In recent years, the concepts of individual autonomy and political liberalism have been the subject of intense debate, but these discussions have occurred largely within separate academic disciplines. *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism* contains for the first time new essays devoted to foundational questions concerning both the notion of the autonomous self and the nature and justification of liberalism.

Written by leading figures in moral, legal, and political theory, this volume covers, among other things, the following topics: the nature of the self and its relation to autonomy, the social dimensions of autonomy and the political dynamics of respect and recognition, and the concept of autonomy underlying the principles of liberalism.

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Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism

New Essays

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Preface

The initial idea for this volume was to prepare an update of The Inner Citadel, the collection of essays on the concept of autonomy that John Christman had put together in 1989. Given the spate of terrific work since then, a new anthology seemed in order. But we also saw that discussions of the concept of autonomy needed to engage more fully with the growing body of literature on political liberalism, where there were strikingly similar lines of critique and rebuttal. Thus arose the idea for a collection of essays that would both update discussions of autonomy and connect them to debates over the foundations of liberalism.

The decision to solicit new essays allowed us to tailor our invitations to authors in a way that framed these issues from the outset, and we are particularly pleased with the way the authors took up and further developed those issues. The chapters were all written independently, but during the process of revising their contributions, the authors had access to drafts of each other’s chapters, which allowed for interesting cross-pollination and a more cohesive overall volume. In addition, several of the authors had an earlier opportunity to exchange their views at symposia on autonomy in St. Louis in 1997 and 1999.

We would like to acknowledge Sigurður Kristinsson for his part in organizing these symposia with Joel Anderson, and Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Missouri, St. Louis, for supporting the events.

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