

Honor vs. Integrity

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1 The Problem

What's the difference between honor and integrity? They both have to do with a sense of right and wrong, and a pattern of behavior or morality. I think the major difference is that honor is more focused on the status or evaluation of a group identity, whereas integrity seems to be based on individual status or character or behavior. I wonder whether this is correlated to societal values. For example, a lot of eastern cultures emphasize group identity and collective behavior, whereas western society tends to emphasize individual behavior and character. Of course, strength of group identification can vary. I think the individualistic approach is more appealing to me.

2 Analysis

Perhaps honor is just the outward-facing aspect(s) of integrity, or the outward perception of integrity. I think both aspects (the outward perception of integrity, as evaluated socially and a sense of collective morality). Integrity seems independent of perception, or there is a version of integrity which is independent of the evaluation of others. I think honor and integrity can overlap where honor is the external, societal perception of an individual's character and where integrity is a social perception. I think integrity is a more stable and worthy value to pursue, as it is under an individual's control. (See Stoic literature, e.g. the Discourses of Epictetus.)