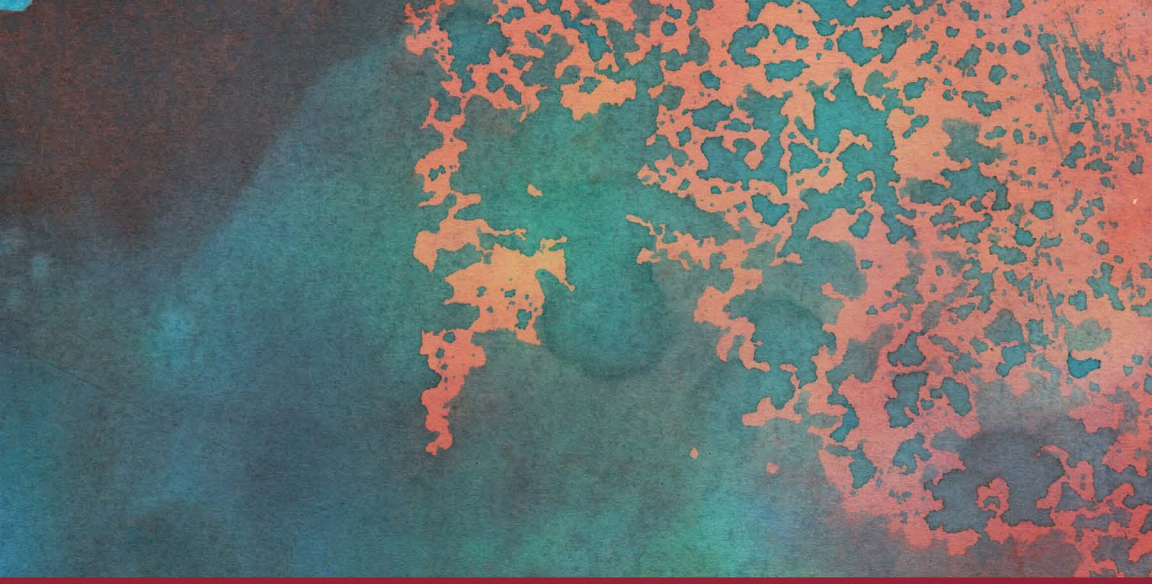
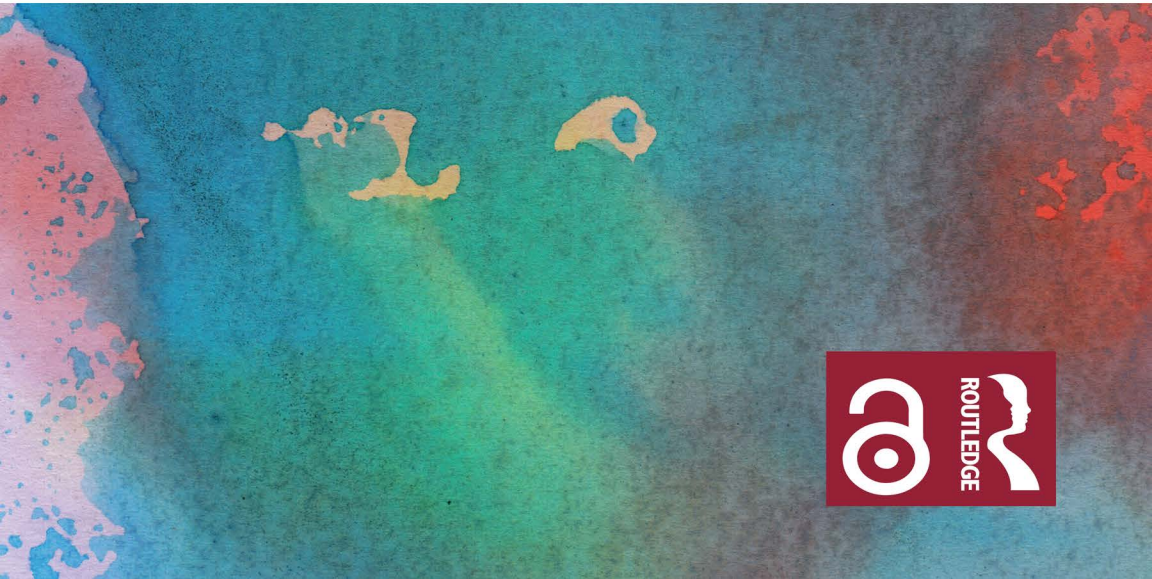


Routledge Studies in Ethics and Moral Theory

THE SELF, CIVIC VIRTUE, AND PUBLIC LIFE

INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Edited by
Nancy E. Snow



"This volume discusses the psychological basis of civic virtue, the educational practices that support (or undermine) virtue, as well as political issues from the philosophical perspective of virtue theory. It is a welcome contribution to the study of civic virtue that crosses disciplinary boundaries."
Victoria Costa, *William & Mary University*, *USA*

"A rigorous, timely investigation into the nature and role of civic virtues."
Maria Silvia Vaccarezza, *University of Genoa, Italy*

The Self, Civic Virtue, and Public Life

This volume showcases new and interesting ways in which the possession of civic virtues can contribute to people's abilities to engage in public life in meaningful ways.

What is the role of civic virtues in public life? How does possessing civic virtues affect persons and their capacities for participation in the public order? The chapters in this volume combine philosophical and empirically informed work to show how civic virtues can be informed by larger virtue ethical perspectives. The first two chapters discuss virtues of individuals that have not received significant empirical attention – authenticity and wisdom and psychological resilience. The next two chapters address education and the ways in which civic virtues can help us to better serve schoolchildren who are socially and economically disadvantaged, as well as to broaden students' horizons with respect to character and sustainability education. The final four chapters explore the roles for virtues within various political and public realms. They offer perspectives on how virtues affect contentious politics in democratic societies, and study virtues in contexts in which democracy has been stifled or torn apart by war. Together, the chapters highlight the ever-widening impact of the virtues on our lives and in society.

The Self, Civic Virtue, and Public Life will be of interest to scholars and graduate students working in ethics, political philosophy, psychology, and philosophy of education.

Nancy E. Snow joined the KU Philosophy Department as a tenured full professor in late August 2022. She is the author of *Virtue as Social Intelligence: An Empirically Grounded Theory* (Routledge, 2010), *Contemporary Virtue Ethics* (2020), and 70 papers on virtue and ethics more broadly. She is the co-author (with Jennifer Cole Wright and Michael T. Warren) of *Understanding Virtue: Theory and Measurement* (2021) and has edited or co-edited seven volumes. She is the series editor of "The Virtues," a 15-book series published by Oxford University Press. From 2014 to 2022, she has co-directed, been the PI on, or been heavily involved with interdisciplinary grants totaling a little under $10 million.

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The Self, Civic Virtue, and Public Life

Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Edited by Nancy E. Snow

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2024
by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

and by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

ISBN: 978-1-032-43548-0 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-43549-7 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-36785-7 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857

Typeset in Sabon
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

Contents

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Introduction

Nancy E. Snow

What is the role of civic virtues in public life? How does having civic virtues affect people and their capacities for participation in the public order? Political philosophy has a long and storied history in the western tradition, yet, with the exception of work in ancient philosophy, most work in this area has focused on rights and obligations, with relatively little being done on civic virtues from a virtue ethical perspective. This is true despite the fact that virtue ethics has been a focus of renewed interest for philosophers and other scholars since the mid-20th century: the attention of virtue ethicists has mainly focused on the moral and intellectual virtues. The aim of this volume is to correct that, showcasing new and interesting ways in which the possession of civic virtues can contribute to people's abilities to engage in public life in meaningful ways.

Eleven teams of interdisciplinary researchers participated in the "Self, Virtue, and Public Life Project" (SVPL), funded by the Templeton Religion Trust. Eight teams chose to contribute their work to this volume. This collection will mark an important step in moving research on the self, virtue, and public life forward.

In 1971, John Rawls published his masterpiece, *A Theory of Justice*. This is a modernized contractarian approach to distributive justice with definite roots in Kantian deontology. It had the effect of stimulating subsequent work in political philosophy in the direction of analyses of democratic institutions, the rational bases of cooperation and the norms of public life, and rational choice theoretic approaches to the problems of civic life. The political philosophy written in the wake of Rawls's work has been extensive, sophisticated, and complex, but it has not highlighted the virtues of individuals. Mark LeBar aptly makes this point in his introduction to his edited volume, *Justice* (2018), where he notes that volumes have been written about the justice of institutions, but the virtue of justice as possessed by individual citizens has been a relatively neglected topic. Even theorists of liberalism, such as Macedo (1990) and Dagger (1997), whose work promises to prominently feature civic or liberal virtues, discuss these

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-1

virtues only briefly in the context of broader liberal approaches to democratic government. Communitarian responses to Rawls's theory, such as those of Sandel and MacIntyre, are more hospitable to the virtues. Indeed, MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, often cited as a communitarian alternative to political liberalism, made a significant contribution to the development of virtue ethics. MacIntyre's book was published in 1984. Since then, some philosophers have paid attention to individual civic virtues or to civic virtue in general. For example, Calhoun (2000) argues that civility is a basic virtue of social life, extending well beyond the civic realm. Audi (1998) offers a liberal theory of civic virtue in which he discusses institutional dimensions of civic virtue (Audi 1998, 167–168). Costa (2004) discusses the ambivalence of liberal theory toward civic virtue and argues in Costa (2009) that Philip Pettit (1999)'s neo-republicanism, which is built on civility, cannot work without a politics of virtue. An issue of the journal *Social Theory and Practice* (volume 33, number 4, October 2007) features some work on civic virtue (see Galston 2007; Murphy 2007; Blum 2007; Mason 2007; Keller 2007). More recent work has been done from the perspectives of several disciplines on the challenges of multiculturalism for civic virtue (see Soutphommasane 2012; Jaffe 2013).

Yet a feature of philosophical work on civic virtue in general and on specific civic virtues is that it has not been inspired by larger virtue ethical perspectives. That is, unlike the philosophical work that has been done by philosophers in the past 20 or so years on moral and intellectual virtues, which has been inspired by the revival of virtue ethics and the beginning of virtue epistemology, work on civic virtue has, for the most part, stood outside of and apart from the major trends of research on virtue (Calhoun 2000 and Annas 1996 could be considered exceptions to this).[1]

In addition to the dearth of work on civic virtue coming from virtue ethical traditions, a central motivation that animated the SVPL project is the belief that it is important to bolster interest in interdisciplinary, empirically informed work on self, virtue, and public life. This research is important, not only out of academic interest but also because the world is in political turmoil. Many examples of this turmoil can be mentioned, but perhaps the most egregious is the present war against Ukraine started by Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. Evidence abounds of the courage of individual citizens of both nations, as well as by citizens of other nations who have protested in solidarity with Ukraine. The need for research on the importance of virtue for civic life could not be of greater practical significance.

The first two chapters of this volume discuss the virtues of individuals, the next two, education, and the remaining four, virtues in the public and political spheres. The organization of the volume as a whole thereby highlights the ever-widening impact of virtues on our lives and in society.

The virtues of individuals discussed in the first two chapters have not received significant empirical attention. Chapter 1 by Matt Stichter, Matthew Vess, Rebecca Schlegel, and Joshua Hicks explores subjective authenticity, that is, the feeling that one is being true to oneself, and how it can orient the agent toward virtuous behavior, including virtuous civic action. Drawing on a range of empirical studies, the authors propose that feelings of authenticity can be a feedback mechanism that can, but need not always, sustain virtuous behavior. Feelings of authenticity signal a connection between one's true self and virtuous (or moral) behavior, whereas feelings of inauthenticity alert one to a disconnect between one's true self and behavior. This framework, they argue, can help to illuminate the specific results of empirical studies that support the idea that authenticity can guide virtuous civic action.

Feelings of authenticity can be difficult to achieve and sustain when people live under stress. How do people deal with stress? Chapter 2 by Yena Kim, Jean Ngoc Boulware, Howard C. Nusbaum, and Anne Henly addresses roles for civic virtues and wisdom in psychological resilience, especially in the face of serious challenges such as COVID-19 and political polarization. Psychological resilience, the authors believe, is important for human flourishing, that is, for overcoming stress and "bouncing back." They examine moral and intellectual virtues as pathways to resilience, then take up civic virtues as pathways to resilience. The authors note that, though civic virtues have psychological health benefits by promoting a sense of purpose and belonging, excessively virtuous behavior, as manifested in service to others, can become draining. This is true in the case of volunteering. The authors' research suggests that civic virtues were related to greater psychological distress during the pandemic. Wisdom, they maintain, can moderate extreme levels of civic action, better navigate the uncertainties of crises, and respond in a measured way to personal and societal challenges.

The next two chapters investigate the development of civic virtues in the context of education. Chapter 3 by David Lundie, Cathal O'Siochru, Lee Shannon, and Antonio Zuffianò examines tensions surrounding the commitment to the aforementioned "fundamental British values" and the actual practices of two schools with adolescent students in the northwest of England. After a theoretical discussion and an examination of methodological concerns, the authors share their findings. Of special note is the absence of a "culture of control" in a school in an affluent suburban area, which contrasts with a controlling culture in a school in a largely deprived white working-class area. Control was construed as a form of care and remedial for deficiencies, but the effect was the curtailment of the students' personal liberty. Students' own testimonies revealed that fundamental British values were not cultivated in all students, leading the authors to write

of a "behind group" and a "beyond group," with different practical experiences of personal liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance. Though there are many reasons for lamenting this state of affairs, one salient one stems from the correlation of personal liberty with self-efficacy, and the realization that self-efficacy is needed for adolescents to live according to personal values, especially when these challenge social norms. Students not only need to understand personal liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance as lived experiences rather than as abstractions but also need to be able to live out their interpretations of those values in the school environment – a proving ground for living those values later in life.

Chapter 4 by Ragný Þóra Guðjohnsen, Karen Elizabeth Jordan, Ólafur Páll Jónsson, Sigrún Aðalbjarnardóttir, and Unnur Edda Garðarsdóttir offers the results of a study that investigated students' civic and global concerns and how educational and social opportunities influenced the students' civic actions and sustainability behaviors, as well as how principals approach these matters. After a brief overview of citizenship, character, and sustainability education, the authors argue for a holistic, integrated approach, maintaining that this conceptual integration can afford new insights into individual and societal well-being, and that, on the practical level, this integration can offer new opportunities in educational and social settings. The authors present a range of findings from students on various types of citizenship – good citizenship, social movement-related citizenship, and conventional citizenship, as well as on a pro-environmental behavior construct. They stress that parents' roles in promoting good citizenship and eco-friendly behavior are crucial for developing good character and positive civic and environmental orientations in students. As a concluding remark, they mention Amartya Sen's work on justice, which suggests that there are clear injustices that we can correct. According to this approach, local policies and practices must be informed by global outlooks. People of good character can no longer look only to what is just for them or their communities, or even their nation. They must also consider the fate of people around the world and of the planet itself. Thus, character, citizenship, and sustainability education must combine in order to prepare students for the challenges that now, and will continue to, beset our world.

The last four chapters in the volume – Chapter 5–8 – explore civic virtues in the public and political spheres. Chapter 5 by Aurélia Bardon, Matteo Bonotti, and Steven T. Zech uses the lens of civility to examine reactions to controversial public monuments, such as the movements against statues honoring Cecil Rhodes in South Africa and Charles Colston in the United Kingdom – the statue of Rhodes being considered a tribute to British imperialism and that of Colston, a tribute a slave trader. Both figures promoted and profited from structural racism. After introducing several different kinds of civility, the authors argue that civility as public-mindedness must

sometimes be achieved through the use of impolite means – as when the statue honoring Colston was toppled through an act of civil disobedience. The authors then examine more complex cases of the application of types of civility to public monuments, arguing, for example, that different types of civility can explain the present discomfort felt by the French at the statue of Joan of Arc in Paris, historically associated with right-wing monarchism. The appropriation of the statue by the far-right attempts to use surface-level civility to garner respectability, but at a deeper level, the appropriation violates norms of moral civility. This, as well as other interesting cases, illustrates how different types of civility (and incivility) allow us to understand the impact of changing narratives with respect to public monuments in different parts of the world, including the United States, South Africa, and Australia.

Chapter 6 by Stacey E. McElroy-Hetzel, Heather D. Battaly, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook examines the important but understudied topic of intellectual servility, specifically as it impacts political polarization. Their work has robust conceptual and empirical dimensions. The authors take a central feature of intellectual humility to be being appropriately attentive to and owning own's intellectual limitations, and review initial empirical findings of the interpersonal and intrapersonal benefits of intellectual humility in political contexts. Identifying the vices associated with intellectual humility as intellectual arrogance and intellectual servility, they make the important point that those with privileged social identities could experience pressure that would produce intellectual arrogance, whereas those with marginalized social identity could be susceptible to pressure resulting in intellectual servility. They contrast intellectual humility with intellectual servility, where the latter is understood as attributing intellectual weaknesses to oneself (even when one doesn't have them), feeling overwhelmed by them, avoiding attributing intellectual strengths to oneself, lacking confidence in self-attributed strengths, and in general, judging oneself as intellectually inferior to others. Using the constructs of intellectual humility and intellectual servility as described, the authors summarize the findings of a battery of empirical studies of intellectual humility and intellectual servility in political engagement. They highlight the negative implications of intellectual servility for flourishing, as well as the implications of their studies for measurement and interventions. An important point is that systemic injustices require structural changes and not merely personal interventions to protect marginalized populations from the harms of intellectual servility and create conditions within which genuine virtue can be cultivated.

Chapter 7 by Gregory R. Peterson, Güneş Sevinç, and Michael Spezio introduces a conception of democratizing autonomy – the requirement that citizens be autonomous so they can develop, sustain, and improve just liberal-democratic institutions. The authors first explore the meaning of

corrigible virtuous autonomy. This is a good which enables one to make reason-responsive decisions about oneself while remaining open to the possibility that one might be wrong and having the goal of correcting errors. The authors note that most work on virtuous autonomy in political contexts incorporates a one-way direction of fit, in which just institutions should protect and promote the autonomy of citizens. They believe that the character of citizens is necessary but not sufficient to sustain just institutions, and argue for a model of democratized autonomy with a two-way direction of fit, in which just institutions protect and promote democratized autonomy and democratized autonomy fosters just institutions. Feedback loops keep these interactions ongoing. The authors describe this in some detail and then turn their attention to important roles for democratizing autonomy within authoritarian, totalitarian, and imperfectly democratic regimes. In those contexts, the imposition of political heteronomy, which need not be overt, can significantly hinder the formation of democratizing autonomy. The authors conclude by discussing how democratizing autonomy can be a costly virtue by having the potential to cost people their wealth, income, security, bodily integrity, or even life, but that knowingly undertaking these risks expresses a commitment to just institutions.

The volume concludes with Chapter 8 by Jonathan M. Tirrell et al. An international team of scholars from the United States and Rwanda examined connections between interpersonal forgiveness and social justice in post-genocide Rwanda. The team interviewed four exemplary individuals, that is, people who had survived the genocide, yet gone on to forgive the perpetrators and become leaders in healing their deeply wounded communities. Their findings include a description of a dynamic process of the formation of civic identity that contradicts accounts found in the positive youth-development literature. In that literature, civic identity is said to unfold through the development of self, then virtue, and is expressed in public life. In the exemplars' stories, the authors identified a different process: civic engagement or public life led to the development of the self and virtue. In addition, the authors discerned that testimony, understood as face-to-face engagement, was a key element in the interdependence of healing, forgiveness, and restorative justice. Community engagement, healing, forgiveness, and justice were mutually supportive components of a holistic moral experience. Again and again in the accounts of exemplars, the experience of testimony was regarded as transformative. The authors conclude with important reflections about the value of forgiveness for achieving justice in a traumatized society, and the importance of public acts of testimony that facilitate accountability as well as renewed community engagement. The lessons of Rwanda extend far beyond that war-torn country, offering hope for all who seek to ameliorate the polarizations evident in our world today.

To close the introduction to this volume, three points are worth noting. First, the work offered by each research team is part of an ongoing project and should be read as offering but one facet of more extensive engagements with civic virtues. Second, this collection of work is groundbreaking in the sense that it furnishes multidisciplinary perspectives on various civic virtues that are both conceptually and empirically informed. Finally, it highlights the extent to which research on civic virtues should take into account multiple cultural experiences and perspectives. We have much to learn, for example, about the development of civic virtue from educational practices in Iceland and the United Kingdom, about intellectual servility's roles in exacerbating political polarization and marginalization in the United States, about how feelings of authenticity can facilitate civic virtue and engagement, about how civic virtues, wisdom, and psychological resilience interrelate, about how conceptions of civility and incivility can help us understand reactions to public monuments in the United States, South Africa, France, and Australia, about the need for democratizing autonomy under oppressive regimes, and about the interdependence of testimony, forgiveness, and social justice in Rwanda. The work of understanding civic virtues in these complex and sophisticated ways is just beginning and promises to yield insights that will allow for greater peace and human flourishing in our day and age.

Note

1. As noted, work on civic virtue has been situated in the realm of political philosophy. My conjecture is that because the philosophy of political liberalism is ambivalent about virtue (see Costa 2004), civic virtue has not received the philosophical attention it deserves. That said, it must be admitted that political scientists writing more recently than Macedo (1990) and Dagger (1997) have creatively investigated specific virtues. Civic virtues have also been studied in educational contexts.

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1 Can Feelings of Authenticity Help to Guide Virtuous Behavior?

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1.1 Introduction

Authenticity is often defined as the extent to which people feel that they know and express their true selves. Research in the psychological sciences suggests that people view true selves as more morally good than bad and that this "virtuous" true self may be a central component of authenticity. In fact, there may be reasons to suspect that authenticity serves as a cue that one's behaviors are virtuous, and feelings of authenticity may help sustain virtuous actions. However, in previous research, operationalizations of virtue may not clearly capture virtue as virtue theorists might recognize it. The possibility that feelings of authenticity keep people oriented toward virtuous activities is compatible with theorizing, but the precise ways that it might do so has not received direct conceptual or empirical scrutiny. We propose an interdisciplinary hypothesis of how feelings of authenticity could function to serve as a feedback mechanism for virtuous behavior. Feelings of authenticity could play a role in sustaining motivation to engage in virtuous activity insofar as the experience of subjective authenticity encourages one to approach that activity or environment in the future. Furthermore, virtuous behavior incorporates a few key elements that are predictive of experiencing subjective authenticity. We review emerging research that offers initial support for the idea that authenticity may guide sustained and virtuous civic action and develop a theoretical framework that positions authenticity as integral to sustained virtuous behavior.

1.2 Authenticity and Virtuous Civic Engagement

Emerging perspectives in psychological science conceptually view authenticity as the subjective experience of knowing and being one's true self (Sedikides et al. 2017). The "true" self, here, reflects people's appraisal of who they are at their core, irrespective of how they might act or what characteristics they might present publicly (Schlegel & Hicks 2011). This

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-2

emphasis on a true self concept – rather than some sort of ontologically "real" essence – makes the empirical existence of a true self irrelevant for the experience of authenticity. People generally believe that they possess a true self (Schlegel et al. 2012), experience feelings of being their true self, or are in conflict with it in the case of feeling inauthentic and are motivated to seek out experiences of feeling authentic and to avoid feelings of being inauthentic (Lenton et al. 2013).

Interestingly enough, although people's conceptions of true selves are inherently subjective, these conceptions are systematically grounded in certain kinds of attributes, as some characteristics are seen as more fundamental than others. Strohminger and Nichols (2014) provided evidence that moral traits are seen as the most essential traits of the self. Furthermore, the true self is viewed not only in moral terms but also as fundamentally morally good (Strohminger et al. 2017). People are more likely to see moral characteristics as central to true selves (Christy et al. 2017; Maffly-Kipp et al. 2023a) and perceptions of one's own moral goodness produce greater subjective awareness of one's true self than perceptions of moral badness (Christy et al. 2016). Such findings support what has become known as the "good true self bias" (De Freitas et al. 2017) and indicate that moral qualities may be particularly important for the experience of authenticity. Indeed, the attribution of virtuous attributes to true selves exists in diverse cultural settings (De Freitas et al. 2018), among people who have generally negative views of others (i.e., misanthropes; De Freitas et al. 2018), and among people who show deficits in moral reasoning and action (e.g., people relatively high in psychopathy; Maffly-Kipp et al. 2023a).

Maffly-Kipp and colleagues (2023b) recently extended work on the connection between true self conceptions and virtue to examine how authenticity might relate to civic virtue and sustained civic action. This work drew from theoretical conceptions about the virtue of (democratic) civic hope (Snow 2018), defined as "a commitment to pursuing desired ends through democratic processes and a belief that such ends are attainable" (Maffly-Kipp et al. 2023b, p. 419). The authors hypothesized that spontaneous expressions of civic hope as a virtue should correspond to greater perceptions of being authentic. Two studies supported this hypothesis. Participants who spontaneously expressed civic hope in written narratives about politics reported that civic engagement activities (e.g., voting) were more authentic and experienced greater authenticity while performing them. These studies were the first to explicitly connect a civic virtue (hope) to authenticity and, perhaps most critically, utilized a novel methodological approach to do so. Civic hope in these studies was operationalized through a narrative coding methodology that was developed through interdisciplinary discussions between social psychologists and philosophers. Participants wrote narratives in a context that did not explicitly inquire about civic hope or

virtue. Coders identified expressions of civic hope according to an objective scheme (see Maffly-Kipp et al. 2023b) that was developed to capture virtue expression in a way that a virtue ethicist would recognize. This methodological approach circumvented some of the pitfalls of other work on authenticity and morality by substantially mitigating the social desirability demand to appear virtuous and by allowing for the spontaneous expression of civic hope. Thus, these studies not only connect civic hope to feelings of authenticity but also provide a more robust demonstration of the empirical connection between virtue expression and authenticity.

Of course, to say that authenticity may be integral to sustained motivation and engagement, there must be evidence that authenticity prospectively predicts continued engagement. Gause and colleagues (2023) have done that in a 12-week longitudinal study. These authors built on documented connections between authenticity and motivational constructs like intrinsic motivation (Goldman & Kernis 2002), interest (Dormanen et al. 2020), work engagement (Sutton 2020), and inspiration (Lenton et al. 2013) to hypothesize that authenticity would *prospectively* predict civic engagement through enhanced motivation. Each week, they asked participants to indicate how frequently they engaged in a variety of civic engagement activities (e.g., participating in boycotts, reading about politics), how motivated they were to engage in them over the following week, and how authentic they felt while performing them. Linear mixed model analyses revealed that current week authenticity predicted a greater motivation to engage in civic activities over the next week, which, in turn, predicted more engagement with those activities in the subsequent week. These findings indicate that experiencing authenticity when performing civic activities (e.g., participating in boycotts) *prospectively* predicts the likelihood of performing those activities in the future. These findings illustrate the potential importance of authenticity for promoting sustained engagement in the civic sphere.

But why? The answer to that question, while central to our understanding of how authenticity operates psychologically, is relatively less clear. Part of the ambiguity derives from a lack of theorizing about what authenticity is and how it might operate in a motivational and self-regulatory framework. That is, the progression of authenticity research has largely flowed from construct development and validation (e.g., Goldman & Kernis 2002; Wood et al. 2008), to the identification of close correlates (e.g., see Hicks et al. 2019), to the nature of the experience (Lenton et al. 2013) and its potential importance (e.g., Rivera et al. 2019). Yet, while a conception of authenticity as a subjective feeling (Sedikides et al. 2017) has emerged, explicit theorizing about the function or utility of those feelings has not followed. It is clear from the empirical work that authenticity has some motivational properties that might help sustain virtuous activity. In what follows, we attempt to develop an initial framework for understanding why and how those properties emerge.

1.3 How Might Feelings of Authenticity Contribute to Sustained Motivation?

1.3.1 Role of Feelings of State Authenticity

The feeling of authenticity relates to whether one is in touch with their "true self", and "subjective authenticity" specifically refers to people's perceptions of whether they are expressing who they truly are, and regardless of the accuracy of this perception (Vess 2019). Kim et al. (2019) discuss what factors lead to the experience of subjective authenticity in terms of two competing models, trait and state, and the evidence that favors the latter. They note:

> Recently, Fleeson and Wilt (2010) articulated two competing hypotheses related to the origins of subjective authenticity. The trait-consistency hypothesis suggests that people feel most authentic when they act in accordance with their dispositional traits. . . . By comparison, the state-content significance hypothesis suggests one's current behavior facilitates feelings of authenticity rather than the congruence between one's behavior and dispositional traits. Fleeson and Wilt found strong support for the state-content significance hypothesis across three studies.
>
> (pp. 165–166)

Insofar as recent research finds support for state authenticity, and less so for trait authenticity, the approach taken here will be concerned with subjective authenticity on the state-content model.

According to this view of state authenticity, Kim et al. (2019) suggest that "certain behaviors feel more natural and less constrained by external influences. When individuals engage in these actions, their subsequent psychological mindsets contribute to the expression of core values and thus enhance subjective authenticity" (p. 166). Much of the research in this area suggests that a lack of conflict (within oneself, or between oneself and others) facilitates this feeling of subjective authenticity. The lack of inner conflict may contribute to the feeling of one's behavior being "natural" and being at ease in one's social conditions may contribute to feeling that one is able to be "true to oneself."

Schmader and Sedikides (2018) offer a model of this connection as "*S*tate *A*uthenticity as *F*it between one's identity and the *E*nvironment (SAFE)". They argue:

> [S]tate authenticity has a proximal effect on an immediate decision to approach or avoid the situation, either in the present or the future. More distal effects on performance, well-being, and relationships are

> likely to be dependent on the decision to select or avoid a situation and will often involve a complex set of trade-offs.
>
> (2018, p. 243)

So, for example, if one feels a fit between one's moral values and a particular situation or environment, this could lead to feelings of authenticity, which in turn would provide greater motivation to approach that situation or environment again in the future.

1.3.2 Role of Affect in General

The conception of authenticity as a feeling state (Sedikides et al. 2017) is critical insofar as it invites consideration of how those feelings might operate in ways akin to other feelings (e.g., affect). In self-regulation, for example, affect and emotion play at least two key roles. First, there's a motivational role affect can play in helping us to act consistently with our goals and standards. As Bandura (1999) explains: "self-regulatory control is achieved by creating incentives for one's own actions and by anticipative affective reactions to one's own behavior depending on how it measures up to personal standards" (p. 176). In general, when we achieve goals or uphold moral standards, this feels good. But if an act we are considering taking (or have already taken) would violate our moral standards, this can trigger feelings of self-sanction, such as guilt or shame, which either help to deter the action ahead of time, or if felt afterwards will hopefully prompt a different course of action in the future.

Second, it's important to highlight those affective reactions are a form of feedback about whether you are maintaining your standards (or making progress toward your goal). With respect to this second role, Carver and Scheier (1990) claim:

> [E]motions intrinsically are related to goal values, and that they reflect differences between expected and experienced rates of movement toward (or away from) those goals. They represent an organismic monitoring of "how things are going" with respect to those values.
>
> (p. 33)

In this sense, negative affect plays a crucial feedback role in alerting us that something has gone awry and signaling that we might need to take action in response. By contrast, positive affect is signaling that we're doing better than we might have expected (or predicted) with regards to making progress toward a goal or in satisfying enduring goals (or needs). This could provide a reason for placing a greater value or higher priority on that goal, as well as enhancing motivation for greater engagement in the activity or environment in which this positive affect was experienced.

We consider the experience of authenticity to be similarly affect laden. Feelings of authenticity (or inauthenticity) provide positive (or negative) feedback about the activity one is engaged in. So, a feeling of authenticity would be a signal that the activity that one is engaged in is meaningful or expressive of moral values, whereas a feeling of inauthenticity would signal a disconnect or even potentially a conflict between one's actions and moral values. Feeling authentic would provide a reason to value that activity and motivation to continue engaging in it, whereas feeling inauthentic could motivate changing one's behavior or disengaging from that goal. In this way, we view feelings of authenticity as a feedback mechanism that gives people information about whether their actions are likely to result in fulfillment. Such a possibility is consistent with a "true self as guide" lay theory (Rivera et al. 2019) that explicitly connects authenticity to the "good life". Authenticity should therefore direct motivation and action toward activities that are fulfilling and rewarding, ultimately functioning as a signal to continue engaging in that action. This could help to explain the results Gause et al. (2023) found with experiences of authenticity while performing civic activities prospectively predicting the likelihood of performing those activities in the future.

1.4 Why Think That Virtue Expression Might Facilitate Feelings of Subjective Authenticity?

1.4.1 Authenticity and Morality

Insofar as feelings of subjective authenticity can contribute to sustained motivation, we next provide reasons to think that the expression of virtue is likely to facilitate such feelings. There are at least two elements to virtue that have also been found to precede experiences of subject authenticity – acting morally and having a promotion focus. Given that feeling authentic is seen as being true to oneself, and the true self is viewed as essentially morally good, it's plausible that actions that are viewed as morally good would be seen as being true to oneself, and so could give rise to feelings of authenticity.

In addition to the true self being viewed as morally good, connections have also been demonstrated more directly between perceptions of morality and feelings of authenticity. For example, Christy et al. (2016) examined the "morality of *behavior* as a predictor of *perceptions* of a component of authenticity (i.e., subjective self-knowledge)" (p. 2), and they found that "people feel more or less in touch with their true self depending on how morally/immorally they believed they behaved" (p. 9). So, when people believed they have acted morally, this contributed to them experiencing subjective authenticity. Interestingly, this effect

emerged even after controlling for self-esteem, indicating that the link between perceptions of morality and authenticity may not be due to egoistic positive self-feelings. Overall, these findings are consistent with Newman et al.'s (2014) characterization of the belief in the morally good true self as the thought that "deep inside every individual, there is a 'true self' motivating him or her to behave in ways that are virtuous" (211). Thus, when someone acts morally, they can feel they are in touch with their true self, whereas immoral acts would be seen as a departure from one's true self.

Another potential connection between authenticity and morality may be found in how they are both considered to be central components of living a good life. In virtue theory, acquiring and exercising the virtues is considered to be partially constitutive of what it is to live well as a human being. We might expect there to be a connection between authenticity and living well, at least when acting morally gives rise to experiences of subjective authenticity, and there's some evidence for a perceived link between being authentic and living a good life. This link is highlighted by the "true-self-as-guide" (TSAG) lay theory (Rivera et al. 2019):

> A TSAG lay theory reflects conventional wisdom that people should "look inside" themselves for guidance (e.g., "follow who you are") and that finding congruence between a choice and the true self will result in personal meaning and satisfaction . . . whereby people *believe* that it is important to live their lives according to their true selves and that *perceptions* of living up to this ideal are consequential for well-being. (p. 117)

It's an advantage that this TSAG lay theory is a nonveridical account of why subjective authenticity matters, as it does not require there to be an actual "true self" or for there to be actual (veridical) congruence between one's decisions and one's values (though there might be). What matters is that people are using feelings of subjective authenticity "as a cue to evaluate whether they are living up to a shared cultural value of what it means to live a good life" (Rivera et al. 2019, p. 114). So, being true to oneself is viewed as an effective guide to decision-making that helps one to live a good life, and feelings of subjective authenticity are an indicator that one is being true to oneself. This would imply that people are motivated to seek out and engage in activities that feel authentic because of the lay belief that this will be more meaningful and fulfilling.

Given the conventional wisdom expressed in the TSAG lay theory, we might expect that people are looking for opportunities to engage in authentic activities in order to help them live well. But how would someone look inside themselves for guidance? In other words, what could be taken

as a signal of congruence between one's choices and one's true self? We believe the subjective feeling of authenticity serves as a cue to this type of congruency, and people use this feeling to help guide future decisions. That is, subjective feelings of authenticity help individuals judge the associated activity as a potential path to fulfillment and well-being, promoting sustained motivation to engage in that activity.

1.4.2 Authenticity and Promotion-Focused Goals

Insofar as people are motivated to seek out activities that feel authentic and express virtue, a distinction in self-regulatory theory is likely relevant for understanding what gives rise to feelings of authenticity. This distinction concerns whether someone's focus is on promoting a desired outcome versus preventing an undesired outcome. Higgins (1997) explains:

> Because a promotion focus involves a sensitivity to positive outcomes (their presence and absence), an inclination to approach matches to desired end-states is the natural strategy for promotion self-regulation. In contrast, because a prevention focus involves a sensitivity to negative outcomes (their absence and presence), an inclination to avoid mismatches to desired end-states is the natural strategy for prevention self-regulation.
>
> (p. 1282)

So, a prevention-focused goal implies maintaining one's existing state and trying to avoid losses relative to that state. A promotion-focused goal, by contrast, implies trying to improve upon one's existing state, such that one focuses more on gains and progress.

Kim et al. (2019) provided evidence that those with a promotion focus experience more feelings of subjective authenticity than did those with a prevention focus. They explain that "[s]ince promotion focus is linked to people's beliefs about their ideal self and nurturance (Higgins 1998), it should naturally direct people to the pursuit of their potentialities (e.g., aptitudes and talents) and ultimately authenticity" (p. 174). Insofar as a promotion focus is linked to reaching our ideals, this would lend itself more directly to feeling like one is expressing one's true self, than would a prevention focus which is linked to obligations one is trying to avoid violating. For example, Valle et al. (2019) studied the effects of this regulatory focus difference in terms of employment goals (e.g., maintain the status quo or seek advancement) and the willingness to engage in unethical behavior on the job, and found that those with a prevention focus engaged more frequently in moral disengagement and unethical behavior.

1.4.3 Virtue as a Moral Goal With a Promotion Focus

The promotion–prevention distinction in the structure of a goal should be expected to make a significant difference in the types of moral behavior one is motivated to display, and to what extent one is motivated to improve. For example, a promotion-focused goal of being kind involves striving to become a kinder person, whereas a prevention-focused goal might be limited to just avoiding any action that would count as cruel (to preserve a view of oneself as kind). So, this distinction in focus can motivate very different types of behavior despite the goals both being expressed in terms of kindness. Given that virtues are conceptualized as acquired excellences which take experience and practice to develop, virtuous goals would need to be formulated with a promotion focus, to motivate improving upon one's current degree of virtue (Krettenauer & Stichter 2023).

This regulatory distinction also has implications for dealing with moral failure. Moral failures can be viewed as opportunities for learning and improvement (Stichter 2020). For people who possess a higher promotion focus, failures would not be as distressing as compared to failures with a prevention focus. By contrast, for those with a prevention-focused moral goal, the goal is to preserve a positive view of one's morality. This would provide strong motivation for avoidance behavior, in terms of it being most important to avoid being viewed as having acted immorally, so as not to be judged negatively and possibly drawing condemnation from others. This may also motivate behaving in ways that are uncritical and conformist, to lessen the chances of doing something which others might see as being morally wrong. Since virtues represent ideals to aspire to embodying, rather than mere obligations to avoid breaking, they again should be conceptualized as having a promotion focus (Stichter 2021). For these reasons, we should expect that acting on virtuous goals is likely to give rise to feelings of authenticity, since doing so incorporates at least two important types of content that have been found to precede experiences of state authenticity – acting morally and having a promotion focus.

1.5 Conclusion

We have proposed a general hypothesis of how feelings of authenticity might function to serve as a feedback mechanism for virtuous behavior, and this framework can help to illuminate the specific results of empirical studies that support the idea that authenticity can guide sustained and virtuous civic action. We conclude with a few thoughts about potential limitations and directions for future research related to civic engagement. First, in

arguing that authenticity has some motivational properties that can help sustain virtuous activity, given the subjective nature of authenticity and true self conceptions, we don't claim that experiences of subjective authenticity will necessarily track objectively virtuous behavior. People's perceptions of the morality of their actions can be subject to bias, especially with various forms of moral disengagement mechanisms that enable one to reconstrue an immoral act as morally neutral or even morally praiseworthy (Bandura 2016). It might be interesting to explore whether feelings of inauthenticity – rather than other mechanisms such as self-esteem protection – might trigger moral disengagement and other kinds of defensive responses to moral shortcomings.

Second, also regarding the subjective nature of authenticity, there's no guarantee that one will feel authentic about engaging in civic action (though if one does then we have presented reasons to expect it will help to sustain that activity). It's possible that one's view of oneself and what a good life consists in would steer one away from civic engagement. Though if Aristotle was right about humans being social and political animals, and that the polis can help to encourage virtue development in citizens (notwithstanding his discriminatory views about who ought to count as a citizen), it might be expected that being true to oneself would lead people toward civic engagement – at least if such activities were conducive to supporting virtue development and expression.

Furthermore, in a time where there is much uncivil behavior in politics, people might face a dilemma between remaining engaged in political activity and discourse that promotes uncivil behavior or withdrawing from civic engagement altogether. We hope that being uncivil feels inauthentic to people, rather than authentic. But in that case, studies suggest that when people have to express characteristics that feel inauthentic to them, this can then lead to less motivation to remain engaged in that activity or setting. For example, in one study on women applying for positions in an STEM field, which often encourages stereotypically masculine characteristics, women who were primed in the study to express more masculine characteristics reported lower levels of authenticity, and as a consequence less interest in pursuing that position (Dormanen et al. 2020). It could also be the case that the abandonment of civic engagements results from cultural shifts in how those activities are perceived to allow for virtuous outcomes (e.g., believing that civic action is always corrupted by elites), which would consequently frame them as lacking virtue and authenticity. To return to a model of state authenticity as a fit between one's values and one's environment, it's important that the political environment is such that people can feel like engaging in political action and discourse can be done in a way that fits (rather than conflicts) with their moral values and encourages virtuous behaviors toward fellow citizens.

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2 Civic Virtues, Wisdom, and Psychological Resilience

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From personal misfortunes, such as illness or loss, to societal woes, such as political polarization and natural disasters, people experience and must respond to a variety of challenges in their lives. While struggling with such challenges can impair individuals' psychological functioning and well-being, we sometimes see people respond virtuously to such external threats, showing compassion toward others, exercising gratitude, and remaining open-minded to those with dissenting opinions. How can people grapple with such challenges so that they can still thrive in their environments? What are the differences among people in the means they use to succeed in meeting these challenges? In this chapter, we highlight the heterogeneity in how much psychological distress people experience during challenging conditions, and we use survey data from the peak of the recent COVID-19 pandemic to better understand the important role virtues may play in such heterogeneity. To begin, we discuss the psychological aspects of virtues that may be thought of as bolstering psychological resilience, which is generally defined as the self-reported ability to withstand threats and setbacks and bounce back from adversity at the individual level (Luthar and Cicchetti 2000). There is substantial variation in psychological resilience across individuals and, presumably, in the virtues that give rise to this resilience. While some people can incur tremendous mental health costs from life's challenges (e.g., Cunningham 2020; Holingue et al. 2020; Killgore et al. 2020), many also effectively adapt to potentially stressful life events and show high levels of resilience (Bonanno and Mancini 2012; e.g., Cusinato et al. 2020; Mancini 2020). Such heterogeneity in response to life's adversities raises the question of which virtues help cultivate resilience – or incur vulnerability if missing.

We first review relationships between virtues and resilience at the individual level more broadly, with an initial focus on *moral* and *intellectual virtues*. We take virtues to represent dimensions of psychological motivation or goals that can be linked to specific capacities or processes that affect how much stress people experience in their day-to-day lives. Then,

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-3

we discuss whether *civic virtues* also play a role in the individual variation in psychological resilience. We argue that, in some circumstances, civic virtues may paradoxically lead to *greater* psychological distress. Finally, we discuss how having wisdom can potentially mitigate the costs of overcommitting to civic values. We view wisdom as a wise reasoning process, in line with the framework outlined by Grossmann et al. (2020) which reflects commonalities among diverse theories of practical wisdom. As such, our approach is consistent with a variety of psychological perspectives, including Baltes and Smith (2008), Thomas et al. (2017), Tiberius (2008), and Schwartz and Sharpe (2006), in that wisdom involves the exercise of psychological capacities of epistemic humility, reflection, perspective-taking, and compassion for others, and is morally grounded. This aspect of concern for others and grounding in moral virtues, especially when values come into conflict with one another, is a general framework for understanding wisdom in much of psychological research (Grossmann et al. 2020). Indeed, it is this social aspect of wise reasoning that in many respects distinguishes it from analytic thought (Stanovich and Stanovich 2010) more generally. Considering a balance between self and others as well as between near-term and long-term consequences in resolving dilemmas (Sternberg 1998) are important elements of wise reasoning. Given that the exercise of wisdom leads to human flourishing, it is plausible that one must have some resilience to flourish. Of course, it is not necessary that wisdom leads to resilience; ultimately, that is an empirical question.

2.1 Moral and Intellectual Virtues as Pathways to Resilience

A virtue may be thought of generally as comprising a distinct set of cognitive patterns, emotions, motivational attitudes, and behavioral outputs that gives us aptitude or motivation to form good habits (Alzola 2015; Curzer 2014; Kristjánsson 2015). In the Aristotelian tradition, virtue ethicists have long focused on moral and intellectual virtues. Moral virtues refer to character traits that embody good will or moral concern for others, including kindness, compassion, and justice (Arpaly 2011). People with these virtues may be praised and, similarly, those lacking such qualities may be blamed (Carr 2015). Beyond this societal approbation, however, might such virtues contribute to psychological resilience?

There is broad consensus about the individual benefits of practicing moral virtues during stressful life events. For example, several studies have documented how cultivating compassion can be helpful during times of stress. Compassion for the self can be related to reduced feelings of anxiety and isolation because there is less critical self-judgment (Neff 2003). Individuals who are self-compassionate show greater psychological health than those with low levels of self-compassion, and they have better chances of recovering

from traumatic life experiences (Hiraoka et al. 2015; Zessin et al. 2015). People can express their compassion for others by engaging in acts of kindness as well (Zaki 2019; Peterson and Seligman 2004). As a moral virtue, kindness is captured in activities such as providing care for vulnerable others as well as donating one's time, money, and efforts to critical causes. Research has repeatedly shown that individuals who help others tend to experience greater health, happiness, and feel less stressed and depressed (Aknin et al. 2020; Crocker et al. 2017; Dunn et al. 2008; Slavich et al. 2022). In recent years, virtue ethicists and psychologists have begun examining gratitude as another key moral virtue that builds resilience (Carr 2015; Emmons and Crumpler 2000; Tudge et al. 2015). During stressful life events, exercising gratitude is associated with less negative affect, thriving, enhanced subjective well-being, and work satisfaction (Kumar et al. 2022).

Snow (2023) has argued that hope as a virtue can play a role in psychological resilience by sustaining the belief that a goal is attainable; this motivation may go beyond simple positive affect and increase cognitive resolve. Such resolve, if trait-like, could underpin the persistence that characterizes grit (Eskreis-Winkler et al. 2016) and perseverance as intellectual virtues (King 2014), supporting the ability to work toward a goal in the face of challenges and setback.

In addition to moral virtues, intellectual virtues may also promote psychological functioning and well-being and cultivate positivity during a wide range of life's challenges. Intellectual virtues, such as intellectual humility and intellectual courage, enable people to apply right reason to action (Roberts et al. 2007; Zagzebski 1996). Intellectual virtues prioritize personal dispositions that promote knowledge, understanding, and subserve learning. In a society where other people's beliefs and opinions may differ from one's own, intellectual virtues can help contribute to human flourishing. Having an open mind allows people to take conflicting views seriously, and being open to such criticism can promote resilient judgment and decision-making even for personal dilemmas we face (Tiberius 2012). For example, when people have to make difficult personal decisions, such as deciding to move away from family or selecting a risky medical procedure, fully considering others' views can enhance our confidence that we have sufficiently tested our own reasoning and give us confidence it is well justified. Intellectual virtues, then, prompt individuals to appreciate alternative possibilities and to continually build and evolve one's own value commitments when need be.

Moreover, open-mindedness is critical in navigating social conflicts. In recent years, news headlines have frequently highlighted the rise of political polarization in global democracies (*Political Polarization in the American Public* 2014). When people encounter those with divergent ideas and beliefs, they may feel threatened, struggle to recognize the limits of their

own knowledge, and become less open to other perspectives (Leary et al. 2017; Porter et al. 2022). However, being aware of one's epistemic limits is crucial for bridging the gap between intellectual and political divides. Past studies have demonstrated that individuals with high levels of intellectual humility are more likely to show tolerance toward their ideological opponents (Stanley et al. 2020) and those who hold different religious beliefs (Hook et al. 2017), which may be important for cultivating resilience during disagreements. In a similar vein, when confronted with misinformation and "fake news," people high in intellectual humility are more likely to engage in investigative behaviors such as fact-checking and seeking outside opinions (Koetke et al. 2021). Thus, exercising intellectual virtues can help avoid falling victim to growing polarization and misinformation, thereby promoting greater resilience during times of strife.

While moral and intellectual virtues help support psychological well-being in a myriad of ways, our capacity to exercise these virtues may vary across situations. In particular, close social interaction appears to enhance our ability to show compassion (e.g., deciding to help a suffering stray dog in front of you vs. a child living in a faraway country) or to engage in civil dialogue (e.g., talking to someone online vs. face to face). With this in mind, it is unclear how people can exercise these virtues during periods of great uncertainty, human loss, and – most critically – social isolation, as well as when adversity strikes at the very structure of society. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts to curb the spread of the virus, including national and regional restrictions on social interactions in nearly all areas of life (e.g., closing national borders, banning overseas travel, working from home, requiring citizens to self-quarantine in "lockdowns"), may have made it more difficult for individuals to stay virtuous (Verma et al. 2020). With the added concerns of an economic crisis (closed businesses, retreated financial markets, and skyrocketing unemployment rates; Pak et al. 2020), individuals may also struggle to bounce back from adversity if they rely on moral and intellectual virtues.

2.2 Civic Virtues as Another Pathway to Resilience

Beyond moral and intellectual virtues, we can ask whether *civic* virtues play a role in psychological resilience. Despite ongoing social isolation due to the pandemic, some individuals may increasingly adopt civic-minded attitudes and behaviors as a way of meeting their need for human flourishing. Indeed, a democratic society cannot thrive and grow during adverse conditions if citizens narrowly focus on their own self-interests and neglect the needs of others and what is good for the larger community. Civic virtues are self-transcendent qualities that promote a citizen's productive involvement in society such that public good is cultivated.

How might civic virtues promote resilience? One way is to engage with the community. Civic engagement is broadly defined as how actively a citizen participates in the life of their community to improve conditions for others or to positively shape the future of their community (Adler and Goggin 2005). In practice, individuals who possess civic virtues may participate in political change, volunteer for the community, and have a keen sense of how their citizenship ties to the community's success (Audi 1998). By integrating one's identity with the betterment of one's community, people can not only outwardly express their values in meaningful ways (Amnå 2012) but also strengthen one's sense of self as a dynamic component of a larger system (Flanagan et al. 2012). Having strong civic virtues, in terms of positive attitudes and engagement in one's community, has been found to buffer the effects of financial hardship on psychological distress (Acevedo et al. 2014). Engaging in civic life may also be intrinsically rewarding and help cultivate a sense of meaning that stems from contributing to something beyond the self (Flanagan and Bundick 2011) as well as cultivating a sense of belonging, which can promote psychological well-being and cooperative behavior (Deci and Ryan 1985; Duke et al. 2009). Furthermore, individuals can craft a stronger sense of their social identities as they contribute to their communities (Johnson 2017). A growing literature has indicated that having a strong sense of one's identity is important for building resilience amid life's challenges (e.g., Drury et al. 2019).

Despite the documented mental health benefits of civic virtues, it is important to note that directing oneself to the service of others can paradoxically hinder resilience in certain situations. In general, civic virtues can help promote psychological well-being by providing a sense of purpose and belonging in individuals. However, the excessive pursuit of virtues can become detrimental to one's health and performance. For instance, having average levels of optimism can boost one's confidence and planning for the future, but at extremely high levels, people can also become overconfident and engage in riskier, dangerous behaviors (Grant and Schwartz 2011). Similarly, too much compassion for others can come at a cost: youth who spend time assisting their families (e.g., cooking, cleaning, and sibling care) are more likely to experience long-term elevations in levels of inflammation (a marker of disease vulnerability) than those who are not involved in family caregiving (Fuligni et al. 2009). In the civic domain, studies find that while moderate levels of volunteering are correlated with positive affect and greater life satisfaction, higher levels of volunteering are associated with mental health costs (Windsor et al. 2008).

Our recent findings from the early period of the COVID-19 pandemic suggest that exercising civic virtues is a double-edged sword when it comes to psychological resilience. During the initial phases of the pandemic, many people struggled with managing their psychological distress levels regarding the

pandemic. Thus, we were interested in understanding how civic engagement levels related to how distressed people felt about the global crisis. We surveyed 240 individuals from the United States during the months between May and October 2020 and asked them to report how distressed they felt about the outbreak in the week prior to taking the survey (e.g., the extent to which they felt jumpy and easily startled, whether reminders of the pandemic caused adverse physiological reactions). We also measured the extent to which people were engaged in their communities both in terms of their attitudes (e.g., beliefs in civic responsibility) and behaviors (e.g., past attempts to make a difference in the community) using the Civic Engagement Scale by Doolittle and Faul (2013). The civic attitudes subscale of this measure includes items that assess a feeling of responsibility for one's community, the desire to help the poor and hungry, a commitment to serve the community, and the responsibility to be informed about community issues. The civic behavior subscale assesses involvement in formal volunteer positions, working with others to make positive changes in the community and help others, participation in discussions about social responsibility, and contributions to charitable organizations. Although assessed during the pandemic, and thus during an attenuation of actual civic behavior, the wording of the civic behavior survey is about one's general behavior, and in the context of the pandemic, would reflect behavior prior to the pandemic as well as a commitment to pursue civic-minded behavior generally.

Similar to previous findings and theories (e.g., Grant and Schwartz 2011), we found that people were *more* likely to report symptoms of psychological distress about the pandemic if they held high levels of civic attitudes ($r = 0.13$, $p < 0.05$) and civic behaviors ($r = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$), as shown in Figure 2.1.

Thus, in times of societal upheaval and social isolation, civic virtues may not be conducive to psychological resilience. Indeed, people who dedicate their time to combating social injustice via civic engagement may do so at a cost to their mental health. For example, in McAdam's (1988) interviews during the Freedom Summer voter registration campaign in 1964, he found that White, northern college students who regularly encountered white supremacist violence were more likely to experience government-directed cynicism and social adjustment problems (e.g., loneliness, emotion dysregulation), compared to those who did not participate in intense political activism. Some studies suggest a positive relationship between civic engagement (e.g., volunteerism, political participation, collective action) and many indicators of psychosocial well-being (e.g., self-efficacy, optimism, satisfaction; Flanagan and Bundick 2011). However, we argue that civic virtues reflect a broad type of service to others that can place greater demands on time and, under certain circumstances, can induce psychological distress. In summary, we have highlighted some evidence to suggest that there are limits to virtues promoting resilience.

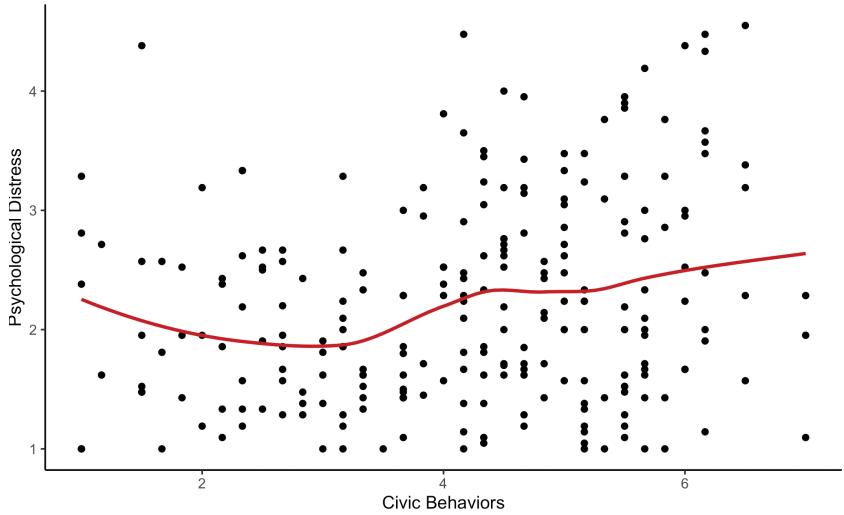

Figure 2.1 Civic Behaviors Are Related to Greater Psychological Distress Regarding the Pandemic.

Source: Figure by the authors.

2.3 Wisdom as a Psychological Capacity for Resilience

If civic virtues can work against psychological resilience under specific kinds of community threat or social isolation, are there psychological capacities that can bolster resilience? In addition to understanding the role of civic engagement in resilience, another goal of our research was to investigate how certain psychological capacities may buffer psychological distress about the pandemic. When confronted with adversity, what kinds of reasoning may help one to put the situation into perspective, to understand what one can do personally as well as what must be left to others, and to understand how to deal with ongoing uncertainty while nevertheless continuing to manage the pragmatics of life and social interaction?

Baltes and Smith (2008) describe wisdom as a kind of expertise in managing life's challenges that is grounded in rich social and world knowledge and an ability to tolerate uncertainty. There is consensus among wisdom researchers in psychology (Grossmann et al. 2020) that the exercise of wisdom requires a core suite of social-cognitive abilities: the ability to acknowledge differing perspectives on situations that involve great uncertainty, the ability to reframe a situation through reflection and analysis, and the ability to balance outcomes among incommensurate goals. These

psychological abilities depend heavily on both epistemic humility (i.e., the capacity to realize the limits of one's own knowledge, understanding, and ability) and compassion in order to not only appreciate the perspectives of others but also take their perspectives to heart (Porter and Schumann 2018; Tangney 2000). Such wisdom would presumably be an important capacity for reasoning wisely about conflicts and challenges in a way that could bolster psychological resilience.

Indeed, research on wisdom suggests that wise reasoning is associated with better psychosocial outcomes, such as life satisfaction, social relationship quality, and emotion regulation (Grossmann et al. 2013). This would indicate that wisdom could also play a role in psychological resilience. Thus, we predicted that people with a greater tendency to reason wisely in navigating ambiguous, challenging life events, would report feeling less distressed about the pandemic. On the other hand, we posited that having an aversion to ambiguity – a strong need for closure in life – should limit one's ability to fully adapt to devastating losses, resulting in heightened levels of psychological distress (e.g., Berenbaum et al. 2008). In the same survey, we conducted during the pandemic, we also measured people's general dispositions to engage in wise thinking and behavior. We used Ardelt's Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS, Thomas et al. 2015) which measures cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions of wisdom, such as the extent to which individuals carefully deliberate about problems before making decisions as well as the level of compassion they have for others in their daily lives. The scale includes items that assess information seeking and willingness to think about a problem, self-control, and compassion for others. It provides a composite measure of wisdom that has been shown to have validity in assessing wisdom in a wide range of different age and cultural groups (Thomas et al. 2017). As seen in Figure 2.2, our data are consistent with our predictions: individuals with greater levels of wisdom were less likely to feel distressed about the pandemic ($r = -0.51$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, those with high levels of self-reported resilience, as measured by the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al. 2008) which includes items such as seeing oneself as someone who can quickly bounce back after hard times, were also less likely to experience psychological distress ($r = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, wisdom appears to be a stronger buffer against psychological distress than self-reported individual resilience in that there was a statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients ($z = -3.76$, $p < .001$).

It is perhaps no surprise that self-rated general resilience was associated with lower levels of psychological distress during the current pandemic. If one views oneself as a generally resilient person, one should be less likely to report experiencing distress (e.g., Yasien et al. 2016). However, a

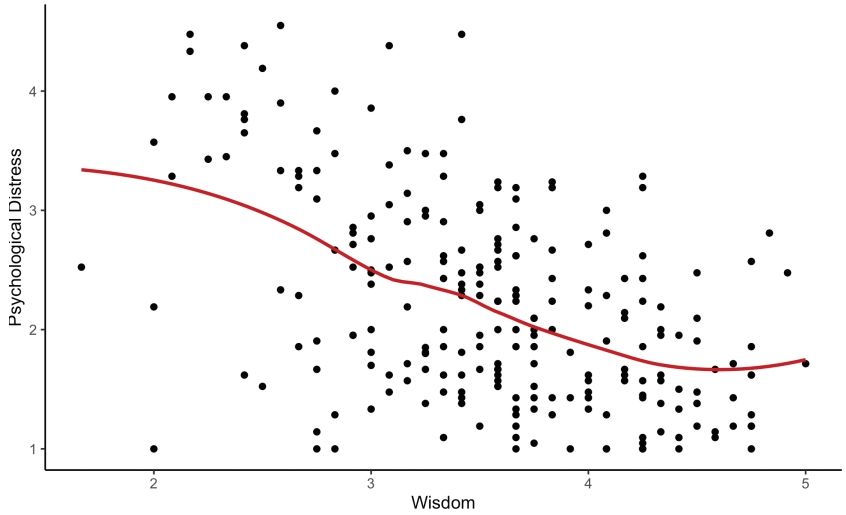

Figure 2.2 Wisdom Is Related to Less Psychological Distress Regarding the Pandemic.

Source: Figure by the authors.

limitation of current measures of resilience is that they only focus on the extent to which an individual positively adapts to or bounces back from adversity. Thus, the psychological *mechanisms* underlying individual resilience are largely left unexplained. That is to say, there is a gap between knowing how *well* people believe they bounce back and *why* they bounce back from adversity. Measures of wisdom, on the other hand, focus on a set of social-cognitive skills (e.g., perspective-taking, epistemic humility) that may ultimately serve as one noteworthy pathway for greater resilience during times of uncertainty.

Our results shed some light on the nature of the thought processes that may promote resilience. Specifically, we found that self-rated, individual general resilience was predictive of lowered distress during the pandemic, but this relationship was fully mediated by people's wisdom levels. In other words, although one's sense of resilience did predict distress, this relationship could be attributed to the underlying relationships between resilience and wisdom, and between wisdom and distress. As resilience increases, so does wisdom, and as wisdom increases, distress decreases. Statistically, when these two relationships are taken into consideration there is no longer an independent relationship between resilience and distress (see Figure 2.3 for a graphical depiction of these relationships). In other words, increased wisdom is related to decreased distress, and this can also explain

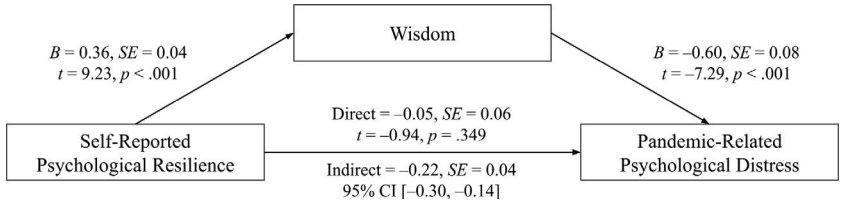

Figure 2.3 Standardized Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Self-Reported Psychological Resilience and Pandemic-Related Psychological Distress as Mediated by Wisdom.

Source: Figure by the authors.

the general measure of resilience. This suggests that one's general view of one's own resilience might depend on the degree of wisdom that characterizes reasoning for that person.

Wisdom during the pandemic may allow one, through epistemic humility, to think specifically about those aspects of life that are under one's own control as opposed to those that health authorities and governments must address. A wise person can tolerate the degree of uncertainty about the nature of the pandemic and its duration while focusing on maintaining the connections with others that can be managed (through technology such as computer and phone). Reflection upon the situation and what is needed for flourishing while taking the perspective of others can help frame the kinds of social support that might be needed and that one is able to provide.

While civic virtues alone may motivate prosocial behavior (albeit potentially to a costly degree), practical wisdom may prove to be a crucial ingredient to understanding what makes certain people more distressed than others. In measuring wisdom using the 3D-WS, we chose a measure that is related to other psychological measures of wisdom that assess the ability to compromise, to exercise intellectual humility, and to feel compassion for others (e.g., the SWIS, Brienza et al. 2018, also see Glück et al. 2013) and can thus be thought of as a proxy for wisdom generally. The psychological capacities of epistemic humility, reflection, perspective-taking, compassion, metacognition, and moral grounding are commonly accepted across many researchers' conceptualizations of wisdom (see Grossmann et al. 2020) and also generally related to increased overall well-being (Glück et al. 2022).

Wisdom focuses on how people can adapt to uncertain and changing environments and deploy the resources that are appropriate to a particular situation. Wise reasoning allows people to pay better attention to and manage the needs, values, and goals of others with their

own, instead of solely prioritizing self- or other-oriented behavior at all times. While those with extreme levels of civic mindedness may work themselves to the point of exhaustion or emotional burnout, individuals who proceed with wisdom may be better equipped to handle the uncertainties of crises and respond to life's challenges in a balanced manner.

2.4 Conclusion

During challenging circumstances of uncertainty and loss, individuals differ in resilience to adversity. While some people flourish, others unfortunately flounder, which raises important questions about the factors underlying resilience. To the degree that intellectual, moral, and civic virtues may be viewed as important to human flourishing, a diverse range of studies have suggested how these virtues bolster psychological resilience. Some of this research has suggested mental health benefits of exercising virtues such as civility and compassion. However, in accordance with the Aristotelian formulation of vices and virtues, we propose that having strong civic virtues may concomitantly increase distress levels in certain situations (e.g., Bloom 2017), especially when there is ongoing social and economic instability in society. Our survey data, which were collected during the peak of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, converge with prior research suggesting that stressful life events do not take the same toll on everyone's mental health and that individuals' perceptions of such events greatly predict psychological distress levels. In particular, those who demonstrate greater levels of wisdom may experience greater psychosocial well-being during global crises; whereas civic virtues, which may support resilience in some adverse conditions, may also increase distress in others.

Clearly, it is important to understand individual and temporal variation in the psychological effects of adversity as well as current theories of resilience and the context-specificity of the nature of adversity. By understanding different psychological experiences and capacities that lead to increased resilience, we may develop a clearer understanding of both those processes and the basis for human flourishing.

Acknowledgments

This research was supported in part by the *Self, Virtue, and Public Life Project* grant funded by the Templeton Religion Trust to the Institute for the Study of Human Flourishing at the University of Oklahoma. Additional support was provided by the Social Sciences Division of the University of Chicago.

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3 Personal Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance

From Values to Virtues

David Lundie, Cathal O'Siochru, Lee Shannon, and Antonio Zuffianò

3.1 Introduction: From Societal to Political Values

The character virtues of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance, though distinct, form an interconnected ecology. For tolerance to be anything distinct from prudence, forbearance, or even indifference, a virtue which enables and enhances life in a pluralistic society, and not merely a putting up with that which one finds objectionable, it must be linked to a motivation of mutual respect for the liberty of the other. If it is grounded in such mutual respect, however, the virtue of tolerance is necessarily context-dependent, based on respect for actual persons as opposed to some abstracted hypothetical otherness. If tolerance is a necessary virtue for life in a pluralistic society, any attempt to instantiate its practices will be dependent on the lived experiences of what Kymlicka (2003) terms 'intercultural competence'. The normative grounding of pluralism in the realities of each pluralistic society implies an attentiveness to actual people, communities and cultures, rather than to neutrality in the abstract.

This chapter focuses on the British experience of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance, as these are required to be promoted in schools following the re-authoring of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection handbook in 2014. In the British context, as in many multicultural and pluralistic contexts in the West, colonial legacies need to be grappled with, confronting Britain's legacy of the weaponisation of state education in India (Lundie 2022), Canada (Bagelman 2018), Australia and elsewhere in service of a pedagogy of erasure (Janson & Paraskeva 2015) of indigenous ways of knowing. The specific British context and the role played by religion and religious education in enframing cultural plurality (Panjwani 2017; Barnes 2002) will necessarily be distinct from the French experience of North African colonial history and migration in a *laïque* education system, for example, or an American focus on marginalised Latinx, African and Native American knowledge systems and cultures.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-4

Tolerance, then, finds itself imbricated in three conceptual paradoxes. The first of these was famously posed by Karl Popper (2002), wherein a tolerant liberal society must be intolerant of those who seek to impose a worldview which, if it were accepted, would lead to the end of liberal tolerance. In and of itself, this paradox sets an important limitation on tolerance, albeit one that rests on liberal ends – aiming at the maximum amount of tolerance which is compatible with the tolerance of others. According to this paradox, tolerance is fundamentally oriented toward liberty as its end and is a facilitator of liberty. As we will illustrate in relation to the need for contextual instantiation of tolerance, this limitation is a necessary but insufficient delineator of the bounds of tolerance. This is so because tolerance is motivated by mutual respect for the liberty of the other, not merely by liberty in the abstract.

The second paradox, then, concerns the ability of persons in a pluralistic society to have a shared conception of the ends toward which liberty and tolerance are oriented. To explain, the Rawlsian formulation that liberal polities ought to be neutral toward conceptions of the good (Rawls 2009) is often taken to entail a neutrality toward the ethical and epistemic frameworks citizens make use of to arrive at a conception of the good. For a liberal pluralist polity to exist, however, first requires an advanced and nuanced ethical and epistemic framework, one that is capable of conceptualising the distinction between universal principles (such as Rawls holds his principles of justice and liberty to be) and culturally determined values, worldviews, mores and personal choices. There exist more than one historical example of how such a pluralist framework might function, and not all of these were liberal democracies. In addition to contemporary multicultural states such as the UK or Canada, one may cite Mughal India (Asad 2003), and Poland's 17th-century 'Golden Liberty' (Krzywoszynski 2012), among others. All of these societies had flourishing religious, ethical and political philosophical traditions capable of arriving at shared understandings of mutual respect for plurality, without anyone needing to be a comprehensive liberal.

It is possible, therefore, that within a pluralistic society, not all (or possibly not any) citizens will value liberty as being a good in and for itself. An approach to tolerance which is based solely on its utility as a facilitator of liberty will therefore be seen as an imposition by some groups. It may here be useful to introduce the distinction made by Charles Taylor (2010) between what he terms an anglophone tradition of secularism and the francophone model of *laïcité*. In the former tradition, citizens may engage in the public sphere complete with their conceptions of the good, even if the epistemic framework by which they arrived at this conception of the good, such as a religious worldview, is not accessible to public reason; in the stronger *laïque* model, in contrast, the public sphere has its own language of public

reason. According to the former model, individuals and groups which do not themselves value liberty as a good may nonetheless recognise the instrumental value of tolerance and liberty as providing them with the freedom to actualise those goods they do value. On the latter model, in contrast, it is necessary for individuals to value liberty and tolerance in themselves, in addition to any other private ends and values. The second paradox can therefore be posed as a paradox of fundamental values – is there, then, an argument that all young people need to be educated in a form of shared public reason to value liberty, tolerance and mutual respect?

The third paradox concerns not the sharing of ends but the ability to conceive of a diversity of valid conceptions of the good. How, if at all, may an ethical or epistemic framework that is incapable of conceptualising the plural whole beyond its particularity be accommodated in a liberal pluralist society? Within a pluralist society, individuals holding a narrowly monist and exclusivist worldview may find themselves stranded in incomprehension of the toleration they are afforded by their neighbours. Where one or more group within society holds an epistemic worldview capable of conceptualising the whole, but another group is capable only of conceptualising their own part, epistemic inequality may easily result in inequalities of agency, depriving the latter group of the epistemic resources necessary to have agency within wider society. This is the case even where the minority have chosen to deprive themselves of such agency, such as in the case of some Hassidic Jewish communities which abstain from participation in democratic elections in non-Jewish nations. Where the group which is incapable of conceptualising the plural whole constitutes a majority, this poses the risk that such a group may seek to supplant tolerant liberal pluralism with their own epistemic and ethical commitments, returning us to Popper's first paradox. Even where such a risk is avoided, however, the absence of a majority from deliberations about wider society may constitute a threat to the legitimacy of pluralist institutions only frequented by a minority, as was the case for the 19th-century Italian democracy during the period where Catholics were forbidden by the Church from participation (Marotta 2019).

While each of the aforementioned paradoxes can be conceived as concerned with protecting the child's right to an open future (Feinberg 1980), each rests on different foundational assumptions about the threats to, and limits of, such a right. The first paradox, Popper's concern with tolerating intolerance, seeks to safeguard individual liberty as an end in itself at the political level. The second paradox, that of a shared minimal conception of the good such that liberty and tolerance are valued as ends, speaks to a wider debate between comprehensive liberals and communitarians. The claim that liberty itself is a fundamental good, one which any rational person ought to accede to, is made by John Rawls in relation to a thought

experiment in which he posits persons in an 'original position', behind a 'veil of ignorance' in which they are unaware of their own wealth, talents, gender, nationality, social status and fundamental commitments. Under these conditions, Rawls argues, 'a rational actor ought to desire a social system in which each person has the same indefeasible claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties that is compatible with the same liberties for all others'.

Michael Sandel's critique of this theory, often termed 'communitarianism', takes aim at the last of the characteristics that Rawls argues that his 'original position' deciders are ignorant of: fundamental commitments. For Sandel, this extends the veil of ignorance too far, excluding ethical values from political consideration such that virtues become 'forms of sentiment rather than insight' (Sandel 1998, p. 164):

> Rawls' conception of right does not extend to private morality . . . and no person's values or conception of the good can possibly reach beyond it. As Rawls strikingly concedes, 'That we have one conception of the good rather than another is not relevant from a moral standpoint . . .' The limited scope for reflection on Rawls' account, and the problematic, even impoverished theory of the good that results reveal . . . an essentially utilitarian account of the good.
>
> (Sandel 1998, pp. 159–160)

Sandel argues that to conceive of a human actor devoid of these fundamental commitments and identities is to imagine a person without depth of character. This critique can be read in one of two ways – either as a defence of another set of values: virtues of loyalty and fraternity which cannot be applied universally, as they seek the good of particular others, rather than others in the abstract – or as a critique of the pretended universalism of Rawls' principles of justice, pointing out that our historically contingent Western values so comprehensively condition our thinking on the nature of justice that we do, in fact, take them with us into the original position, rendering Rawls' pretence of neutrality implicitly culturally specific. Although the first reading suggests Sandel wishes to ascribe universal value to these virtues, while the latter reading is suggestive of a more relativistic critique, both readings pull together in providing a defence of moral particularism.

The final paradox, that of epistemic inequalities, speaks to the tension that may exist between the child's right to an open future, and the right of a child to an education that respects their cultural identity, language and values (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, Art.29(c)), the tension between the liberal and the particular at the level of knowledge and belief. The fear that some communities may be singled out by the state as requiring additional training in civic liberalism evokes past examples of

epistemic violence against indigenous communities. That such concerns remain live in contemporary multicultural societies is illustrated by the following account from the UK.

This chapter first locates the particularity of the British experience of pluralism, mutual respect and tolerance in its political and historical context. It then goes on to draw on two empirical studies, the first drawing on quantitative data from young people engaged in ecological momentary assessment, a methodology that engages in daily surveys over a 28-day period instead of traditional one-time-only surveys, and the second drawing on participatory approaches, ethnography and reflective writing to explore lived understandings of teaching the virtues of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. The first of these studies highlights a correlation between the valuing of liberty and other measures of subjective well-being, while the second draws attention to significant differences in the ways different schools enact an understanding of liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. Concluding remarks seek to draw these specific examples back to the paradoxes introduced earlier. Both of these studies draw on approaches to ecological validity drawn from an understanding of the limitations and challenges of measuring character virtue education.

3.2 Measuring Values and Virtues in Adolescents

Foundational to the study of values and virtues is the way in which we attempt to measure them. Two fundamental challenges to the authenticity of value measures have been explored in the academic literature: realism and predictivity. The assumption that a realistic or naturally occurring moral dilemma is needed to evoke an authentic response is open to challenge, as is the assumption that a more authentic response will accurately predict moral behaviour.

A long-standing critique of research instruments relying on responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas is that the hypothetical scenarios used are not relevant to the lived experience of participants, and as such elicit minimal affective response (Baumrind 1978; Haan 1977). In a parallel study incorporating Kohlberg's (1958) hypothetical dilemmas and real-life relevant scenarios, Walker et al. (1987) found consistent moral responses to both, suggesting abstract hypothetical scenarios are still valid for the purpose of measuring moral response. Skoe et al. (2002), however, found real-life relevant scenarios evoke more emotional responses. These differences are significant because one of the major models for moral cognition suggests that deontological reasoning and consequentialist reasoning are driven by different levels of emotional response (Greene 2007).

A further critique of hypothetical instruments concerns the staging of dilemmas. One example of alternative methodologies is the use of virtual

reality technology (McDonald et al. 2017; Moretto et al. 2010; Patil et al. 2014) which has found some differences in participant responses when compared to self-report dilemmas, with the most consistent difference being that responses in the VR staging tended to be more based on consequentialist reasoning (Francis et al. 2016). A further example is the falsified staging of real dilemmas, where participants are given the impression that real people or animals can be helped or harmed. A falsified staging from Bostyn et al. (2018) found that participants were more likely to take a consequentialist course of action when they believed a mouse would be harmed than in a hypothetical staging of the same dilemma; this is in contrast to the model suggested by Greene (2007). Real-life, VR and deception studies of moral reasoning, however, come at increased ethical and economic costs; ethical costs from deception undermining trust in the research process, and economic costs from staging realistic scenarios instead of much simpler written descriptions of the same.

The link between values and behaviour is also central to an understanding of character virtue education; indeed, without such a causal relationship it is hard to see what purpose character education would serve. The assumption that values guide behaviour is a common feature of most definitions of values (Schwartz & Bilsky 1987), and forms the basis of determinations of validity for most value measures (Davison et al. 2016). While some have theorised this directive role as setting standards by which we evaluate behaviour (Schwartz 1992; Caprara et al. 2017) – the 'drive' hypothesis – others claim we engage in value-consistent behaviour in order to express and endorse those values (Eisenberg et al. 2006; Lönnqvist et al. 2013) – the 'value-expressive' hypothesis.

With regard to individual liberty, pluralism, tolerance and intercultural competences, the role of social norms in measures of values and virtues must be taken into account. Adherence to the social norms of a group is often a condition of group membership (Schwartz 1977), and over time, members may come to identify with a group to such a degree that they internalise and adopt the normative beliefs, attitudes and values of the group (Tajfel 1974; Rand et al. 2014), and come to feel anxiety and fear of exclusion where individual values do not match social norms (Triandis 1990; Sagiv & Schwartz 2000; Pagliaro et al. 2011). Self-efficacy beliefs are also important in efforts to express individual values over and against the group, mediating relationships between prosocial values and prosocial behaviours (Caprara et al. 2012) such as panic buying and social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic (Tabernero et al. 2020). One model which incorporates both norms and self-efficacy in explaining the link between attitudes and behaviour is the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen 1991). A development of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980), TPB proposes that attitudes, norms and self-efficacy

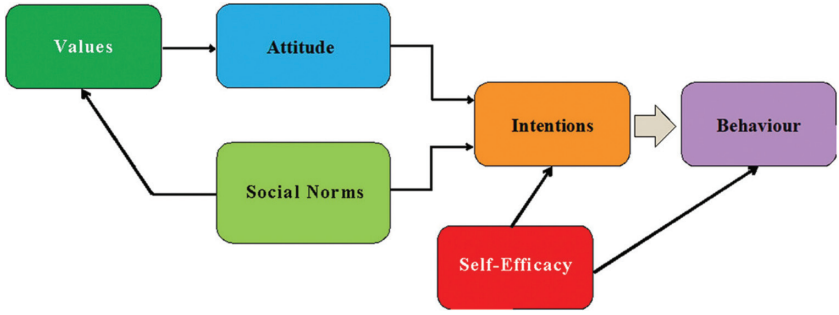

Figure 3.1 Expanded TPB Model Incorporating Values.

combine to produce behavioural intentions, and these in turn influence behaviour. O'Siochru et al. (2023) expand TPB to incorporate values as determining attitude, predicting that we are more likely to follow individual values in situations where there are no strong normative indicators, such as when our behaviour is anonymous or part of a collective effort (see Figure 3.1, also cf. Aguilar-Luzón et al. 2012; Leung & Morris 2015). The relationship between values and social norms proposed by O'Siochru and Blinkhorn's expanded model is more complex; however, recognising that behaviour can be both 'value expressive' and 'identity expressive', such that it may be necessary to know the relative strength of the link between individual values and social norms in order to understand which will be predictive of behaviour.

The studies that follow attempt to use the modified TPB to understand the impact of social norms and individual values on understandings and expressions of personal liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. The first study employs ecological momentary assessment to understand the interrelations between value dispositions, self-efficacy beliefs and subjective well-being at an individual level, while the second study employs naturalistic observation to understand real-life relevant expressions of value dispositions within the social context of three case-study secondary schools in the UK.

3.3 Values, Virtues and Well-Being

If values are linked to real-life intercultural encounters, then attention needs to be paid to understanding to what extent the experiences of respect, tolerance and liberty in students' daily lives are also relevant to their well-being. Using Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA), students from four schools in the UK (age range 14–16 years) reported three times a day

over four weeks (28 days) their momentary importance of the values of respect, tolerance and liberty as well as their hedonic well-being (i.e. happiness and life satisfaction) and eudaimonic well-being (i.e. their perception of purpose in life and connection to others). Following Sirgy (2021), values such as respect, tolerance and liberty largely mirror Schwartz's values of universalism/benevolence and self-direction/achievement which are growth-related and associated with higher subjective well-being (Schwartz & Sortheix 2018).

Yet the literature so far has mostly focused on stable, between-person differences (i.e. trait-like) in values and well-being (e.g. Schwartz & Sortheix 2018), partially neglecting the momentary, within-person dynamic relations (i.e. state-like) between such variables. Here, we aim to evaluate whether the expected positive relations among the values of respect, tolerance and liberty to both forms of well-being (i.e. hedonic and eudaimonic) mostly reflect trait-like, between-person differences (e.g. do students who generally value being respectful to other people more than their counterparts also report higher hedonic/eudaimonic well-being?) and/or also capture state-like relations in the momentary peaks of values and well-being (e.g. is being more respectful than one's usual level associated with being more satisfied with life than one usually is?).

The use of EMA is particularly appropriate to answer these questions, since EMA benefits from high ecological validity and captures the occurrence of psychological phenomena in real-time (Bolger et al. 2003). To disentangle properly the levels at which the relations occurred, we used Dynamic Structural Equation Modeling (DSEM; Hamaker et al. 2018), a novel technique that allows us to separate between-person effects (stable inter-individual differences) and within-person effects (intra-individual changes) with intensive longitudinal data.

3.3.1 Methodology

Participants were 82 students from four schools in the UK (mean age = 14.88, SD = 1.34; 72% girls). Students received three online questionnaires a day over 28 days for a total of 84 EMAs. The EMAs were collected during the waking time (afternoon and evening) from 2.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. with approximately a two-hour time-lag between each EMA. Data were collected in 2021.

Regarding the response rate, we found that 43.9% completed more than 75% of the questionnaires, 24.4% completed more than 50% of EMAs, 6.1% completed more than 25% of the questionnaires, and 25.6% completed less than 25% of EMAs.

3.3.1.1 Measures

Respect, tolerance and liberty. The three values were collected three times a day using three ad-hoc items ('How important for you right now is to *be respectful to other people/be tolerant of other people's beliefs/have freedom over your actions*?'). Students rated the momentary perceived importance of each value using a 5-point rating scale (from 1 = very slightly or not at all to 5= extremely).

Hedonic (HWB) and eudaimonic well-being (EWB). Students' ratings of their momentary happiness (from 1 = very slightly or not at all to 5 = extremely) and life satisfaction (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) were averaged at each EMA to create a composite score of HWB. Similarly, students' ratings of their momentary meaning in life (from 1 = not at all to 5 = extremely) and feeling of closeness to other people (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) were averaged at each EMA to create a composite score of EWB.

3.3.1.2 Results

We used DSEM with the Bayesian estimation of the parameters in Mplus 8.4 with 3,000 iterations. To address the unequal spacing of the measurement occurrences (i.e. no EMAs were sent during night and early morning), we rearranged the variable time to represent a four-hour interval for the adults' sample and a two-hour interval for the adolescents' sample using the TINTERVAL option in Mplus (see McNeish & Hamaker 2020). This allowed us to consider also the time windows in which the participants did not receive questionnaires. We used the 95% credible intervals (95% CIs), to determine which effects were statistically different from 0 (i.e. when the credible intervals for the effect did not include the zero).

At the between-person level, we found that, on average, adolescents who (1) reported higher tolerance also experienced higher HWB (r = .265, 95% CI: .032, .551) and EWB (r = .346, 95% CI: .096, .675) than their counterparts; (2) reported higher respect also experienced higher EWB (r = .252, 95% CI: .014, .474) but not HWB (r =.182, 95% CI: –.045, .456) than their counterparts; (3) reported higher liberty also experienced higher HWB (r = .235, 95% CI: .032, .489) and EWB (r = .249, 95% CI: .013, .561) than their counterparts.

At the within-person level, we found evidence for statistically significant carry-over effects of values (β values for respect, tolerance and liberty were .255, .207 and .216, respectively) and both types of well-being (β values for HWB and EWB were .329 and .331, respectively). Hence, momentary state-like peaks in these variables tend to persist over time (i.e. they do not fade away after two hours). Moreover, we also found a statistically

significant spill-over effect (β =.079, 95% CI: .032, .137) from HWB (at time t) to the next peak of respect (at time $t + 1$), indicating that higher-than-expected peaks of HWB were predictive two hours later of higher-than-expected peaks of respect. Finally, we found evidence of consistent and statistically significant co-occurrences between momentary peaks in values and HWB/EWB at the same EMA (r values ranging from .109 [liberty with HWB] to .159 [respect with EWB]). Hence, higher-than-usual levels of each value were related to higher-than-usual levels of both HWB and EWB at the same EMA throughout the study.

To summarise, students who, in general, attributed generally more importance to tolerance, respect and personal liberty also received greater benefits in terms of happiness and satisfaction with their life (HWB) as well as experienced a stronger purpose in life and felt more connected to other people compared to their counterparts. Hence, these results confirm previous works attesting to the importance of personal values for one's well-being (Sirgy 2021). Likely, these values help students fulfil basic motives of being competent (agency) and belongingness (communion) that, in turn, improve their well-being. Interestingly, we also found that values and well-being were also positively related at the within-person level. Hence, attributing higher-than-usual importance to each of these three values was related to a peak in both types of well-being (i.e. higher-than-usual levels of HWB and EWB), suggesting a close moment-to-moment dynamic among values and well-being in students' everyday life. Notably, we also found a predictive effect from HWB to later peaks of respect (roughly two hours later). Although this result is largely exploratory and must be confirmed in future studies, it could indicate the relevance of eliciting pleasant states of happiness and satisfaction to make students more open and respectful to other people. This finding could be partly explained via Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory (2004), in which the experience of positive emotions could make people more prone to embrace novelty and exploration, even in their personal relationships. Exploring new possible relationships, indeed, relies on accepting and respecting people who could likely be different from us.

3.4 The Behind and the Beyond, Values, Politics and the Character-Educative Control of Bodies

3.4.1 Methodology

The ethnographic strand of our research proceeded from a post-critical ethnographic paradigm, recognising like critical ethnography (Carspecken 1996) the intersubjective construction of understanding. Employing provisional normative perspectives in keeping with the post-critical perspective,

however, we sought to respond to participant knowledge and values with a sincerity (Stengers 2010) as to the self-knowledge of participants, as opposed to a model aimed at unmasking or denunciation (D'Andrade 1995). This is not to deny that systematic inequities are complexly reproduced by culture (Carspecken 2001) but rather to foreground substantive experience. Tracing conditions of agency and responsibility through insight into the cause, intention, state and response of participants (Laidlaw 2014) to particular practices, processes, social sites and cultural commodities enabled us to understand the place, role and construction of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance in the lifeworld of the school, assigning priority to lifeworld over worldview (Jackson 1998).

Working in schools as sites of enquiry involves a necessarily recursive step to any ethnography of character virtue development. This is the case because schools are themselves points of mediation between worldview and character virtue development. At the same time as adolescents are discovering their own place within the social world, and within the school as a microcosm of that world, the ethnographers are seeking to understand the place they inhabit. To address this, our methodology mediates between linguistic (Blomaert 2005) and ontological (De Castro 2015) semiotics; recognising that the language of personal liberty, mutual respect and tolerance, as found in policy, can present itself not only as concept-as-thing – endowed with efficaciousness and agency (Singh et al. 2013), but also as repertoire of communication – through and against which language users construct and continually re-construct themselves as agents. Data was connected employing a multi-modal approach, recognising that place and voice are essential to understanding experiences of agency (Gerhart 2003; Bamber et al. 2018), and the embodied phenomenology (Pink 2015; Bagelman & Bagelman 2016) of schools as sites of character virtue development through the communicative role of physical spaces, routines, and visual displays. In addition to participant observation, ethnographic interviews were carried out with key individuals, employing a purposive sampling approach. Multi-modal ethnographic approaches also enable the representation of 'multiplicities and in-betweens' (Selkrig 2014) of processes of *phronesis* through which adolescents combine the values of personal liberty, mutual respect and tolerance within the school site, with their wider personal worldview and the ways these wider virtue constellations are refracted and expressed through collaborative meaning-making (van der Kooij et al. 2013; Pyhalto et al. 2014) in the lifeworld of the school.

Initial plans to carry out 10 days of ethnography in three clusters of three schools (a total of 90 days' participant observation) had to be modified due to the closure of schools across the UK from April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon reopening in September 2020, pandemic

control measures still prevented all but essential visitors from entering schools. The full ten days of participant observation could only be completed in two schools; at a third school, we were four days into the ethnographic process when the COVID-19 school closures were announced. In response to this limitation, a young person's writing prize was also included in the design of the project. Two prizes were available, one for young people aged 11–14 (Year 7–9 in English Secondary Schools) and one for young people 14–16 (Year 10–11), for the best essay of up to 1,500 on the theme of any or all of the 'fundamental British values' of democracy, rule of law, personal liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. The writing prize was advertised through social media and the teacher education partnership links of our host universities. Thirteen entries were received. A preponderance of these entries came from students in academically selective or private schools, which was in contrast to the three schools in which ethnography had been carried out, two of which served communities experiencing multiple deprivations.

As explored earlier, the explanations as to why people behave in accordance with their values include the suggestion that values act as guides to evaluating our behaviour (Caprara 2017), making the correspondence between values and behaviours a product of this use of values to make key behavioural decisions. Another perspective is offered by Lönnqvist et al. (2006) who claim we engage in value-consistent behaviour in order to express those values. An example of this would be an individual who engages in prosocial behaviour in order to demonstrate and endorse those values to themselves and others (Eisenberg et al. 2006). The importance of this discussion regarding the theoretical reasons for the relationship between values and behaviour is that the different perspectives offer different avenues of exploration for future research. For example, the 'value expressive' perspective suggests that the value–behaviour relationship may be influenced by the extent to which behaviour is known to others, thus connecting with group dynamics and social norms. Some have argued that differences between value-related judgement and behaviour indicates that they are underpinned by two distinct processes (Tassy et al. 2013). Others suggest that what individuals consider morally permissible does not exhaust salient moral decision-making factors (Gold et al. 2015). Some researchers have argued that values guide behaviour only on certain occasions or only in certain people (Kristiansen & Hotte 1996). This raises the question as to how to differentiate between those occasions or people? It was intended, for this reason, that the ethnographic data would be drawn upon in designing the response items for Ecological Momentary Assessment in the same participating case-study schools. Due to pandemic restrictions and timescales, this did not prove possible.

3.4.2 Findings

Socio-material cultures within schools reflected divergent lived experiences of individual liberty and mutual respect, even as the common fundamental British values were presented in all of them. Cultures of control varied in response to the degree of autonomy afforded to adolescents – while in one school serving an affluent suburban area, our researcher was escorted round by pupils, who were permitted to move around the building freely, in another school, serving a largely deprived white working-class community, pupils' movements in time and space were tightly controlled. This latter case is worthy of closer investigation, as it speaks to a form of state paternalism in the framing of 'problem communities' in post-multicultural approaches to character value education (Thomas 2018). According to this approach, consistent with the second paradox highlighted in the introduction, 'Teachers need to be in a situation where they are able to challenge students whose "moral homeground" is a wasteland' (Thanissaro 2010).

In the case of this school, on multiple occasions, teaching staff referred to adolescents' out-of-school experiences as 'chaotic lives'. One member of the school leadership team expands on the meaning of this term as sad, heartbreaking, and yet something he is unable to fully understand because of his own more ordered upbringing. The framing of non-understanding here points to the limits of pluralism hinted at by the third, epistemic, paradox. In contrast to this characterisation, students spoke about this moral homeground in terms that were at once untheorised and affectionate.

> With the whole environmental thing, you get things from people around you, its almost like you have a bowl full of pennies and people are putting more in and every different one's a value. So I have values from people that I've known here [in school], I have values from people that I've known outside and then at home (Student focus group).

This analogy to a bowl full of pennies suggests an unstructured moral epistemology, one in which mutual respect and tolerance are unrelated to the cultural context toward which that respect is enacted. The context of adolescents' 'chaotic lives' as described by their teachers is of drugs, alcoholism, abuse, broken homes, upbringing left to siblings, parental disengagement with education, and truancy.

In response to this messaging from school, practices of control were reinscribed as forms of care and value remediation. These practices included lining all students up in the schoolyard each morning to inspect uniform, strict control of movement around the building between classes, interjections and corrections by staff when students speak to one another, and dedicated attendance officers whose role is to visit homes to respond

to disengagement, including disengagements which were caused by school exclusion. The overarching justification, in line with the instrumental approach to liberty discussed in the colonial context, was couched in terms of a preparation to join the workforce. The characterisation of the school's highly controlled, consistent and predictable environment as a safe space is placed in tension with the development of self-regulation, belonging and self-efficacy which are a requisite preparation for adult life.

In practice, this construction of control as a form of care and deficit remediation led to an environment in which personal liberty was highly constrained during the school day. Senior staff within the school carried out school uniform inspections in hallways in the course of otherwise casual interactions, reinforcing the controlling gaze. Students often acted in polite ways toward teachers, which were reciprocated, but within highly constrained norms of communication. These norms, however, quickly broke down in the absence of the controlling adult gaze, as an interview with a group of adolescents who discussed homophobic bullying mentioned. The awareness of educational inequality in such an approach was highlighted by two adolescents in the same interview:

R1: Yes, but that's the thing, it's grades and not . . . and our minds cannot work like that, because our minds are creative, not like . . . schools are basically, like, in the olden days, they were made for people to work in factories, like, say for example, the reason why we stay in straight rows, we're asked to raise our hands is because, like, have you ever heard of short breaks? That's the way factories are, so that's what school is, like, still resembling.
R2: That's what they're trying to set us to fail, right? They've got the selective kids, where they're going to do good, while the other kids are going to get shipped off into, like, bad jobs, dying, drugs and everything. Like, there are skills, right, I did a little summer job, right, and basically, everything you learn here is useless when it comes to actual jobs. And it's like, cooking helps you cook. No, it doesn't, it doesn't help you deal with the stress of many people yelling around with people trying to take from the cash register 24/7.
R3: With art, you have to learn how to do certain technical . . .
R1: Art is subjective.
R2: Art can be anything.
R1: Since Miss is gone and we have a supply, she's just going back on what we've already learned.

Movement around the school building was strictly controlled, in ways reminiscent of the 'zero tolerance' approaches criticised by Merten (2005) as foreclosing liminal spaces for worldview-making. Here, the contrast

between spaces for subjective artistic expression, imagined to operate in selective elite schools, and the regimented approach to the curriculum is collocated within a wider context of economic inequality, teacher shortage and deprivation. Among teachers, also, the narrative of 'chaotic lives' functions as a form of emotional distancing, enabling them to exercise proactive agency in a resilient way in response to the often-heartbreaking realities such as 'dying, drugs and everything' identified earlier by the pupils.

Excavating a sense of this lived experience was essential to developing ecologically valid approaches to the measurement of character virtue dispositions, beliefs, attachments and actions. The risk of an unstructured, unintegrated 'bowl of pennies' of values is that it lends itself to context-dependent performative lip-service to each value set, with stable trait-like virtues being underdeveloped, and tolerance for divergent value-sets being reduced to indifference. By way of further illustration, in another of the participating schools, as a result of changes in the management of quasi-autonomous academy schools in England, the school had been through three sets of 'official' values: 'DREAM – Determination, Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Mastery; LORIC – Leadership, Organization, Resilience, Initiative, Communication'; and an older school-derived set, in addition to the five British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.

In contrast to the paternalistic deficit constructions of 'chaotic lives' and 'caring control' observed in some schools, many of the entries in the writing prize highlighted the sense that the 'fundamental British values' agenda was not aimed equally at everyone. Highlighting Islamophobic hate crime and the UK Government's 'hostile environment' policies toward immigration (ICIBI 2016), for example, one writing-prize participant noted:

> [T]he reality is that these values do not apply to everyone. What we are witnessing is the erosion of our so-called 'British values' by social prejudice and the institution itself that coined these values. . . . We are observing a system that maintains discriminative history through underlying clauses [in reference to Clause 9 of the Nationality & Borders Bill] which are inherently prejudiced and unfair. So, who is actually entitled to personal liberty?

Criticism of overt corruption and double standards by British politicians featured prominently in a number of responses, as did discriminatory treatment of migrants. Hypocrisy was also framed in relation to the difference in school cultures enjoyed by participants, compared to the contexts described earlier:

> British values weren't really aimed at myself and my peers: we all went to a very good school, which reflected the values, an example being the student

> council. . . . Fundamentally my school was strong, this allowed for the creation of the next generation of doctors, engineers, lawyers, economists, geographers that come out of it ready to battle the world's issues.

Some adolescents offered criticisms of the concept of tolerance itself, highlighting the limitations they perceived in the liberal framing in which it had been presented to them:

> I, and my trans friends, do not want 'tolerance' of our transness offered by laws that allow us to transition socially and nothing else until we are 18. Tolerance provides nothing material, no assistance, no support. . . . Tolerance implies and indulgence; 'enduring' behaviours. Enduring a person in their status as a minority is not enough. . . . Furthermore, in schools, there is no teaching on discrimination beyond noting down discrimination sanctioned by law . . . students are not educated on defending or helping people, just 'tolerating' their differences
>
> Tolerance is the limit or capacity to endure something. It could be the tolerance to endure pain or stamina.

Others highlighted a different register of character virtues as understood by an emerging generation:

> [E]veryone is beautiful and it wouldn't matter as beauty doesn't define you. Self love. It's a difficult thing to explain. . . . Valuing yourself, respecting yourself; knowing how amazing you are; looking in the mirror and loving the person you see and have become. . . . Mutual respect summed up is not letting someone's opinion effect your relationship.
>
> We may be brought up in a home where you practice a spiritual way of life, influencing your beliefs. Whatever our beliefs, we should not do it for the sake of it, you should do it because you want to do it, you should live it, now, not tomorrow, we should live in the moment, being happy, enjoying every moment and being grateful for everything. Taking every moment with a positive mindset. We should value every second of it.

These presentations of immediacy, an aesthetic turn in character virtue language, and recognition of hypocrisy among adolescents point to a different understanding of character virtue development to those identified in the participant observations.

3.5 Conclusion: From Values to Virtues

Whereas the EMA study suggested that helping students succeed and master the challenges that they face daily may also help them further appreciate

the importance of personal liberty, the ethnography highlighted various ways that schools are closing down spaces of agency essential to moral development. This points, problematically, toward a bifurcation in the ways schools are preparing young people for life in a tolerant pluralistic society. On the one side is an increasingly policed community of young people whose personal and family lives are constructed as in deficit with regard to character virtues, and for whom character education is presented through contexts of unremitting control and conditioning. On the other side, a group which is empowered through personal liberty to adopt independence of thought, to represent themselves as being in a space 'beyond' a set of politically constructed liberal values, the limitations of which in wider society are clearly visible to them.

Returning to the paradoxes of tolerance posed in the introduction, this bifurcation raises further questions. That behaviour management policies which openly celebrate 'zero tolerance' (Dickens 2019) are able to exist in schools without challenge alongside a policy agenda that requires schools to promote tolerance as a civic value points to a structuring of discourse such that the origins and interpretation of these terms are never brought into contact in the day-to-day thinking about the meanings of the term. This runs the risk that such approaches inculcate young people into a form of life incapable of conceptualising liberty and tolerance as lived virtues beyond a mere liberal abstraction of their meaning, detached from lived experience. The concern that being capable of understanding a plurality of conceptions of the good is necessary to a resilient pluralistic society is borne out by the results of our ecological momentary assessment, highlighting that attributing importance to tolerance and liberty led to greater happiness and satisfaction.

Methodologically, this insight is allowed to emerge from the combination of ecologically valid instruments at a qualitative anthropological and quantitative psychological level. Both of these address the realism challenge posed by traditional moral dilemma survey instruments, by gathering real-time data in real-world scenarios. Despite the challenges of carrying out ecological qualitative observations during the pandemic, qualitative self-report mechanisms facilitated insight into the changing definitions, semiotics and repertoires of adolescents' moral vocabulary. Adapting the instruments in ecological momentary assessment to reflect these changes would add further ecological validity to future studies.

This bifurcation into a 'behind' group and a 'beyond' group, increasingly subject to different forms of schooling, becomes still more problematic when combined with an understanding that personal liberty is predictive of self-efficacy, and that self-efficacy is essential to adolescents' willingness to act according to personal values where these challenge social norms. As societies, not only in the UK, become more complex and pluralistic, there is a pressing need

not only to teach young people about an understanding of mutual respect and tolerance that turns, as does the understanding of many of our essay-writing adolescents, on the lived experiences of others, rather than a liberal abstraction, but also to live out such virtues in the lifeworld of the school.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the other co-investigators on the project, Phil Bamber, Carly Bagelman, Joseph Maslen and John Tillson (Liverpool Hope University) and Victoria Blinkhorn (Liverpool John Moores University) for their work in refining our ideas. We would also like to thank Lucia Manfredi and Fulvio Gregori (Sapienza, University of Rome) for their help with organising the dataset.

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4 Good Citizenship and Sustainable Living

Views, Experiences, and Opportunities Among Young People in Iceland

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4.1 Introduction

There is an urgent need for knowledge on how to tackle the many threats facing societies related to environmental issues, health and welfare, human rights, and increasing global migration. While societies around the world are becoming more diverse, the struggle for social justice, equality, and good citizenship continues (Abu-Laban et al., 2023). Current trends in society toward individualism, political polarity, increasing inequalities, and accelerated environmental degradation demand a response from education, with UNESCO (2021) emphasizing the role of education. The 2015 Incheon declaration for Education 2030 states that quality education must develop

> the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges through education for sustainable development and global citizenship education . . . and stress the importance of human rights education.
>
> (UNESCO, 2015, p. 68)

Despite *democracy and human rights* and *sustainability* being two of the six fundamental pillars in the Icelandic curriculum, research suggests that schools and teachers struggle to find holistic ways to engage with the value-laden purposes of education and support students' active participation (Bjarnadóttir & Geirsdóttir, 2018; Gollifer, 2022).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-5

The aim of this research was to gain insight into young people's views toward, experiences of and, actions related to civic engagement, democracy, sustainability, and social justice. We sought to understand their civic and global concerns, their participation opportunities created by educational and social structures, as well as the factors that influence their civic- and sustainable behaviors. By social structures, we refer to homes, recreational as well as organizational settings (e.g., NGOs).

A particular focus was on the existing overlap and potential integration of civic-, character-, and sustainability education, and a more holistic approach toward developing young people's global social responsibility, sense of justice, and civic participation skills, values, and virtues needed for sustainable lifestyles, and active citizenship. UNESCO (2021) has argued that if young people are to be prepared to meet contemporary social and environmental challenges, the educational response cannot be limited to single disciplines.

4.2 Guiding Factors for Future Citizens

4.2.1 Citizenship Education

Citizenship and citizenship education refer to aspects such as civic knowledge, understanding, values, and engagement but the concepts have become increasingly multidimensional in this era of globalization and migration, with more emphasis on multiple identities (Kubow et al., 2012).

The core dimensions of citizenship education have been classified into these elements: (i) knowledge and skills related to civic rights and responsibilities; (ii) identity, citizens' feelings of belonging and togetherness; and (iii) active participation (Hämäläinen & Nivala, 2023). The importance of cultivating learners' communication skills as well as their social-, moral-, and emotional development has also been stressed (Aðalbjarnardóttir, 2007). Studies have, for example, found that young people's civic discussions in everyday life are related to democratic values, civic engagement, and the development of political knowledge (Ekström & Östman, 2013).

According to Article 12 in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), children have the right to express their voices and be heard in all matters that affect them. However, this has been far from the reality in praxis (Lundy, 2007; Davies et al., 2022). In response, many school systems have sought to place emphasis on providing young people opportunities to be active participants in their local and global communities and helping them to understand the value of such participation (Sherrod et al., 2010). In the meta-analysis of Celio et al. (2011), findings indicated that students that took part in service-learning projects gained self-efficacy, self-esteem, social skills, and more positive attitudes toward learning and civic participation.

In the pluralistic democracy of Iceland, citizenship education overlaps with the democracy and human rights education pillar of the national curricula for pre-, elementary-, and secondary schools. In school, young people should be prepared to take part in a democratic society by learning *about* democracy, *for* democracy, *in* a democracy. Within subjects and through educational practices, democratic knowledge, attitudes, and values are to be strengthened (Ministry of Education and Children, n.d.).

Aðalbjarnardóttir's (2007) mixed-method study, *Young People's Civic Awareness and Engagement in a Democratic Society*, was the first study in Iceland to focus on young people's citizenship, and findings have been published widely. In Guðjohnsen and Aðalbjarnardóttir (2017) students' better understanding of democracy, greater volunteering experience predicted more positive views on being engaged citizens. They preferred Social-Movement-Related Citizenship to Conventional Citizenship but sought more engagement opportunities and more various participation platforms. Students' experience of democratic discussions at school was also found to be related to more positive views toward the rights of immigrants (Aðalbjarnardóttir & Harðardóttir, 2018).

Another aspect of citizenship is the civic virtues – character traits necessary for engaged responsible citizenship, contributing to the common good, for example, service. Peterson & Civil (2021) have argued that:

> The formation and expression of civic virtues in pursuit of the common good are vital for both individual and societal flourishing. These virtues – including civility, tolerance, and service to others – are a core part of an individual's character, but are also vital for the active, informed, and responsible engagement of citizens.

4.2.2 Character Education

The civic virtues connect the concepts of citizenship and character development and thus citizenship- and character education. The *character* concept refers to who we are as human beings, the personal attributes or dispositions that shape our moral emotions, motivation, and behavior (The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2022). Character education deals with societies and culture in an informative and critical way, based on the idea that character virtues are the basis of individual and societal flourishing emphasizing reflection on equality, democracy, care, respect, and the significance of these values for a good life. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (2022, p. 7) has emphasized its wide meaning:

> Character education is more than just a subject. It has a place in the culture and functions of families, classrooms, schools, and other

> institutions. Character education is about helping students grasp what is ethically important in situations and how they act for the right reasons, such that they become more autonomous and reflective in the practice of virtue.

Character education therefore emphasizes people's social and personal development and explores internal morality and environmental forces (Zhang, 2023) like the influence of parents and teachers (Watts et al., 2021). Examples of character education topics are values, socio-moral reasoning, ethics knowledge, moral emotional competencies, character growth, communication skills to provide a caring community, and prosocial motivation and action opportunities (Berkowitz et al., 2020). Indeed, parents "psychological autonomy granting" – one of three core dimensions of authoritative parenting identified in Baumrind's Studies (1971) – has been shown to support adolescents' psychosocial competence (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Other subject names covering "character education topics" are moral-, values-, citizenship-, and democratic education, social-emotional learning, and positive psychology. The most common name used in Iceland is "life skills studies," introduced in compulsory and upper-secondary National Curricula 1999 as part of social studies. The topics are also mentioned as part of democracy-, human rights-, and sustainable education or practices. The aims are to support students' awareness of their duties, rights, and values, help them understand their emotions, and learn to direct them in constructive directions. This is meant to enhance their understanding of qualities of human life such as justice, knowledge, freedom, friendship, respect, and responsibility. Part of character education's task is also fostering learners' self-identity to be able to respond to important questions and undertakings in life.

4.2.3 Sustainability Education

Sustainability education aims to develop learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and motivation with the intention to enable a worldwide transition toward sustainability. It is largely an educational response to the environmental and societal challenges humanity faces. Following the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, sustainability education has become one of the main policy concerns of the UN and is explicitly mentioned in various national and international educational policies. Sustainability education emphasizes understanding the limitations that the earth's ecosystem places on humans; equality within and between generations; and the rational use and fair distribution of resources.

A systematic review of climate change education, being one of the main components of sustainability education, identified the need for more participatory, interdisciplinary, creative, and affect-driven approaches in this educational

area (Rousell & Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles, 2020). In the Icelandic context, sustainability is one of the six fundamental pillars of education in the national curricula for all school levels from primary, compulsory education through upper secondary school. There is the understanding that a prerequisite for a sustainable society is active citizens who are aware of their values, attitudes, and feelings toward these factors and emphasis is placed on developing learners' ability to address a variety of issues and to prepare them to take part in a democratic society (Ministry of Education and Children, n.d.).

In a Nordic study by Jónsson et al. (2021) on the implementation of the UN SDGs, findings indicated that although many things have been done well in Iceland there are still various shortcomings, and more emphasis needs to be placed on the UN SDGs in Icelandic educational policy and laws.

4.2.4 The Importance of a Holistic Approach

Citizenship-, character-, and sustainability education all examine questions of individual and societal well-being. However, they tend to be thought of as distinct fields, usually taught in isolation. Yet it is clear there is considerable overlap between them, notably not only in terms of fostering active participation in society and developing civic skills and virtues but also in terms of the moral aspects of citizenship, of individual and societal flourishing, and of responsibility toward current and future generations, and the environment (Jordan et al., 2023).

Our research is based on the understanding that integrating the perspectives, ideas, and practices from the fields of citizenship-, character-, and sustainability education can offer new knowledge in relation to sustainable individual- and societal well-being. At a practical level, our research aimed to reveal the opportunities for engaging with civic-, character-, and sustainability education as a unified whole, through both educational and societal settings.

The research questions we are going to answer with our data are (1) What constitutes young people's views, concerns, and opportunities for engaging with issues related to good citizenship and sustainability within educational and societal settings? (2) How do principals view the practices and student engagement opportunities related to citizenship and character in their schools?

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Data

We used mixed methods to gather research data:

First, in collaboration with the Icelandic Ombudsman for Children, we sent out questionnaires to principals of all compulsory schools (elementary and lower-secondary levels) in Iceland (n = 177), asking about

educational practices related to human rights, democracy, morality, character, and civic engagement. Some questions were open-ended.

Second, we submitted a questionnaire to 14- and 18-year-old students in lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools (n = 784). They were asked about their attitudes toward, and actions related to, human rights, good citizenship, and sustainability. The questions and constructs were drawn and adapted from several measures:

4.3.1.1 Used as Independent Variables

(i) The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) (2016):

- *Being informed and social discussion* (adjusted from Political action): How often the students discuss social issues with parents, friends, or others and stay informed, for example, "How often do you read news to know what is happening in your country or internationally."
- *Democratic class culture* (adjusted from Classroom): How teachers foster open discussion in class, for example, "Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues in class."
- *Civic knowledge*: How much they learn in school, for example, about parliamentary elections, constitutional rights, politics, and events in other countries, for example, "To what extent have you learned about how citizens can vote in municipal and parliamentary elections."
- *School participation*: Questions on social participation in school, for example, "I have participated in processes to make my school more environmentally friendly" (e.g., by riding a bike to school, recycling).

(ii) *Parental autonomy granting* (Lamborn et al., 1991; Baumrind, 1971): Participants' perceptions of their parents as non-coercive, using democratic discipline, and encouraging independence, for example, "Your parent/s encourage you to think independently."

(iii) *Learn about values and virtues* (this research): A question asking: "Have you learned or discussed what virtues and values are important to an individual to be a good person? (e.g., honesty, kindness, fairness, being responsible, respectful)."

(iv) *Participation in climate change protests* (this research): Questions about views on and protest over climate change, for example, "I feel responsible to reduce climate change."

(v) *Social justice* (Civic Measurement Model: Flanagan et al., 2007; Young People's Civic Awareness and Engagement in a Democratic

Society: Aðalbjarnardóttir, 2011): Questions, for example, "I want to fight injustice in my society."

4.3.1.2 Used as Dependent Variables

(i) Importance of *Good Citizenship* (ICCS, 2016): Questions about students' views on how important it is for a good citizen to, for example, "participate in activities to help people in the community [society]"; Importance of *Social-Movement-Related Citizenship*; Importance of *Conventional Citizenship*.
(ii) *Pro-Environmental Behaviors (PEB) – Sustainable living* (Whitmarsh et al., 2017): Only used in upper-secondary school. Questions about how often students and their families do a range of PEB, for example, "How often do you or your family buy environmentally friendly products."

Third, we ran interviews with 29 students: two focus group interviews in upper-secondary school (n = 9); four focus group interviews in lower-secondary school (n = 15); and individual interviews with young people who were part of the Youth Council for the Ombudsman of Children in Iceland (n = 5).

4.3.2 Analysis

In this chapter, we will report the analysis of the student questionnaire data in terms of how young people's views and their experiences at school, at home, and in society correlate with (a) their views on the importance of different aspects of Good Citizenship, and (b) their PEB (18-year-olds only, n = 293). However, we will also report a few samples of the themes analyzed from the interviews.

In analyzing the student questionnaire, multivariate imputations by chained equations were used to impute missing values. Multiple imputations were conducted using R package MICE 3.16.0 (van Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). Twenty complete data sets were imputed with the maximum number of iterations set at 30. Regression analyses were conducted separately for each imputed data set and results pooled using Rubin's rules (Rubin, 1987). Logistic regression was used to impute binary variables. Numerical variables were imputed using the predictive mean matching technique (van Buuren, 2018). The data for models I, II, and III were imputed together. Imputations for models I, II, and III were conducted separately from imputations for model IV. All predictors and response variables were used for imputation. The response variables (Importance of Good Citizenship; Importance of Conventional Citizenship

or Social-Movement-Related Citizenship) were not used to predict each other. No auxiliary variables were used in the imputation process.

Descriptive analysis was used in analyzing the principal questionnaire. Theme analysis was used to analyze the open-ended questions in the principal questionnaire, and the focus group- and individual interviews with students (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 The Principal Questionnaire Findings

The response rate for the questionnaire sent to compulsory school principals was around 40% (70 out of 177). Findings indicated that less than half (45%) of them said they work with children's rights according to UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child in their school. Half of it occurs as part of regular subject teaching (50%) and learning but sometimes it is part of topics at school assemblies (10%) and theme days (2%). Teaching practices most used when working with human rights were discussions (28%) and project work of various kinds (40%). According to the principals, few teachers (16%) had received good training in human rights teaching and there was a lack of teaching material and curriculum guidance. The incentive to work with human rights came mostly from the requirements in the national curriculum (38%) and the policy of their schools (37%). Most principals said students get opportunities to express their opinions in school (18.5% a lot; 61.5% quite a lot) such as in student- or school councils or in individual meetings with principals.

Most principals said their schools work with values and virtues in a systematic manner (32% a lot; 37% quite a lot; 20% very little or not at all). When asked how, the principals gave various and contrary examples such as; working with the UN SDGs where "emphasis is placed on specific values and virtues, how the individual has obligations towards not only others but no less towards the earth"; helping students to become "the best version of themselves"; and promoting their responsibility by pointing out that "the only person they can control is themselves and they have responsibilities for their studies."

4.4.2 The Student Questionnaire Findings

The response rate for the student questionnaire was 78.4% (784 students out of 1000). Students answered questions about issues they found important for the future of the world and over 90% of them found food- and water shortage, poverty, and climate change important or rather important. They also reported taking part in various societal activities (see Figure 4.1).

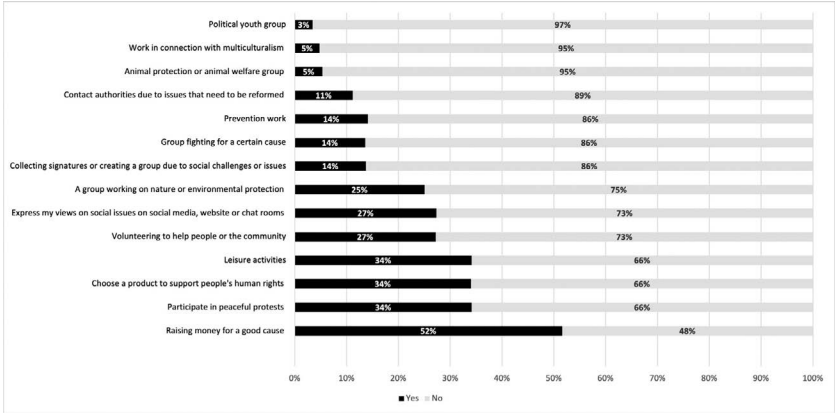

Figure 4.1 Students' Societal Participation.

The most common participation forms were *Raising money for a good cause* (52%), *Participation in peaceful protests* (34%), and *Choosing a product to support human rights* (34%).

Around 20–30% of students reported having *learned about civic issues* in school such as voting, laws, and political issues. One area stood out though, as 53% of students reported having learned how to protect the environment, for example, energy-saving and recycling.

Around 30% of students had school participation experience within the last 12 months or more than 12 months ago. The most frequent participation forms were voting for class representatives (50%), pro-environmental participation such as sorting waste/recycling (43%), having structured discussions on specific issues (34%), and taking part in decisions on schoolwork (34%). Students also said 30% of teachers often used democratic practices in class.

Less than 50% of the young people had sometimes or often learned about or discussed what qualities and values are important to be a good person (e.g., honesty, kindness, fairness, being responsible, being respectful to others). The learning or discussions were evenly common at home (49%) and in school (48%) but a little less common with friends (37%) and others (23%).

The findings from the social justice measure showed that around 50–60% agreed on most of the issues such as wanting to fight against injustice 59% but one result stood out as only 34% said their parents encouraged them to discuss politics and current affairs even if their views differ from their parents'.

The findings on the Good Citizenship measure showed that young people value social-movement-related actions such as protecting the environment and advocating for human rights (average scale score 59) more than conventional

actions (average scale score 47) such as joining a political party and discussing politics. They still found voting an important element of being a good citizen (51%).

Next, we used linear regression models to examine how chosen predicting variables were related to the young people's views on the Importance of Good Citizenship (Model I), Social-Movement-Related Citizenship (Model II), Conventional Citizenship (Model III), and a Pro-Environmental Behavior construct (PEB) (Model IV).

The findings for Model I are presented in Table 4.1.

As shown in the table, boys were less likely than girls to find Good Citizenship important; there was, however, no difference between the age groups of 14- and 18-year-olds (school type). More citizenship knowledge, such as learning about politics and happenings around the world, laws, and civic constitutional rights, predicted that the young people placed more importance on Good Citizenship. Their active participation in school, such as being a member of the student assembly or making the school more environmentally responsible, also predicted that they would consider citizenship more important. Following the news and discussing social issues with parents and friends, predicted students laying importance on Good Citizenship. Young people's greater sense of social justice predicted them placing more importance on Good Citizenship. The predicting variables in model III explain 22% of the variance in the dependent variable (R^2 = 28%).

The findings for Model II are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1 Model I: Importance of Good Citizenship.

			95% CI		
	β	*SE*	*LL*	*UL*	*p*
Intercept	10.83*	2.632	5.61	16.05	.000
Gender [a]	–1.21*	0.526	–2.25	–0.18	.022
School type [b]	–0.54	0.558	–1.65	0.56	.333
School participation [c]	0.14*	0.055	0.03	0.25	.011
Civic knowledge education [d]	0.19**	0.061	0.06	0.31	.003
Democratic class culture [e]	0.09	0.063	–0.03	0.22	.155
Parental autonomy granting [f]	0.55	0.354	–0.15	1.25	.122
Being informed and social discussion [g]	0.29***	0.079	0.13	0.44	.000
Social justice [h]	0.22***	0.046	0.13	0.31	.000
Learn about virtues and values [i]	0.12	0.086	–0.05	0.29	.166

Note. *N* = 784

* <.05 **<.01 ***<.001

[a] 0 = girls; 1= boys [b] 0 = lower-secondary school; 1= upper-secondary school

CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit

Table 4.2 Model II: Importance of Social-Movement-Related Citizenship.

			95% CI		
	β	*SE*	*LL*	*UL*	*p*
Intercept	4.54***	1.184	2.20	6.89	.000
Gender [a]	–0.61**	0.228	–1.06	–0.15	.009
School type [b]	–0.18	0.238	–0.65	0.29	.446
School participation [c]	0.07**	0.024	0.02	0.11	.007
Citizenship knowledge [d]	0.03	0.026	–0.02	0.08	.287
Democratic class culture [e]	0.03	0.031	–0.03	0.09	.351
Parental autonomy granting [f]	0.26	0.159	–0.06	0.57	.111
Staying informed and societal discussion [g]	0.12***	0.036	0.05	0.19	.001
Social justice [h]	0.13***	0.020	0.09	0.17	.000
Learn about virtues and values [i]	0.06	0.041	–0.02	0.15	.122

Note. $N = 784$

*<.05 **<.01 ***<.001
[a] 0 = girls; 1= boys [b] 0 = lower-secondary school; 1= upper-secondary school
CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit

As shown in the table, boys were less likely than girls to find *Social-Movement-Related Citizenship* important. The same applied to more participation in school such as being a member of the student assembly or making the school more environmentally responsible, following the news more and discussing social issues with parents or friends. Young people's greater sense of social justice also predicted them placing more importance on *Social-Movement-Related-Citizenship*. The predicting variables in model III explain 30% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 30\%$).

The findings for Model III are presented in Table 4.3.

As shown in Table 4.3, boys were less likely than girls to find *Conventional Citizenship* important. More citizenship knowledge such as learning about politics and happenings around the world, laws, and civic constitutional rights also predicted that the young people placed more importance on *Conventional Citizenship*. The same applied to participation in school, following the news and discussing social issues with parents and friends. Young people's greater sense of social justice also predicted them placing more importance on *Conventional Citizenship*. The predicting variables in Model III explain 22% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 22.3\%$).

The findings for Model PEB IV are presented in Table 4.4.

In Model IV, we used PEB as a dependent variable measuring 18-year-olds' view of their own and their families' PEB, such as buying environmental-friendly products or walking, biking, or using public transport for travel. The findings from Model IV can be seen in Table 4.4.

Table 4.3 Model III: Conventional Citizenship.

			95% CI		
	β	*SE*	*LL*	*UL*	*p*
Intercept	6.48***	1.725	3.05	9.91	.000
Gender [a]	–0.75*	0.330	–1.40	–0.10	.025
School type [b]	–0.17	0.354	–0.87	0.53	.632
School participation [c]	0.07*	0.036	0.00	0.14	.041
Citizenship knowledge [d]	0.17***	0.041	0.09	0.25	.000
Democratic class culture [e]	0.06	0.039	–0.02	0.14	.129
Parental autonomy granting [f]	0.28	0.241	–0.20	0.76	.244
Staying informed and societal discussion [g]	0.17***	0.051	0.07	0.27	.001
Social justice [h]	0.09**	0.30	0.03	0.15	.004
Learn about virtues and values [i]	0.04	0.054	–0.07	0.14	.481

Note. $N = 784$

*<.05 **<.01 ***<.001
[a] 0 = girls; 1= boys [b] 0 = lower-secondary school; 1= upper-secondary school
CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit

Table 4.4 Model IV: Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB).

			95% CI		
	β	*SE*	*LL*	*UL*	*p*
Intercept	13.44*	5.905	1.30	25.57	.031
Gender [a]	0.84	1.213	–1.63	3.31	.495
School participation [b]	0.14	0.130	–0.13	0.42	.291
Citizenship knowledge [c]	0.15	0.248	–0.47	0.77	.563
Democratic class culture [d]	–0.15	0.149	–0.45	0.16	.340
Perceived parental autonomy granting [e]	2.26*	0.860	0.47	4.05	.016
Staying informed and societal discussion [f]	0.12	0.214	–0.32	0.56	.579
Social justice [g]	0.34***	0.100	0.15	0.54	.001
Learn about virtues and values [h]	0.04	0.208	–0.40	0.49	.836
Environmental protest [i]	5.56***	1.355	2.67	8.44	.001
Nature or environmental protection group [j]	0.97	1.110	–1.25	3.19	.385

Note. $N = 784$

*<.05 **<.01 ***<.001
[a] 0 = girls; 1= boys [i] 0 = No; 1= Yes; [j] 0 = No; 1= Yes
CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit

As shown in Table 4.4, parental autonomy granting (parents support children's independence, critical thinking, and listen to their ideas) predicted more PEB. Young people's greater sense of social justice and their former participation in environmental protest also predicted more PEB.

The predicting variables in model IV explain 35% of the variance in the dependent variable (R^2 = 35.3%).

4.4.3 Focus Group Findings

A brief summary will now be given of the interview findings related to the focus of this chapter. Students in both lower- and upper-secondary schools did not feel they had enough opportunities to take part in decision-making or influencing their learning, while they had more say on practical school matters, such as choosing school furniture or decisions on school ground issues. However, some mentioned getting opportunities through individual teachers. Those who had been on student councils found it a good way to influence their school but complained about not being listened to enough.

About civic- and sustainability learning, most students said they had some learning or discussion at school on different social or environmental issues, for example, climate change, racism, gender equality, and bullying. However, they said the teaching is often "repetitive or boring" with too little emphasis on things relevant to students' lives. The interviews with the young people in the Youth Council of the Ombudsman for Children in Iceland stressed the importance of discussing social and environmental issues at school so that children become more aware, and because they may not be learning about them at home. Others mentioned having learned about sustainable lifestyles at home or, conversely, having brought their knowledge to their home.

Most students felt that they could express their opinions freely at school, but said some students are reluctant because they are shy, want to "fit in" with peers, worry about being criticized, or think they do not have enough knowledge on the subjects discussed. They also mentioned that teachers sometimes get insecure during such lessons and seem afraid to make mistakes.

The young people mentioned having had some teaching related to values and human rights in school, such as in social studies or in elective classes such as philosophy. However, values education mostly seemed to take place indirectly in discussions between the teachers and students. Many of them were familiar with the Convention on the Rights of the Child but expressed not having learned enough about controversial issues, values, and human rights. Concerns about their future and the earth were noticeable while talking to the young people.

They reported wanting to be more involved in community service but needed more engagement opportunities. Most school – community work was related to collecting or raising money (e.g., through craft fairs) for charity, and students felt that the school should do more to connect them to social projects outside of school as they do not know how to go about it. Many of them mentioned taking part in climate

school strikes in 2019 inspired by Greta Thunberg. They said that some teachers supported their participation, some had required parental permission, while others recorded absences. They stressed that opportunities for non-Icelandic speakers and less-/disabled students to have impact are even less.

However, the young people thought that they could, by using social media, make a difference both locally and internationally and influence important issues such as politics and equality. When feminism and gendered issues were mentioned, clear gender differences were visible as some boys tended to get defensive and stated that nowadays people get offended about most things men say on social media while the girls thought it was a good platform to fight for gender equality.

4.5 Discussion

In the meeting of the Nordic Council (2023) held in Reykjavík Iceland in March 2023, the vice president of the council said:

> We are facing major challenges . . . war of aggression against Ukraine has upturned the security situation in Europe. At the same time, we are facing an acute climate crisis . . . top priorities must be to defend democracy, peace, and human rights . . . maintaining the Nordic welfare model is perhaps the best way to meet the demand for ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

In our study, we strove to gain new knowledge of how young people in Iceland think and act related to this worldly pursuit toward good citizenship and sustainable lifestyles. The key findings revealed several important messages on how young people can better be prepared to face the aforementioned challenges and be agents of improvement.

The young people value *Social-Movement-Related* actions such as protecting the environment and advocating for human rights higher than *Conventional* actions such as joining a political party as a means in their good citizenship passage. When comparing findings to other nations, Icelandic students lean more toward *Social-Movement-Related* engagements than other countries' students (Schulz et al., 2018, p. 117). Overall, girls placed more importance on Good Citizenship, both *Social-Movement-Related* and *Conventional*, than boys. This is in line with earlier studies (Schulz et al., 2018).

4.5.1 Schools' and Parents' Role in Fostering Good Citizenship and Sustainable Lifestyles

An important finding was that students' participation in civic-related activities in school (e.g., student council) predicted that they put more

importance on both *Conventional Citizenship* (e.g., vote in all elections) and *Social-Movement-Related Citizenship* (e.g., finding it important to take part in work that benefits people in society). These findings add to the findings from Guðjohnsen and Aðalbjarnardóttir (2017), which indicated that young people's volunteering predicted their placing more importance on *Social-Movement-Related Citizenship*. Engagements related to environmental issues (e.g., protests in relation to environmental threats) also predicted that their own and their families' PEB. Given the importance of participation experience and in the light of only 30% of students having that, it is vital for schools to help nurture pupils' *Good Citizenship* and sustainable lifestyles by providing meaningful participation opportunities through volunteering and other services (Peterson and Civil, 2021).

In the interviews, students emphasized wanting more participation opportunities at school and to be able to influence not only practical matters but also their learning and things that are relevant to their lives.

At the same time, schools in Iceland need to stress more democratic practices (Harðardóttir & Jónsson, 2021) and diverse participation. In the interviews, only 30% of students described that teachers are using democratic practices often in class. Schools need to encourage *all* students' active participation and foster autonomy and independent thinking (Yang et al., 2023). However, students revealed that most students are left with limited participation access as the same people get chosen repeatedly as representatives in school projects.

Also, only half of the principals reported that their schools work with children's rights, and when describing democratic practices, they seem to "beautify the situation." At the same time, it is evident that teachers need to be better prepared for working with human rights and civic issues and supported by providing teaching materials and curriculum guidance.

More mainstream civic participation opportunities are needed for young people, such as activism projects, voluntary service programs, and NGO engagement. Only 27% of students reported having volunteered to help people or the community, 25% had worked with a nature or environmental protection group, and 34% had taken part in peaceful protests. The young people raised concern in the interviews about not having platforms to convey their civic voice and impact. Many mentioned having engaged in the 2019 school strike for climate and received partial support from school and parents. By offering more hands-on participatory opportunities, children's civic and climate change action can be facilitated (Trott, 2020).

Another noteworthy finding relates to *learning about virtues and values* not predicting *Good Citizenship* views or PEB. Only half of the students answered having learned or discussed virtues and values at school, home, and with friends or others. Some students mentioned in the interviews having learned about values through parental influences but described having

little experience of virtues or values education at school and when they did, it appeared quite tokenistic, for example, discussing the school mottos, or values painted on the walls. It can be speculated that more emphasis needs to be laid on character- and values and virtues education. There is perhaps a sense of reluctance or lack of knowledge and skills among teachers for working with these issues. It might also be that young people's knowledge and sense of values and virtues concepts are insufficient, leading to them not experiencing having received such education at school, directly or indirectly.

Given the global nature of many issues facing societies today, civic engagement and active citizenship education should address global as well as local issues and engage with the concepts of global- and eco-citizenship (Huckle & Wals, 2015). Others have highlighted that attention should be paid to how adolescents currently think about their futures due to how it connects with their long-term societal behaviors (Finlay et al., 2015). Over 90% of our students voiced concern for global issues such as climate change, food shortage, water shortage, and poverty. The last three of which are unlikely to be issues in Iceland itself in the foreseeable future, therefore indicating students were thinking globally when answering the question, potentially giving a certain idea about them as future citizens.

The role of parents/guardians and other adults in guiding children and young people in their role as citizens cannot be underestimated. We saw for example how young people's societal discussion with parents and friends predicted their views on *Good Citizenship*. However, we also noticed that only a third of parents encourage democratic political discussion allowing multiple opinions to shine. Parental autonomy granting also predicted young people's own and their families' PEB and Sustainable Lifestyles. These findings bring out the notion that parents are key parties in building children's civic and sustainable foundations.

4.5.2 Steppingstones on the Path to Good Citizenship and Sustainable Lifestyles

Returning to our focus on a more holistic approach to citizenship and sustainability, and potential avenues toward integrating civic-, character- and sustainability education, we suggest social justice might provide a connecting concept. Students' sense of social justice predicted them placing importance on *Conventional-* and *Social-Movement-Related Citizenship*, as well as their PEB. This could be an important means of fostering positive views toward *Good Citizenship* and Sustainable Lifestyles, and their associated virtues.

The dominant conception of social justice in the late 20th century and into the present has been a contractarian conception along the lines of Rawls' justice as fairness (1971, 2001), focusing on what justice demands of the institutional structure and its functioning for an entire society. While it provides some ways for critically analyzing school systems, it is less applicable to "mundane" issues of justice as they appear in students' lives. This is reflected in students' declining participation in conventional politics, where issues of social structure are central, while young people have found diverse means of direct engagement through NGOs and various projects.

Approaching concerns of justice along the lines of Amartya Sen (2009) might be more fruitful in relating civic-, character-, and sustainability education. Sen suggests that we take our cue, in theorizing about justice, from the various and often diverse instances of injustices we see all around us. Thus, he begins the preface to his book *The Idea of Justice* (2009) with a reference to Charles Dickens *Great Expectations*:

> In the little world in which children have their existence', says Pip in Charles Dickens's Great Expectations, "there is nothing so finely perceived and finely felt, as injustice." I expect Pip is right. . . . But the strong perception of manifest injustice applies to adult human beings as well. What moves us, reasonably enough, is not the realization that the world falls short of being completely just – which few of us expect – but that there are clearly remediable injustices around us which we want to eliminate.
>
> (Sen, 2009, p. vii)

By approaching justice in the way Sen suggests, a theory of justice can serve as the basis of practical reasoning with students about what might count as instances of injustice and how they might be reduced. This invites educators to engage their students in reflecting critically on their local surroundings with a global perspective. Such a reflection could bring together concerns of sustainability, citizenship, and character, for example, what it means to share the earth (See Habib, 2013), issues of civic structure and social engagement, important character traits or virtues such as harmony with nature (Jordan & Kristjánsson, 2016), and abilities to engage in critical discussion and to reflect on one's own relationships with both the human and more-than-human. A comparative conception of social justice, along the lines of Sen, might help to systematize a holistic approach and give it motivational force that helps young people to take interest in common, global well-being, develop sustainable mindsets, and become the agents of change that the world so desperately needs.

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5 Civility, Contentious Monuments, and Public Space

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5.1 Introduction

In recent years, many campaigns and protests have taken place to demand the removal of monuments considered controversial. Prominent cases include the "Rhodes Must Fall" movement starting in South Africa and the Countering Colston campaign in England. Some view Cecil Rhodes as the embodiment of British imperialism, and Edward Colston as the embodiment of slavery. Both introduced and promoted practices and institutions that contributed to the development of structural racism and its consolidation over time. Statues or other forms of commemorations in their honor, including naming places after them, are therefore highly contested. In April 2015, after weeks of protests, the University of Cape Town made the decision to remove the statue of Cecil Rhodes from its campus. In June 2020, the statue of Edward Colston in Bristol was toppled by Black Lives Matter protesters and thrown into Bristol Harbour.

Following these incidents, statues and monuments have received increasing attention in both public debate and scholarly literature. In moral and political philosophy, this is part of a general trend to reflect on the role of public architecture and the built environment in society, how they affect our social and political lives, and the messages public symbols might communicate. Monuments are physical objects such as statues or buildings that are meant to commemorate a person, issue, or event. Although there are many private monuments, we focus on public monuments in this chapter. By this term, we mean monuments which officials may have commissioned and/or whose construction or placement on public grounds they may have authorized, and which are often maintained through the use of public money. Importantly, a monument can be public even if it was introduced or paid for by private parties (Bardon 2022, 256–257). For instance, many of the Confederate monuments in the United States were paid for by a private association, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and were then given to states or cities to display on public property. Consequently, they should still be understood as public monuments.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-6

Philosophers working on the issue of contested monuments have mainly focused on two questions. First, what is it that makes certain monuments controversial or morally contentious? When monuments are public, it can be argued that whatever message they are sending can be interpreted as a message endorsed by the state. This means that monuments can be understood as "government speech" (Schragger 2021). Monuments are morally objectionable when they are interpreted as honoring someone who is a "serious wrongdoer" (Frowe 2019), when they represent a degrading ideology (Schulz 2019), when they valorize historical injustices (Matthes 2018), or when they threaten sources of self-respect for some members of society (Lim 2020; Schulz 2019). This leads to the second question: what should be done with morally objectionable monuments? Burch-Brown identifies and analyses four different solutions: preserving, removing, recontextualizing, and reclaiming contested monuments (2022). Most of the discussion, however, has focused on the ethics of removal. On the one hand, it has been argued that monuments such as Confederate statues should be removed because they are harmful (Timmerman 2020), because the state has a duty to condemn serious wrongdoing (Frowe 2019), or because this is necessary to challenge unjust hierarchies (Burch-Brown 2017). On the other hand, it has been argued that monuments, including contested ones, are the sites of memorialization (Demetriou 2020) or public memory (Abrahams 2022), and that removing them would be wrong because it would obliterate morally problematic yet factually important figures, events, and/or issues from the historical record (Cannadine 2018). Presenting this dilemma as a false dichotomy, according to which we can only either remove or preserve contested monuments, Lim argues that vandalism can be the most appropriate thing to do since it can address the harms or wrongs that are associated with the monument "while not reducing everyday occasions for remembrance" (2020, 198).

In this chapter, we take a different approach by addressing the question of monuments through the concept of civility. Since civility is ultimately about the expression of respect, we believe that it makes sense to interpret monuments as being more or less civil. Crucially, the concept of civility brings additional nuance to the evaluation of monuments and of the messages that they convey: the types of serious injustices associated with the statues of Rhodes or Colston, for instance, represent incivility at its worst, but monuments can also be uncivil in more superficial and less objectionable ways. Using the lens of civility allows us to go beyond the more straightforward cases of monuments that are considered overtly racist and show that it is important to also pay attention to monuments that violate civility more subtly. Ultimately, this can open up new ways of thinking about monuments: we should consider not only whether a certain monument should be removed but also, as a society more generally, what themes and functions we should prioritize with monuments.

Our analysis proceeds as follows. In Section 5.1, we explain what we mean by civility. We distinguish between different dimensions of civility and of incivility, and different ways in which they may intersect. What is particularly relevant is that we identify a form of civility that is not necessarily a good thing (surface-level civility) as well as a form of incivility that is not necessarily a bad thing (critical incivility). In Section 5.2, we focus on surface-level civility, which is illustrated by the statue of Joan of Arc in the Place des Pyramides in Paris and by *Fearless Girl* in New York. Next, we examine how monuments can also be critically uncivil, through the cases of a statue honoring Desmond Tutu in South Africa and Australia's settler monuments. The complexities and nuances of monuments are revealed through the use of the disaggregated concept of (in)civility, showing that the question of how to interpret the messages that these monuments send requires more work than has commonly been assumed.

5.2 Civility as a Lens[1]

Civility is often understood as a virtue associated with etiquette and good manners. For instance, according to Edyvane, "civility is bound up with the idea of what it means to be civilized, to be well-mannered or polite; its focus is on standards of behavior in our dealings with others in everyday life" (2017, 345). Some authors refer to this kind of civility as "ethical civility" (Edyvane 2017, 345) or as a "moral virtue" (Calhoun 2000, 273). However, politeness is a more accurate and clearer way to define this first kind of civility, since one can be polite toward others and respect the rules of etiquette for non-moral reasons, without acknowledging the moral worth of others. For example, to label civility as politeness "ethical civility" or "moral virtue" would prove contentious in the context of a racist politician who uses polite speech or behavior to advance a racist agenda. The politician exhibits only a surface-level kind of politeness, lacking any (positive) moral connotations.

Civility in this sense involves not only a list of dos and don'ts for everyday life, including how to greet people and how to behave in particular scenarios (e.g., not jumping the queue, not speaking loudly on the phone in public), but also a "set of habits of speaking and listening" (Bejan 2017, 164) that tells us more specifically how we should talk to others, especially when we happen to disagree with them: we should avoid offensive language, we should listen to what others have to say, we should not interrupt, we should not give dismissive responses, and so on. Civility as politeness is just enough to make disagreeing possible and tolerable, "even – and especially – in the absence of actual respect or affirmation" (Bejan 2011, 417); for this reason, the "mere civility" defended by Bejan is kept distinct from the much more demanding values of recognition or mutual respect. What civility as politeness demands is not the recognition of others' equal

moral worth but merely the recognition of others' status as co-members of society with whom we must coexist. It is this kind of recognition that we communicate to others when we treat them politely. As Edyvane notes, politeness "implies recognition of members of the group as enjoying a certain standing in relation to the problem of sociation" but it does not necessarily imply "that I think you [are] entitled to an *equal say*" (2020, 95, original emphasis). It therefore seems misleading to call such a thin conception of civility "moral," which is why we prefer the term "civility as politeness."

Civility as politeness inherently depends on "generally agreed upon, often codified, social rules" (Calhoun 2000, 260). Crucially, these rules are neither universal nor static; rather, they are based on customs, which are relative and vary between societies (Kekes 1984; Sinopoli 1995). This poses another problem. The historically and culturally contingent nature of civility (as politeness) is also sometimes linked to its alleged "dark side" (Bejan 2017, 9) and the view that civility may be a vehicle for oppression, silencing, and exclusion. As Elias (1969) and Freud (2004) have famously argued, and as Bejan aptly reminds us, given that its norms are often developed against the structural background of pre-existing power asymmetries, civility could be considered by some as "irremediably imbricated with colonialism and empire . . . a covert demand for conformity that delegitimizes dissent while reinforcing the status quo" (Bejan 2017, 9). When that is the case, potential responses may include "incivility as dissent" (Edyvane 2020), that is, deliberate acts of incivility aimed at expressing a sense of injustice toward established social norms, structures, and institutions.

Alongside the thin conception that we label "civility as politeness," some scholarship views civility primarily as a political concept, describing it as a civic virtue that relates to liberal politics (Edyvane 2017; Meyer 2000). This understanding of civility focuses on an individual's responsibilities as a member of a liberal-democratic political community. Echoing and expanding on this sentiment, Edyvane notes how this notion of civility is

> bound up with the idea of an association of citizens, and includes cognate ideas of the civic, the civil, and the civilian; it concerns one's status and duties as a member of a political community, as a citizen with certain rights and responsibilities.
>
> (2017, 345)

This characterization of civility highlights the importance for individuals to adhere to core liberal-democratic values in a way that takes into account the collective good. In other words, those who are civil in this political sense engage in "a kind of politics, a type of political discourse that does not harm, injure, or offend fellow citizens" (Harcourt 2012, 5). A civility

that entails a regard for the broader public can arguably improve democratic governance and social coexistence in the long term.

This second kind of civility is often simply called "political civility" (Edyvane 2017, 345), but we believe that "civility as public-mindedness" is a more accurate term. It is not merely civility applied to the political sphere; instead, it is a kind of civility characterized by an attitude of giving proper weight and recognition to others as free and equal members of society. Those adhering to civility as public-mindedness demonstrate a deep moral commitment to liberal political values and institutions (Macedo 1992), and it is in this sense that civility is considered a core liberal value (Boyd 2006, 863; Meyer 2000, 79; Rawls 2005, 217; Sabl 2005, 219). While politeness is not necessarily absent from civility as public-mindedness, the distinction between the two dimensions is important. It helps us to highlight that one can be perfectly civil in the sense of politeness without adhering to any of the rules of civility as public-mindedness tied to specific liberal and democratic commitments.

We believe that it is useful to distinguish between two different sub-dimensions of civility as public-mindedness. The first sub-dimension focuses on one's duties toward others regarding the justification of political decisions. We call this "justificatory civility." Rawls (2005, 217) introduces and defends the most prominent account of this first sub-dimension of public-mindedness in what he refers to as the "duty of civility." This notion of political civility corresponds with the "practice of reasonable public discourse" (Meyer 2000, 72): the policies that one advocates should be justified by appealing only to public reasons, that is, reasons that all persons in a diverse society could understand and accept at some level of idealization. By complying with the duty of civility, members of society treat one another as free and equal persons. To be civil in the justificatory sense means to comply with the demands of public reason. This requires refraining from invoking our comprehensive (e.g., religious or philosophical) doctrines when justifying political rules and appealing instead to political values that are widely endorsed in liberal-democratic societies. These include individual rights and liberties, equality of opportunity, and the promotion of the common good; guidelines of inquiry, that is, "principles of reasoning and rules of evidence in the light of which citizens are to decide whether substantive principles properly apply and to identify laws and policies that best satisfy them"; and "the methods and conclusions of science when these are not controversial" (Rawls 2005, 224). As Cohen puts it, this kind of civility is not about politeness and "how we talk to our friends or students or members of our neighborhood or church or union or company," but about politics and "how we ought to argue with others on basic political and constitutional questions" (2012, 119–120). By complying with the constraints of public reason, we communicate our respect for

other members of society as free and equal persons. In the recent literature in liberal political philosophy, this is often how civility is understood.

The second sub-dimension of civility as public-mindedness – what we call "moral civility" – also involves recognizing others as free and equal. However, unlike justificatory civility, moral civility does not relate to the justificatory status of the reasons used to support political decisions. What matters here is not whether we use the language of public reason when justifying political rules but whether our words or actions express the right kind of moral commitments toward others. More specifically, being morally civil involves recognizing others as free and equal by refraining from infringing upon their fundamental rights, liberties, and equal civic standing. This may require, for example, refraining from the use of physical violence (Zurn 2013), discrimination (Peterson 2019), or racist or hateful speech that characterizes members of certain groups (e.g., women or minority ethnic groups) as holding a lesser status in some way (see, e.g., Waldron 2012; see also Bejan 2017, 7).

Importantly, moral civility (like the other [sub-]dimensions of civility) concerns not how we treat others per se, but rather the kind of moral commitment that we are communicating to others when we treat them (or, in the case of moral incivility, do not treat them) in a certain way. More specifically, moral civility involves *displaying or communicating* to others, through one's speech and/or behavior, that we respect them as free and equal members of society. Indeed, as Calhoun (2000, 261–262) points out, one can be respectful (or tolerant or considerate) toward others without actually being civil or uncivil – for example, someone who donates to charities without knowing (or being known by) their beneficiaries. Conversely, one can be disrespectful toward others, for example, by engaging in covert criminal activities, without being uncivil, that is, without communicating any disrespect to their victims or to other members of society more broadly (Calhoun 2000, 261). Furthermore, in some cases, one can be both respectful and uncivil at the same time – for example, an employer who fully complies with affirmative action regulations but who says to the new employee, "[y]ou know you only got this job because you're black" (Calhoun 2000, 261).

The distinction between the three (sub-)dimensions of civility becomes particularly clear if we consider that adherence to one dimension does not always imply adherence to another (Bardon et al. 2023). Indeed, while one can simultaneously be polite and public-minded, or impolite and non-public-minded, in some cases, there is a *functional incongruence* between civility as politeness and civility as public-mindedness or, under the latter, between justificatory civility and moral civility. For example, so-called "polite Nazis" (Tiso 2017) may strategically comply with norms of civility as politeness in order to advance political agendas that fail to recognize

members of some groups as free and equal members of society entitled to basic rights and liberties, thus contravening moral civility. In other cases, one might comply with justificatory civility in order to defend or preserve social and political institutions that are not consistent with moral civility, for example, far-right political actors that appeal to liberal values, such as free speech and gender equality, in order to advance exclusionary (and, therefore, morally uncivil) political agendas (e.g., Castelli Gattinara 2017, 346). We call this kind of incongruence *surface-level civility*.

Conversely, the goal of civility as public-mindedness may sometimes be accompanied by impolite means: acts of dissent or civil disobedience may violate norms of civility as politeness while advocating more just institutions in line with the demands of civility as public-mindedness. Edyvane (2020) describes these kinds of challenges to civility norms as "incivility as dissent," where incivility refers to violations of civility as politeness, as opposed to civility as public-mindedness. He suggests, "instead of functioning as a one-off challenge to a particular institutional failure, incivility-as-dissent more often consists in recurring practices of small-scale rebellion inspired often by a nebulous sense of injustice" (Edyvane 2020, 105; see also Delmas 2018). Likewise, one may disregard the constraints of justificatory civility, for example, by invoking God, in order to promote liberal-democratic values and institutions or fight illiberal and undemocratic ones, such as slavery, thus advancing moral civility. For example, Rawls (2005) refers to the case of those abolitionists who explicitly used religious reasons to justify the abolition of slavery in the United States and therefore advance liberal-democratic norms and institutions. Slavery, they argued, was simply "contrary to God's law" (Rawls 2005, 249); this would be consistent with moral civility but not with justificatory civility. In some cases, norms of moral civility may be violated in order to promote them in other ways, as when climate activists engage in violent or other criminal acts in order to put pressure on governments to tackle climate change – a goal that arguably communicates respect for others as free and equal (cf. Zellentin 2015). We call the use of impoliteness, justificatory incivility, or moral incivility itself to advance morally civil goals *critical incivility*.

In the next two sections, we examine two of the aforementioned instances of functional incongruence – surface-level civility and critical incivility – in connection with specific monuments.

5.3 Surface-Level Civility

In the case of surface-level civility, an apparent commitment to the norms of civility (as politeness) can be used to undermine it in a deeper sense. This can also happen with monuments.

5.3.1 The Statue of Joan of Arc in Paris

Consider, first, the case of the statue of Joan of Arc in Paris located in the Place des Pyramides (see Figure 5.1).[2] During the 15th-century Hundred Years' War, a teenage Joan of Arc was supposedly guided by the voices of angels to save the kingdom of France. Captured and sold to the English, she was put on trial for heresy and burnt at the stake in Rouen in 1431. In the 19th century, she became the embodiment of French nationalism. The 1858 publication of a book by the republican historian Jules Michelet, dedicated to Joan of Arc, contributed greatly to her renewed popularity and to the idea that she plays a significant role in the national myth. So much so that this statue in the Place des Pyramides was the only public monument directly commissioned by the French state in the first few decades of the Third Republic (1870–1914) (Sniter 2001, 265).

The golden bronze statue was created by Emmanuel Frémiet and inaugurated in 1874: it presents Joan of Arc riding a horse, wearing armor, and

Figure 5.1 "*Dad, Who Is This Woman? – One of Our Great Men.*" Le Monde Illustré 04 Avril 1874.

Source: gallica.bnf.fr/BNF

waving her flag. She is not depicted as a pious Catholic or as a martyr but as a warrior and a figure of national resistance, ready to lead the battle against the foreign invaders. At the time of the statue's inauguration, Joan of Arc was widely perceived as a "republican symbol" (Sniter 2001, 265). At the end of the 19th century, left-wing senators even attempted to introduce an annual national holiday in celebration of Joan of Arc (Sanson 1973): they were unsuccessful in 1884 and in 1894 (Sanson 1973), but the national holiday was adopted in 1920 under the official name of *Fête nationale de Jeanne d'Arc et du patriotisme* and it has been taking place ever since on the second Sunday of May.

Yet, over time, Joan of Arc gradually became more closely associated with monarchists and with right-wing Catholic nationalists (Sniter 2001, 278), who would emphasize the religious and royalist aspects of her story. At the beginning of the 20th century, for example, the far-right monarchist movement *Action Française* "sought to establish unequivocally Joan of Arc as the symbol of non-republican France" (Hanna 1985, 217). This appropriation by the far right continues to this day. In the 1980s, the *Front National* decided to celebrate Joan of Arc not on the second Sunday of May but on May Day (May 1), to provoke the left-wing trade unions that organize a demonstration every year on that day. A march leading to the statue of Joan of Arc has become the annual parade of the far-right party. Interestingly, in 2022, for the first time, the march led not to the statue in the Place des Pyramides but to another statue of Joan of Arc in Paris. The golden monument had been so deeply appropriated by the far right that it ended up as embarrassing for the *Rassemblement National*, the successor of the *Front National*, since the relabeled party claims to be "neither right nor left," and officially rejects the violent, racist, anti-democratic, and antirepublican elements associated with the far right.

Today, Joan of Arc in general, and her statue in the Place des Pyramides in particular, remains deeply connected to the speeches of the *Front National* and *Rassemblement National* leaders, and to the images of gatherings of far-right activists. The meaning of the monument has been significantly affected by its political appropriation. So what does this have to do with civility? We believe that approaching the interpretation of the monument through the lens of civility is useful to explain the discomfort felt by many French people today toward the statue. As a result of its appropriation, the monument can be interpreted as a case of surface-level civility: there is nothing particularly offensive about the statue of Joan of Arc in the Place des Pyramides, but the fact that it has been routinely used with the purpose of undermining what we call *moral civility* matters. For far-right activists as well as for the general public, the statue has become the symbol of a certain idea of French nationalism, of the defense of its territory and its identity, and of the need to fight against foreign invaders. Because of the

actions of several far-right groups, the foreign invaders are understood not only as an enemy army in the context of an international war but also as immigrants, or maybe even as non-White or non-Christian French citizens, in the context of a culturally diverse society. The official celebration of a historical figure and national hero begins to convey a message of inequality and exclusion, which conflicts with the idea of communicating respect for others as free and equal persons that is central to moral civility.

The surface-level civility at work here can be seen as a more general strategy by the far right to come across as respectful while, at a deeper level, violating the norms of moral civility. In other words, Joan of Arc has become a dog whistle which allows its far-right appropriators to explicitly claim a commitment to certain values of the French republic while at the same time, and implicitly, undermine others. Ernst Nolte, focusing on the *Action Française*, once made a similar point commenting:

> True, no photograph exists exposing the character of the Action française as dramatically and graphically as is often the case with pictures from the Italian Fascist and National Socialist era. A group of peaceful citizens, the *Comité directeurs* of the Action française are walking in the procession in honor of Joan of Arc, among them [nationalist intellectual Charles] Maurras, short, grey, and unobtrusive, carrying an umbrella.
>
> (Nolte, as cited in Hanna 1985, 239)

Hanna adds that, for Nolte, "this semblance of civility cleverly concealed the true character of the Action française" (Hanna 1985, 239). This true character, which we have argued represents a serious violation of moral civility, ends up being reflected in the monument itself. It is this "semblance of civility" or surface-level civility which explains the unease that many feel toward the statue today.

What is striking about the case of the statue of Joan of Arc is that its perception as an instance of surface-level civility results entirely from the fact that it has been appropriated by the far right in recent history. When the statue was inaugurated in 1874, no such interpretation existed. Furthermore, it is interesting that the perception of surface-level civility is associated very specifically with the statue located in the Place des Pyramides, and not necessarily with Joan of Arc herself, or with other statues that represent her.

5.3.2 The Fearless Girl Statue in New York City

The idea that a monument can be civil only on a superficial level while in fact conveying uncivil messages at a deeper level does not always result from the way it has been received or appropriated by people. Sometimes, it

results more directly from the monument itself and the intentions (implicit or explicit) of those who created or commissioned it. The Fearless Girl statue in New York City presents such a case.

To understand Fearless Girl, we must discuss the Charging Bull, a statue that was installed on December 14, 1989, in front of the New York Stock Exchange during the night and without authorization. For the artist, Arturo Di Modica, the statue symbolized American financial resilience and it was meant as a Christmas present to New York City. The statue was quickly removed, but, following public outcry, it was brought back to the financial district, on Bowling Green, a couple of blocks away from its original location (Chused 2020, 45–46). On March 7, 2017, the day before International Women's Day, the Fearless Girl statue was installed – also during the night but this time with a temporary permit from the city (McGregor 2017) – in front of Charging Bull. It features a young girl with her hands on her hips and her chin up, standing defiantly. A few months after it was installed, the city decided to move the statue to Broad Street, where she now stands facing the New York Stock Exchange. Although no longer located next to Charging Bull, the meanings of both statues remain connected.

Fearless Girl was created by artist Kristen Visbal but it was commissioned, through the McCann advertising agency, by one of the largest asset-management companies in the world, State Street Global Advisors. That the statue should represent a little girl and that it should be placed in front of Charging Bull were decisions made by the advertising agency, with the intention to "call attention to 'the glass ceiling regarding pay and promotion of women in the Wall Street community'" (Kolhatkar 2022, quoting Visbal). With Fearless Girl facing it, Charging Bull became a symbol not of economic power but of "patriarchy and capitalism gone wild" (Peluso 2017). This made Fearless Girl immediately controversial: Di Modica's lawyers wrote to the mayor of New York City, complaining that the new statue violated his rights regarding derivative work, that is, the "right of an artist to license works that rely on her or his original creation to make a new work," as well as his "moral right to limit modification of his work" (Chused 2020, 54). Another reason that Fearless Girl was contested is that it was seen as an illustration of "corporate feminism": the promotion of women leaders in financial companies generally does little to challenge the structures of gender inequality. To some, the statue relies on "outdated conventional gender stereotypes" and is a "symbol of the disneyfication of feminism" (Peluso 2017).

The legal disputes regarding the rights of an artist over their work and the disagreements over conceptions of feminism are however not what make the idea of surface-level civility relevant in the case of Fearless Girl. The reason why the statue can be seen as an instance of surface-level

civility is the discrepancy between the explicit purpose of the statue and the actual objectives of the company that commissioned it. The timeline suggests that the true intention behind Fearless Girl was to restore the image of the company:

> [I]n January, following an inquiry by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Boston field office, the Justice Department announced that State Street Corporation, the parent company of State Street Global Advisors, had entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with the government, consenting to pay more than $64 million to resolve fraud charges. (Bellafante 2017)

That the firm is particularly committed to gender equality can also be seriously questioned: in 2017, only three of the 11 board members of State Street Corporation were women (Bellafante 2017) and in September 2017, just a few months after Fearless Girl was installed, the company agreed to pay several million dollars to settle claims of gender and racial discrimination (Kolhatkar 2022). Far from being particularly praiseworthy in terms of its treatment of women and other underrepresented groups, the firm behind the statue had itself reinforced structures of gender inequality. Feminism is therefore not the message; it is the disguise. The statue is ultimately a publicity stunt motivated by the private interests of a major money manager, and the success of the publicity stunt comes precisely from the fact that several explicit elements are used to convey the idea that Fearless Girl results from a commitment to the public value of gender equality. Pretending to act out of public-mindedness only as a cover-up for one's true private ambitions is objectionable: the hypocrisy and cynical self-interest of those who orchestrated its creation have deeply tainted the meanings associated with the statue.

As with Joan of Arc, the example of Fearless Girl shows that civility is not always a good thing if it is exploited by those with more questionable values or interests. In these cases, civility becomes a tool used for something different than a genuine expression of respect. It is this doublespeak that makes surface-level civility morally suspect. Monuments, like people, can and should be criticized for it.

5.4 Critical Incivility

While the monuments that we examined in the previous section, we argued, are instances of surface-level civility, here we turn our attention to monuments which are critically uncivil either because of what they represent or

because of how they have been interpreted by some. As we explained in Section 5.2, we are in the presence of critical incivility when the norms of civility as politeness, justificatory civility, or moral civility itself are violated in order to advance moral civility.

5.4.1 The Statue of Desmond Tutu in Cape Town

The first example of a monument capturing the idea of critical incivility that we examine is the statue of South African Anglican Archbishop and theologian Desmond Tutu, a key figure in the anti-apartheid movement, unveiled in Cape Town in March 2023. The statue became part of the Long March to Freedom exhibition, "[a] pantheon of 100 life-size bronze sculptures of liberation heroes [that] honours South Africa's brightest and bravest icons and tells the story of the country's 350-year journey to freedom and democracy."[3] The life-size bronze statue depicts Desmond Tutu in his purple clerical robes, wearing a large Christian cross. After the statue was unveiled, Tutu's granddaughter Nyaniso Burris commented:

> It looks like him. I wasn't expecting it to look so much like him. It's beautiful. It feels like him. It's such a beautiful rendition of who he was and the memory we have of him. It's amazing that over a year after he passed, he's being honoured in such a way.
>
> (McCain 2023)

Inevitably, references to Tutu's religious faith were also prominent in some of the commentary around the statue. For example, Dali Tambo, the head of the National Heritage Project NPC, which owns the Long March to Freedom, reacted: "He was a man who occupied a unique position – without being appointed or elected, guided by his faith – as a global moral conscience and human role model" (McCain 2023).

The role of religious faith in Tutu's anti-apartheid and human rights activism is, of course, well known. For example, in his book *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Tutu wrote: "[T]heological and religious insights and perspectives would inform much of what we did and how we did it [in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission]." (Tutu 2000, 73).

At first glance, it would seem that elements of Desmond Tutu's statue violate the norms of justificatory civility. Indeed, one might argue that a commitment to justificatory civility implies a commitment to the idea of a "neutral" public space, that is, one where visual manifestations of citizens' different comprehensive doctrines – for example, in the form of monuments, buildings, street names, and other visible public features – is

discouraged. This is, for example, the kind of neutral public space that Avner de-Shalit (2003) identifies with Manhattan. According to de-Shalit:

> [T]he Manhattan streets and avenues are numbered, as if to declare: we place no greater value on this event or that person. . . . They never take you to a dead end, to some place in particular, which strikes me as analogous to the palpable climate of neutrality which pervades the city. . . . [I]n order to sustain . . . [its] . . . openness the city holds to its neutrality among different conceptions of the good.
>
> (de-Shalit 2003, 13–14)

Does this mean that Tutu's statue, with its clear emphasis on his religious role and background, is not consistent with the ideal of justificatory civility? Not necessarily. According to Rawls's "wide" view of public reason, for example:

> [R]easonable comprehensive doctrines, religious or nonreligious, may be introduced in public political discussion at any time, provided that in due course proper political reasons – and not reasons given solely by comprehensive doctrines – are presented that are sufficient to support whatever the comprehensive doctrines introduced are said to support.
>
> (Rawls 2005, 462)

It would therefore seem that, from this perspective, Tutu's religious faith is consistent with justificatory civility, at least as long as public (non-religious) reasons are eventually also provided to justify the kind of positions (in support of human rights and against apartheid) that Tutu had endorsed.

However, while the wide view of public reason might work for citizens deliberating in the public space, it is less clear that it may help relax the constraints of public reason when applied to monuments and statues. This is because, unlike people's speech, monuments and statues are more permanent and solid, and once established, they are not easily amenable to the kind of change that the Rawlsian proviso demands – Tutu's clerical robes and Christian cross will always remain highly visible and prominent religious symbols while the statue exists. In other words, justificatory civility, especially as intended in Rawls's "wide" view, is a temporal phenomenon, that is, an ongoing and fluid process of reason exchange that only needs to "crystallize" when, "in due course" (most likely, when political decisions are about to be made), only reasons deemed public after that process can be appealed to, whereas non-public reasons should be abandoned. Statues and monuments, though, are different. For a start, they are more permanent and stable, and this creates a tension with the dynamic nature of justificatory civility. Furthermore,

when religious reasons are represented by a public (i.e., state-supported or state-endorsed) monument, they acquire an "official" status, that is, the monument can be understood as sending the message that the state provides public support for those reasons.

However, even if Tutu's statue does constitute a violation of justificatory civility, it may still advance civility in a deeper, critical sense. Indeed, as we explained earlier, one may disregard the constraints of justificatory civility, by invoking God, in order to promote liberal-democratic values and institutions or fight illiberal and undemocratic ones, such as slavery or, in Tutu's case, apartheid, thus advancing moral civility. Tutu's statue can therefore be considered a physical manifestation of critical incivility.

5.4.2 Australia's Settler Memorials

The second example that we use in this section to illustrate how critical incivility may manifest itself via statues and monuments concerns Australia's settler memorials. These are

> graves, memorial monuments and even place names . . . dedicated to white settlers who were "killed by Natives" . . . [and which] serve to uphold the pioneer legend that honours the brave settler and the characteristic representation of the "Natives" as being savage and vengeful, and their attacks unmotivated and unpredictable.
>
> (Carlson and Farrelly 2023)

In what sense do these memorials constitute instances of critical incivility?

These memorials commemorate the killings of Australian white settlers, calling attention to their status as victims of a morally uncivil act. Indeed physical violence, we saw earlier, constitutes an instance of moral incivility (Zurn 2013) – that is, a failure on the part of its perpetrators to recognize their victims as free and equal persons. Killing is an extreme act of physical violence and, therefore, of moral incivility. This point, however, only captures the *incivility* aspect of critical incivility. In what sense, then, is the incivility that these memorials commemorate *critical*? As in the case of the statue of Joan of Arc in Paris, this question can only be answered by distinguishing between the memorials themselves – or, more precisely, the intentions of those who erected them – and the interpretation and appropriation of them by others.

In the case of Australia's settler memorials, we are particularly interested in the way some Aboriginal activists have reinterpreted and appropriated them. That is, it should be noted that "[these] commemorations . . . despite their original intentions, inadvertently testify to the fact that Aboriginal

peoples did, in fact, 'fight back' and that colonisation was, in fact, violent" (Carlson and Farrelly 2023). For example:

> [T]he Wills Massacre [which involved] the 1861 killing of 19 white settlers by the Gayiri people on Cullin-La-Ringo Station near Springsure, Queensland – the largest recorded massacre of white settlers by Aboriginal people in Australian history . . . is also seen as an important Aboriginal victory in the struggle against the settlers.
>
> (Carlson and Farrelly 2023)

This and other "commemorations to settlers 'killed by Natives' have gained social significance for Aboriginal communities" and become "a testimony of Aboriginal resistance" (Carlson and Farrelly 2023).

As in the case of the statue of Joan of Arc in Paris, therefore, our analysis shows that monuments may be sites of contrasting narratives and that reinterpreting and reimagining can play a key role in this process. As Fredericks and Bradfield point out:

> [M]onuments, statues and re-enactments [can] function as sites of colonial resistance. Through their contextualisation, monuments reveal unstable terrains that "problematize[s] not only hegemony and domination but resistance as well". . . . For some Aboriginal people in Cooktown, resistance comes not from outright opposition to colonial narratives, but rather through repositioning figures such as Captain James Cook within Indigenous perspectives that emphasise Aboriginal agency and sovereignty.
>
> (2023, 352)

From the perspective of Aboriginal peoples, and based on instances of reinterpretation and appropriation of memorial sites, Australia's monuments (including settler memorials) can become sites and channels of critical incivility. The killing of others, of course, is incompatible with moral civility and should never be tolerated. However, *remembering* certain past killings in order to challenge the morally uncivil acts of colonizers seems to be a much less problematic behavior than directly engaging in those killings. While killing per se should never be celebrated, the memory of violent acts of armed resistance in the context of colonial encroachment, aimed at challenging colonizers' morally uncivil policies, can arguably be considered an instance of critical incivility, therefore consistent with civility all things considered.

At this point, two clarifications are required. First, establishing whether an uncivil act constitutes an instance of critical incivility may often require a certain degree of contextualization. More specifically, in the case that

we are examining, while remembering and celebrating gratuitous killings would seem to overly stretch the scope of what critical incivility should allow, the killings to which Australia's settler memorials are related were often not gratuitous. "Typically," Carlson and Farrelly argue, "the events are decontextualized [in the memorials]; there is no account of what led up to an incident, what actions by the settlers prompted the attacks made by Aboriginal peoples on them" (2023). Only if understood as a response to settlers' own hegemony, domination, and violence – themselves uncivil acts, to say the least – can the memorialization and reinterpretation of the uncivil acts of violence perpetrated by Aboriginal peoples be considered instances of critical incivility.

Second, for an uncivil act to count as an instance of critical incivility, the message that it communicates must be a matter of public knowledge. Indeed, recall that civility is an inherently communicative virtue. Therefore, unless most Australians are aware that Aboriginal peoples reinterpret and contextualize settler memorials as a response to settler hegemony, domination, and violence, we may not be able to characterize Aboriginal peoples' reinterpretation and contextualization as an instance of critical incivility – the critically uncivil signal that they intend to send will either undershoot or misfire, so to speak. Arguably, that kind of public knowledge is not currently present in Australia. It would therefore be important, for Aboriginal peoples and those committed to highlighting and correcting the historical record about injustices, to make their views about settler memorials more widely known, for example, through scholarly, educational, and (social) media channels.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have employed the lens of civility to examine a number of contentious monuments. We have shown that rather than simply categorizing certain monuments as civil or uncivil, we can evaluate them in more subtle ways, by considering the complex intersections between different (sub-)dimensions of (in)civility. We hope that our analysis will stimulate more nuanced research and public debate about the meaning of monuments in contemporary liberal democracies, and the role they can play in fostering civil attitudes among their citizens.

Notes

1. This section on 'Civility as a lens' reproduces material from Bardon et al. (2023) that unpacks several dimensions of the civility concept.
2. There are other statues of Joan of Arc in Paris, but this is the most famous one.
3. www.longmarchtofreedom.co.za/Home/Welcome

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6 Too Much Intellectual Humility? Measuring Intellectual Servility in Civic Engagement During the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election

Stacey E. McElroy-Heltzel, Heather D. Battaly, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook

Political partisanship has recently been conceptualized as a form of social identity (Iyengar et al., 2019; Landry et al., 2021). It may even function as a sort of "mega identity" by capturing a set of other important identities, such as race, religion, and education (Bell et al., 2022). Salience of political identity may prompt affective polarization, which refers to feelings of dislike, distrust, animosity, and an unwillingness to form social ties with political out-group members (Iyengar et al., 2019). Such unwillingness to form social connections with political opponents is termed "political homophily" and can lead to a host of social issues (Goldenberg et al., 2023)

For example, this dynamic may erode open-minded political discourse and lead to increased myside bias (i.e., the tendency to seek out confirmatory evidence for one's beliefs and dismiss contrary evidence; Bowes et al., 2022). This sort of bias has been shown to manifest as "political acrophily," namely, a social preference for in-group members with more extreme political views relative to more moderate ones (Goldenberg et al., 2023). Additionally, studies have shown that individuals believe political opponents dehumanize their party (i.e., meta-dehumanization), prompting them to retaliate by dehumanizing political opponents and supporting anti-democratic practices designed to hurt the other side (Landry et al., 2021). Furthermore, one study indicated that Democrats and Republicans differ in their conceptualizations of what it means to be American, indicating that efforts to reduce partisan animosity by highlighting a shared identity as Americans may be ineffective (Bell et al., 2022).

To address such problems, scholars have begun investigating factors that might mitigate affective polarization, with intellectual humility (IH) being identified as one such factor. Although multiple definitions of IH exist within the philosophical and psychological literatures, most conceptualizations converge around the idea that IH involves an appropriate

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-7

attentiveness to and owning of one's intellectual limitations (Porter et al., 2022; Whitcomb et al., 2017). Motivated reasoning theory has been used to explain how IH might help temper political extremism (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2023). People are motivated to maintain their current worldview, resulting in biased information processing (e.g., confirmation bias) and a propensity to situate oneself within ideological echo-chambers. To the extent that IH helps individuals more accurately assess their knowledge limitations, it might counter the tendency to engage in motivated reasoning.

Empirical work has documented some of the intra- and interpersonal benefits of IH in political contexts. Regarding intrapersonal benefits, misinformation tends to be more emotionally laden (i.e., contains more negative sentiment and appeals to morality) and to require less cognitive effort to process (Carrasco-Farré, 2022). IH might help in contexts of misinformation because it is thought to involve slower deliberation, prompting attentiveness to cognitive distortions and faulty assumptions (Bowes et al., 2022). One study found that IH was related (albeit weakly so) to less myside bias, even for issues about which participants held great conviction (Bowes et al., 2022). Another study found that a measure of political humility (i.e., IH contextualized to politics) was related to more positive perceptions of an opposing political perspective (Hodge et al., 2021).

IH might also provide interpersonal benefits, such as mitigating relational wear and tear during conflict (Van Tongeren et al., 2019). For example, when people held opinions about specific political issues (e.g., marijuana legalization, the death penalty) with humility, they felt less hostility toward those holding opposing opinions (Smith, 2023). In the same study, an experimental prime designed to induce IH lowered hostility without altering participants' underlying opinions about the issue (Smith, 2023). Yet another study found that politics-specific IH was related to less avoidance of political discussions and more political tolerance (Krumrei-Mancuso & Newman, 2021).

Despite the promise of these initial findings, scholars have cautioned against the uniform conceptualization and application of IH between privileged and marginalized social identities. Feminist philosophers have noted concerns about how traditional conceptualizations of IH might interact with oppressed social identities, noting that humility might not be a virtue, or at least not for oppressed people (Callahan, 2022). Likewise, Battaly (2021) noted that, while individuals with privileged social identities are more likely to experience pressure toward the vice of intellectual arrogance, individuals holding marginalized social identities are more likely to experience pressure toward excessive IH, or the vice of intellectual servility. There is some initial evidence validating these concerns within empirical studies. One experimental study found that women may accrue greater social costs for inflating their ideas and accomplishments than men (Priebe &

Van Tongeren, 2023). Therefore, as work on IH develops and the field moves toward intervention work, there is a need to carefully consider for whom and under what circumstances specific intervention strategies are likely to be the most beneficial in producing virtuous IH.

6.1 Toward a Conceptualization of Intellectual Servility

To further explicate, both psychologists and philosophers have described a need to disentangle the *trait* of IH from the *virtue* of IH (Battaly, 2021; Van Tongeren et al., 2022a). While the trait of IH involves a disposition to be attentive to and own one's intellectual limitations, the virtue of IH involves doing so for the right reasons, with the right motivations, and under the right circumstances (McElroy-Heltzel & Battaly, 2023). Van Tongeren and colleagues (2022a) have described virtuous IH as an ability to "right size" oneself in a particular context, avoiding both overinflation and underinflation of one's knowledge resources. They argue that one cannot have too much of a virtue, but could engage in behavior indicative of the virtue in inappropriate situations or for the wrong reasons (Van Tongeren et al., 2022b). For example, one might chronically underestimate or downplay their knowledge even in situations in which they are knowledgeable, or chronically overestimate their ignorance even in situations where they are not ignorant. In short, though one cannot have too much of the *virtue* of IH, one can have too much of the *trait* of IH (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2023).

This conceptualization aligns with the doctrine of the mean espoused in Aristotelian virtue theory, positioning the virtue of IH as the middle-point between intellectual arrogance and intellectual servility (Haggard et al., 2018). Battaly (2021) describes intellectual servility as, "an unwillingness or inability to be attentive to or own one's strengths; and a disposition to be overly attentive to or over-own one's limitations." Thus, while virtuous IH involves a motivation to acquire knowledge and good judgment about when to own limitations, intellectual servility can involve different motivations and can cause one to own limitations in the wrong circumstances (Battaly, 2021). Intrapersonally, servility involves attributing weaknesses to oneself (even when one does not have them) and feeling overwhelmed by these weaknesses. It also involves an avoidance of attributing strengths to oneself or lacking confidence in self-attributed strengths. Intellectually servile people tend to judge themselves as inferior to others; in other words, they have an excess of the trait of IH as well as a lack of intellectual pride (Battaly, 2021).

6.2 Intellectual Servility in Political Engagement

Battaly (2021) noted that while political arrogance has garnered much attention, political servility may also be problematic. In the context of

political conflict that might trigger ego-defensiveness, intellectually servile people will respond by attributing weaknesses to themselves, doubting their knowledge, and lacking confidence. In other words, such identity threats may exacerbate servility. These intrapersonal aspects of intellectual servility might interpersonally manifest in several ways. People with the most extreme degrees of servility may be avoidant of political discussions, seeing themselves as unable to contribute to or learn from such conversations (Battaly, 2021).

On the other hand, people who are moderately servile may engage in political discussions, but do so inappropriately by remaining engaged with people who are not knowledgeable and being willing to consider points that do not merit consideration (Battaly, 2021). In other words, intellectually servile people may present as excessively open-minded. This can cause them to inappropriately defer to interlocutors and inappropriately revise their beliefs. Likewise, they are unlikely to feel angry when anger is merited or be overly agreeable. Servile people might be motivated by things such as a desire to be accepted or by low self-esteem (Battaly, 2023; Tanesini, 2021). Because virtuous IH involves a motivation to acquire knowledge, IH individuals are less likely to be excessively open-minded and agreeable, making them more likely to disengage from interlocutors who lack knowledge and competence (Battaly, 2021). They will also be less likely to defer or to revise their beliefs than intellectually servile individuals (Battaly, 2021).

This account of IH and intellectual servility also leaves open the possibility that IH may not always be associated with flourishing or well-being. Marginalized people, in particular, risk experiencing negative social consequences for refusing to defer (even when refusing is appropriate) and may be labeled as arrogant or angry (Battaly, 2021). Likewise, people with marginalized identities may have their intellectual credibility more frequently called into question. These are forms of systemic epistemic injustices, creating pressure on marginalized people to develop the vice of intellectual servility rather than the virtue of IH or the vice of intellectual arrogance (Battaly, 2021).

In order to empirically examine these theoretical predictions, we developed a measure of intellectual servility, drawing from Battaly's (2021) conceptualization. Results of an exploratory factor analysis in a sample of MTurk participants suggested a four-factor structure. This replicated using a confirmatory factor analysis in a sample of Qualtrics panel participants. After examining the item content that loaded onto each factor, we named the factors as follows: (1) Discomfort Asserting Perspective (e.g., "I do not like having to assert my perspective."), (2) Self-Doubt (e.g., "Others often have better ideas than me."), (3) Inappropriate Deference (e.g., "I defer to others so they will like me."), and (4) Belief Uncertainty (e.g., "I don't really know what I believe about these issues"; McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2021b).

Next, we examined evidence for construct validity (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2021b). We instructed participants to complete the measure of intellectual servility with respect to a political issue that they believe is important. Note that we did not instruct them to choose an issue to which they were committed or held strong beliefs. This allowed participants to choose an issue that is salient to them, but not necessarily one about which they are at risk of feeling arrogant. We included a measure of specific IH and political commitment (both completed with respect to the same issue they identified for the intellectual servility measure), the Limitations-Owning IH Scale, and Social Dominance Orientation (which generally measures the belief that some social groups are inherently superior to others). Intellectual servility was moderately positively related to specific IH and weakly positively related to social dominance orientation; it was moderately negatively related to limitations-owning IH; it was not related to political commitment (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2021b). Specific IH was weakly negatively related to both political commitment and limitations-owning IH; it was not related to social dominance orientation (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2021b). Limitations-owning IH was weakly negatively related to social dominance orientation and was not related to political commitment (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2021b).

This pattern of findings suggests that our measure of intellectual servility is tapping into some of the concerns we have described. Namely, the positive relationship with social dominance orientation aligns with our predictions about servility representing an excess of intellectual humility, or belief in one's own inherent inferiority which might map onto social identities. Likewise, the null correlation with political commitment suggests that people who are high in servility have a tendency of approaching their political beliefs with servility, regardless of whether they are strongly or weakly committed to those beliefs. In other words, they treat their strongly held beliefs with the same approach as their weakly held beliefs. Finally, it is notable that intellectual servility demonstrated an opposite pattern of findings with specific intellectual humility (positive correlation) and limitations-owning intellectual humility (negative correlation). This provides some initial empirical support for our assertion that some measures of IH (e.g., specific IH) do not rule out the possibility of servility.

Next, we examined intellectual servility in the context of civic engagement and personality variables that might influence one's approach to information appraisal (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2023). We expected intellectual servility to be negatively related to the big five personality variables of openness and conscientiousness; people with very high levels of intellectual servility ought to doubt their ability to learn, closing themselves off to new information and avoiding efforts at conscientiously scrutinizing information. Likewise, we expected intellectual servility to be positively

associated with maladaptive perfectionism, because intellectually servile people may imagine that their best efforts at learning will always fall short.

Finally, we expected intellectual servility to be negatively related to civic engagement. By doubting their knowledge and consequent beliefs, people with high degrees of intellectual servility are less likely to invest time, energy, or monetary resources in civic participation. They will also doubt their ability to contribute to civic discourse or gain knowledge from it, making them less likely to engage in it. Instead, and perhaps in an effort to gain approval and acceptance by in-group members, they may simply defer to these members, trusting the group more than they trust themselves. One way we theorized this could manifest is as social media intrusion. Being motivated by social approval and acceptance rather than knowledge acquisition, intellectually servile individuals may feel compelled to monitor the beliefs and behaviors of in-group members in order to adopt or replicate those beliefs and behaviors. In a cross-sectional study of undergraduate students, we found that intellectual servility was moderately negatively related to openness, and weakly negatively related to conscientiousness and civic engagement; it was moderately positively related to maladaptive perfectionism (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2023). Intellectual servility was not related to social media intrusion or activism commitment.

Within this same sample, we also measured flourishing throughout the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election using a prospective, longitudinal design with three time points (Wang et al., 2022). Flourishing showed a curvilinear relationship with time whereby it decreased leading up to the election (i.e., from T1 to T2), and then increased following the election (i.e., from T2 to T3). There was also a statistically significant pattern of slope variability between participants, indicating that participants had different trajectories of change across time, and both IH more generally and politics-specific intellectual servility predicted these different patterns of changes. People high in IH started with higher levels of flourishing at T1, demonstrated a faster rate of decline in flourishing leading up to the election (i.e., from T1 to T2), but then began showing faster rates of increase in flourishing after the election (i.e., from T2 to T3; Wang et al., 2022).

Intellectual servility predicted a similar but opposite pattern of findings in flourishing (Wang et al., 2022). Higher levels of intellectual servility were related to lower flourishing at T1, predicted slower rates of decline leading up to the election (e.g., from T1 to T2), but also slower rates of growth following the election (i.e., from T2 to T3; Wang et al., 2022). These findings indicate that while people high in IH/low in intellectual servility are sensitive to stressors, they generally have higher baseline levels of well-being and trend toward recovery more quickly in the aftermath of a stressor.

6.3 Summary and Implications

To conclude, we situate our findings within the existing literature. We also propose several implications based on the results of these studies, including measurement strategies and intervention design. First, these findings have implications for understanding nuances associated with virtuous (rather than trait) levels of IH in political contexts. Within our studies, intellectual servility was positively related to social dominance orientation and maladaptive perfectionism, and negatively related to openness, conscientiousness, and civic engagement. In the context of the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election, it was also related to lower baseline levels of flourishing and predicted slower rates of increase in flourishing following the election.

Within the existing literature, a recent set of four longitudinal or experimental studies indicated that daily political events prompted negative emotions, which were associated with not only lower psychological and physical well-being but also higher motivation for political engagement (Ford et al., 2023). However, when people used strategies to cope with negative affect, such as cognitive reappraisal or distraction, it increased their well-being, but lowered their motivation for political engagement (Ford et al., 2023). These findings present a dilemma regarding the tradeoff between well-being and political engagement. In general, we would expect virtues to be positively related to well-being, and for civic virtues in particular to be related to civic engagement. Our results indicated that intellectual servility was related to lower well-being and lower civic engagement. Moreover, IH was related to higher baseline levels of flourishing and faster recovery in flourishing after a political stressor (i.e., an election). These curvilinear results suggest that while people high in IH are nevertheless sensitive to stressors, IH also promotes bouncing back, or resilience following stressors.

Though our measure of intellectual servility was not related to social media intrusion, there are other ways in which intellectual servility might be problematic in the context of social media engagement related to politics. For example, Montrey and Shultz (2022) found that individuals prefer observing in-group members during online interactions, and this preference for in-group members outweighed perceived reliability, warmth, and competence when selecting who to observe. The same study also indicated that people use a "copy-the-in-group social-learning strategy," which is a tendency to copy the behaviors of in-group members even when perceived competence is low (Montrey & Shultz, 2022). This is one-way inaccurate ideas, and harmful behavior might spread. Moreover, this behavior aligns with our conceptualization and theorizing of one potential motivation for intellectual servility (i.e., weighing motivations for social approval over motivations for truth-seeking). Together, these findings further highlight

the risk of over-owning one's intellectual limitations, and of promoting interventions that do not attend to the risk of intellectual servility.

Another study (Goldenberg et al., 2023) indicated that people (erroneously) tend to see extreme views as more prototypical of their in-group, and that this is related to a desire for social ties with those expressing extreme opinions. Moreover, individuals who do not conform to group norms by sharing fake news tend to experience less social media interaction over time (Lawson et al., 2023). Importantly, this latter study found that those social costs explained the sharing of fake news above and beyond partisan identity and subjective accuracy assessments (Lawson et al., 2023). These findings highlight potential mechanisms for how groups move toward political extremism. Finally, a study by Potoczek et al. (2023) found that individuals who had lower levels of sociopolitical control were more susceptible to in-group norms (either perceived or experimentally manipulated) regarding political participation. Low sociopolitical control is one indication of social marginalization. Together, the results of these studies highlight how intellectual servility, insofar as it is socially motivated and more likely to manifest among those who experience marginalization, might be a risk factor driving the political extremism of groups.

6.3.1 Implications for Measurement

Results of our studies highlight and clarify some of the concerns described in the literature regarding the conceptualization and measurement of IH. We developed a measure of intellectual servility that might be used in several ways. First, it may be used alongside existing measures of IH that risk conflating virtuous IH with servility. By first controlling for intellectual servility using the measure we developed, the measure of IH should then more closely account for the unique variance attributable to virtuous IH. Second, it might be used in a person-centered analysis to explore various profiles of IH, authentic pride, and intellectual servility. Theoretically, virtuous IH should involve a combination of high IH, high-authentic pride, and low-intellectual servility. Future studies might explore whether this profile emerges in samples and if it is related to outcomes in theoretically predicted ways.

Nevertheless, one limitation of our measurement approach is that while it might help rule out intellectual servility, it still does not entirely capture the contextual and motivational aspects that would make IH virtuous. Van Tongeren et al. (2022b) proposed the use of situation-based behavioral assessments. Such an approach has several advantages, such as not being subject to the same biases as self-report measures and having rigorous contextual control so that behavior can be assessed relative to context. Because contextually grounded behavioral assessments tend to be a resource intensive

approach, and because the field needs large sample sizes to improve replicability, computerized assessments using machine learning or computerized simulations might be fruitful avenues (Van Tongeren et al., 2022b).

6.3.2 Implications for Interventions

Regarding future work developing interventions to promote IH, Hook et al. (2023) described how applied research programs on other virtues have thrived because individuals typically have a clear motivation to participate in them. Virtues such as forgiveness and gratitude have demonstrated relatively straightforward links with well-being within the literature. However, reasons why one might be prompted to increase one's virtue of IH are less immediately clear, both intuitively and within the existing body of research (Hook et al., 2023).

For starters, being intellectually arrogant can have some intra- and interpersonal benefits. Intrapersonally, intellectual arrogance might provide individuals with more existential security in their worldviews or belief systems (Van Tongeren et al., 2016). One study found that existential IH was related to greater death anxiety, predicted lower religious well-being, and lower general well-being (Van Tongeren et al., 2023). Interpersonally, it might help strengthen social ties with in-group members. While there is some evidence that IH might facilitate social bonds with out-group members, the motivation to strengthen those ties may be (considerably) lower than the motivation to strengthen in-group ties (Hook et al., 2023).

Relatedly, there is the potential for misguided IH interventions to harm marginalized groups if they perpetuate internalized oppression (by not attending to the risk for servility) or create opportunities for further trauma by promoting social bonds with oppressors (Battaly, 2023; Hook et al., 2023). It is also worth exploring whether intellectual servility may be incentivized by the need to survive oppressive contexts. Hook and colleagues (2023) recommend studies exploring motivations that individuals or groups identify for wanting to increase their virtue of IH.

Related to this idea, we have proposed Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) techniques as a strategy that might lay the foundation for effective IH interventions (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). A key theoretical assumption of ACT is that maladaptive behavior is driven by avoidance of negative, difficult, or unpleasant internal states. People behave in ways designed to lessen distress, or promote comfort, even when those behaviors do not align with their broader goals and values. In other words, people sacrifice values-driven behavior in exchange for short-term comfort. Engaging with virtuous IH is likely to be challenging, effortful, and come with potential intra- and interpersonal costs. As a strategy, ACT acknowledges and incorporates this difficulty with change. It guides people in identifying

their values which help them engage in difficult or painful behavior in service of living out their values. In other words, it explicitly does not attempt to avoid distress but helps people take valued action in the midst of distress.

This proposal seems compatible with Tanesini's (2021) motivational account of intellectual virtues and proposal of self-affirmation as an ameliorative strategy for intellectual vices. In short, intellectually arrogant people are motivated to avoid the pain of ego threat, while intellectually servile people are motivated to avoid the pain of social exclusion. This results in the employment of either vice to promote comfort rather than virtue. ACT teaches people strategies such as mindfulness to help them non-reactively and non-judgmentally observe their thoughts and feelings. This is thought to provide people with space to slow down and intentionally choose values-congruent behavior. The end result is that individuals gain the satisfaction of behaving in ways that are congruent with their self-views and deeper values.

Building upon those skills, we draw from Social Learning Theory (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). Though this is not a novel proposal, aligning with traditional strategies of using moral exemplars in promoting virtues (Battaly, 2023), we recognize a few caveats. Battaly (2023) noted that this strategy may backfire for those who have already developed high degrees of servility. These individuals may see themselves as unable to improve in virtue and thus lack motivation to improve. Alternatively, they may also adopt the wrong motivation to improve by performing relevant behaviors in service of social acceptance rather than knowledge accuracy (Battaly, 2023; Tanesini, 2021). Additionally, they may misidentify which exemplars to emulate as virtuous. Because their conceptualization of humility and pride are likely skewed, they may misidentify servility as humility, and pride as arrogance (Battaly, 2023).

Accordingly, virtue role models will be most effective when they are relevant (i.e., an in-group member) and attainable (i.e., someone who is not so high in the virtue that their behavior seems unattainable; Battaly, 2023; Tanesini, 2021). For example, people might be paired with another in-group member who is in a similar stage of developing virtuous IH but nevertheless motivated to grow in virtuous IH (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). The dyad might be instructed to identify small, attainable behavioral changes that they could make to move one step closer to virtuous IH, and regularly check-in with each other to affirm progress or troubleshoot difficulties. In this way, the new behavior becomes socially reinforced by an in-group member and in a way that is more attainable than observing someone who is exemplary in virtuous IH. This should also help avoid potential barriers to engaging in the new behavior, such as fear of social exclusion and motivations to act morally superior to out-group members.

Some prior work has demonstrated the promise of using behavioral modeling to promote IH. Results of one experimental study suggested that expressing IH in a conversation might prompt others to express IH

(Smith, 2023). Participants who read a humbly written passage regarding marijuana legalization reported lower negative views of people holding the opposing belief and regarded their own views with more humility, without changing their underlying belief (Smith, 2023). Likewise, Leary (2022) summarized work indicating that people are more likely to respond with IH when they observe others doing so. Leary (2022) argues that behaviorally, this may be indicated through actions such as openly acknowledging the limits of one's knowledge, admitting mistakes, explicitly revising beliefs, listening to others' views with respect, and avoidance of derogation.

However, we caution against promoting behavioral expressions of IH in marginalized populations. If an individual holding a social identity traditionally subjected to epistemic injustice engages in this strategy with an oppressive interlocutor, it may simply validate and reinforce expectations by the oppressor that individuals from marginalized groups be deferential. Thus, rather than promoting IH, it risks exacerbating intellectual arrogance in the oppressive interlocutor and intellectual servility in the marginalized individual. Indeed, Battaly (2023) proposed that when the vice of servility (rather than arrogance) needs to be countered, individuals might actually need to practice a form of overcorrection (i.e., intellectual arrogance) in order to move toward intellectual pride, resulting in getting closer to the midpoint of IH. Individuals with high degrees of servility might initially need to just try owning a strength – any strength – without worrying about whether it is a strength they actually possess.

Finally, we draw upon theorizing based on the Social Contact Hypothesis to inform design of IH interventions (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). Here, we note that intergroup contact is not always positive and that in some cases, it can strengthen negative moral emotions (e.g., contempt, fear) toward out-group members. To mitigate this possibility, we have proposed shaping contextual factors and/or shaping individual skills to make positive outcomes more likely (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). In a meta-analysis, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that belief in the importance of intergroup contact was related to positive experiences of intergroup contact. As we have described, information dissemination strategies and algorithms on social media platforms are designed to exploit normal cognitive biases. Perhaps some form of psychoeducation about these processes could help individuals externalize the problem as a larger structural force, rather than seeing out-group members as the problem, and undergird the importance of intergroup contact to counter this structural issue (McElroy-Heltzel, 2022). Bringing awareness to and normalizing these common cognitive biases may also help reduce individuals' ego-defensiveness, to the extent that it is contextualized as a common experience rather than an individual flaw.

Finally, we note that for substantial and meaningful movement toward intellectual virtue to take place, additional structural changes are likely

needed. Individual interventions might be insufficient given systemic injustices, which are by definition pervasive and ongoing. Individual progress can be undone when the individual exists in a system that is regularly reinforcing servility (Battaly, 2023). For example, the U.S. educational system is structured toward answer-oriented education, which discourages the asking of questions and thus discourages the development of IH and intellectual pride, and encourages the development of intellectual arrogance and servility (Battaly, 2023; Johnson, 2020; Watson, 2021). This is because answer-oriented systems reinforce intellectual inferiority in cases where students feel ill equipped (either appropriately or inappropriately so) to provide answers, and reinforce intellectual superiority in cases where students feel well equipped. Such changes may involve designing educational systems that encourage the development of intellectual virtues (including curiosity and asking questions) in addition to providing answers (Battaly, 2023). At the same time, there is still a role for individual strategies to ameliorate intellectual servility and increase virtuous IH given that systemic changes take time. In these cases, it will be important to emphasize that different strategies for facilitating virtuous IH might be needed for students who tend toward intellectual servility and for students who tend toward intellectual arrogance. It might also be more important for the former to move toward virtuous pride, and more important for the latter to move toward virtuous IH (Battaly, 2023).

Acknowledgments

This work was made possible by The Self, Virtue, and Public Life research initiative based at the University of Oklahoma through a generous grant from the Templeton Religion Trust (Grant: SP00013912–01). We would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support of the John Templeton Foundation (Grant: 62265), Applied Research on Intellectual Humility: A Request for Proposals.

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7 Democratizing Autonomy

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It is commonly thought that a central function of just political institutions in a liberal democracy is the protection of the autonomy of its members. A just society is one where members are able to pursue their particular conceptions of a good life and thus to make choices without fear of unjustified coercion from the state and without fear of interference and violence from individual citizens and nongovernmental groups. On this line of thinking, institutions that are both liberal and democratic not only are the best form of governance but also are required because they ensure the best protection of political freedoms necessary for autonomy compared to all alternatives. Less considered is the requirement that members be autonomous so that they can develop and eventually sustain and improve just, liberal and democratic institutions. In these two considerations, a direction of fit applies, and the senses of autonomy in both directions are not identical. In the first case, institutions must be fitted to the aspirational political goals of justice and liberty, where the latter applies to the autonomy of societal members. In the second case, members' autonomy must be fitted to developing, improving, and sustaining just liberal, and democratic institutions. If both directions of fit are held together, then one can see the primary role of institutions in protecting an autonomy that is not a "naked" autonomy capable of acting on first-order desires but indifferent to the value of reflective evaluation and understanding of justice-seeking ethical norms, or insensitive when distinctions need to be made between the goods of justice and autonomy, and other types of goods, some of which may not be genuine goods at all. The kind of autonomous expressions important for the second direction of fit, the development, improvement, and sustaining of just, democratic institutions, would have to be something more specific, and such expressions of autonomy would, presumably, be of a form of that is maturely reason-responsive, corrigible, and exhibits moral, epistemic, and civic dimensions. Such a category of autonomy we might label *democratizing autonomy*, in the sense that this expression of autonomy is what democratizes societies and ensures the protection of other expressions of

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-8

autonomy. We might conceive of such an autonomy as a specific expression of a more general virtuous autonomy encountered in domains beyond the political.

The aim of this chapter is to develop a conception of democratizing autonomy. Building on prior work (Peterson et al. 2022; Peterson et al. In Preparation), we develop a conception of democratizing autonomy (DA) that is a virtuous autonomy in public life, especially within the domain of politics, oriented toward justice and therefore toward more just, democratic institutions. We conceive virtuous autonomy as a form of autonomy that is maturely reason-responsive and corrigible. Virtuous autonomy has both moral and epistemic dimensions, and when expressed in the political domain it can be understood as a civic, or more specifically democratic, virtue as well. DA, we propose, is not only what just, democratic institutions primarily seek to protect, it also sustains them. In the absence of just, democratic institutions, we should expect those whose character manifests DA to favor social equality, engage in action, contribute to both a newly formed democracy, re-democratization, and resistance to institutions of illiberal democracy and forms of autocratic rule. As such, it is in line with interdependent models of the self, in which individuals can both high in autonomy and relatedness (Kagitçibasi 2005). Thus, we propose that DA as a construct has both normative and causal implications. We propose that DA is in fact an expression of virtue and both emerges from and contributes to assessments of good character, but we also conjecture that DA exists empirically and finds expression in the actions of those actively seeking and sustaining democracy. Because of this, and like some other moral and democratic virtues, DA is a costly virtue. While DA contributes to a life that is genuinely good, expressing DA can, in some contexts, demand sacrifices, including risking and therefore possibly diminishing one's own short-term mental and physical well-being.

Section 7.1 briefly summarizes the concept of virtuous autonomy. Section 7.2 examines three different conceptions of political autonomy: the protective account, the expressive account, and the sustaining account. While each is important, we situate DA primarily within the sustaining account, playing a role in promoting, improving, sustaining, and defending democratic institutions. Section 7.3 takes up the first direction of fit and addresses DA in the context of institutions that are predominantly just and democratic. In such contexts, one may expect public institutions, especially educational institutions, to play a primary role in the healthy development of DA, and private civil institutions may do so as well. In such a context, the second direction of fit is one in which DA sustains democratic institutions. We should expect those high in DA to be resistant to the influence of demagogues and autocrats and resilient in the face of propagandistic pressures. Furthermore, we can expect DA to manifest

in political participation. Section 7.4 then considers the expression of DA in contexts which are unjust or undemocratic or both, where the first direction of fit is absent. Understanding DA in these contexts requires first some understanding of political heteronomy. We draw on the work of José Medina (2013) to consider how virtues and vices are differentially expressed in conditions of oppression. The second direction of fit, autonomy fitted to the (re)generation of liberal, democratic institutions, elicits latent expressions of DA not widely experienced and not as necessary in functioning liberal democracies. Included in these latent properties of DA are nonconformism and even active, nonviolent opposition and civil disobedience to the reigning political order. In such contexts, DA is costly but not burdened (Tessman 2005), and expressing DA entails risking affiliative ties, economic opportunity, and even mental and physical well-being. Depending on the context, DA may be developed individually as a survival strategy, but in optimal cases it will be sustained in counter-cultural institutions. DA thus manifests in different ways, and how it manifests depends on the contexts individuals find themselves in.

7.1 Virtuous Autonomy

We understand virtuous autonomy to be a specific expression of autonomy, one that is both normative and descriptive. Normatively, virtuous autonomy is a good: it is better for an individual to be more than less virtuously autonomous, and virtuous autonomy is understood to be both a moral and intellectual good, and thus a moral and intellectual virtue. Descriptively, virtuous autonomy can be understood as a character trait, what we call an active schema (as opposed to a schema one has but does not generally recall or use). Virtuous autonomy is not synonymous with autonomy *tout court*; alternative conceptions of autonomy exist and describe related but distinct phenomena (see, e.g., Arpaly 2003, 118–129; Taylor 2005; Sneddon 2013). To the extent that such alternative conceptions are genuinely conceptions of autonomy, they are understood here to be non-virtuous expressions of autonomy, and some may even be morally vicious. Even so, when philosophers speak of autonomy, they typically do so in a way that conceives of autonomy not simply in terms of a descriptive fact about the world but something needing effortful direction for development. Thus, when Gerald Dworkin (1988, 20) speaks of autonomy as "a second-order capacity of persons to reflect upon their first-order preferences," he understands this positively as a capacity that gives individuals "meaning and coherence to their lives" and enables them to "take responsibility for the kind of persons they are."

Virtuous autonomy, as a virtue, captures the core normative understanding of autonomy as self-law. Minimally, to act according to self-law

implies acting in accord with one or more principles providing normative guidance of one's morally salient thoughts and actions. Understood narrowly, it might be thought that self-*law* can be cashed out in terms of following a set of explicit rules. In this way, an individual who woodenly and unreflectively follows an explicit principle ("Do not lie") would count as autonomous. But this is not usually what is meant by autonomy and not what we mean by virtuous autonomy, especially since an individual might follow such a rule out of unreflective obedience to another. The *law* in self-law involves more than this narrow sense. Rather, the "laws" one follows are reasons one has acknowledged and endorsed as reasons for oneself, and while such reasons may take the form of explicitly formed lexical/linguistic propositions, our account includes reasons that take the form of paradigm instances, narratives, heuristics, and schemas. Furthermore, being autonomous with respect to the principles one applies to oneself also involves some ability to evaluate one's own reasons with openness to the possibility of error and with a goal of moving away from error, and this implies a reason-responsiveness and corrigibility. Reason-responsiveness comes in degrees. Thus, to be virtuously autonomous is to be maturely reason-responsive. Maturity in reason-responsiveness involves more than the capacity for means-end reasoning; it involves sensitivity to the good, to genuine value. This is one reason we do not generally regard even older children as fully autonomous. While older children are often perfectly capable of the type of means-end reasoning characteristic of some forms of economic rationality, they lack the maturity to reliably discern genuine goods. Of course, adults are also highly variable in this learned capacity. In recognizing this variability, we acknowledge that if and when virtuous autonomy is manifested, it is, as with other virtues, learned, manifested to varying degrees, and depends upon corrigibility.

When one is unable to act according to mature reason-responsiveness, one fails in activating virtuous autonomy. The source of this failure may be internal: one may wish to pursue a career in neuroscience yet find oneself unable to focus sufficiently when it comes time to study or complete lab assignments. The source may be external: discriminatory pressures imposed by wider society may be so great that they effectively prevent mature expressions of autonomous action, one may wish to participate in political activism but be constantly prevented from doing so because of sexual discrimination. In both cases, the actions one performs are not those actions which are reflective of mature reason-responsiveness; they are not actions according to *self*-law. In the extensive literature on autonomy, this sourcing of action in the self has been described in various ways, in terms of actions that are *self-constituting* or *authentic*, or which are reflective of one's *true self*, *centered self*, or, put negatively, not driven by "alien desires" (Korsgaard 2009; Dworkin 1988; Deci and Ryan 1991; Velleman 2006;

Edstrom 1993). When one's actions are not one's own, one instead experiences alienation, and one is in the process robbed of making decisions for oneself and thus properly receiving the appropriate sense of accomplishment or the requisite learning imposed by one's failures. This holds even when another aims to act paternalistically on one's behalf. The principle of respect for autonomy is grounded in the recognition of the importance of the development and exercise of autonomy as a good in and of itself.

To speak of autonomy as a virtue, then, is to recognize as a genuine and determinative good the fact that autonomy is the capacity to make mature reason-responsive decisions for oneself, within a stance of corrigibility. Without active openness to the possibility of error and without the active goal of moving away from error, reason-responsiveness can never mature into that which is required for virtuous autonomy. Minimally, autonomy contributes to prudential functioning: a person who is maturely reason-responsive will make better decisions than one who isn't. But virtuous autonomy is both a moral and intellectual virtue. For a person to act according to moral principles in the absence of corrigibility and reason-responsiveness is to run the risk of an inflexible dogmatism, insisting on applying rules in ways that do not meet the demands of the situation. When one unreflectively accepts the moral rules imposed by another, then one has fallen into moral heteronomy and possibly started on a path to incorrigibility. Parallel arguments obtain for intellectual autonomy. Thus, normatively we can speak of autonomy understood as mature reason-responsiveness as a virtue. Virtuous autonomy also fits commonly cited psychological criteria. To be virtuously autonomous is not simply a matter of willpower in the sense of explicitly forming the decision at a given moment to act autonomously. To be maturely autonomous is a process, one that is typically social and involves the influence of both positive and negative exemplars of corrigibility and reason-responsive decision-making. Both corrigibility and mature reason-responsiveness require integration with and formation of the many varied emotions that contribute to effective action, including hope, guilt, and repentance.

7.2 Autonomy in Political Context

In political contexts, the most common concern about autonomy is the first direction of fit: that the liberty to exercise autonomy, in private and in social and political spaces, can be protected by institutions fitted to do so. On this protectionist account, the state violates the rights of its societal members when it wrongfully infringes on societal members' autonomy or wrongfully withholds protections against violations from private individuals or groups, and a central question concerns how and when such violation occurs. In the neutralist tradition of political liberalism, autonomy

includes the right to pursue one's own conception of the good, and the state violates autonomy when the state imposes one conception of the good above others. Consequently, the state must be neutral between conceptions of the good, and the grounds of justice are based not on a conception of the good but on the conception of the right (Rawls 1971; Dworkin 1977). The protectionist account finds expression in other approaches as well. Philip Pettit's (2012, 2014) development of a republican conception of freedom in terms of non-domination provides an alternative justification for the protection of autonomy, as does Joseph Raz's (1986) perfectionist account. On all these accounts, the kinds of autonomy protected are multiple, including not only virtuous autonomy but also the naked autonomy of bare choice. There are important reasons for the expansiveness of the protectionist account, not least being the long history of efforts to illegitimately block the political rights of those deemed insufficiently capable to make "autonomous" political decisions, understood variously as informed or rational or similar types of decisions. On false grounds regarding autonomy, women and Blacks in the United States (and elsewhere) were oppressed by being denied the right to vote. In an earlier period, similar false arguments were made against the unpropertied and uneducated (e.g., J.S. Mill 1991; Bagehot 2009). Although the protectionist account typically receives strong support with respect to basic rights such as the right to vote, the right to privacy, and freedom of religion, its relative merits remain an area of active debate beyond those narrow areas. A lively debate continues, for instance, concerning the limits of state paternalism and societal member autonomy. When the state chooses to act in a putatively paternalistic way, the outcomes can be much worse than if individuals were left to their own devices, as demonstrated by the horrific history of Indian boarding schools, to which Native American children were sent under false claims about their own good. Or, to take other examples, efforts to increase taxes on sugary sodas in order to decrease consumption and sugar-consumption-related ill health, debates about using "nudges" in social policy to improve welfare, seatbelt laws, helmet laws, smoking laws, and vaccine mandates, all involve judgments concerning the power of the state to impose its will on decision-making and, in the case of vaccine mandates, the freedom of societal members to choose whether or not to risk the well-being of others.

While it is important for the state to protect societal member autonomy, arguments can be made that it is important that autonomy be exercised and expressed in political life. On this account, societal member well-being is inclusive of political action, and the flourishing societal member is one who, inter alia, engages in the political life of the polity. One ground of this can be found in Hannah Arendt's conception of the *vita activa*, which in the context of the Greek polis was manifested in participation in the public life of the polis (at least among those who had the standing to do so;

the Greek concept of democracy was, in our present terms, a profoundly illiberal one). Elizabeth Anderson (2009) argues that the value of liberal democracy does not lie simply in the instrumental benefit it may supply in terms of comparatively more effective government but in the fact that democracy makes possible the expression of autonomy in democratic participation and the mutual determination of shared principles and goals. And while, as critics note, the physical act of voting may often have only minimal impact, this is but one form of autonomous expression in the political sphere, which can include public speech, participation in political campaigns and protests, efforts in turning out the vote and ballot counting, and running for political office.

As individuals mature in their capacity for the virtuous expression of autonomy, including as it does both moral and intellectual dimensions, we should expect the virtuously autonomous to participate in the political life of their community, especially with respect to matters of moral and political importance. Thus, the conception of virtuous autonomy provides a strong basis of support for the importance of the expression of autonomy in the political sphere, and since such expression can only safely occur when the expression of autonomy has political protection, it provides a basis of support for the protectionist account as well.

Virtuous autonomy thus provides grounds of support for both the expressive account and the protectionist account of autonomy in the political sphere, although the justification of each may have other sources as well. Virtuous autonomy in political expression is distinct from other forms of autonomy, however, in the second direction of fit, precisely due to its requirement for sustaining democratic norms and practices. On the sustaining account, the just, democratic state requires the exercise of virtuous autonomy to actively sustain the state and its institutions. When expressed in the public sphere, we can refer to virtuous autonomy more specifically as DA and understood as such it can be classed with other democratic virtues that play a sustaining role. We treat the sustaining account as an empirical hypothesis with normative implications. Empirically, we should expect to find DA expressed in populations, and we should expect those who are virtuously autonomous to be disproportionately involved in political life and action. Normatively, since the sustaining of democratic institutions is itself a good, this provides reason to support the development of DA in a population.

Although little empirical attention has been devoted to the role that specific character traits play in the sustaining of specific political institutions, a large literature supports the importance and influence of cultural norms and values more generally. Robert Putnam and colleagues (1993) documented differences in effective governance between northern and southern Italy, attributable to the differences in the historical development of civil society.

Tapping decades of data generated by the World Values Survey, Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel (Welzel and Inglehart 2006; Welzel 2013) have argued for the causal role of changing societal values in institutional change and development and, more recently, Joseph Henrich (Henrich et al. 2010) has developed an empirical research program supporting his claim that a cascade of value shifts caused by the West's break with traditional kin structures is responsible for the development of modern economic and political institutions. That cultural values, let alone character traits, can have such institutional impact is not an uncontested claim. Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012) have argued in a series of papers and books that institutions are causally prior to culture and that both institutional and cultural change are explained by the prior institutional history of a region. In a somewhat parallel division virtue epistemologists are also divided on the empirical and normative significance of individual epistemic vices for explaining political failure. Some, such as Quassim Cassam (2019) and Michael Lynch (2012), have argued for the importance of epistemic character traits for explaining the behavior of both voters and political elites, while others have argued against character's relevance (see Anderson 2012; Haslanger 2015; Kenyon 2014; Boult 2021).

As do many others, we find that arguments in favor of a thoroughgoing virtue skepticism do not withstand reasoned, informed critique (Annas 2003; Snow 2010; Sreenivasan 2002). While we agree with Anderson that the character of individuals is insufficient to sustain just institutions, we argue that the existence of a democratic character and concomitant democratic virtues is a necessary condition. Just institutions do not wholly determine character formation either, and the model we propose involves both directions of fit, with feedback loops to properly understand the phenomena.

7.3 Democratizing Virtuous Autonomy in Alignment With Political Institutions

How DA is expressed will depend on the institutional context. In the context of genuinely democratic institutions, DA is not only free to develop unhindered but may also be encouraged and fostered by the very institutions it helps to sustain. In the context of less than just and democratic institutions, support for the formation of democratic institutions may not be forthcoming, and under undemocratic institutions formation of virtuous autonomy will often be actively hindered. We may thus expect a correlation between the expression of democratic autonomy in a population and democratic institutions, but we should expect exceptions to occur due to the particularities of a given context.

How might this occur? In the minimal case, institutions that are just and democratic will not interfere with the development of virtuous autonomy in

societal members engaging public life. Recall that for the liberal neutralist, just institutions are based on a conception of the right that does not give preference to any particular conception of the good. Because of this, the liberal neutralist may argue that, while the state should provide strong safeguards to protect the exercise of autonomy in its various forms, it should not lend support to any one conception of autonomy over another. On this account, virtuous autonomy will not be favored, but its exercise will also not be hindered. In such a state, those who are virtuously autonomous will be free to exercise their autonomy in the political domain, and they will choose to do so in multiple ways. Some may choose to run for political office or work in public service. Others will choose to participate in civil society and the development of social institutions that will, directly or indirectly, contribute to the formation of virtuous autonomy in others. Of course, the degree to which this occurs will vary from society to society, and this will impact the development of virtuous autonomy in the context of that society. Thus, in the context of the democratic state committed to liberal neutrality, the formation of virtuous autonomy will be unhindered but also largely unaided by the state, and to the extent that the formation of virtuous autonomy is aided, it will be influenced by the modeling of those who serve as leaders in the society and by those institutions of civil society that contribute to its formation.

In practice, liberal neutrality has significant limits. All modern states provide public education, and while public education may be neutral between some conceptions of the good, it is not possible for education to be neutral between all conceptions of the good. This is because education is itself a good, and decisions about the content of education and methods of instruction involve particular conceptions of the good and require the formation of specific virtues or (in some cases) vices. Educational systems, for instance, may be employed for the purpose of ideological indoctrination and the encouragement of heteronomous decision-making. Such systems, however, are hardly educational in a genuine sense, and to the extent they manage to impart useful skills and true beliefs, they will do so in ways that are fragile and inflexible, since the promotion of those intellectual virtues that promote truth-tracking will be considered dangerous by the regime. By contrast, education that is democratic in character will promote the development of virtuous autonomy. This facilitation occurs because the development of mature reason-responsiveness and corrigibility that is characteristic of virtuous autonomy are critical to learning in educational programs in just democratic states. In the ideal case, education will promote the development of autonomy-enhancing intellectual virtues, and, in such formation, we may expect critical roles for science education, civic education, and the critical faculties associated with advanced study in the humanities. Education in each of these domains can be done poorly, and in such cases we can expect little contribution to the formation of

either intellectual virtues generally or virtuous autonomy specifically. At the extreme, such education will consist simply in rote memorization of important historical facts, parts of the government, or tables of elements. But when it is done well, we should expect virtuous formation of autonomy. Quality instruction in the sciences involves not simply the memorization of formulas and an array of already discovered facts but also learning how to independently develop and test hypotheses, objectively interpret results, and to receive negative feedback constructively (Peterson 2019). Central to the development of scientific thinking is a reason-responsive corrigibility (Spezio 2018), the capacity of being open to error, of being able to recognize errors and disconfirming evidence accurately and in an emotionally healthy way, not as a threat to one's identity but as integral to it. Similar qualities are important for historical and literary study, among other areas of inquiry. To be skilled at history involves something other than the reception and transmission of culturally approved narratives; it involves, among other things an understanding of historical context, understanding of the ambiguities of interpretation, and the danger of Whiggish interpretations that justify the supposed inevitability of the present by appeal to the past (i.e., a monotonic view of history as being wholly about struggles between those in favor and those against "progress"). The intellectual virtues cultivated through effective education contribute to mature reason-responsiveness and thus to virtuous autonomy. Because education requires cooperation in the educational setting, and because education presumes basic principles of moral integrity and honesty, it contributes as well, though often in a limited way, to moral formation.

Thus, when democracies support quality education for their populaces, they also support the formation of virtuous autonomy that contributes to the stability and thriving of democratic processes. There are at least two ways that virtuous autonomy may contribute to such outcomes. First, those who are virtuously autonomous to varying degrees will be correspondingly more resistant to blatant propaganda and thus, at least to some extent, the influence of authoritarian demagogues. Propaganda, by its nature, aims to persuade by appeal to such motives as self-interest, fear, victimhood, and out-group infrahumanization, to secure endorsement of political ends that are often based on falsehoods and contrary to the genuine interests of those appealed to. Out-group infrahumanization applies to views that see most or all members of a perceived out-group as lacking character and characteristics essential for humankind (e.g., morality, rationality, sensitivity to suffering, creativity). One need not be perfectly reason-responsive to be resistant to propaganda, and since virtuous autonomy is manifested in degrees, we can expect as well degrees of resistance in any given democratic society. But given the positive role of education in the formation of virtuous autonomy, we can expect some greater presence of virtuous autonomy

in those populations where genuinely democratic education is supported. Since, in turn, authoritarian demagogues rely heavily on the same formulae of non-rational persuasion, virtuous autonomy has a similar if not stronger effect, since the appeal to heteronomy is clearer in such cases.

Second, we may expect those who are virtuously autonomous to be more likely to exercise their autonomy in various forms of political action, and to do so in comparatively salutary ways. When the virtuously autonomous do participate in civic and political life, however, we should expect the impacts to be comparatively positive, since decisions will be more likely to be based on mature reflection on one's values than a response to the various heteronomous forces at play. In the context of voting, this implies a decreased likelihood to vote impulsively or akratically, approaching a kind of independence assumed in some models of epistemic democracy (Landemore 2017; List and Goodin 2001). Under proper conditions, then, virtuous autonomy and other processes of democratization can create a virtuous cycle, improving governance and societal member well-being (cf., e.g., Boehnke and Wong 2011). Such a virtuous cycle is not inevitable, and when institutions supporting the formation of virtuous autonomy change or falter, this can in turn impact the quality of democratic governance. The rise of authoritarian populisms, encouraging as they often do a kind of heteronomy signaled in part by hard-to-fake commitment to obvious falsehoods, can, in part, be understood as the result of such faltering.

7.4 Democratizing Virtuous Autonomy in Opposition to Political Institutions

7.4.1 Virtuous Autonomy Formation and the Imposition of Political Heteronomy

No political institution is perfectly just, and even the best states implement democracy imperfectly. Genuinely democratic governance granting enfranchisement to all adult societal members is, historically speaking, only of relatively recent invention, and much of the world's population resides in states that are considerably less than fully democratic if not outright autocracies. Consequently, for most places for most of history, the formation of virtuous autonomy has occurred independently of state institutions or even in defiance of the state. José Medina (2013) has argued that when conditions of systemic oppression occur, we can expect differential propensities in the formation of specific epistemic virtues and vices among those who benefit from oppression compared to those who suffer from it. Medina argues that those suffering under oppression will have greater motivation to develop intellectual humility and curiosity, since the lack of access to educational institutions will make manifest one's unequal access to knowledge

and one's epistemic hardship provides motivation to learn and take advantage of information important for one's well-being. Medina's argument is not that those benefiting from oppression are necessarily vicious in all respects and those suffering oppression necessarily virtuous, but that the respective contexts of being in the position of the oppressor and oppressed exert influence on character formation.

Following the logic of Medina's argument, one might expect democratizing autonomy to be developed primarily among those who benefit from doing so and to be hindered in its development among those for whom the development of democratizing autonomy creates cognitive dissonance with the self-interested and radial in-group benefits they receive in their role as an oppressor. While this argument provides some initial insight into the way that DA could develop, it misses the central role that DA plays in political life and the extent to which its development is dangerous to unjust institutions. In particular, unjust institutions will have among their aims the development of political heteronomy, that is, they will seek to inculcate attitudes of unreflective consent to the value set of the institution, even when the implemented values of the institution negatively impact the rights and well-being of those affected. The imposition of political heteronomy is most obvious in authoritarian and, especially, totalitarian regimes that are both manifestly unjust and seeking to maintain their unjust rule not only by force but also by means of propaganda and indoctrination, all practices that DA detects and rejects as stifling for the (re)generation of liberal democracy.

Political heteronomy is not limited to the cases of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Pressures of political heteronomy can occur in the context of consolidated (i.e., well-established) democracies, in which few political actors seek to take organized action outside of established and normatively democratic institutions. Political heteronomy can be inculcated through both formal and informal political institutions and by the elites in control of those institutions or in control of influential social and political messaging, and also by institutional policies and practices that embolden private actors and groups to take their own coercive actions. Just as schools can be vehicles for the formation of virtuous autonomy, they can also be turned to the use of political heteronomy by discouraging reason-responsiveness and encouraging instead submission to unjust institutions. Institutions of civil society and the elites leading them may also play a role. Systems of political heteronomy need not be overt. Individuals caught up in heteronomous systems will often themselves be heteronomous and, being heteronomous, will unreflectively contribute to the heteronomizing system of which they are a part. Of these, some may enthusiastically embrace their own heteronomy and participation in such a system. Theirs is a willful servility, embracing the domination of others, even at the sacrifice of their own rights and well-being.

In contexts of oppression, and especially in the context of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, we should expect the development of DA to be significantly hindered, not only because of the various shaping forces actively aiming at its suppression through means of propaganda and shaping environments aimed at its prevention but also because the expression of DA entails real risks in such contexts. DA formation becomes a form of nonconformism. Under conditions of oppression we envision two main routes of DA formation. On the first route, DA forms in the context of communities of resistance, which themselves aim implicitly or explicitly at DA formation and development. Communities of resistance may be explicitly political, as is the case of protest movements and opposition parties. They may also be cultural and religious, especially when a dominant regime actively discriminates against cultural and religious minorities. They may also be formal or informal communities of journalists or media organizations, such as *Novaya Gazete* in Russia or *140journos* in Turkey, which aim at challenging false narratives and maintaining free speech and press autonomy (Repnikova 2018; Tufekci 2017). Such communities at their best both model DA for one another, to those new to the group, and to society at large, and they provide networks of mutual support and learning of DA along with other democratic virtues. But they will often be imperfect, sometimes mirroring within themselves some forms of discrimination while at the same time opposing other forms in wider society.

On the second route, DA forms individually. This view is not simply a de novo view, but a recognition that microcultures within families and groups of families, religious traditions, and other small group affiliations engender and elicit commitments that create opportunities for DA among exemplary persons or small. In these conditions, DA forms as a deliberate response against threats to personal well-being and identity. When confronted with attempted impositions of heteronomy, one route is to accept the imposition, and this is sometimes done on the thought that it is better to endure the yoke of oppression than to resist and therefore endure greater risk. But this is not always possible. It may not be possible because of the real or perceived significance of the threat to one's own physical well-being, but it also may not be possible because of the threat to one's identity. The latter form of threat is especially pertinent when the oppression takes the form of scapegoating or exerting inequality based on ideological claims about superior and inferior groups based on categories of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or other criteria. In such contexts, the exercise of autonomy becomes deeply connected to an assertion of self-worth equal in worth to that of others. By developing and exercising mature reason-responsiveness, the individual develops the strength and independence of mind to conceive and narrate progress to greater, inclusive equality and to use this to reject dominant social narratives. In the process, the individual also develops

keener recognition for the diverse forms that heteronomy may take and through this develops toward a virtuous autonomy and not a naked autonomy that, for instance, embraces subjectivism or relativism. Because this individual path lacks a supporting social network and often even suitable exemplars, the challenges confronting the development of a healthy and mature virtuous autonomy are much greater than in the first route. But because the level of threat is often more dire and direct, the development of virtuous autonomy takes on particular importance.

In the American context, both the pro-Constitution phase of Frederick Douglass' development and the mature, post-Mecca, Malcolm X provide examples of such DA, and indeed are exemplars, of the formation of virtuous autonomy as an individual-level response to unjust institutions. While the life story of each is complex in its path of development, both are marked by a resistance to heteronomous systems and an ongoing development of corrigible reason-responsiveness that learns from the other and also learns from one's own mistakes. In the case of Malcom X (X and Haley 1987), growth in autonomy involved not simply rejecting his "place" in society and engaging in a process of self-education in prison, it involved a second stage of development in his eventual movement into Islam, beyond the Nation of Islam and the leadership of Elijah Muhammed. Doing so, he tells us, required recognizing his own errors in judgment and developing a deeper realization of himself in relation to the ideological movements around him.

7.4.2 Virtuous Autonomy: Costly but Not Burdened

Given the challenges of forming virtuous autonomy in the context of unjust institutions, it might be thought that virtuous autonomy is a burdened virtue in the sense developed by Lisa Tessman (2005). According to Tessman, a burdened virtue is one that contributes to one's survival under contexts of oppression. Such burdened virtues, Tessman argues, can be costly to the individual who possesses them, inflicting longer-term psychological damage at the same time that they help the individual survive and combat injustice in the immediate context. Furthermore, such burdened virtues may not even be virtues under fairer societal conditions. Tessman gives the examples of unrelenting rage and hard resolve against oppression as two burdened virtues that have these characteristics (2005, 96, 116). Unrelenting rage enables one to both endure and confront violent oppression, but such rage is also emotionally costly and damaging and empirical evidence suggests that it would diminish rather than facilitate the development of DA (Thomas et al. 2023; Ryan and Deci 2020). Likewise, hard resolve may have similar effects, but Tessman argues that it also reduces one's capacity for sympathy, and this reduced capacity can

be problematic if one succeeds in escaping or overturning oppression. If DA were a burdened virtue, we would expect it to have similar costs for the agent, and we might also question whether it was a virtue outside of the context of oppression. As we have argued though, DA is an expression of virtuous autonomy, and virtuous autonomy is a virtue not only under contexts of burden but also one that actively contributes to both individual and societal thriving. Yet, when virtuous autonomy contributes to active opposition to existing institutions, including possible risk of bodily harm and mental anguish, how should we understand this?

Tessman determines the diminishing of well-being to be one of the defining characteristics of a burdened virtue (2005, 98). We suggest that understanding virtues in terms of flourishing, especially flourishing in terms of subjective well-being, even so-called eudaimonic well-being, is at odds with historical examples and exemplars of DA and with insights from moral philosophy and psychology. Philippa Foot (2001) recognized this when she attacked utilitarians who harbored simplistic accounts of happiness. We propose a conception of thriving that can include but is not defined by subjective well-being. Thriving is best understood multidimensionally in terms of objective goods of which the virtues are constitutive. Unlike typical conceptions of subjective well-being or even psychological accounts of eudaimonia, in thriving actions may contribute along some dimensions but be costly in others. Virtuous autonomy and its expression in unjust contexts as DA is a constitutive element of thriving. It is better to be virtuously autonomous than to be heteronomous (e.g., servile) or to possess a mere naked autonomy. In addition, DA across contexts typically contributes to elements of subjective well-being. For those suffering under unjust institutions, both as an individual and as part of a group, DA protects one's identity and self-respect from the downward evaluations imposed by the oppressor, and it empowers one's sense of agency in the face of hostile and even overwhelming forces of injustice (see, e.g., Della Porta and Atak 2017). DA can also be costly along other dimensions, as exercising one's political autonomy can lead to confrontation with the forces of oppression on behalf of oneself and others. Rather than seeing DA as being a "burdened" virtue defined solely in terms of flourishing as subjective well-being, we see DA as constitutive of a multidimensional thriving. Because of this, DA is in an important sense good for the individual and community at the same time that it may impose costs in the process of confronting injustice.

Given this, we should expect DA to be important not only for consolidated democracies, and not only for consolidating democracies and democracies confronting deconsolidation, but also for democratizing movements in authoritarian contexts. On the individual level, DA plays an important role in the sustaining and development of individual identity, and thus an

important role in sustaining authenticity and opposition to the imposition of heteronomous messaging. Furthermore, DA is sustained in and also sustains democratizing movements in their opposition to injustice, and as such it plays an important role in the defense of human rights. But it is important to remember that, in virtually all cases, DA, like all virtues, is developed imperfectly, and especially in authoritarian contexts and contexts of oppression more generally, both its formation and sustenance are subject to constant challenge. In both schools and workplaces, for example, there will often be pressures to ideologically conform. While virtuously autonomous individuals may outwardly do so for purposes of survival, they will inwardly, and also sometimes outwardly, subvert imposed commitments and systems of belief. Because DA is a component of the thriving of individuals, and because it is a resource for individual and group resistance in the face of oppression, it cannot be wholly suppressed. And because the exercise of DA is inclusive of political autonomy and action, its development and expression are constant dangers to autocratic rule. Thus, DA is just as important, if not more so, in non-democratic contexts as it is in democratic ones.

7.5 Conclusion

We began by addressing a widely accepted defense of liberal democracy and its democratic institutions, namely that they are the best at protecting autonomy. We noted that a full defense and understanding of liberal, democratic institutions requires attending to "directions of fit," something that is overlooked in most protectionist and expressivist defenses of democracy. Paying attention to directions of fit shows that liberal institutions are fitted to protection of various forms of autonomy (including DA) at the same time that DA contributes to healthy liberal and democratic institutions. DA applies our recent development of more general types of virtuous autonomy (VA) to the public life and especially to action for and within political institutions. DA is VA in public and especially in actions with and in political institutions. Thus DA is relationally sensitive, sensitive to the goods of justice and freedom and care in democratic contexts, and it is maturely reason-responsive, all within a stance of corrigibility. Corrigibility consists in an active willingness for inquiry and relationship capable of recognizing one's error and a willingness to move away from that error while at the same time seeking forgiveness and ways of making amends. We discussed how DA works with political institutions when they contribute to the consolidation of democracy and how DA works against political institutions across a spectrum of illiberal or anti-democratic, authoritarian contexts. DA is not a burdened virtue, in that its development in anti-democratic contexts does not lead to harm once those forces are dismantled. DA is, however, a distinctly costly virtue, especially when opposing anti-democratic institutions

and regimes, in the sense most helpfully discussed by Philippa Foot. DA can cost someone their income, wealth, security, bodily integrity, even their life. Recognizing these potential costs is part of DA and knowingly bearing the risk of these losses does not confer consent to loss but communicates a virtuous commitment to just institutions and to the persons, communities, and liberal democracies that foster them.

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8 Public Life, Virtue, and Self

Finding Forgiveness and Justice Through Community Engagement After Genocide in Rwanda

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What does *justice* involve after mass atrocity? How can *forgiveness* be considered following heinous acts? As part of the "Self, Virtue, and Public Life" (SVPL) project, our team embarked on a collaborative study to gain insight from the transitional- and restorative-justice practices enacted in Rwanda beginning in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and continuing to the present day. The 1994 genocide against the Tutsi was an intensive state-sponsored period of mass violence that incited neighbors to take arms against neighbors, killing over one million Tutsi people in 100 days (Brehm et al., 2014; Center for Conflict Management of the University of Rwanda, 2012; McDoom, 2020). Our SVPL project sought to learn lessons from survivors of the genocide about their identity development ("Self"), their perspectives on forgiveness and justice following the genocide ("Virtue"), and their community work aimed at building a better future for all in Rwanda ("Public Life").

With support from the SVPL project, our project began as an interdisciplinary, researcher–practitioner partnership designed as a research study involving interviews with exemplars – those who not only survived the genocide but also reckoned with its legacy, forgave, and came meaningfully to contribute to rebuilding their communities and nation, dedicating their lives to promoting the values of forgiveness, unity, reconciliation, peace, and justice. We asked exemplars about their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and experiences related to forgiveness and justice following the genocide (see Tirrell et al., 2023 for full description of the research methodology). As Rosoux (2022) summarized, the case of Rwanda is "a 'textbook example' illuminating the complexity of reconciliation processes after mass atrocities" (p. 1718), and thus is an important case

DOI: 10.4324/9781003367857-9

to study. Not only are there political challenges of transitions of power and enacting of post-conflict policy toward justice, but there are also community-related challenges of peace and reconciliation (e.g., see Brett et al., 2022). In Rwanda, restoring the community meant living together again, in peace and harmony, with neighbors who committed crimes of genocide. How can one come to forgive and live peacefully alongside those who killed one's family? There are timely and important lessons to be learned from the people of Rwanda, and the SVPL project provided fertile ground for cultivating them.

The interviews we conducted revealed that these exemplars had powerful stories to share and also that they were eager to share them for the benefit and betterment of others. Accordingly, following the completion of the exemplar interview research study (Tirrell et al., 2023), our partnership evolved into a community of practice (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Wenger-Trayner, 1998; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014), involving an ongoing collaboration with four of the original study participants (co-authors of this chapter affiliated with Compassion International Rwanda; see Tirrell et al., 2023) who were especially interested in pursuing further and deeper the ideas that arose in the interviews – namely, ideas about the interdependence of community engagement, restorative justice, forgiveness, and peacebuilding, and how their testimonies of the genocide and, in particular, of their healing and reclaiming their lives, could reach and benefit others worldwide.

In this chapter, we aim to integrate this developing collaboration, by sharing some of the testimony of these exemplars, with the aim of learning from it about civic virtue and identity development, and to illustrate the interesting links they described between forgiveness, justice, and peacebuilding. This unfolding research is premised on the view that moral insight and knowledge of character development can be gained from the moral thinking of exemplary individuals (e.g., Čehajić-Clancy & Bilewicz, 2021; Damon & Colby, 2015). The individuals we interviewed all described an intimate relationship between their own healing and their engagement in restorative-justice practices. We intend here to further reflect on the Tirrell et al. (2023) findings relating forgiveness and restorative justice, with implications for advancing research and practice designed to promote civic virtue and identity development. We consider philosophical approaches to understanding forgiveness and justice and connect those understandings with contemporary models of human development. By bringing the voices of genocide survivors and community leaders to bear on these timely and important issues, we hope to contribute to efforts to promote human flourishing by illuminating possible pathways to peace following conflict, injustice, and atrocity.

8.1 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda: April–July 1994

It is difficult to imagine the realities of what occurred during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. However, to understand just how exemplary these community leaders are – and how powerful their testimonies and lessons – it is important to try. As part of our community of practice, and to further public understanding, nationally and internationally, of the genocide and its impact, four exemplars – Cecile Kampeta, Octave Rukundo, Esperance Wibabara, and Placide Mwiseneza – shared written reflections on the trauma they experienced. Please be advised that these stories include graphic descriptions of genocide trauma:

> In 1994, I was in grade four high school and that is the same year that the genocide started. It claimed the whole of my family, save me and one sister. With the assistance of people whom we used to go to church with, I fled to Congo and did not even want to come back to Rwanda because of what had happened to my family. I did not expect to get the courage of forgiving those who killed my family. I was full of grief and hatred towards those who killed our loved ones.
>
> (Cecile Kampeta, age 21 at the time of the genocide; written June 2023)

> During the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, I was 17 years of age and in high school. My extended family, including uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandparents, were killed at that time. My mother, young brother, and sister were all killed in the 1994 Genocide. All our properties were looted and destroyed. My heart was bitter and in despair. Life was a hard plight for me as well as for other Genocide survivors. The assassinators were our neighbors, colleagues, church members, etc. The 1994 Genocide led to survivors who had no means to rebuild, and we knew those who were involved.
>
> (Octave Rokundo, age 17 at the time of the genocide; written April 2023)

> The journey towards survival was a nightmarish one, marked by a ceaseless trail of slaughter and unimaginable horrors that no one should ever bear witness to. My beloved grandparents and an uncle, to whom I was particularly close, suffered a dreadful fate – they were discarded into a latrine, where they suffocated to death. I was forced to witness the beheadings of individuals I once considered friends. The pain was further intensified when I realized that these heinous acts were committed by people who were an integral part of our lives – our teachers, our classmates. With the onset of the Genocide, our previous affiliations and

> shared histories were disregarded, and we were subjected to violence simply due to our ethnic origin. The aftermath was shattering. I did not only lose my closest friends and family members, but also my dreams, and the very will to live. I was plunged into despair and consumed by hatred for a world that had permitted such atrocities to transpire.
>
> (Esperance Wibabara, age 24 at the time of the genocide; written May 2023)

> On 7th April 1994, it was a Thursday around 3 p.m. when my family and I were taking our after-lunch rest. For the country, it was a mourning period for the death of the President of Rwanda. At the age of 15, my eyes witnessed horrible scenes I could never imagine seeing in my life. A multitude of people – armed soldiers with guns, known as presidential guards, and civilians known as Interahamwe, majorly made of our neighbors – violently forced, destroyed, entered our home's gate, and killed my father (TWAGIRAYEZU François) and my elder brother (TWAGIRAYEZU Félix) with guns. When I was trying to escape those killers, one of them heavily macheted me on the parietal part of my head; I kept running while bleeding and escaped. That very day I plunged into the darkest total confusion of my life because I couldn't imagine that in one day, I had lost my father, brother, other relatives, and friends in such horrible circumstances, planned and executed to exterminate the Tutsi. The belongings of Tutsi were purposely stolen or destroyed by Hutus, with systematic coordination and full support of their government in a period of 100 days (April–July 1994).
>
> (Placide Mwiseneza, age 15 at the time of the genocide; written June 2023)

With these testimonies in mind, we revisit our approach to learning lessons from these exemplars' stories (see Tirrell et al., 2023) and frame it with an unexpected finding that emerged regarding how they understood themselves, their virtues, and their public life.

8.2 "Stand Up Again and Walk."[1] Public Life, Virtue, and Self

In asking the exemplars to reflect on their civic identities and virtue development, we expected their stories to unfold in a linear way: that they would describe early formative experiences as shaping their identity; that their developmental trajectories would be marked by the development of virtues – including forgiveness – that would survive and help them to survive their experience of the genocide. In fact, we designed our sequence of interview questions with that in mind. We expected that the development of these virtues would, in turn, encourage and equip these individuals to

become engaged in public life, thus actualizing their civic roles and identities as people who had endured trauma by relying on their personal strengths.

We believed that questioning them about their early life would help us to understand how they evolved into exemplary individuals able to forgive the trauma and serve their communities. Indeed, in the positive youth development (PYD) literature, contribution to self, family, community, and civil society is often described as an *outcome* of PYD (see Lerner, 2004; Lerner et al., 2015) – for instance, in the Lerner and Lerner (e.g., 2019) Five Cs model of PYD, when the purported "Five Cs" (competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring) develop, then *contribution* (the "sixth C") is said to emerge as an outcome and indicator of thriving. We therefore expected the exemplars' stories to reflect a process in which the pre-trauma development of the self led to and included the development of virtue, which, then, motivated civic engagement in their post-genocide public life (i.e., *Self* → *Virtue* → *Public Life*).

Instead, a different meta-theme emerged from the exemplars' stories. We found that the exemplars described the development of self and virtue, of forgiveness and healing, as unfolding in and through – indeed, because of – their community engagement. Rather than their roles in public life being an *outcome* of their self and virtue development, the exemplars described their actions in public life as being a key *contributor* to their self and virtue development – and, relatedly, to their healing. In fact, they described community engagement as critically important to re-establishing their sense of selfhood after the experience of self-shattering trauma. They described the experience of engaging with and contributing to their communities as helping them to experience, understand, and articulate the development of their (civic) virtues which, together, enabled them to "find" themselves and to begin to heal after suffering the trauma of the genocide. Specifically, through public life, they managed forgiveness and reconciliation:

> I embarked on a journey toward forgiveness and reconciliation, although it was anything but easy. Following the cessation of the Genocide, I joined a non-governmental organization called Samaritan's Purse. This experience, coupled with my upbringing steeped in Christian values, laid the foundation for my journey towards forgiveness. With time, I found myself pondering on Jesus' example, who managed to forgive those who crucified him. This thought served as a beacon of hope, offering a glimmer of potential joy in my otherwise pain-ridden existence. While working with Samaritan's Purse, I slowly began to understand that those who had committed the Genocide were ensnared by a poisonous ideology. Recognizing this did not absolve them of their deeds, but it did shed some light on the circumstances that had catalyzed their

monstrous actions. In that journey of forgiveness, I gave jobs to those who were on the side of the ones who were committing those actions in the genocide, and I even gave one of them land for building a house with his family, because they had nowhere to stay. Through my everyday job, I still give some of them clothes, help them solve conflicts, and give advice and food.

(Esperance)

As time went on, I decided to come back to Rwanda because I started missing my old friends and the people we used to go to church with. When I returned, instead of going back to school, I decided to get married because I did not have anywhere to live. Before returning, I was curious to see the people from the RPF-Inkotanyi [Rwandan Patriotic Front, the Tutsi-led regime that ended the genocide] who the old regime [led by the Hutus, perpetrators of the genocide against the Tutsi] referred to as cockroaches.[2] The people from the old regime [Hutu-led] used to tell us that they [Tutsi] were not human beings and they added that they had tails. To the contrary, when I returned, I noticed that they were very good people who resembled my loved ones who were killed during the genocide. I was happy to see them, and they helped me heal and I started loving myself again.

(Cecile)

Regarding my journey of forgiveness, it started in 1996, just two years after the Genocide against the Tutsis. I started to visit perpetrators in prisons, supporting them in my limited capacity (such as buying them washing soaps) and holding thoughtful conversations with them. In their understanding, being imprisoned was caused by the allegations of Genocide survivors, so they took all survivors as bad people. When I visited the perpetrators in prison, some of them came to me and said to me openly that they realized that I'm a good person; in their mind, the perpetrators could not think that, among survivors, someone would have mercy on them and visit them. So I decided to forgive and reconcile with those who killed my people in the 1994 Genocide. Visiting perpetrators in prison helped me to decide to forgive and reconcile with them.

(Octave)

In May 2005, a new phase of testing my healing, forgiveness, and justice status started. I was working as a civil servant and some of my responsibilities were to coordinate the population requests and the local home-grown solutions of dealing with innumerable crimes of genocide. Most perpetrators were overloaded in prisons and the classic courts in Rwanda or International arena could not handle their huge number of

> cases. At that time, the government of Rwanda established the "Gacaca courts" as part of home-grown solutions to provide justice on the Genocide's crimes. In the framework of my job, I attended many Gacaca sessions in which killers were accused or confessed of what they had done during the Genocide; it was a tough situation but worthwhile! Assisting in the hearings of all those perpetrators narrating how they slaughtered children, pregnant mothers, old people, just because they were born Tutsi, revived my tragic memories, shocked, and tortured me again, but my heart was new by then and I had to apply what I learned in the Word of God: forgiveness despite the pain. Later in 2008, I was also given the capacity of being a public bailiff in executing the jurisdictions decisions amicably or using force as provided by the law. It was still hurting as I would spend sleepless nights crying, struggling in my heart to take the position to be neutral and professional as it was the required standards. Going through that period strengthened me, and I can proudly say that I overcame hatred and stood neutral as all cases and jurisdictions decisions were executed with restorative justice. The result of this is that the relationships of the citizens became healthy and, today, they continue to live peacefully together.
>
> (Placide)

Exemplars described a bottom-up process, from hands to heart to head, rather than top-down, from head to heart to hands (see Easton, 1997; Orr, 1992; Sipos et al., 2008; Tan et al., 2021). Instead of unfolding from within the self, then reaching outward in public service, civic identity was perceived as starting outwardly, by engaging with others, which then enabled reflection back to the self. It was *Public Life* → *Virtue* → *Self*.

Of course, as developmental scientists, philosophers, and practitioners, we recognize that development is indeed holistic, dynamic, and iterative/circular (e.g., Cantor et al., 2021; Lerner et al., 2022). Accordingly, a reductionistic, linear model would not be correct. As the saying (often attributed to statistician George Box, e.g., 1976) goes, "All models are wrong, but some are useful." Indeed, models (e.g., in the form of heuristics, stories) are only approximations of reality that are intended to help us to make sense of aspects of it. Nonetheless, such approximations are important for shaping our overall understanding of life and our place in the world. As well, they are necessary for inculcating values and educating future generations on how to strive toward a better future together. Accordingly, what would constitute a useful model of civic identity and virtue development toward human flourishing?

The exemplars' descriptions reflect a process whereby their lived experiences of engagement with the community – their public life – shaped their healing and forgiving. The process of active social engagement has been

referred to by developmental scientists as "embodiment," understood as the emergence, through the lived experience of active engagement with one's physical and social environment, of a socio-cultural point of view. As described by Overton (2013):

> Embodiment includes not merely the physical structures of the body but the body as a form of lived experience, actively engaged with the world of socio-cultural and physical objects. The body as form references the biological point-of-view, the body as lived experience references the psychological subject standpoint, and the body *actively engaged with the world* represents the socio-cultural point-of-view [emphasis added].
>
> (p. 103)

As we understand it, embodiment is a human being's subjective experience of active, in-person engagement with her social environment. In this chapter, we focus on the experience of embodiment that is relevant to – and being called for in – post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. As Brett et al. (2022) summarized, reconciliation following violent conflict must recognize and reflect the presence of "war bodies" – those dead, disappeared, displaced, and damaged – by promoting a sense of "corporeal" (embodied) peacebuilding. In Rwanda, such efforts included the identification and burial of the bodies of persons killed during war; they also involved "corporeal encounters," including the testimony and community engagement described by the exemplars.

Whereas physical encounters in community are important for developing socio-cultural identity, generally speaking, they are especially important to reconstruction in the aftermath of trauma. Exemplars described how engaging with the community, through activities designed to facilitate reconciliation, enabled forgiveness and healing to be integrated with their lived experience of selfhood. This relation suggests a relevant and powerful trajectory – a mediated developmental process – from public life to virtue to self. Generalizing from their experience, we conclude that, in social contexts that describe significant conflict and suffering, efforts to achieve reconciliation can lead to forgiveness becoming a component of communal life and a shared experience of healing and justice.

8.3 "Justice Starts With Us. Justice Starts With People. It Starts With the Community."[3] Finding Forgiveness and Justice After Genocide

The emergence of forgiveness as a civic virtue was a key finding of our SVPL project – that it was indeed admissible and realistic in public life (cf. Arendt, 1958), and that forgiveness did not forswear justice but, rather,

facilitated and completed it (Tirrell et al., 2023). Exemplars described forgiveness not only as giving them relief and enabling them to reclaim their lives but also as benefiting the perpetrators. Justice was restorative and meant to serve both parties. As Octave wrote, "I consider *forgiveness as the best gift* I can give to someone who killed my family, and it will leave a good legacy for him and his descendants as well as my people." Not only did community engagement facilitate healing and forgiveness, but also forgiving, in turn, facilitated restorative justice and further engagement in public life. The mutual support of these processes illustrates a kind of holistic network of moral experience (see Nucci, 2019; Overton, 2015).

Our recent, community of practice conversations have revealed that a key element in the interdependence of healing, forgiveness, and restorative justice in the aftermath of mass violence in Rwanda is *testimony*, understood as a form of face-to-face civic engagement:

> [Regarding] the justice part, Rwandan government also initiated the Gacaca courts, truth and reconciliation tribunals, offering victims an outlet to express their experiences and emotions. This initiative was instrumental in my healing process, enabling me to gradually extend forgiveness to those who had partaken in the Genocide. Now, I am devoted to spreading a vital message: forgiveness is not just an act of mercy, but it is also a gift of the Holy Spirit and discipline from how we were raised. It liberates the heart from the burdens of hatred and despair, just as it liberated mine.
>
> (Esperance)

> I had access to a healthy and secured platform for sharing our sorrow and tragic history endured in the genocide with my brothers and sisters survivors, through Genocide Survivors Students Associations (AERG). Latterly in 1999, I joined a local evangelical Christian church, got saved and started serving, which helped me to interact with many biblical truths related to personal healing, on how to overcome my sorrow and becoming a fulfilled child of God.
>
> (Placide)

> For me, "*Gacaca Courts*" benefited me by becoming more informed about the crimes committed against my people during the Genocide. It made the perpetrators agree to tell me the truth about the cruelty they did to my family because they didn't blame me anymore for their imprisonment. It also helped me continue to heal the wounds of broken heart and bitterness. The most important thing is that it aided me to have peace of mind.
>
> (Octave)

> I started joining other people, among them genocide survivors with whom we shared a dark background. I was happy to see them and they helped me heal and I started loving myself again. We started sharing testimony and other experiences of how we survived the genocide. All in all, we realized that we did not survive on our own, but it was because of God's grace that we survived.
>
> (Cecile)

Following these reflections from our Rwandan partners in this project, we believe that what emerges is an understanding of forgiveness as a form of testimony. Forgiveness is the public act of relinquishing moral anger and bitterness toward the wrongdoer and seeking a repaired relationship. It is not simply a personal change or inner state of mind. Nor is it ultimately dyadic. The reparation sought had a strong communal dimension. Furthermore, expressions of contrition from the perpetrators were not described by the exemplars as critical to the possibility of forgiveness.

Exemplars described their testimonial acts as transformative. The relief they experienced from bitterness, anger, and suffering was paired with a public commitment to forgiveness and reconciliation.

> I realized that forgiving was a medicine to many diseases and sufferings I was going through [at] that time. I remember before forgiving, I could hardly sleep, I was lonely, depressed, I had some cardiovascular problems; but, when I forgave, I got a sense of relief. I can liken it to someone who was carrying a very heavy burden, but got relieved of it, when I forgave all those who killed my loved ones. I started taking different government positions and started having responsibilities in the church. In all those responsibilities, I met people who needed my support, material assistance and those who needed different advice. I started helping people irrespective of their ethnic groups. I started treating people the same, I started helping all those who had needs and treated all of them as human beings and as people created in the God's image. I even treated those who participated in genocide as ordinary people because everything that people do is in God's plan.
>
> (Cecile)

This finding widens the study of forgiveness from the more familiar focus in the philosophical literature on forgiveness as an inner psychological change – a subjective transition from moral anger to good will toward a wrongdoer (see Enright et al., 1998; Worthington, 2020) – to an appreciation of the power of forgiveness as a public political act for the sake of the broader community and future generations. The practice of forgiveness by Rwandan exemplars is not best described as a transaction between

two parties in which the wrongdoer enables the possibility of forgiveness through contrition, apology, penance, and a commitment to change (see Griswold, 2007; Hieronymi, 2001). Instead, forgiveness is offered unconditionally, by the wronged party, in an effort to facilitate a transition to a better future society (see Nussbaum, 2016). Exemplar testimony highlights the link between forgiveness, transitional justice, and healing:

> To sum up this chapter of my life, I noticed that when the victim forgives, she/he already opens the door to full justice. In doing this, he paves the way for the offender to apologize and both parties gain their reconciliation which builds strong relationships (foundations of a secured future). Justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation constitute a journey to healing inner wounds. Therefore, I always strive to teach children, youth, and adults from my community and abroad (through seminars, training, conversations, mediation, and preaching the Gospel) the culture of conflict prevention and resolution, justice, apology, and forgiveness, for the purpose of having an amicable and serene community.
>
> (Octave)

> In my process of being healed, forgiving, and helping people to forgive each other while pursuing justice, I volunteered in teaching our traditions and civic education in Itorero. The Itorero is a platform of teaching citizens the undistorted history of Rwanda, promoting Rwandan cultural values and recognition of heroic behaviors among citizens, especially youth, and reinforcing unity. A clear message from my long journey summarized here is that forgiveness is possible after the worst experiences one could have lived. This may take years as it is a real process but with the work of the Holy Spirit and personal commitment to release anger and hatred, nothing is impossible.
>
> (Placide)

These testimonies illuminate a case made by Griswold (2007) for the place of forgiveness in the catalogue of character virtues. Though we find the transactional model of forgiveness he offers to be inadequate to describe exemplar testimony, we concur with his larger, existential point. To Griswold, forgiveness is responsive to the needs of the human condition – that is, being imperfect and interdependent creatures, in a world perceived as fractured and threatening, and marked by suffering. With our social and embodied life experiences, we must navigate such challenges, striving to maintain that human beings have inherent and equal dignity and worth, despite and throughout the violence and injustice that is present in such a divided and conflicted world. As Griswold (2007) concluded, "Forgiveness is responsive to the demands of the world so understood, and in a way that

helps to enable its possessor to live a good life" (p. 15). We observe that this idea applies even under extreme circumstances of mass violence.

8.4 Reflections on the Political and Spiritual Context for Forgiveness and Justice in Rwanda

To confirm these findings and to further contextualize and enhance their validity, the co-authors engaged in a reflective conversation after reviewing a draft of this chapter. In that conversation, our Rwandan partners affirmed and elaborated on the themes of embodiment and testimony that emerged. Esperance noted the connection between forgiveness and agency:

> It was very important to translate forgiving into actions. Instead of living in that depression, in the past, it was important to take another step ahead – to lead by example and do it ourselves – for a better future. It was very important to mend relationships, not only to survivors but also to the future generations, to children, and to the entire world, to help others elsewhere.

Forgiveness, realized through action, not only helped victims to heal and gain relief but also was intended to model peacebuilding and reconciliation for the sake of future generations.

Octave elaborated on the holistic, self- and other-serving roles of forgiveness, when he emphasized that forgiveness

> starts with overcoming the bitterness experienced. After overcoming bitterness, you take another step of having compassion toward the person who wronged you. Then, if you are able to help, you take another step of helping the perpetrator who wronged you.

But if the first step of forgiveness is to overcome bitterness, how does that occur? Worthington (e.g., 2006) described two types of forgiveness: *decisional* forgiveness, where one may decide to forgive; and *emotional* forgiveness, where one actually experiences the emotional release and relief of forgiveness. What, then, bridges the decision to forgive and overcome bitterness, with experiencing the emotional healing?

In the post-genocide context of Rwanda, it emerged that the socio-cultural point-of-view (see Overton, 2013) importantly includes politics and spirituality. The political context and faith traditions were both noted by survivors as contributors to healing and restoration. As Octave reflected, overcoming bitterness involved three key factors:

> The first one was the political will of the new government, which actually prioritized unity and reconciliation among people. People had to

> live together after what happened – that was important. That political will of making people live together was key. Second, some people believe in God; especially in Rwanda, many people believe in God through different religions. That itself motivates or helps people to forgive, to look past what was done wrong. The third one that was very important was training or attending different sessions on healing the wounds. It helped them heal and then forgive.
>
> (Octave)

This political will of the new government was noted by each Rwandan partner as being significant, but also, difficult. As Placide elaborated:

> The position of the new government of not allowing victims or survivors to take revenge against perpetrators – killers of their loved ones – was a bitter medicine. It was a bitter medicine which made survivors think of other ways to cope. They had to live side-by-side with people who killed their families. They were neighbors with nowhere to go. The government had to put in place measures assuring they were secure, they were safe; but they had no rights of taking revenge.

Esperance further reflected:

> Because of the good initiatives of the new government, people from the church were allowed to go to prisons to preach, which made some perpetrators take a step of confessing. Another thing which was very important was the community courts, the Gacaca courts, which were initiated by the new government. Trials were conducted in the community whereby perpetrators were brought into community and testimony was given. Survivors testified against perpetrators. It was a good platform. The community courts were key in the forgiveness process.

Again, testimony was emphasized as an important part of the process – and for some, the government initiatives of unity and reconciliation facilitated opportunities for testimony and, in turn, forgiveness and the possibility of living peacefully together.

8.5 Future Directions

For future study is the task of understanding better how testimony can be given without further victimizing those who have suffered. Our team of collaborators has stressed the importance of this matter and expressed interest in sharing their expertise. We look forward to further collaborative study and analysis, which we anticipate will deepen our understanding of

restorative justice and the possibilities for healing from individual and collective trauma. Also to be explored is whether and how punitive conceptions of justice have a place within a restorative orientation. Punishment has been integrated with restorative justice in Rwanda and we intend to query the importance and impact of punishing the perpetrators of genocide against the Tutsi.

These continued explorations will have implications for understanding and promoting public life engagement. For the exemplars involved in the SVPL project, such implications may be especially important for the child- and youth-development work that they are engaged in through their roles with Compassion International (see Tirrell et al., 2023). Indeed, fostering and promoting public life engagement as a key to self and civic identity could shape the communal values and flourishing of future generations. As Dr. Charles Murigande (Rwandan politician involved in post-genocide depolarization efforts) reflected:

> Our success [in rebuilding the nation toward peace and flourishing] will be measured by how the young people, the new generation, will behave currently and in the future. That is really when we shall be able to say that we have been successful.
>
> (Personal communication with Tirrell, October 20, 2020)

It should be noted that restorative-justice work is continuing in Rwanda with far-reaching implications. At this writing, Aegis Trust – a non-governmental organization that curates the Kigali Genocide Memorial with the mission of preventing genocide and crimes against humanity – is planning to establish a global peace institute. Central to their mission is the value and role of forgiveness in justice and peacebuilding. With support from the Templeton World Charity Foundation (TWCF-2023–31609, "*Launching the Aegis Trust Peace Institute: Establishing a Community and Platform to Scale Lessons on Forgiveness from Rwanda to the World*"), the launch of the global peace institute will coincide with the 30th anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. The aim of the institute is to amplify and scale the Aegis Trust peace-and-values education programs, already adopted nationally in Rwanda (see Gutierrez et al., 2019; Uwizeye et al., 2022), with forgiveness as its central theme.

8.6 Conclusions

These lessons on forgiveness are timely and important. The United Nations (2015) 2030 Agenda includes in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) an emphasis on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies marked

by justice for all. Although the genocide against the Tutsi took place nearly 30 years ago, at this writing, conflict, violence, and human rights violations persist worldwide (see United Nations, 2022). As cited by the United Nations (2022) report, pleas for global peace are growing louder, as the world is witnessing the largest number of violent conflicts since 1946. As of 2020, a quarter of the global population lives in conflict-affected countries. As of May 2022, a record 100 million people have been forcibly displaced worldwide; a third of the world's population, mostly women, fear walking alone in their neighborhoods at night; and corruption is found in every region with nearly one in six businesses having received bribe requests from public officials. In response, SDG 16 is focused on "peace, justice, and strong institutions" – specifically, to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."

We conclude that, based on the lessons learned from our SVPL work in Rwanda, forgiveness represents a valuable component of human life. As an embodied and public act, one involving testimony and community engagement after conflict and suffering, forgiveness supports relief and healing as well as communal flourishing. Forgiveness can be a pathway to peace, justice, and strong institutions (see Boehle, 2021; United Nations, 2015, 2022).

Notes

1. Quote from Interview 12 of the Tirrell et al. (2023), exemplar interview SVPL study.
2. Ethnic identity labels (Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa) have been banned in public spaces and are considered rude or even criminally divisionist (see Hintjens, 2008). The people of Rwanda now refer to themselves as Rwandan. We inserted these labels for clarity in the telling of the story.
3. Quote from Interview 12 of the Tirrell et al. (2023), exemplar interview SVPL study.

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