

DANIEL N. ROBINSON'S ACCOUNT OF VIRTUES IN AMERICAN FOUNDERS

I have been the first person in history to show empirical validity of Aristotle's Theory of Virtue, by showing that high moral values correlate with high Life Satisfaction. I am a proponent of the view that Empirical Virtue is the only path to a scientifically valid theory of Human Morals. The questions are difficult because of the vast population of Earth, around 8 billion and the relative dearth of sufficient measurements at scale, for large samples. The key issue of Virtues is what Aristotle emphasized in Nicomachean ethics and often neglected in works on Moral Philosophy in recent centuries, which is that Phronesis depends on *non-cognitive aspects* of the human psyche. I have challenged the long view that *phronesis* refers to some practical wisdom. It is much deeper.

As an aside, I have been playing a lot of Starcraft II recently, a game that is quite challenging. I play protoss, against the computer AI. And I observe the changes in my skill level. There is little doubt that skill levels do improve over time, slowly, and measurably. Now I am at the level where I can defeat 'Very Hard' with 50% handicap sporadically but not well. I can now easily beat 'Harder' AI with no handicap. A month or two ago, I was simply unable to get past 'Hard'. I played quite a few games. I am not more cognitively capable now than I was years ago when beating even 'Normal' was too challenging. And that is the point of *phronesis*. Practice sharpens some natural skills in my psyche with Starcraft II. And this point is precisely missing from Aristotle's account of Virtue, that *habituation* is the key to Virtue and not just theory and thoughts. Virtue, according to Aristotle, is acquired by continuous practice. And this has been difficult for philosophers of the recent centuries to appreciate at all.