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# CHAN

Virtue ethics:

* A teleological ethics that is concerned with human good.
* Interested n moral character…gives priority to being over doing
* Sees all aspects of life a morally relevant
* Urges one to oral growth
* More interested in the affairs of ordinary life…than in moral dilemmas
* Concerned with the telos (“end”)
* Virtue ethics is all about moral formation
* Fundamental presupposition that virtue is teachable

Four goods of virtue:

* Practices and habits
  + A regular activity that forms us in such as way that certain dispositions to act in particular ways is developed
  + Practices both develop and express the character of the moral agent
* Dispositions and character
  + Virtue ethics as an “ethics of character”
  + Character ethics does not neglect rules, but subordinates them to the development of character
  + See moral life rooted in nature, formation and socialization of a particular community
  + Particular direction our agency acquires by choosing to act in some ways rather than others
  + Character dominates the notion of virtue
  + Incorporate character formation into virtue ethics as an important good
  + Concern for telos means continual growth in character
  + Good life leads to development of good character
* Exemplars
  + Practice of imitating exemplars of faith is fundamental to the acquisition of Christian virtue
  + Transformation by imitation mentor’s life of virtue results communion, sharing vision
  + Virtues as skills need examples to show what they mean
  + Teach and encourage us to act likewise
  + Two types:
    - heroes - demonstrate people living the best kind of moral life and
    - saints - extraordinarily virtuous and visionary
    - embody a higher law
* community identity
  + narratives and communities facilitate the practice of virtue
  + local community determines our understanding of the virtues
  + in community people recognize the ends of the community, virtues to develop
  + a temporal framework that combines diverse experience into a coherent whole
  + personal identity comes through identification within this narrative framework
  + MacIntyre: virtue is a social quality, conception of virtue is possessed within an ongoing social tradition
  + Plato says virtues exist primarily to form and improve communities
  + Chan:
    - Relativism - While virtues are context sensitive, they are not limited to a specific context and are open to revision
    - Virtue reading of scripture to different culture and religions is possible
    - Adapt philosophical language into theological – Christ as telos
* Relevance of scripture
  + Concept of virtue found in scriptures
  + Contains and commends virtues and character-building motifs
  + Moral character
    - point of reference for discussion of virtues and Christian character
    - Israel and early Church experiences shape community’s character as distinctively Christian
  + Exemplars
    - Scripture contains many characters that model certain moral characters to us
    - Contributes to moral formation by telling stories of the exemplary Bible characters
  + Community
    - Scripture forms community as much as community informs scripture
    - Formation of a particular type of community based on the relationship with the Lord
    - Generates and sustains community and its spiritual moral formation

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* Exegeting Ten Commandments
  + Historical context
    - Understanding what text meant to original readers in their community is necessary to apply the text to modern society
  + Augustine
    - Divided tables into two parts
    - Stand for not just 10 laws but the entire Old Law
    - Subordinated to two-fold commandment in the NT
    - Used in disputes such as Pelagians
    - What is important is the basic symbolic meaning of each commandment
  + Aquinas
    - Confirm Augustine on two precepts of charity
    - Turned negative commandments into positive ones
  + Luther
    - Decalogue is based on faith rather than reason
    - Only reliable way to know God’s will
    - Focused on inner person calling for acting from a charitable heart
  + Calvin
    - Is central to Calvin theology and ethics because it sets forth divine grace,
    - expressions of God’s will, call church to continual process of conversion
    - reveal moral law of God
    - each commandment represents a broad range of behavior
    - decalogue is about both exterior behaviors and inner dispositions
    - hermeneutical and instructional not exegetical
    - look at ethical implications of the community rather than ancient meanings
  + Catechism / Pontifical Commission
    - Half of morals section on decalogue
    - Has a special place in Church traditions, expression of natural law, engraved on human heart
    - Reflects two-0fold ethics,
      * primitive (exteriority, community)
      * rich ethic (universal virtues, part of covenant, context of liberation)
  + Keenan
    - Anchor treatment of decalogue in theme of God’s compassion
    - Priority of interior disposition over exterior action
    - Start with relationship with God and move to relationship with each other
  + Chan’s approach
    - Exodus decalogue older than Deuteronomy version so he focuses on Exodus decalogue
    - Treat each one individually but
    - Look at interrelationship between the Exodus and Deuteronomy versions in literary forms and content to understand each commandment
    - Treat exodus 20:2 as part of first commandment
    - Closely associated with other legal statutes of Near East countries at the time
* Beatitudes
  + Intro
    - Is about happiness, so employ virtues to seek happiness
    - As popular as decalogue
    - Holds significant place in Christian theology and ethics
    - Biblical scholars cite two texts together
    - Decalogue expresses God’s will while beatitudes reveals Jesus’ values prioritized
    - Shows openness of commandments and orientation to horizon of perfection
    - Recent increase in interest in virtues has increased interest in Beatitudes and virtues
    - A better source of virtues than Greek philosophers
    - Only when the Sermon on the Mount is read in light of the eschatological orientation can it radical demands be explained
  + Function of Beatitudes (three views)
    - Ethical imperative calling for cultivation of certain character traitsand regulations for communal life
    - Eschatological ethics, blessings and hope for the oppressed
    - Series of virtues and promises
  + Augustine
    - Sermon on the mount holds all precepts needed for guidance in the Christian life
    - Represents the seven stages in Christian life
    - Principal part and keystone for entire Sermon on the Mount
    - Perfect answer to question of happiness
  + Ambrose
    - Four Beatitude common to Luke and Matthew reflect four cardinal virtues (justice, temperance, fortitude, prudence)
  + Aquinas
    - Relates Beatitudes to the virtues
    - As significant to NT as Decalogue is to NT
    - Became his primary source for his treatise on human happiness and ultimate end
    - Associate each beatitude with a virtue acquired through gift of Holy Spirit
    - The Beatitudes are not virtues but are the perfect actions of the gifts from the Holy Spirit
  + Luther – held to Augustine view that Beatitudes are commandments for all Christians
  + Chan’s approach
    - Apocalyptic and eschatological nature of the gospel plays important role in understanding the Sermon and macarisms
    - Adopt the translation “blessed” without reducing original meaning
    - Rooted in source Q with addition by redaction so pay attention to differences between Matthew and Luke
    - Will not divide them into parts, since to do this undermines their connectedness to each other
    - Follow traditional view that there are 8 beatitudes, integrating 5:11-12 into 5:10
    - Beatitudes are both moral demands as well as eschatological promises

# Aquinas

* Two ends of mankind
  + Limited happiness in human society through our own natural resources
  + Perfect happiness of the afterlife for Christians through God’s grace
  + Intellectual the power of the soul and will is most crucial to getting earthly happiness
  + The love of God, a virtue of the will, is more essential to living as a Christian than any virtue of the intellect
  + People only capable of merit if they have the end and motivations of the theological virtues
* Virtues
  + A good quality of the mind by which we live rightly of which no one makes bad use, which God works in us
  + God is the efficient cause of the infused virtues
  + A habitus is a durable characteristic of the agent including to certain kinds of actions and emotional reactions…habits grow to be second nature
  + Virtues can be acquired through our own natural resources and through superhuman virtues Christians have through god’s grace.
  + Virtues acquired naturally through long practice work to eliminate contrary emotions. Infused virtues can have the same effect but only more slowly
  + Intellectual and moral virtues
    - A virtue is a good habit either in intellectual or moral order, so we differentiate intellectual and moral virtues, carrying forward Aristotle
    - Intellectual habits are virtues only relative to the specific art or discipline or role
  + Aquinas’ claim that “charity is but the form of the virtues” (I–II, 24, 8) is but a theological restatement of his assumption that the unity of the virtues (and the self) is a correlative of men having a single “last end.”
  + Every virtue is either intellectual or moral
  + An operative habit, has to do with doing not being
  + Is a good habit, a perfection of power
  + A good habit of reason by which we live rightly and cannot be put to bad use
  + May be infused into us by God without us contributing anything
  + Habits are by nature principals of action
  + Some habits are infused in us by God
  + Aquinas is looking for happiness both in this life (per Aristotle) and in the next life (per Augustine)
  + ﻿
  + Natural vs purifying virtues
    - Aquinas makes a clear distinction between virtues suited to our natural status behaving well in social situations in the present life and purifying virtues of people striving to be closer to God
    - Unless directed by God through charity, natural virtues fall short of real virtues
    - Purifying virtues are those that infused by God together with charity, making a person’s actions good
* Moral and intellectual virtues
  + Overview
    - A will-virtue, the appetitive part of reason
    - Moral virtues are connected to each other
    - All haver meaning in conformity with right reason
    - Tendency, desire and decision belong to the will
    - Final end
      * While human acts have an immediate object, by constantly orienting their acts toward “something”, humans strive for a final end as the ultimate of lifetime achievement.
      * Since the final end is present in everything one does, one’s actions gain their unity and inner coherence only in the measure that they succeed in uncovering this final end.
      * Human practice does not find its point of unity in itself but is completed in communion with God as the unique fulfilling good.
      * God draws all creatures in accord with their own dignity back to Himself
    - Virtues of understanding and prudence are required for every moral virtue
    - Regulate passions
    - Virtues are distinguished from one another by distinct objects pf the passions
    - Can be classified as those controlling operations (e.g., justice)
    - There are 4 cardinal virtues.
    - Other virtues Cardinal means hinge for other virtues. Whole structure of good works are built upon four cardinal virtues
    - Belong to order of knowing
    - Give knowledge of what ought to be done
    - Virtues of the speculative mind (wisdom, science and understanding) enable us to grasp the truth
    - Art, a virtue of the practical mind, gives us skills in making things
    - Make people well suited to human affairs and earthly happiness
    - People can obtain moral virtues without charity but you to have charity to really make this a virtue
    - ﻿Even though Aquinas defends the view that each of the virtues is distinct, he also maintains that they qualify one another by a kind of overflow. For the qualities of prudence overflow on to the other virtues insofar as they are directed by prudence. And each of the others overflow onto the rest, for the reason that whoever can do what is harder, can do what is less difficult.
  + Cardinal virtues In general
    - All other moral virtues are subordinate to these four
    - Each virtue are distinct habits each with its own area of application
    - Can be called social virtues since man requires them to live well in human society
    - Can be called perfecting virtues since they help man to perfect his character
    - Can be called exemplar virtues, as a model of conduct that should be imitated
    - Aquinas tried to provide a rational scheme to suggest why certain virtues are more prominent than others—thus prudence is the perfection of the practical intellect, temperance perfects the concupiscible passions, courage perfects the irascible passions, and justice perfects all operations.
    - These are, of course, the classical cardinal virtues which Aquinas claims are called such because they “not only confer the power of doing well, but also cause the exercise of the good deed”
  + Secondary virtues
    - Can’t have virtue of generosity without justice but can have justice without generosity
  + Prudence
    - Prudence is an intellectual virtue, the only intellectual virtual in the cardinal virtues
    - Its twin functions of perfecting practical reason and leading the inclinations to their virtuous realization is what gives prudence that overarching role of directing the entire person in the way of life.
    - Art is right reason about things to be made, prudence is right reason about things to be done
    - By prudence, an agent becomes what she or he intentionally does. The activities further develop the agent’s dispositions
    - Through prudence we can attain our natural ends but prudence needs charity to be disposed to the supernatural end.
    - Moral virtues and prudence
      * Moral virtues are united together through prudence just as the theological virtues are connected through charity
      * The fundamental inclination of man is innate and based on natural law. They are realized into moral virtues by prudence.
      * The moral virtues need prudence to set the means to reach the end, prudence needs moral virtues in order for prudence to advance. If the object of justice, temperance or fortitude is not prudential the act will not be just, temperate or fortitudinous.
      * Because prudence puts order into acts or reason and directs the moral virtues in the choice of means, prudence is the most excellent of the acquired virtues.
      * Prudence suffuses all virtues; it is a bond that links them together and is necessary for them all.
      * The principles of prudence are the ends of the moral virtue, so natural law are the ends of our natural inclinations.
      * Is the only intellectual virtue inseparable from moral virtue. No one can have justice, courage or other moral virtues without prudence
      * Determine rightly the works of the moral virtues. The principles of prudence are the ends of the moral virtues
    - The end is decided by human reason but its up to prudence to decide in what manner and by what means man shall obtain the end.
    - Prudence is goodness essentially whereas the other virtues are good by their participation in prudence
    - The function is to choose actions that result in the right handling of the appetites.
    - Functions to perfect a person’s natural inclinations, integrating them into one’s way of acting and living in a right manner
    - It recognizes the ends which a person wants and makes an approach to pursue those ends and measures the rightness of these actions
    - Need prudence to judge correctly which dangers are good to face (so moral virtues are needed)
    - Does not say what the end of action is but how to do it
    - First of the cardinal virtues
    - Knowledge of how to act and conduct one’s life rightly
    - Belongs to the knowing faculty of the soul rather than appetitive, to the intellect not the will
    - More than knowing what things are, but also how to act
    - Belongs to intellect or reason
    - Prudence does not do the action but commands how actions should be done
    - applies to both private actions (domestic prudence) and public ones (political prudence)
    - Is only the good but is cast out by serious sin.
    - There is. Both natural and supernatural prudence
    - Infused prudence only enables one to deliberate about things related to salvation
  + Justice
    - Second of the cardinal virtues
    - Right as object of justice
      * What is just, what is owed
      * Requires that right be done and rights in persons observed
      * Is based on natural law, eternal moral law knowable by sound human reason without help of divine revelation
      * “positive law” (like decalogue) can be divine or human. Human law if civil law
      * International law shows rights of nations with regard to each other
    - Is a virtue in a person is a habit by which a person gives to everyone what is due to him.
    - Concerned solely about one’s dealings with others
    - Is a moral virtue, related to the will
    - A general virtue regulating the common good under the laws is legal justice
    - Justice applies to social life…is concerned with acts and operations which have reference to others
    - Mean or measure of justice is “real” where
    - Seeks to maintain equality of proportion in affairs of human life, each person has what is his part due.
  + Temperance
    - As a virtue which regulates passions, exact factual measurement is not always possible, considering internal and external facts
    - Controls desires and pleasures.
    - Moderates appetite for sensible and bodily delights to the end that he should use to meet the needs of life
    - Is the fourth of the cardinal virtues
    - Has to do with tactile senses, like touch or contact
    - Can be regarded as a general virtue for moderation, the object of temperance, and can be found in all the moral virtues
    - The temperate person no longer need struggle to resist temptation because he no longer feels tempted to do anything bad
    - Not to be confused with continence which unlike temperance must resist emotions to control actions
  + Fortitude
    - The virtue that enables a person to withstand the greatest difficulties that block him from attaining his true goal.
    - Is a clear-cut virtue on its own account
    - It puts down paralysis of fear that prevents action while moderating courage that might lead to ineffective action
    - Bravery in the face of death, sees the business through
    - Man of fortitude has delight in his soul in his endurance for good, bearing hardship and pain
    - Is an aid to the other virtues as an example of steadfastness
    - Is the third of the cardinal virtues
* Theological Virtues
  + In general
    - Supernatural virtues guiding us to God
    - Faith, hope and charity
    - Spiritually infused, poured into the soul by God.
    - the power of the Holy Spirit fills the soul directly and immediately…love in its proper sense demands free response of the human being
    - Made know by revelation
    - Distinct from moral and intellectual virtues
    - These are the only virtues with God as their object
    - Enable us to share in God’s nature and direct us to happiness in this life
    - We can only acquire these virtues through the grace of God
    - We need the infused virtues for happiness in the afterlife
    - Are very different from the natural virtues
    - Infused virtues make people well suited to the life Christians must live because they are Christians
    - You cannot have a moral virtue without prudence and can’t have prudence without all the moral virtues
  + Faith
    - Enlightens the intellect by telling supernatural truths
    - Must have charity, so charity is said to be the form (essence) of faith, without charity faith is lifeless
    - We believe what God has revealed of himself
    - The substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not
    - A habit of the intellect
    - Faith is the habitual assent of the intellect to truth…
    - Faith with the extrinsic form of charity is living faith, the habit of a man that serves as the principal of good works
    - Gives absolute certainty of the truths believed, directly infused by God
    - Makes us adhere to God as the source of truth
  + Hope
    - Directs the will to its supernatural last end requiring effort and the cooperation with grace
    - We come to have God as the source of our own happiness
    - The love of desire
    - We pin our hope on God not man
    - It is reaching after good and I the last analysis after the supreme good which is God and through that get eternal happiness
    - Directs the efforts of man to God and eternal happiness in God
    - Hope makes us adhere to God as the source of good.
    - Hope comes after faith since faith gives knowledge since faith gives us knowledge of what to hope for
    - Hope precedes charity as the hope of good engenders love of it
  + Charity
    - What is charity
      * The greatest of the theological virtues
      * Conceives the union between the human being and the God of his faith and hope as friendship…friendship appears to him as the most complete realization of love
      * Charity brings about the arrival at the final goal meant for all human beings and the highest fulfillment of their longing for definitive community with God.
      * In it are packed the basic lines of the theological and ethical conception that Thomas brings to sight in discussing the single material themes in the area of special ethics.
      * the will with God, soul in love and friendship with God
      * through charity we can love God as an end himself, the supreme good
      * produces genuine love of friendship
      * charity is love and friendship, when we love God and love our neighbor and wish God’s friendship for our neighbor
      * One man’s part devotion and service to God
      * Is the grace, love and friendship of God
      * Is a supernatural habitual power added to the natural power of the soul
      * Charity is one virtue, not divided into different essential kinds
      * Augustine: all true virtues are forms of charity
      * Apparent virtues in pagans are actually hidden vices, inflated by pride
    - Partial virtues associated with charity: joy, peace, mercy, beneficence, almsgiving and fraternal correction
    - Three poles of charity
      * Inner unity of charity become different acts of love of God, self and neighbors but is treated as one virtue
      * We love all our neighbors with the same love of charity because they are related to God as our common good
      * Thomas considers self-love of virtuous people as a basic creative energy
      * The one who truly loves follows the objective order of love, according to which spontaneous self-love is supposed to be the origin and measure of neighborly love
      * One loves the neighbor neither for one’s own pleasure, but wished the neighbor good for the same reason for which one will the good for oneself
      * The good of one’s own physical health and existence must be subordinated to the duties of proper love of neighbor as the reason for caring for one’s bodily integrity weighs less than love of neighbor
    - where does it come from?
      * perfection of charity is found in those who give their whole hearts to God, not looking for anything contrary to God’s love
      * charity attains God simply
      * charity is not in us by nature, so ins in use by divine infusion
    - who is the object of charity
      * we love our neighbor even if he is a sinner. Hate the sun. Love the sinner.
      * We should love God first then blood relatives and then people in our household
      * God and our fellow men in God are the object of charity
      * We love ourselves out of true charity since we love our neighbor as we love ourselves
      * Charity gathers the effective power for the good present already in the moral virtues to guide them to the ultimate end that transcends the natural tendency of the will but may never place ethic integrity of our selves at risk
    - What does charity do?
      * Charity makes us adhere to God for His own sake.
      * On God’s part: love, benevolence and communication of graces
      * Directs man to his last end
      * When out affections are well ordered, unites us with God
      * Out of charity we love charity itself
      * The final perfection of acquired virtues is through charity. The virtuous person without charity can sin and even mortal sin and virtues without charity can be good or bad so they are imperfect
      * Through prudence we can attain our natural ends but prudence needs charity to be disposed to the supernatural end.
      * If people through charity become friends of God: 1) God acts in them and (2) they make themselves available to God in the world through natural abilities
    - Relation to other virtues
      * Moral virtues are united together through prudence just as the theological virtues are connected through charity
      * There can be no supernatural moral virtue without charity and no charity without infused moral virtues0
      * With the infusion of charity, all supernatural moral virtues are given to man, faith and hope
      * Charity directs the acts of all the other virtues, moving man toward his last end
      * Per Aquinas charity is the root, mother and form of all the virtues and are required for faith and hope
      * Charity which has God as its object and enables people to from love of God, exceeds every other virtue
      * Charity is effective in justice through justice, in courage through courage and in prudence through conduct of prudence.
    - Increase/decrease
      * Each act of charity well performed leads to another, so it becomes more intense
      * Charity can increase in us during life by becoming more intense, with there being a limit
      * Charity cannot decrease but can be lost entirely by a moral sin, to neglect acts of charity or commit venal sins, who deserve eternal death
    - Mercy
      * is heartfelt sympathy for another’s distress, making us help him is we can
      * A kind of sorrow for a defect, looking on the other’s defect as if it were ours
      * When referring to God, it is the greatest of virtues; when referring to creatures, it is not as great as charity.
      * Mercy ranks next to charity itself and is the greatest of the social virtues

**Keenan**

* The classical list of virtues is inadequate, and we need to articulate the cardinal virtues more correctly
* Two schools of contemporary thought
  + Deontologists – focused on rules associated with actions
  + Proportionalists/revisionists – what was the object of the actions and what were the effects
  + Only thinks about impact on others not on the person doing the actions
* Virtue ethics
  + places the moral agent not the moral action or its consequences at the center of moral reflection
  + virtues and not principles are the source for understanding normative conduct…principles and rules are derived from virtues
* MacIntyre – virtue ethics as a three-fold question
  + First – who am I? Am I just temperate, brave and prudent
  + Second – who do I need to become
  + Third – In which virtuous practices ought I to engage in order to attain that goal?
  + The task of virtue ethics is the acquisition and development of practices that perfect the agent into becoming a moral person while acting morally well.
  + Through practices or virtues one’s character and actions are enhanced
  + It belongs historically to local communities to determine the practices that shape the excellent person.
  + There are no shared presuppositions about the ideal of the excellent person
  + Individuality also has an impact. The communion of saints shows the great variety of ways that the holy is incarnated
* Universal virtues
  + MacIntyre and Nussbaum presume that the virtues of justice and prudence exist universally and prior to any culture’s particular determination of them.
  + Cardinal virtues express what minimally constitutes a virtuous person.
  + Rather than being the last word on virtue, they are among the first, providing the bare essentials for right human living and specific action.
  + Toward this end, the cardinal virtues that I propose—prudence, justice, fidelity, and self-care—will be thinly described. There is no flesh on this skeleton. But they actually provide us with a way of talking across cultures.
* The trouble with classic cardinal virtues
  + Goodness pertains to charity and rightness describes an action or way of living that conforms to the virtues
  + Aside from charity the virtues are about being rightly ordered in essential areas of life
  + They do not necessarily engage faith life…they are acquired virtues, not the infused ones which God gives through grace
  + Called cardinal because they are fundamental to attaining the rectitude of appetite of virtuous living…sufficiently order all those areas of our lives that are engaged in normal acting
  + The cardinal virtues
    - Prudence orders practical reason
    - Justice orders the will or intellectual appetite
      * exterior actions
      * only rational virtue
    - Temperance and fortitude perfect the passions (interior actions)
  + Don’t meet current needs
    - First – it is deceptively simple and inadequate
      * Hierarchy does not allow conflict or overlap among virtues
      * The whole matter of moral virtues falls under the one rule of prudence, no acquired virtue is more important
      * Virtues are distinguished by their matters and subject so they do not compete against each other
      * Follows the hierarchy of moral virtues….Justice alone does not provide enough context to judge actions.
      * Thus only when one cardinal virtue stands on equal footing with another cardinal virtue can there be a dialectical tension in which the virtues challenge and define one another
      * Contemporary virtue ethics acknowledges, then, the possibility that cardinal virtues could be in competition with one another.
      * Stanley Hauerwas…we have the task of sorting out "conflicting loyalties" throughout our lives. That sorting out means that in the long run we are to live a life that ethically incorporates the variety of relational claims which are made on us.
    - Second – a different anthropology has more recently emerged that insists on the relationality of the human
    - Third – philosophers and theologians have proposed virtues that are based on our rationality
  + New proposal
    - Prudence in the new proposal prudence also must say what the claim of each virtue is but also set the priority of competing virtues
    - Justice
      * First, our relationality generally is always to be directed by an ordered appreciation for the common good in which we treat all people as equal
      * justice is about ordering all our interior dispositions so that the claim of equality originates from within
      * justice rests on impartiality and universality
    - Fidelity
      * Fidelity is the virtue that nurtures and sustains the bonds of those special relationships that we enjoy whether by blood, marriage, love, or sacrament.
      * Fidelity requires that we treat with special care those who are closer to us
      * fidelity rests on partiality and particularity
      * Generally speaking, Roman Catholics tend to consider
      * love as the basis of all virtues. If we want to know what to do in the concrete, we must turn not to charity, which is about union with God, but to the cardinal virtues, which are about right living.
    - Self-care
      * Love or care for self enjoys a considered role in our tradition
      * But the moral task is to take care of oneself and that includes, among other tasks, self-esteem.
      * self-esteem is a subcategory of self-care "the promotion" of one's own health is a subcategory of self-care.
      * we each have a unique responsibility to care for ourselves, affectively, mentally, physically, and spiritually.
    - Prudence
      * prudence has the task of integrating the other three virtues into our lives, just as it did when it was among the classical list of the cardinal virtues
      * prudence is always vigilant, looking to the future, not only trying to realize the claims of justice, fidelity, and self-care in the here and now
      * calls us to anticipate occasions when each of these virtues can be more fully acquired.
      * In this way
      * prudence is clearly a virtue that pursues ends and effectively establishes the moral agenda for the person growing in these virtues

# Hauerwas

* **﻿**Introduction
  + philosophically or theologically there is no consensus on how the virtues should be understood or the significance they have or ought to have in accounts of morality
  + ﻿Whether virtue is one or many, what the individual virtues are or which are primary, whether the virtues can conflict, how they are acquired, the locus of the virtues, are all questions on which there is little agreement
  + As a result, there has been no satisfactory, unambiguous moral definition of the virtues.
  + ﻿The very plurality of different notions of virtue indicates that any account of the virtues is context dependent.
  + ﻿Thus, many accounts of the virtues do little more than list the qualities generally praised by a society. A person who exhibits such qualities may not necessarily be a person of virtue.
* Ethic of virtue
  + ﻿what one does or does not do is dependent on possessing a “self” sufficient to take personal responsibility for one’s action. What is significant about us morally is not what we do or do not do, but how we do what we do.
  + ﻿How persons of virtue or character act is not just distinctive: the manner of their action must contribute to or fulfill their moral character.
  + ﻿﻿the virtuous life is not premised on the assumption that we can avoid the morally onerous; rather, if we are virtuous, we can deal with the onerous on our terms.
  + Duty vs virtue
    - The recognition and performance of duty is made possible because we are virtuous
    - a person of virtue is dutiful because not to be so is to be less than virtuous.
    - ﻿Thus our “duties” seem to require choices and decisions, whereas virtues do not.
    - ﻿we ought to be people who can be trusted because we are faithful.
    - ﻿Duties imply matters that we must decide and act upon, whereas virtues involve dispositions that may or may not entail decisions.
  + ﻿Acquiring virtues
    - “training in virtue” requires that we struggle with the moral situations which we have “got ourselves into” in the hope that such a struggle will help us develop a character sufficient to avoid, or understand differently, such situations in the future.
    - ﻿To be a person of virtue, therefore, involves acquiring the linguistic, emotional, and rational skill that give us the strength to make our decisions and our life our own.
    - The individual virtues are specific skills required to live faithful to a tradition’s understanding of the moral project in which its adherents participate.
    - the virtues must be learned and coordinated in an individual’s life
    - ﻿our capacity to be virtuous depends on the existence of communities which have been formed by narratives faithful to the character of reality.
    - Thus a person of virtue or character is often described as “his own man”; possessing “character” is equated with being a person of integrity.15 By definition, integrity denotes the courage to march to a different drummer.
    - ﻿Even as integrity requires that one live faithful to personal history, so the development of a person of virtue mandates living faithful to a community’s history.
  + Politic of Virtue and neglect of virtue
    - ﻿there is hardly any way to ﻿portray “the virtuous person” or the “person of character” without reference to some antecedent criteria of good or right.
    - ﻿This presumption is often reinforced by the commonplace assumption that a “person’s moral character is typically approached via questions of the worth of the things he or she does (or is disposed to do) and the motives and intentions behind those acts.
    - Three theories of virtue
      * Traitegoism
      * Trait-utilitarianism
      * Trait-deontological
    - ﻿Ethics based on actions
      * But utilitarians have generally been less interested in the question “Will this act put me in the category of good or of sinful men?” than in the question “Ought I now to do this Act? Would it be the right thing to do?” and they have said that we must answer this question by examining the consequences.
      * ﻿For we as agents know that our actions, both what we have done and what we have not done, are seldom good indications of our moral worth. Assessment of one another solely on the basis of our actions is insufficient to describe ourselves.
      * ﻿Rather we wish to be judged by the way our “actions” gain their intelligibility as they are understood in the context of our history, our character.
      * Virtue does not imply that society cannot outlaw certain kinds of behavior
      * ﻿Moreover, evaluations of “acts” are crucial for the growth of our own character and virtue. For it is through descriptions of our behavior tested against other accounts that we check ourselves against self-deception and self-righteousness.
      * If we judge people by actions how do you explain people that act right but are not considered good and people that act wrong but you think are good?
    - Virtues and Human Nature
      * ﻿Certainly, no agreement exists about which virtues should be considered central.
        + For Plato rightly suggested that any analysis of the cardinal virtues requires some account of how they are necessary for the fulfillment of our nature and for the working of the good society. When the virtues are simply treated as “excellences” for the fulfillment of our human nature, divorced from any political context, they cannot help but appear arbitrary.
        + Struck by the diversity of constitutions, and considering it impossible to provide any one account of the ideal state and a corresponding set of virtues, Aristotle was forced to rely on the clumsy device of the mean in order to compile what is almost a grocery list of virtues.
        + The fourfold division of virtue in Augustine’s writings must be understood as four forms of love: “temperance is love giving itself entirely to that which is loved; fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object; justice is love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly; prudence is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it. The object of this love is not anything, but only God, the chief good, the highest wisdom, the perfect harmony.
        + Aquinas in many ways is the high point for reflection on virtue, as his compilation combines the influence of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Augustine in an extraordinarily complex manner. Though his account of the nature of the virtues as habits and how we acquire them is primarily dependent on Aristotle, he attempted to correlate the individual cardinal virtues with functions of the soul.
        + Although there might be widespread consensus on the importance of such virtues as temperance and courage, agreement often extends no further than the name.44 As soon as the question of substance is raised, sharp disagreements appear as to what courage or temperance entail.
      * ﻿Aristotle and Aquinas suggest that it is through our habits that we acquire a “second nature”; and insofar as those habits are virtuous they furnish us with a nature befitting our moral stature.
      * ﻿Necessity of passions as well as reason
        + Indeed when reason is made the primary source and basis of the virtues their very substance is distorted, for then they appear to be the means to control our nature and passions. But as Aristotle and Aquinas insisted, the virtues are a unique blend of “nature” and “reason,” since our passions do not so much need control as they need direction.
        + it is a mistake to argue whether reason or passion is more basic to human nature, since both reason and passion are essential for the development and life of virtue.
    - Virtue and histories of our communities
      * ﻿we inherit too many histories and participate in too many communities, each with its own account of what constitutes being virtuous.
      * Every substantive tradition generates diverse interpretations which give rise to conflict. Fortunately no society is so well ordered that all moral conflicts are excluded.
      * The peculiar circumstance of our current situation is that we lack any schema for resolving such conflicts societally and, even more significantly, in our own souls.
      * ﻿That is why, in spite of claims of moral neutrality, medical and law schools survive as the closest modern analogs to ancient schools of virtue. In the commitment to their clients’ welfare through the practice of developed skills, they exemplify a training in virtue from which they derive profound self-esteem.
      * ﻿Because we find ourselves always involved in intricate webs of conflicting relationships and duties, it is imperative that the ultimate guide issue from personal resources. ﻿Conscience thus becomes the ultimate authority for our behavior.
      * ﻿But if the primary task of conscience is to sustain the achievement through time of personal identity and integrity, it seems to require some combination of virtues such as wisdom, courage, honesty, temperance.
      * ﻿Our only escape from destructive histories consists in having the virtues trained by a truthful story, and that can come solely through participation in a society that claims our lives in a more fundamental fashion than any profession or state has the right to do.
      * ﻿Only by hope and patience, therefore, are we able to sustain a self capable of withstanding the disintegration that is threatened by the inescapable plurality and often unresolved nature of our moral existence.
  + Character, Narrative and Growth in Christian Life
    - ﻿Every community has to provide some account and means to initiate their young into their moral traditions and activities, and it seems every community finds some way to encourage its members to move from the less good to the better, and from the good to the excellent.
    - Correlatively, this means that one community’s sense of moral development may be quite different from another’s.
    - ﻿While it is certainly true that Christians have emphasized the necessity of moral development, it is equally interesting to note that they have seldom used phrases like “moral development” to talk about it.
    - ﻿Three ways
      * Life as gift
        + For the Christian seeks neither autonomy nor independence, but rather to be faithful to the way that manifests the conviction that we belong to another. Thus Christians learn to describe their lives as a gift rather than an achievement.
        + In contrast, it is the Christian belief that true freedom comes by learning to be appropriately dependent, that is, to trust the one who wills to have us as his own and who wills the final good of all.
      * Imitate a master
        + ﻿for Christians freedom is literally a gift. We do not become free by conforming our actions to the categorial imperative but by being accepted as disciples and thus learning to imitate a master.
        + ﻿The problem lies not in knowing what we must do, but how we are to do it. And the how is learned only by watching and following.8
        + ﻿
      * Conversion
        + The convictions that form the background for Christian growth take the form of a narrative which requires conversion, since the narrative never treats the formation of the self as completed.
        + Thus the story that forms Christian identity trains the self to regard itself under the category of sin,
        + ﻿ ﻿Thus growth in the Christian life is not required only because we are morally deficient, but also because the God who has called us is infinitely rich. Therefore conversion denotes the necessity of a turning of the self that is so fundamental that the self is placed on a path of growth for which there is no end.
    - Character, narrative and Christian life
      * ﻿Nevertheless, Christian reflection has largely failed to provide conceptual categories for understanding and articulating the kind of moral development appropriate to these Christian convictions.
      * ﻿Because of the lack of conceptual categories, attempts to deal with moral development in the Christian life always seem to call forth irresoluble issues, such as the relation between faith and works, and so on.
      * ﻿the self is constituted by many different roles and stories. Moral growth involves a constant conversation between our stories that allows us to live appropriate to the character of our existence. By learning to make their lives conform to God’s way, Christians claim that they are provided with a self that is a story that enables the conversation to continue in a truthful manner.
    - Puzzles or moral growth and the ethics of character
      * ﻿The general assumption that it is a good thing for anyone to grow morally involves a paradox that is seldom noticed—for how can we grow and yet at the same time remain faithful to ourselves?
      * ﻿Modern moral philosophy has been written from the perspective of some last stage, as if everyone were already at that stage or at least should have it in sight and should be working to achieve it. The problem of moral development is then taken to be how to reach the last stage of morality where moral growth ceases.
      * ﻿The two dominant contemporary moral theories, **utilitarianism and formalism**, share a common presumption that in the absence of any one moral principle our lives cannot help but be chaotic. They assume the possibility of integrity or moral identity depends on a single moral principle sufficient to determine every moral situation. The moral self results from or is the product of discrete decisions that have been justified from the moral point of view.
      * ﻿Integrity, therefore, need not be connected with one final end or one basic moral principle, but is more usefully **linked with a narrative** sufficient to guide us through the many valid and often incompatible duties and virtues that form ourselves.
      * From such a perspective growth cannot be antithetical to integrity, but essential to it; our character, like the narrative of a good novel, is forged to give a coherence to our activities by claiming them as “our own.”
      * ﻿Integrity, therefore, need not be connected with one final end or one basic moral principle, but is more usefully linked with a narrative sufficient to guide us through the many valid and often incompatible duties and virtues that form ourselves.
      * ﻿To become moral thus entails that each person learn to describe and judge his or her own behavior “from the perspective of anyone.”
      * ﻿Ironically the demand for moral growth requires an account of morality that allows us to understand that with every advance comes a new possibility of higher-level degeneracy.18 The greater the integrity of our character, the more we are liable to self-deception and fault.
  + Moral virtues and unity of the self
    - ﻿I have also hinted that the self can be held to have sufficient coherence to deal with the diversity of our moral existence only if that self is formed by a narrative that helps us understand that morally we are not our own creation, but rather our life is fundamentally a gift.
    - ﻿I shall try to show that Aristotle and Aquinas are right to think that moral growth is dependent on the development of character sufficient to claim one’s behavior as one’s own.
    - ﻿What is required for our moral behavior to contribute to a coherent sense of the self is neither a single moral principle nor a harmony of the virtues but, as I have already said, the formation of character by a narrative that provides a sufficiently truthful account of our existence.
    - Acting as a virtuous man
      * ﻿There are certainly aspects of Aristotle’s account of the moral life that might lead one to think that for him “moral character consists of a bag of virtues and vices.”20 If that is Aristotle’s view, he seems to have no way to avoid the difficulty that “everyone has his own bag.” The problem is not only that a virtue like honesty may not be high in everyone’s bag, but that my definition of honesty may not be yours.
      * ﻿It is certainly true that Aristotle’s resort to the mean fails to give an adequate explanation for the individuation of the various virtues.
      * Nor does he seem to appreciate the theoretical significance of the fact that the meanings of individual virtues are relative to different cultural and societal contexts.
      * ﻿Moreover, Aristotle at times seems to claim that becoming virtuous is simply a matter of training.
      * ﻿Argument and teaching, I am afraid, are not effective in all cases: the soul of the listener must first have been conditioned by habits to the right kind of likes and dislikes, just as land must be cultivated before it is able to foster seed.
      * ﻿The virtues must be acquired by putting them into action.
    - Circularity involved in acquisition of virtue
      * ﻿Aristotle notes that we are capable of performing just actions without becoming just, yet “it is possible for a man to be of such a character that he performs each particular act in such a way as to make him a good man—I mean that his acts are due to choice and are performed for the sake of acts themselves”
      * ﻿Note that this seems clearly to be circular.26 I cannot be virtuous except as I act as a virtuous man would act, but the only way I can become a virtuous man is by acting virtuously.
      * ﻿He assumed that if people were started off rightly they would naturally over time become people of character capable of moral development.
    - On being responsible for our character
      * ﻿Indeed, Aristotle even goes so far as to suggest that we must finally be responsible for our character. ﻿For a given kind of activity produces a corresponding character.
      * ﻿Aristotle is prepared to admit, however, that once an unjust or self-indulgent man has acquired these traits voluntarily “then it is no longer possible for him not to be what he is”
      * ﻿If, then, our assertion is correct, viz., that the virtues are voluntary because we share in some way the responsibility for our own characteristics and because the ends we set up for ourselves are determined by the kind of person we are, it follows that the vices, too, are voluntary; for the same is true of them.
    - Aquinas on acquiring virtues
      * ﻿For Aquinas argued explicitly that all the virtues are united in the virtue of prudence; indeed every virtue “is a kind of prudence” (I-II, 58, 4 and 2). “it matters not only what a man does but also how he does it” (I-II, 57, 5). And the “how” is always determined by prudence.
      * ﻿As a result we find the same kind of circularity in Aquinas that we saw in Aristotle: the practice of any virtue requires prudence, yet prudence cannot be developed without moral virtue.
    - Unity of virtues
      * ﻿Aquinas tried to provide a rational scheme to suggest why certain virtues are more prominent than others—thus prudence is the perfection of the practical intellect, temperance perfects the concupiscible passions, courage perfects the irascible passions, and justice perfects all operations.
      * These are, of course, the classical cardinal virtues which Aquinas claims are called such because they “not only confer the power of doing well, but also cause the exercise of the good deed”
      * ﻿Aquinas, therefore, maintains that if anyone has “perfect moral virtue”—that is, a “habit that inclines us to do a good deed well”—then they have all the virtues. He thus assumes that perfect moral virtue necessarily provides a unity to the self, since there is no possibility of the virtues conflicting. However, he is able to make such an assumption only because he asserts that all men have a single last end which orders the various virtues appropriately.
      * ﻿Courage, justice, friendship, the power of thought and the exercise of intelligence, are the essential Aristotelian virtues, although the concrete forms that they take greatly vary in the different socially conditioned moralities.
    - Disunity of virtues and unity of self
      * ﻿But Aristotle and Aquinas were unable to conceive that we live in a world in which we must choose between ways of life that are inherently incompatible. No positing of a single end or good for man is sufficient to provide a solution for that fact.
      * Aristotle and Aquinas seemed to assume that no self could bear such conflict. It was necessary, therefore, to assert that there could be no inherent incompatibility between the virtues. Rather the right balance between the virtues could be exercised within a single complete life.
      * ﻿Rather, virtues finally depend on our character for direction, not vice versa.
    - Narrative unity of self
      * ﻿his assumption seems to be that “consistency” of self depends on our willingness to guide our life from the perspective of a universal moral standpoint.
      * “A more differentiated and integrated moral structure handles more moral problems, conflicts, or points of view in a more stable or self-consistent way. Because conventional morality is not fully universal and prescriptive, it leads to continual self-contradictions,
      * ﻿In summary, I am suggesting that descriptively the self is best understood as a narrative, and normatively we require a narrative that will provide the skills appropriate to the conflicting loyalties and roles we necessarily confront in our existence. The unity of the self is therefore more like the unity that is exhibited in a good novel
  + Growth in the Christian life: a story
    - ﻿Freedom depends on us having a narrative
      * For our freedom is dependent on our having a narrative that gives us skills of interpretation sufficient to allow us to make our past our own through incorporation into our ongoing history.
      * But the freedom acquired through our reinterpretations is dependent on our having a narrative sufficient to “make sense” of our lives by recognizing the continuity between our past and present ﻿and our intended future.
    - Gifts, sociality and growth
      * ﻿In fact, I have suggested two related but different points: (1) that the self is a gift and (2) that we need a story that helps us accept it as a gift. It is from the story that we gain the skills to recognize the gift on which our life depends, as well as ways of acting appropriate to such a gift.
      * ﻿For the very condition required to claim responsibility seems to be character itself. Therefore Aristotle seems right in suggesting that it does not just make considerable difference how we are brought up, it makes “all the difference.”
      * ﻿And it is certainly true that we need to be trained to acquire certain habits. But it is equally important to be introduced to stories that provide a way to locate ourselves in relation to others, our society, and the universe.
      * ﻿Moral growth comes exactly through the testing of my role amid the other possibilities in the adventure.
      * ﻿we become who we are through the embodiment of the story in the communities in which we are born. What is crucial is not that we find some way to free ourselves from such stories or community, but that the story which grasps us through our community is true.
      * ﻿What we require is not no story, but a true story. Such a story is one that provides a pilgrimage with appropriate exercises and disciplines of self-examination. Christians believe scripture offers such a story. There we find many accounts of a struggle of God with his creation.
      * ﻿By learning their part in this story, Christians claim to have a narrative that can provide the basis for a self-appropriate to the unresolved, and often tragic, conflicts of this existence.
      * The unity of the self is not gained by attaining a universal point of view, but by living faithful to a narrative that does not betray the diversity of our existence.
      * ﻿There is no “story of stories,” but only particular stories which more or less adequately enable us to know and face the truth of our existence. Thus, there is no universal point of view, a point of view that does not bear the marks of a particular history.
    - How can we be taught and grow into the story
      * ﻿The various sets of exercises through which Christians learn to understand and live appropriate to the story of God’s dealing with them in Israel and Jesus may be called tradition. The Christian life requires the development of certain kinds of habits, but those very habits require us to face ambiguities and conflicts through which our virtues are refined.
      * ﻿Growth in the Christian life may well involve encouraging a greater conflict between the self and wider society than is generally approved. Thus Christians train or should train their children to resist the authority of the state, not in the name of their “rights” as individuals, but because the “justice” of the state is to be judged against God’s justice.
      * To be trained to resist the state, therefore, requires nothing less than an alternative story and society in which the self can find a home.
      * ﻿What is crucial is not that Christians know the truth, but that they be the truth. “For if the doctrines of Christianity were practiced, they would make a man as different from other people as to all worldly tempers, sensual pleasures, and the pride of life as a wise man is different from a natural;
      * ﻿For it is from the masters that we learn skills necessary to have lives appropriate to the claim that we are nothing less than God’s people.
      * Rather to be moral requires constant training, for the story that forms our lives requires nothing less than perfection

# MacIntyre

* Nature of virtue
  + ﻿there are just too many different and incompatible conceptions of a virtue for there to be any real unity to the concept or indeed to the history.
    - ﻿It would be all too easy to conclude that there are a number of rival and alternative conceptions of the virtues, but, even within the tradition which I have been delineating, no single core conception.
    - But of course it is not that Homer’s list of virtues differs only from our own; it also notably differs from Aristotle’s. And Aristotle’s of course also differs from our own.
    - Moreover the relationship of virtues to the social order has changed. For Homer the paradigm of human excellence is the warrior; for Aristotle it is the Athenian gentleman.
    - ﻿Homer’s concept of an aretê, an excellence, is one thing and that our concept of a virtue is quite another since a particular quality can be an excellence in Homer’s eyes, but not a virtue in ours and vice versa.
    - For the New Testament not only praises virtues of which Aristotle knows nothing—faith, hope and love—and ﻿says nothing about virtues such as phronêsis which are crucial for Aristotle, but it praises at least one quality as a virtue which Aristotle seems to count as one of the vices relative to magnanimity, namely humility.
    - ﻿If different writers in different times and places, but all within the history of Western culture, include such different sets and types of items in their lists, what grounds have we for supposing that they do indeed aspire to list items of one and the same kind, that there is any shared concept at all?
    - ﻿It is not just that each of these five writers lists different and differing kinds of items; it is also that each of these lists embodies, is the expression of a different theory about what a virtue is.
    - ﻿So it is with the virtues and the telos which is the good life for man on Aristotle’s account. The exercise of the virtues is itself a crucial component of the good life
    - ﻿A virtue is, as with Aristotle, a quality the exercise of which leads to the achievement of the human telos. The good for man is of course a supernatural and not only a natural good, but supernature redeems and completes nature.
    - ﻿A key feature of this parallelism is the way in which the concept of the good life for man is prior to the concept of a virtue in just the way in which on the Homeric account the concept of a social role was prior.
    - ﻿Franklin’s account, like Aristotle’s, is teleological; but unlike Aristotle’s, it is utilitarian. the virtues are means to an end, but he envisages the means-ends relationship as external rather than internal. The end to which the cultivation of the virtues ministers is happiness, but happiness understood as success, prosperity in Philadelphia and ultimately in heaven.
    - ﻿We thus have at least three very different conceptions of a virtue to confront: a virtue is a quality which enables an individual to discharge his or her social role (Homer); a virtue is a quality which enables an individual to move towards the achievement of the specifically human telos, whether natural or supernatural (Aristotle, the New Testament and Aquinas); a virtue is a quality which has utility in achieving earthly and heavenly success (Franklin). Are we to take these as three different rival accounts of the same thing?
  + I am going to argue that we can in fact discover such a core concept
    - it turns out to provide the tradition of which I have written the history with its conceptual unity. It will indeed enable us to distinguish in a clear way those beliefs about the virtues which genuinely belong to the tradition from those which do not.
    - ﻿One of the features of the concept of a virtue which has emerged with some clarity from the argument so far is that it always requires for its application the acceptance for some prior account of certain features of social and moral life in terms of which it has to be defined and explained.
    - ﻿Three stages
      * The first stage requires a background account of what I shall call a practice,
      * the second an account of what I have already characterized as the narrative order of a single human life and
      * the third an account a good deal fuller than I have given up to now of what constitutes a moral tradition.
      * Each later stage presupposes the earlier, but not vice versa.
  + Practice
    - Definition
      * ﻿ First, practices are human activities. However, these are not activities of isolated individuals but socially established and cooperative activities
      * any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through
      * which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity,
      * with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.
      * ﻿ ﻿For the range of practices includes the arts, the sciences and certain types of intellectual and athletic game. And it is at once obvious that any of these may under certain conditions be a source of evil:
      * MacIntyre, Alasdair. After Virtue (p. 200). University of Notre Dame Press. Kindle Edition. A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as the achievement of goods.
        + To enter into a practice is to accept the authority of those standards and the inadequacy of my own performance as judged by them.
        + It is to subject my own attitudes, choices, preferences and tastes to the standards which currently and partially define the practice.
        + the standards are not themselves immune from criticism
        + we cannot be initiated into a practice without accepting the authority of the best standards realized so far.
      * Virtues have history
        + ﻿To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point.
    - Virtue in context of practices
      * ﻿The virtues are of course themselves in turn fostered by certain types of social institution and endangered by others.
      * ﻿The virtues therefore are to be understood as those dispositions which will not only sustain practices and enable us to achieve the goods internal to practices, but which will also sustain us in the relevant kind of quest for the good, by enabling us to overcome the harms, dangers, temptations and distractions which we encounter, and which will furnish us with increasing self-knowledge and increasing knowledge of the good.
      * A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods.
      * ﻿its goods can only be achieved by subordinating ourselves within the practice in our relationship to other practitioners.
      * ﻿Just as, so long as we share the standards and purposes characteristic of practices, we define our relationship to each other, whether we acknowledge it or not, by reference to standards of truthfulness and trust, so we define them too by reference to standards of justice and of courage.
      * ﻿What is distinctive in a practice is in part the way in which conceptions of the relevant goods and ends which the technical skills serve—and every practice does require the exercise of technical skills—are transformed and enriched by these extensions of human powers and by that regard for its own internal goods which are partially definitive of each particular practice or type of practice.
      * ﻿ ﻿For the range of practices includes the arts, the sciences and certain types of intellectual and athletic game. And it is at once obvious that any of these may under certain conditions be a source of evil:
      * The exercise of the virtues is itself apt to require a highly determinate attitude to social and political issues; and it is always within some particular community with its own specific institutional forms that we learn or fail to learn to exercise the virtues.
      * The integrity of a practice causally requires the exercise of the virtues by at least some of the individuals who embody it in their activities; and conversely the corruption of institutions is always in part at least an effect of the vices.
      * Practices and institutions
        + ﻿For no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions. Indeed so intimate is the relationship of practices to institutions—
        + ﻿In this context the essential function of the virtues is clear. Without them, without justice, courage and truthfulness, practices could not resist the corrupting power of institutions.
      * ﻿That the virtues—as the objection itself presupposed—are defined not in terms of good and right practices, but of practices, does not entail or imply that practices as actually carried through at particular times and places do not stand in need of moral criticism.
      * ﻿The most notable difference so far between my account and any account that could be called Aristotelian is that although I have in no way restricted the exercise of the virtues to the context of practices, it is in terms of practices that I have located their point and function.
    - Tradition
      * Behavior can only be understood in context of setting
        + We cannot, that is to say, characterize behavior independently of intentions, and we cannot characterize intentions independently of the settings which make those intentions intelligible both to agents themselves and to others.
        + ﻿But it is central to the notion of a setting as I am going to understand it that a setting has a history, a history within which the histories of individual agents not only are, but have to be, situated, just because without the setting and its changes through time the history of the individual agent and his changes through time will be unintelligible.
        + ﻿we need to know both what certain of his beliefs are and which of them are causally effective;
        + ﻿Each of the shorter-term intentions is intelligible by reference to some longer-term intentions; and the characterization of the behavior in terms of the longer-term intentions can only be correct if some of the characterizations in terms of shorter-term intentions are also correct.
        + the history of a practice in our time is generally and characteristically embedded in and made intelligible in terms of the larger and longer history of the tradition through which the practice in its present form was conveyed to us; the history of each of our own lives is generally and characteristically embedded in and made intelligible in terms of the larger and longer histories of a number of traditions.
      * Narratives
        + Narrative history of a certain kind turns out to be the basic and essential genre for the characterization of human actions.
        + ﻿ ﻿We agree in identifying the intelligibility of an action with its place in a narrative sequence.
        + In each case the act of utterance become intelligible by finding its place in a narrative.
        + ﻿The most familiar type of context in and by reference to which speech-acts and purposes are rendered intelligible is the conversation. Conversation is so all-pervasive a feature of the human world that it tends to escape philosophical attention.
        + ﻿I am presenting both conversations in particular then and human actions in general as enacted narratives. ‘we dream in narrative, day-dream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative’
        + ﻿It is because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that we live out that the form of narrative is appropriate for understanding the actions of others.
        + ﻿what the agent is able to do and say intelligibly as an actor is deeply affected by the fact that we are never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives. Only in fantasy do we live what story we please.
        + ﻿The difference between imaginary characters and real ones is not in the narrative form of what they do; it is in the degree of their authorship of that form and of their own deeds.
        + ﻿If the narrative of our individual and social lives is to continue intelligibly it is always both the case that there are constraints on how the story can continue and that within those constraints there are indefinitely many ways that it can continue.
        + ﻿To be the subject of a narrative that runs from one’s birth to one’s death is, I remarked earlier, to be accountable for the actions and experiences which compose a narratable life.
        + ﻿I am not only accountable, I am one who can always ask others for an account, who can put others to the question. I am part of their story, as they are part of mine. The narrative of any one life is part of an interlocking set of narratives.
        + ﻿It is important to notice that I am not arguing that the concepts of narrative or of intelligibility or of accountability are more fundamental than that of personal identity. The concepts of narrative, intelligibility and accountability presuppose the applicability of the concept of personal identity,
        + ﻿In what does the unity of an individual life consist? The answer is that its unity is the unity of a narrative embodied in a single life. To ask ‘What is the good for me?’ is to ask how best I might live out that unity and bring it to completion.
        + ﻿The first is that without some at least partly determinate conception of the final telos there could not be any beginning to a quest. Some conception of the good for man is required.
        + ﻿It is in the course of the quest and only through encountering and coping with the various particular harms, dangers, temptations and distractions which provide any quest with its episodes and incidents that the goal of the quest is finally to be understood. A quest is always an education both as to the character of that which is sought and in self-knowledge.
        + ﻿We have then arrived at a provisional conclusion about the good life for man: the good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man, and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life for man is.
      * Importance of context / tradition
        + Hence what is good for me has to be the good for one who inhabits these roles. As such, I inherit from the past of my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations. These constitute the given of my life, my moral starting point. This is in part what gives my life its own moral particularity.
        + ﻿Notice also that the fact that the self has to find its moral identity in and through its membership in communities such as those of the family, the neighborhood, the city and the tribe does not entail that the self has to accept the moral limitations of the particularity of those forms of community.
        + ﻿What I am, therefore, is in key part what I inherit, a specific past that is present to some degree in my present. I find myself part of a history and that is generally to say, whether I like it or not, whether I recognize it or not, one of the bearers of a tradition.
        + ﻿For all reasoning takes place within the context of some traditional mode of thought, transcending through criticism and invention the limitations of what had hitherto been reasoned in that tradition…Moreover when a tradition is in good order it is always partially constituted by an argument about the goods the pursuit of which gives to that tradition its particular point and purpose.
        + ﻿A living tradition then is an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition. Within a tradition the pursuit of goods extends through generations, sometimes through many generations. Hence the individual’s search for his or her good is generally and characteristically conducted within a context defined by those traditions of which the individual’s life is a part, and this is true both of those goods which are internal to practices and of the goods of a single life.
  + From the virtues to virtue and after virtue
    - Practices have been less prominent in modern times
      * ﻿As, and to the extent that, work moves outside the household and is put to the service of impersonal capital, the realm of work tends to become separated from everything but the service of biological survival and the reproduction of the labor force, on the one hand, and that of institutionalized acquisitiveness, on the other. Pleonexia, a vice in the Aristotelian scheme, is now the driving force of modern productive work.
      * ﻿ ﻿such work too has consequently been expelled from the realm of practices with goods internal to themselves. And correspondingly practices have in turn been removed to the margins of social and cultural life. Arts, sciences and games are taken to be work only for a minority of specialists:
      * ﻿which the narrative understanding of the unity of human life and the concept of a practice were expelled to the margins of modern culture turn out to be one and the same.
      * ﻿What Hume identifies as the standpoint of universal human nature turns out in fact to be that of the prejudices of the Hanoverian ruling elite. Hume’s moral philosophy presupposes allegiance to a particular kind of social structure as much as Aristotle’s does, but allegiance of a highly ideological kind.
    - Concerns about Hume
      * ﻿In a society where there is no longer a shared conception of the community’s good as specified by the good for man, there can no longer either be any very substantial concept of what it is to contribute more or less to the achievement of that good. Hence notions of desert and of honor become detached from the context in which they were originally at home.
      * Virtues are indeed now conceived of not, as in the Aristotelian scheme, as possessing a role and function distinct from and to be contrasted with, that of rules or laws, but rather as being just those dispositions necessary to produce obedience to the rules of morality. The virtue of justice, as Hume characterizes it, is nothing but a disposition to obey the rules of justice.
      * ﻿Where once the common language of morality, even in everyday speech, had embodied a set of precise distinctions which presupposed a complex moral scheme, there comes into being a kind of linguistic mélange which enables very little to be said.
    - Revert into Stoicism
      * ﻿I remarked in Chapter 13 that when teleology, whether Aristotelian or Christian, is abandoned, there is always a tendency to substitute for it some version of Stoicism.
      * The virtues are now not to be practiced for the sake of some good other, or more, than the practice of the virtues itself. Virtue is, indeed has to be, its own end, its own reward and its own motive. It is central to this Stoic tendency to believe that there is a single standard of virtue and that moral achievement lies simply in total compliance with it.
      * ﻿Nature for many writers becomes what God had been for Christianity. Nature is conceived of as an actively benevolent agent; nature is a legislator for our good.
    - Adam Smith – optimistic version of stoicism
      * ﻿For Smith the virtues fall into two classes.
        + There are on the one hand those three virtues which, if they are perfectly possessed, enable a man to exhibit perfectly virtuous behavior.
        + ﻿is not sufficient to enable us to follow them; to do so we need another virtue of a very different kind, the Stoic virtue of self-command which enables us to control our passions when they distract us from what virtue requires.