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Review of The Power of Tolerance: A Debate by Wendy Brown and Rainer Forst

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The Power of Tolerance: A Debate

Brown, Wendy & Rainer Forst. *The Power of Tolerance: A Debate*. Columbia Univ. (New Directions in Critical Theory). Jun. 2014. 104p. ed. by Luca Di Blasi & Christoph F.E. Holzhey. notes. ISBN 9780231170185. \$45; pap. ISBN 9780231170192. \$15; ebk. ISBN 9780231537964. PHIL.

This book is a transcription of a 2008 debate between Brown (Class of 1936 First Professor of Political Science, Univ. of California at Berkley; *Regulating Aversion*) and Forst (political theory and philosophy, Goethe Univ., Frankfurt am Main; *Toleration in Conflict*) on the subject of tolerance, in which both authors agree that it is an extra-moral means to correct for inherently nonrational moral or religious disapproval of others. Forst contends that tolerance is necessary to justify rights, while Brown maintains that tolerance is unnecessary, and that a freedom of speech and opinion is sufficient. Brown and Forst share a conception of ethics that is inconsistent with a common sense, reason-based account. This nonrational conception drives their analysis of the issue; for Forst it serves as an ad hoc foundation of rights that would otherwise be justified by common-sense ethical reasoning. Following the transcript of the debate there are three pages of notes that serve, largely, to cite works mentioned in the text.

VERDICT This content could have been presented more clearly and accessibly in an article less than half the size of this book. Alternatively, readers might be better served by a video (or at least audio) recording of the debate.—**William Simkulet, Andover, KS**