A central task in contemporary political philosophy is to identify principles governing political life where citizens disagree deeply on important questions of value and, more generally, about the proper ends of life. The distinctively liberal response to this challenge insists that the state should as far as possible avoid relying on such contested issues in its basic structure and deliberations. David McCabe critically surveys influential defenses of the liberal solution and advocates modus vivendi liberalism as an alternative defense of the liberal state. Acknowledging that the modus vivendi approach does not provide the deep moral consensus that many liberals demand, he defends the liberal state as an acceptable compromise among citizens who will continue to see it as less than ideal. His book will interest a wide range of readers in political philosophy and political theory.

David McCabe is Associate Professor in Philosophy at Colgate University. His previous publications include a number of articles within books and journals on social and political philosophy.
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Acknowledgments

Most of what I understand about making philosophical arguments I owe to my advisor at graduate school, John Deigh. In his staunch commitments to rigor, clarity, and intellectual probity, John offered an exemplary model of how philosophical work should be done. This book no doubt falls short of those standards in various respects, but it is a pleasure to acknowledge my extensive debt to him.

The bulk of this book was written after I joined the faculty at Colgate University. Its appearance has been accelerated by the University’s generous support of faculty research and by its fine library staff. My students at Colgate have offered a consistently high level of philosophical engagement that has been an important stimulus to my thinking. Most importantly, my colleagues in Colgate’s departments of Philosophy and Religion have provided an environment for careful reflection as rewarding as it is enjoyable.

I also worked on this book, and presented some of its ideas, while a Fellow at the Centre for Ethics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs at the University of St. Andrews, under the direction of John Haldane. I thank the St. Andrews Philosophy departments in general, and John in particular, for their hospitality and for the opportunity to exchange ideas. I made final revisions while holding the McCullough Chair in the Philosophy Department at Hamilton College, and I am grateful to Hamilton and to my colleagues there for their warm and stimulating support.

Chapter 4 is a revised version of an essay that originally appeared in Ethics 111 (April 2001), and Chapter 5 reworks some material from an essay that appeared in Ethics 110 (January 2000). I am grateful to Ethics and the University of Chicago Press for permission to use that material here.
Acknowledgments

This book has benefited from the criticisms and input, direct and indirect, of many people. I wish to acknowledge in particular Robert Audi, Jerome Balmuth, Stanley Brubaker, Kai Draper, James Harris, Jonathan Jacobs, the late Susan Moller Okin, Barry Shain, and John Skorupski. Paul Baumann, model editor of Commonweal, has been a consistent supporter of my work in ways I appreciate very much. George Sher early in my career offered friendly but devastating criticism of a view I had advanced, and his critique has been influential in my subsequent approach to political theory. Finally, David Dudrick, my colleague at Colgate, deserves special mention for being such a generous and constructive interlocutor as I struggled to figure out precisely what I wanted to say here.

At Cambridge, Hilary Gaskin has been an ideal editor from start to finish – unfailingly gracious, professional, and supportive; without her ministrations this book would not exist. I am also thankful for the exceptionally thorough reports from outside readers on an earlier version of this book. Though I am sure I have not addressed all their worries, this book has been immeasurably improved as a result of their comments.

My wife, Kate Lucey, has offered steadfast and loving support of this project, often when I feared it had got the best of me; I hope I have repaid her confidence. My father, Frank McCabe, provided a life-long model of responsible engagement in the world that I have tried to honor on every page here. Though he did not live to see its publication, I take some pleasure in dedicating this book to his memory, as I know of no one who has demonstrated more conclusively the importance of philosophical reflection to a life well lived.