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Lawrence C. Becker
Hollins University

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My project in this article is to sharpen the distinction between cognitive and noncognitive accounts of trust and to argue for the importance for political philosophy of pursuing an inquiry into the more neglected of the two areas, the noncognitive one. In particular, I will argue for the importance of what I will call a sense of security about other people's benevolence, conscientiousness, and reciprocity. Apart from the rather obvious case to be made for its being a crucial element in the formation, stability, and productiveness of both individuals and large-scale social organizations, such security raises intriguing empirical and theoretical problems often obscured in discussions of other forms of trust.

A diverse body of work has prompted these reflections. The proximate cause was Russell Hardin's analysis of the strategic value of what he calls optimistic trust,[1] together with an early version of his article in this issue (pp. 26–42). Those pieces led me to Niklas Luhmann's remarks about the "internal" dimension of trust that should not be treated merely as "an analogy with cognition" and his more recent distinction between trust and confidence.[2] These works renewed and deepened my appreciation of Annette Baier's arguments against a cool, rational, contractarian approach to the subject.[3] Judith Baker's analysis of forms of trust that are evidence resistant or evidence independent, Trudy Govier's emphasis on trust as an attitude, and John

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1. Russell Hardin, "The Street-Level Epistemology of Trust," *Analyse und Kritik* 14 (1992): 152–76.

2. Niklas Luhmann, *Trust and Power,* ed. Tom Burns and Gianfranco Poggi, trans. Howard Davis, John Raffan, and Kathryn Rooney (New York: Wiley, 1979), p. 79, and "Familiarity, Confidence, Trust: Problems and Alternatives," in *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations,* ed. Diego Gambetta (New York: Blackwell, 1988), pp. 94–107.

3. Annette Baier, "Trust and Antitrust," *Ethics* 96 (1986): 231–60, "Trust and Its Vulnerabilities," in her *Moral Prejudices* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 131–51.

Dunn's remarks about trust as a "passion," held against James S. Coleman's rigorously cognitive account, clarified many matters for me, and the various ways in which Toshio and Midori Yamagishi; John Orbell, Robyn Dawes, and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea; and Tom R. Tyler and Peter Degoey have studied trusting the benevolence and fairness of others was suggestive.[4] All of this work, however, as I interpret it, is ultimately in what I will call the cognitivist tradition and has hardened my conviction that it is a particular form of noncognitive trust that ought to be of central interest to political philosophers.[5]

To fix ideas, let us call our trust "cognitive" if it is fundamentally a matter of our beliefs or expectations about others' trustworthiness; it is noncognitive if it is fundamentally a matter of our having trustful attitudes, affects, emotions, or motivational structures that are not focused on specific people, institutions, or groups. I say "fundamentally" because the distinction has a fuzzy boundary.[6] Hope, for example, though it can be an unfocused attitude, can clearly be a feature of cognitive trust if it is directed toward specific people and is causally dependent on specific beliefs or expectations about them. When hope (like anxiety) lacks an object, however, or is not causally dependent on a discrete set of beliefs about an object, it is a feature of noncognitive trust. These matters will become clearer as the argument progresses, but for the moment it is sufficient to reiterate simply that cognitive trust is composed of beliefs or expectations about the future behavior of others, in some or all situations. Thus, to assert that A trusts B cognitively is to assert something of the form A believes or expects B will do X in situation S. Noncognitive trust is composed of attitudes of certain sorts, period. To assert that A trusts B noncognitively is to

4. Judith Baker, "Trust and Rationality," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 68 (1987): 1–13; Trudy Govier, "Self-Trust, Autonomy, and Self-Esteem," *Hypatia* 8 (1993): 99–120; John Dunn, *Interpreting Political Responsibility* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Toshio Yamagishi and Midori Yamagishi, "Trust and Commitment in the United States and Japan," *Motivation and Emotion* 18 (1994): 129–66; John Orbell, Robyn Dawes, and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, "Trust, Social Categories, and Individuals: The Case of Gender," *Motivation and Emotion* 18 (1994): 109–128; Tom R. Tyler and Peter Degoey, "Trust in Organizational Authorities: The Influence of Motive Attributions on Willingness to Accept Decisions," in *Trust in Organizational Authorities*, ed. R. Kramer and Tom R. Tyler (Beverley Hills, Calif.: Sage, in press).

5. Baker's paper is ultimately quite close to my concerns, though not to the way I work them out. The same is true of John Deigh, "Morality and Personal Relations," in *Person to Person*, ed. George Graham and Hugh LaFollette (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), pp. 106–123, pp. 109 ff.; Olli Lagenspetz, "Legitimacy and Trust," *Philosophical Investigations* 15 (1992): 1–21; and Karen Jones, "Trust as an Affective Attitude," in this issue, pp. 4–25.

6. For a stronger claim, see Baier, "Trust and Its Vulnerabilities," p. 132.

assert something of the form A's attitude (affect, noncognitive disposition) toward B is X. That is, it is to assert that A's attitude is trustful of (or trusting with) B.

Cognitive accounts of trust typically treat it as a matter of strategic choice, either about individual actions or about dispositions to behave. On this view, trust is a way of managing uncertainty in our dealings with others by representing those situations as risks. We can do this if we develop beliefs or expectations about the trust*worthiness* of others. Some of those beliefs will be about particular people; some will be about types of people; still others will constitute an underlying set of expectations about people in general. Once we have beliefs and expectations about the trustworthiness of others, we can convert uncertainties about their behavior into an estimate of the risks of dealing with them.[7] Then the theory of strategic choice can be wheeled securely into place—to discuss not only when it is rational to trust particular people in particular situations but also whether it is rational to be trusting in general. (And, alas, the romance is gone.)

My interest is in cases in which the residue of uncertainty is objectively very great and where we cannot, or at any rate do not, try to convert it into subjective estimates of risk. Those cases are pervasive in modern political life, and I want to propose that how we handle them—how trusting we are in a noncognitive way—is something political theorists should attend to in a more systematic way.

As a final preliminary, let me define three forms of trust that are particularly relevant for present purposes. I define them here as motivational traits or dispositions (i.e., forms of noncognitive trust), but they obviously have analogues on the cognitive side. I do not mean to suggest that the three forms are mutually exclusive. They are often tightly interwoven, but they are nonetheless distinct. (Compare Bernard Barber's tripartite distinction.)[8]

Credulity.—In some contexts, trust is a matter of credulity: it is a disposition to believe what another person says and to banish skeptical thoughts. ("Trust," says the promo for *NBC Nightly News*, over a picture of Tom Brokaw. In effect, "You can believe what this man says on a newscast.") Let us say that credulity is comprehensive to the extent that we are disposed to believe anything anyone says on any topic and that it is stable to the extent that it persists no matter how much evidence we have of the fallibility of our informants. No doubt it is

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7. Hardin has urged me to reformulate this point in a way that does not depend on what may be an empty distinction between uncertainty and risk. We can do this by saying that the cognitivist project is to reduce estimated risk to something better than chance for each alternative outcome.

8. Bernard Barber, *The Logic and Limits of Trust* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1983), pp. 9–14.

lethal at the limits. It is notable that the extent to which credulity may be an unduly neglected element in the theory of knowledge has recently generated some debate, some of which relies on the theory of strategic rationality.[9]

Reliance. — In other contexts, trust is a matter of reliance: it is a disposition to depend upon other people in some respect; to banish fear of such dependence; to rely, for example, on their competence or fidelity. ("Believe you? I don't understand a word you say. But go ahead anyway. I trust you.") Reliance, too, can be more or less comprehensive and stable, and it is notably unhealthy at the extremes.

Security. — Finally, in still other contexts, trust is a matter of feeling secure: it is a disposition to have confidence about other people's motives, to banish suspicious thoughts about them. ("I don't know anything about you, but somehow I feel safe with you. I trust you.") In developmental psychology, the most fundamental form of this is what Erik Erikson called basic trust and what appears in Abraham H. Maslow's theory of motivation as the safety needs.[10] Karen Horney wrote about its pathological counterpart under the heading of basic anxiety.[11] Basic trust (and distrust) is something we develop in a crude form in infancy and continue to refine throughout our lives. Such a sense of security, too, can be more or less comprehensive and stable, but the most interesting confidence games depend on the victim's having a complex mixture of low and high levels of security of this sort, as depicted, for example, in films such as *The Sting* or *The Grifters*.[12] Even for those who take the cynical view that effective government is always a con game, then, this form of trust will repay close study.

9. For debate, see John Hardwig, "Epistemic Dependence," *Journal of Philosophy* 82 (1985): 335–49, "The Role of Trust in Knowledge," *Journal of Philosophy* 88 (1991): 693–708; Mark Owen Webb, "Why I Know about as Much as You: A Reply to Hardwig," *Journal of Philosophy* 90 (1993): 260–70; Jonathan E. Adler, "Testimony, Trust, Knowing," *Journal of Philosophy* 91 (1994): 264–75. On strategic rationality, see Michael J. Blais, "Epistemic Tit for Tat," *Journal of Philosophy* 84 (1987): 363–75; John Woods, "The Maladroitness of Epistemic Tit for Tat," *Journal of Philosophy* 86 (1989): 324–31; Michael J. Blais, "Misunderstanding Epistemic Tit for Tat: Reply to John Woods," *Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990): 369–74.

10. Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society,* 2d ed. (New York: Norton, 1963), p. 247; Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality,* 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 39 ff.

11. Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* (New York: Norton, 1937), pp. 88 ff.

12. George Roy Hill, director, *The Sting* (1973), the Paul Newman and Robert Redford classic; Stephen Frears, director, *The Grifters* (1990), elegant, nasty film noir, with fine performances by Angelica Huston, John Cusack, Annette Benning, and Pat Hingle.

ABSTRACTION AND THE ELIMINATION
OF COGNITIVE TRUST

Cognitive accounts of trust have a strong hold on us for a variety of good reasons. In the first place, it seems impossibly dreamy to trust people without regard to their trustworthiness, especially when the stakes are high. The conventional wisdom is that political life is a high-stakes game full of ruthless players. Saintly souls who are persistently trustful and serenely indifferent to the treachery around them may have a few temporary successes at the margins of such a game, but more often they are exploited and pose a danger to themselves and others. Such saintly trust is dangerous even in intimate relationships because it can elicit, perpetuate, and exacerbate abusive behavior. So it is natural to think that our trust should always be a cognitive matter in the sense that we should always try to connect it to good estimates of others' trustworthiness. Moreover, even when we cannot estimate this, our trust should be a cognitive matter in the sense that we should monitor its consequences. Thoughts like these rightly make the strategic analysis of trust irresistible.

That is certainly part of the attraction of cognitive trust for us all, but it is not the whole story for political philosophers and social scientists, and it does not adequately reveal a disturbing peculiarity—namely, that cognitive accounts of trust appear to eliminate what they say they describe. That peculiarity, I think, is what drives (some) theologians, poets, narrative artists, and moral philosophers toward noncognitive trust.[13]

My contention is that we can see this peculiarity most clearly if we focus on the special appeal that cognitive trust has in political, social, and economic theory (and journalistic political analysis) when we adopt a common simplifying assumption about human motivation: the "wide" self-interest assumption. This abstraction is not much used in moral philosophy generally, as opposed to its political subdepartment, and for obvious reasons gets short shrift in narrative art. As a consequence, in those endeavors we are less apt to give an eliminative analysis of trust.

To support this contention, I need to begin with a distinction between the abstract and the concrete in human interactions. Let us say that our interactions are abstract insofar as we deal with others in general terms—that is, as though they were merely tokens of a given type of thing (e.g., constituents, competitors, enemies, men, women, children, friends, or lovers). At the limit of such abstraction, a constituent or a lover is thought of as completely describable in general terms—as a replicable instantiation of general properties. In contrast,

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13. For a rather different argument on this point, see Lagenspetz.

let us say that our interactions are concrete insofar as we deal with others in particular terms—that is, as this or that one, identified, but uncategorized, being. At the limit of concreteness, this or that constituent or lover is not thought of in even that one general category but rather as sui generis—a Buberean Thou, with whom our relationship is not consciously like our relationship with any other. (Whether love, trust, or any other social interaction is possible at either of these conceptual limits is a nice question.)

I take it as given that in ordinary life we live near those limits only intermittently. If we are demographers, actuaries, economists, political philosophers, or strategic planners of any sort, we regularly think of others as high-level abstractions, but we also spend a great deal of our time in much more concrete dealings with colleagues, students, clients, and friends. There are outliers, of course—people who seem lost at one extreme or the other: the mystic lost in meditation so concrete that it is ineffable, the theorist who is unable to remember the way to his office or the names of his children. But I take it that most of us, in most of our sustained interactions, in both the public and the private aspects of our lives, live nearer to the middle than to the limits of abstraction or concreteness.

Even midrange interactions, however, can differ dramatically in their concreteness in ways that we would like to control. Once the IRS agent begins to audit my return, and even before she interviews me, she has a disturbingly concrete picture of me. A close friend may have a disappointingly abstract picture of how I teach or write. Implausible as it seems, even a theory of justice, or an econometric model, may be too abstract for its own good. So there is routinely a normative question here about the appropriateness of a given level of abstraction or concreteness in a given setting.

In some cases, there is a loose conceptual connection between the kind of human interaction involved and the degree of concreteness it requires. How much abstractness, for example, is consistent with the claim that I love you? If I love you solely because you instantiate a (long) list of attractive properties (intelligence, wit, generosity, cheerfulness, a hard body, a strong libido, etc.), then in what sense can I be said to love you in particular? Would I not "love" just anyone I came across who had those properties? And love her in exactly the same way? (Call this the adulterer's lament.)

That ancient puzzle about love[14] has a parallel in the area of trust. The parallel is this: how much abstractness, in my dealings with you, is consistent with the claim that I trust you? If I think of your motiva-

14. Plato, *Symposium*, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New York: Bollingen, 1961), 210a ff.

tions (and my own) very abstractly, trust may appear to be a puzzling phenomenon.

Consider the abstraction mentioned earlier: that all human motivation can be captured under the single heading of self-interest, when that is not confused with psychological egoism. The idea is simply that everything we do is ultimately a case of pursuing our own interests—whether those interests are egoistic, altruistic, perfectionistic, or whatever. Now, if we think of human motivation in that very abstract way, then it is clear that we need knowledge and power in order to pursue our interests effectively, and we are led to think of trust as something we employ when we lack those things: when we do not have all the knowledge we need, we sometimes fall back on credulity and operate on the basis of what others say; when we do not have all the power we need, we sometimes fall back into dependence on others and rely on their powers. Since we are all less than omniscient and omnipotent, some amounts of credulity and reliance initially seem to be a practical necessity. But oddly, on further reflection, it is not clear how they even get into the picture. It is not clear how any rationally defensible form of trust would even differ, conceptually, from knowledge or power. Trust has been eliminated.

Consider: either I can compute the risk that what you say will be incorrect or I cannot. If I can, then what more do I need (beyond power) in order to pursue my interests with you in situations where you have offered to supply me with information? Specifically, what would credulity add to my effectiveness in that case? It seems superfluous at best, and at worst a recipe for undermining rational decision making. Nor is it clear why credulity would be a useful thing in cases in which I cannot compute the risk. It seems even less worthwhile in those cases, because it might dispose me to blind myself to my ignorance rather than to incorporate my awareness of it into my decisions. Note that a disposition to trust only the trustworthy (i.e., in this context, only those whose behavior one can reliably predict) is not an alternative here. It is equivalent to the cases in which one heaps trust on top of knowledge, adding nothing useful to the pursuit of one's interests. What is important is that I am able to act in the face of uncertainty and act in a way that is strategically defensible. That may take courage, but it is hard to see why it must or should require credulity.

The situation is similar for the disposition to rely on others: either I can compute the risks of depending upon you in situations of interest to me or I cannot. In either case, reliance as something distinct from merely being disposed to make strategically defensible choices, and having the courage to carry them out, is either superfluous or dangerous. The same is true, mutatis mutandis, for security about people's motives.

The result is that, at this level of abstraction about human motivation, trust disappears. It is either made synonymous with the knowledge and power we can gain through strategically defensible thinking or dismissed.[15] Either way, I believe, we obscure something that makes a certain form of trust intensely interesting for political theory. To remove the obscurity, we need to do two things: to explore the notion of noncognitive trust and to give a little more concreteness to our account of human motivation.

NONCOGNITIVE TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

To say that we trust others in a noncognitive way is to say that we are disposed to be trustful of them independently of our beliefs or expectations about their trustworthiness. In some cases we remain trustful (credulous, reliant, secure) despite our belief that others do not deserve our trust; in other cases the issue does not arise because we simply do not attend to it. Trust of this sort is not only a way of handling uncertainty; it is also a way of being, a way of going, in uncertain or certain terrain. It is one of many possible general structures of concrete motivation, attitude, affect, and emotion.

Noncognitive trust is a common phenomenon. Severely abused children and adults can develop intense attachments to their tormentors. Some deeply religious people achieve a serenity about human affairs that persists through horror upon horror. In ordinary life there is massive anecdotal evidence that most of us have personal relationships in which we remain trustful despite the known untrustworthiness of others. Whether this is with an unfaithful spouse, an alcoholic lover, a backbiting friend, a vindictive boss, an incompetent coworker, or a child who is rotten to the bone, it is not uncommon for people to be both vividly aware of the problem in reflective moments and helplessly credulous, reliant, or secure in action.

Nor is this sort of trust limited to intensely personal relationships. Con games operate on the premise that everyone can be had. Bait and switch is a persistently successful sales technique. Used car salesmen, who operate in an environment in which the common wisdom is that they cannot be trusted, have successful techniques for eliciting enough noncognitive trust to close deals that a wary customer

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15. The 1960s dustup, in the pages of *Ethics*, between Virginia Held and Gordon Tullock illustrates nicely how philosophers try to resist this. Held, along with a number of other prominent philosophers, wanted to characterize Prisoner's Dilemmas as presenting us with a problem about trust precisely because the prisoners face uncertainties rather than calculable risks. Tullock wanted to define problems of trust in terms of rational decisions about the trustworthiness of others and thus thought Prisoner's Dilemmas were not about trust. For a summary of this, and relevant references, see Virginia Held, "On the Meaning of Trust," *Ethics* 78 (1968): 156–59.

would reject. And more to the point here, though polls frequently report that belief in the trustworthiness of our social and political institutions (i.e., cognitive trust) has steadily declined in the last few decades, it is not obvious at all that noncognitive trust in them has declined in a comparable way. Many people continue to use those institutions in what appears to be a remarkably unguarded way—responding with bewilderment and outrage when it becomes evident that some others are so distrustful and alienated that they are willing to bomb public buildings or arm themselves against the government.

The striking difference in the general public response in the United States to three recent events can plausibly be interpreted along these lines. The World Trade Center bombing in 1992 was initially very disturbing but ultimately came to reinforce people's confidence in government rather than diminish it. "Outsiders" were immediately identified as the perpetrators and quickly caught. Government agencies mobilized effectively to restore business as usual, and the media coverage returned to low intensity very soon. By contrast, the protracted siege and final raid on the Branch Davidians near Waco, Texas (1993), carried out by federal officials in the full glare of saturation TV coverage, was from its beginning widely regarded as having been managed in an incompetent and duplicitous way. The site has become something of a shrine for conspiracy theorists in the so-called militia movement, for whom it also became unambiguous proof of the malevolence of the government.[16] Yet it did not become a national obsession or appear to cause a general disturbance in people's sense of security about the motives of public officials. What did become a national obsession for over a month was the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City (April 19, 1995), in large part because it was apparently a response to the Waco raid—a response most citizens considered to reveal a shocking and pathological distrust of the motives of government officials. How are we to interpret this other than to say that most citizens of the United States are disposed to feel secure about the motives of their public officials in a way that survives receiving a great deal of information about the incompetence, mendacity, greed, and so forth, of some of them? How are we to interpret this other than to say that those citizens have a good deal of noncognitive trust in their government?

Now there are obviously wide individual differences among us in the types and degrees of this noncognitive trust. Whether such trust is wholly learned or partly hardwired is an interesting empirical question. Whether some, but not all, of the varieties of noncognitive trust that we find among ourselves are strategically defensible traits for an

16. Michael Kelly, "The Road to Paranoia," *The New Yorker* (June 19, 1995): 60–75.

individual to have is an important line of inquiry. And whether some schematic form of noncognitive trust contributes to inclusive genetic fitness is also interesting. But I want to address a separate set of questions: what type and degree of noncognitive trust, if any, is necessary for effective government of various forms or for sustained, collective action in general?

It seems clear that the answers to those questions are not wholly derivative from answers to the strategic or genetic ones. The latter are obviously relevant to the former, since it is plausible to think that we would, in the long run, resist, disrupt, or alter social practices that are inconsistent with strategic rationality or inclusive fitness. The thought is that social institutions could not survive or be stable unless they were fundamentally consistent with genetic and widely exhibited motivational structures. The history of governments, however, is in large part the history of *resistance* to them, not only in the form of active rebellion but also in the form of evasion and avoidance. Many (most?) governments are not stable for long, unless they have ways of routinely accommodating rebels and noncooperators. Does that mean that there is a persistent conflict between the level of trust required by effective governments and the level we are disposed to give? It may be that different forms of government depend on different types and levels of noncognitive trust, some of which are strategically defensible (given the existence of the government) and others of which are not. But it is not at all clear a priori that our favored form of government (say, liberal democracy) depends on a type and degree of noncognitive trust that is inclusively fit, strategically defensible, or learnable in this life.

SECURITY AND CONCRETE MOTIVATION

In sorting out the kinds of noncognitive trust that might be of most interest, I am struck by several things. One is the way we seem to need (psychologically) a sense of security to an extent that we do not appear to need credulity and reliance in their noncognitive forms.[17] Another is the way governments, too, if they depend on noncognitive trust at all, seem to depend most of all on security. (More about that appears below.) Still another is the attention given to a particular trio of motivations relevant to security—attention found both in moral philosophy and in social science when it abandons the wide self-interest abstraction.

In moral philosophy unitary accounts of human motivation are typically put aside. The practical importance of narrow self-interest (i.e., concern for one's own welfare) is assumed. But as Joseph Butler argued convincingly long ago, the difference between benevolence

17. Maslow, pp. 39 ff.

and narrow self-interest is as important as their similarity.[18] Conscientiousness (concern or respect for following the moral "law" for its own sake) is also widely recognized as an importantly distinct motive. And some of us think that reciprocity, or perhaps fairness or fair play, should be equally central to an account of our moral psychology. In any case, moral philosophy attends to the ways in which all of those things and a host of other motivational structures (projects, commitments, ends) play out with or against narrow self-interest. The situation in social and behavioral science seems parallel whenever the wide self-interest abstraction is dropped: narrow self-interest is assumed, and attention shifts to the ways in which altruism, norms of reciprocity, and other motivational structures operate with or against it.

My impression is that, when these moral philosophers or social scientists turn their attention to trust, they regularly see that confidence about others' motives, especially their benevolence and commitment to justice, is a central issue.[19] These scholars readily recognize what I have called the noncognitive dimension of this form of trust. It may be wishful thinking, but I believe my preferred account of security—as noncognitive confidence about the benevolence, conscientiousness, and reciprocity of others—is merely an explication of this rough consensus.

Given an interest in security, however, why should this trio of traits be singled out for inquiry? Why not include honesty, for example, or loyalty, temperance, or courage on the list? Do we not feel even more secure when we are confident that others have all those motives? Why not include the whole inventory of conventional virtues? And if not the full list, then why this short one in particular?

The answer is that I am interested here in identifying a core of traits that are connected directly to our ability to feel secure in our independent transactions with others—in those transactions in which our lack of knowledge or power does not figure centrally, and thus issues of trust in the sense of credulity or reliance are not prominent. When we are ignorant or powerless (say, in a public health or safety emergency), and thereby dependent on others, then admittedly their honesty, competence, and courage are relevant to whether we feel secure about dealing with them. But it is also true that in cases like these, our sense of security is usually rather beside the point. What the emergency management people need to do their work is merely our credulity and compliance for the duration of the emergency. What interests me is what happens when such periods of substantial igno-

18. Joseph Butler, *Fifteen Sermons,* ed. T. A. Roberts (1726; London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1970).
19. Baier, "Trust and Antitrust"; Yamagishi and Yamagishi.

rance and dependency (including childhood and illness) are over, and we are routinely dealing with public officials and each other more or less independently. Perhaps then we begin to suspect that our earlier credulity and reliance had been misplaced. (Think of the continuing revelations from cold-war Department of Energy and Department of Defense files that show how ignorant the experts were in the 1950s about the hazards of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons research.) It strikes me as a plausible hypothesis, however, that democratic government is not seriously disabled by a consequent decline in people's credulity and reliance, as long as they continue to believe that officials generally mean well, play by the rules, and play fair. When we feel secure about that much, we tend to write off incompetence, mendacity, greed, and cowardice as simply human foibles. In emergencies, when we again recognize our ignorance and lack of power, we can easily enough be persuaded to follow evacuation orders. What we cannot ignore is evidence that officials do not mean well, do not play by the rules, and do not play fair. When we lose that sort of confidence, we are likely to become very wary indeed—perhaps to disengage from "the system," or to try to bring it down. Effective government needs that kind of trust. (Or so goes my hypothesis.) It may be that we would feel most secure in the presence of a moral saint—one who possessed every virtue to the highest degree.[20] But I suggest that a more modest form of security is all that could plausibly be necessary for effective political institutions.

BENEVOLENCE, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, AND RECIPROCITY

The nature of the motivational structure at issue here is still somewhat obscure. Let me go over a few definitional matters and formulate some assumptions and hypotheses to clarify them.

A. Benevolence

'Benevolence' is used here simply as shorthand for one person's concern for, or interest in, the welfare of others. It varies along at least five important dimensions: scope, magnitude, distribution, activity, and imposition. Each of them poses interesting descriptive and normative problems.

   Scope.—The reach of one's benevolence can be universal (a concern for the welfare of all beings that can logically be the objects of such concern), or it can be limited (e.g., to sentient creatures, to benign sentient creatures, to benign members of the moral community, to benign fellow citizens, etc.). I assume that our sense of security about the motives of others is connected not only to whether we behave as

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20. But see Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints," *Journal of Philosophy* 79 (1982): 419–39.

if we ourselves are within the scope of their benevolence but also to whether we behave as if it includes everything we ourselves have (or might have) a benevolent interest in—for example, our families, friends, and so on. So the hypothesis would be that we do (and should) feel more secure the more we are disposed to behave as if the scope of others' benevolence exceeds our own (first by including us, of course), up to the point that it includes everything our own benevolence might come to include. (That limit will obviously vary from person to person.)

Magnitude.—The relative magnitude of people's benevolence may be thought of in terms of the power it has to dominate their other motives in a given context. (I happily leave aside the question of whether we can construct a useful concept of its absolute magnitude.) The logical range here is from impotence to omnipotence. For practical purposes, however, if people's benevolent motives were omnipotent, exceeded our own in scope, and were likely to preempt our own decisions, we might reasonably regard them as dangerous. My hypothesis is that, in a political context at least, we do (and should) feel most secure when we are disposed to behave as if others' benevolence, conscientiousness, and reciprocity are of roughly equal magnitude in their lives.

Distribution.—Within its reach, the magnitude of my benevolence may be uniform or variable. A typical pattern is some sort of "radiating" benevolence, which is most powerful for those I define as "close" and which grows weaker with distance. But an utterly uniform distribution has sometimes apparently been recommended. (I say "apparently" because it is often the critics of a moral theory who are most eager to force this interpretation of it. Think of the standard attacks on the impartiality required by utilitarianism. Nonetheless, advocates do occasionally give the critics a clear text.)[21] My assumption is that people and institutions generally operate with radiant distributions that are context dependent. Sometimes the radiance will be limited by a sharp outsider/insider boundary forced by an enterprise (e.g., a competitive or adversarial undertaking). Most political contexts force a fairly steep decline in the signal beyond the boundaries defined by citizenship, legal residence, and hospitality. Nonetheless, a radiating pattern can be the source of considerable insecurity. Just as being outside the scope of others' benevolence is disturbing, so too is the sense that their concern for you is too remote or weak. My hypothesis is that, in a given cooperative enterprise, we are most secure when we are disposed

21. William Godwin, "Political Justice," in *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and Its Influence on Morals and Happiness,* ed. F. E. L. Priestley (1798; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), bk. 2, chap. 2.

to behave as if the others in it with us are uniformly benevolent to all participants.

Activity. — Benevolence is active to the extent that the benevolent person takes the initiative in assessing and contributing to the welfare of others, reactive insofar as the person assesses and contributes only in response to others' initiatives, and passive insofar as the benevolent person simply wishes others well and does nothing to either help or hinder them. Other things being equal, I assume we do and should prefer active to reactive and reactive to passive.

Imposition. — People whose benevolence is active or reactive, however, face the questions of whether, when, and how to impose their help on others. These questions of so-called paternalistic intervention are among the most vexing in ethics, including political philosophy. My assumption is that partly because we are often divided about these matters, we are rightly apprehensive about being preempted by others' benevolence. My hypothesis is that confidence in others' conscientiousness is needed to make us feel secure on this score.

B. Conscientiousness

By 'conscientiousness' I mean the disposition to carry on a given activity on its own terms, by following its own internal rules understood in terms of its own point or purpose. The disposition to follow the etiquette of various social situations is an example. If we accept a wedding invitation and want to help make the wedding a success for everyone involved, then much of the purpose of the event and the standards of right conduct for participants and observers will have been fixed for us by the sort of wedding it will be. We will conscientiously follow those rules rather than our own preferred ones, and we will dutifully not over- or underdress, not snicker at the music or readings or vows, and not complain about anything at all in the hearing of the families. When we are in doubt about what the correct behavior would be in some particular, we will think about it in terms internal to the practice—in terms of the purposes of the sort of wedding it is going to be.

It is evident that conscientiousness, in this sense, is always tied to rule- or norm-governed activities. It cannot be free-form. And it is always deontological—a matter of what is right, correct, or good form within a normative structure treated as a given. Conscientious people are disposed to operate within the rules of the game in play. Moreover, they are disposed to operate *by* rules. That means their behavior will be principled and take the form of treating similar cases similarly, though of course this does not guarantee its justice.[22] Note, however,

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22. Chaïm Perelman, *Justice, Law, and Argument: Essays on Moral and Legal Reasoning* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1980), pp. 34–43.

that conscientiousness is not equivalent to the sort of competence that underwrites our willingness to rely or depend upon others. Nor should the two be joined for analytic purposes. Competence connects with the issue of reliance, not security.

We should resist the temptation to moralize this disposition here.[23] Unmoralized, of course, it is obviously not a trait that the heroes of Romanticism and moral autonomy exhibit. Moreover, if the game in play is evil, it is common to regard its conscientious players with special horror or contempt—even when their conformity to the rules has the demonstrable effect of limiting the evil or opening the way for reform. When we address the good of this trait in our lives, then, there is impetus to think of its value conditionally—as dependent on the value of the game being played. This translates into a reluctance to think that the wisdom of trusting in people's conscientiousness could wisely be separated from the justice or goodness of their enterprise.

My assumption, however, is that our sense of security in our dealings with others is (and ought to be) in large measure dependent on a wholly unmoralized notion of conscientiousness. It is and ought to be dependent on a disposition to behave as if (1) any situation we find ourselves in will be a norm-governed activity, (2) we will be able to understand, quickly enough for our purposes, what those norms are, and (3) the others involved in the situation are generally going to be acting in accord with the rules.[24]

C. Reciprocity

'Reciprocity', as I use it here, is also an unmoralized notion. It refers simply to the disposition to make fitting and proportionate responses to the good or ill we receive at the hands of others. A fitting response is one of the same general kind—good for good, evil for evil, indifference for indifference—where the standard of sameness is established either by social convention, agreement between the parties, or the standards of the individual making the response. A proportionate response is one of the same magnitude, as measured either by the giver's cost or the recipient's benefit.

It is very hard to find functional human beings who lack a disposition to reciprocate, and it is equally difficult to find societies that lack elaborate norms of reciprocity. It is easy, however, to find startling varieties in these dispositions and norms (servility, vengefulness, sociopathy, potlatch, vendetta). The range is so wide and the practices are

23. By 'moralize', here, I mean an effort to define a practice or disposition in a way that makes it normatively acceptable from one's favored moral point of view, however defined.

24. Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 76–103.

so potent that there is very good reason to try to sort out the rationally defensible versions—or the ones that conform to one's favored concept of justice, fairness, utility, or moral duty. Thus we find moralized notions of reciprocity that restrict its scope, rule out revenge, put a cap on the magnitude of proportionate responses, and so on.[25]

A discussion of noncognitive trust, however, is best served by an unmoralized concept of reciprocity. My assumption is that, like trust in others' conscientiousness, trust in their reciprocity consists partly of a disposition to behave as if their behavior will be norm governed in an understandable way—a way we can adapt to even if it is bizarre. Like trust in others' benevolence, trust in their reciprocity consists partly of a disposition to behave as if others will benefit us in certain situations. But unlike either benevolence or conscientiousness, trust in others' reciprocity gives us some sense of control—control over the operation of these norms and the receipt of these benefits. The thought that public officials are reciprocators is no doubt more comforting to people with good credit histories than to those with bad ones. But even bankrupts can get back on track by proffering benefits to people disposed to reciprocate. When we come to behave as if nothing good that we can do will ever be reciprocated in any way, we come quickly to a crisis. Some of us learn helplessness and alienation. Others learn intractable rebelliousness. Either way, the results for social organizations are not good.

THE TRUSTING SOUL

A proper sense of security is a balance of cognitive control and noncognitive stability. That is, it is a balance between our ability to maneuver in response to our beliefs about the nature of what we are doing (our cognitive control of our conduct) and our resistance to being driven by the shifting winds of our beliefs (our noncognitive stability). When we have perfect cognitive control over our dispositions, we no longer have anything worth calling a disposition; we are simply untethered rational actors in an atmosphere of possibilities. When we have perfectly stable dispositions, we no longer have anything worth calling control; we simply follow the trajectory determined by our dispositions, unable to maneuver at all in response to our contrary beliefs about goals or circumstances.

The analogy here is from aeronautical engineering in fixed-wing aircraft.[26] An airplane is said to have positive stability if it stays in or returns to straight and level flight unless pressure is continuously applied to the controls. It has neutral stability when it holds any given

25. Lawrence C. Becker, *Reciprocity* (New York: Routledge, 1986).
26. I am indebted to Robert Hansen for discussion of these matters.

attitude (roll, pitch, yaw) in which it is placed—tending neither to exaggerate that attitude nor to return to straight and level flight. It has negative stability when it deviates from any given flight attitude unless corrective control is continuously applied.

At the limit of positive or negative stability, an aircraft is uncontrollable. Its optimal level of control and stability, however, is largely determined by its purpose. If it is designed as a trainer for novice pilots, a significant amount of positive stability is a desirable trait. If it is a high-performance fighter with computer-assisted controls, even some negative stability may be a tolerable trade-off for other characteristics.

What is the proper balance of stability and control for noncognitive trust?[27] Clearly, we want to be able to maneuver in response to information about the untrustworthiness of others. A noncognitively trustful disposition will resist such maneuvers. How much resistance is optimal? And when we do override the resistance, finish our strategic maneuvers, and release the controls, then what? A noncognitive disposition is presumably malleable to some degree—that is, it can presumably be erased or altered by experience. What is the optimal level of such malleability? How fixed should our trustful dispositions be? And in cases when we do not want our strategic maneuvering to alter them, how quickly and fully should they reestablish our trustfulness? How much tractable power should they have?

The answers to such questions, both normative and descriptive, will depend on several matters. For one thing, it appears (e.g., from the discussion of the Waco and Oklahoma City cases) that malleability in noncognitive security is more problematic than malleability in the dispositions to be credulous or reliant. This is so, in part, because when others breach our trust in their motives—breach our confidence that they are benevolent, conscientious, and reciprocating—we typically respond in ways that are much more volatile and disruptive of social relations than we do when people prove to be merely unreliable or not credible. Thus, a highly malleable form of noncognitive security poses a significant risk that does not attend malleability in our other trustful dispositions.[28]

Moreover, answers to questions about optimal levels of malleability will depend on the agenda behind the questions. (1) Whose trust? In the context of governments, the question is usually put in terms of citizens trusting officials. But two other areas are equally interesting: the extent to which officials trust each other (to keep secrets, be loyal, carry out orders, use discretion properly, etc.) and the extent to which

27. H. J. N. Horsburgh, "Trust and Social Objectives," *Ethics* 72 (1961): 28–40.
28. I thank John Deigh for this point.

officials trust citizens (e.g., with civil liberties). (2) In what kind of government? It is often observed that different polities appear to require different levels of trust in order to sustain themselves. Modern dictators, for example, as well as the ruling elites in command economies have often exhibited obsessive concern for maintaining the credulity and dependence of their citizens and civil servants, while simultaneously exhibiting extreme distrust of them. By contrast, the ruling elites in liberal democracies and open-market economies seem able to tolerate a great deal of incredulity in their citizenries. Moreover, they actively discourage citizens' dependence on government in many areas and exhibit a good deal of trust in other citizens and civil servants. (3) In what kind of governmental activity? Again, in some areas the need for credulity and reliance appears to be much greater than in others. Compare the judiciary with, say, campaigning incumbent politicians, or compare social service agencies with intelligence agencies. (4) In what kind of environment? In crises of various sorts (war, famine, economic depression, etc.), reliance may be forced. In general, it may be that things like the size of the stakes, the need for expertise, the amount of public participation in voluntary social organizations, and so on, affect the need for trust in a systematic way.

In any case, finding optimal levels of resistance, malleability, and tractive power in our trustful dispositions will obviously depend on all the matters just mentioned. Framing empirical hypotheses and normative arguments on these issues is an intriguing prospect that I cannot pursue here. I will make only two brief and speculative suggestions.

One is that, at their optimal levels, resistance and tractive power in noncognitive security will not vary from case to case nearly as much or as frequently as in the optimal levels of credulity and reliance. To return to the aeronautical analogy, airplanes operate in three dimensions and can be stable or unstable around all three axes. I am told that in some aircraft designs, instability around one axis can be coupled with instability in the others—so that a roll, for example, may generate a yaw as well and may then quickly yield a rather colorful situation. Noncognitive trust operates in at least three dimensions also, and it seems plausible that instability in one might be coupled with instability in the others, with an equally colorful result.

My thought is that security presents more of a problem in this regard than either credulity or reliance. When I lack security about the motives of others, I am as a consequence likely to lose both my willingness to believe what they say and my willingness to depend on them. But the causal connection seems much less firm in the other direction: my sense of security about motives is not damaged by others' lies or mistakes insofar as I construe them as well meant or innocent. (As Justice Holmes famously remarked, "Even a dog distinguishes

between being stumbled over and being kicked.")[29] So the disposition to feel secure about the motives of others can withstand a good deal of instability in the others, but the reverse may not be true. That is reason enough to pay close attention to this form of trust.

The other suggestion is that at its optimal level noncognitive security is not malleable at all. In "Papa Doc" Duvalier's Haiti, it is good to be on guard. It does not follow that its inhabitants should learn the sort of attitudinal insecurity that would make a life in Sweden unnecessarily miserable—or socially volatile. Thus, it may be fruitful to think of the optimal level of trust (in political contexts) as being constituted by nonmalleable, noncognitive security, steered by cognitive trust of all three sorts (credulity, reliance, security). In support of this, I note simply that there does not seem to be anything to be gained by making our noncognitive security even a little bit malleable as long as its resistance and tractive power are properly calibrated and as long as it can be steered cognitively. Moreover, it may be that stable government depends on the ability of political actors to elicit such noncognitive security in others. If so, and if political actors are generally untrustworthy by cognitive standards, a malleable version of the trait will not long survive. We may be best served by a trustful disposition that survives perpetual disappointment.

29. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., *The Common Law,* vol. 3 of *The Collected Works of Justice Holmes: Complete Public Writings and Selected Judicial Opinions,* ed. Sheldon M. Novick (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 116.