

UNIVERSAL HUMAN NATURE BY CHARACTER STRENGTH BOUNDS

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What is Universal Human Nature? What are we like? Is there a Universal Human Nature?

These are basic questions we have asked for more than ten thousand years. In this note we extend results I had obtained on June 29 2021 on standard deviation bounds for 24 virtues measured across the globe in 21 countries. We have data for 54 countries but for the sake of having clear understanding we are examining the issues slowly.

The substantial result here, a marvelous discovery, that will help us support an affirmative answer to existence of a Universal Human Nature, is the following.

Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson and Nansook Park have a beautiful paper from 2006 where they tabulate some estimate for the mean virtue levels for 54 nations. We love their work.

What we do is to examine their data and seek *strong bounds* on the values taken on by the virtues in the actual world.

A priori, any given virtue x can take arbitrary values $x \in [1, 5]$. We are interested in concentration of x in much smaller part of $[1, 5]$ than would be the case if sufficiently large population of humans could somehow saturate $[1, 5]$.

I want to make the issues a bit more clear. We will use the convention that virtues are denoted x_j . So for example x_1 is kindness, and x_2 is fairness and so on. A priori, without knowledge of the actual measurements, it could be possible that for any given number $q \in [1, 5]$ there exists some man or woman h among Human Race such that $x_1(h) = q$. In other words, our metric is generic, and a priori it is possible that the entire interval $[1, 5]$ is covered by sufficiently large population of humans.

The substance of our discovery is that in actual nature, this is not possible. We are interested in bounds of the type $(a, b) \subset [1, 5]$ such that for *all* humans h , we have $a \leq x_j(h) \leq b$. This is a nontrivial substantial result the moment $a > 1$ and $b < 5$ and closer to each other.

Just to put things in perspective suppose we had the situation that we find bounds and $a = b$ for all $1 \leq j \leq 24$. In that case we would say all humans are exactly identical in their virtues.

1. ACTUAL BOUNDS ON VIRTUES FROM 28 NATIONS

The last column RelCov is the percentage of the a priori range actually covered by humans beings. Roughly 10-20% of the range is actually covered and that shows the constraints of Human Nature.

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	Virtue	Min	Max	Delta	RelCov
1	kindness	3.64	3.97	0.33	8.25
2	fairness	3.78	4.12	0.34	8.50
3	honesty	3.76	4.06	0.30	7.50
4	gratitude	3.50	4.03	0.53	13.25
5	judgment	3.84	4.06	0.22	5.50
6	love	3.59	4.03	0.44	11.00
7	humour	3.52	3.82	0.30	7.50
8	curiosity	3.70	4.16	0.46	11.50
9	beauty	3.57	4.00	0.43	10.75
10	creativity	3.40	4.10	0.70	17.50
11	perspective	3.54	3.97	0.43	10.75
12	social intelligence	3.47	3.81	0.34	8.50
13	leadership	3.50	3.93	0.43	10.75
14	teamwork	3.43	3.85	0.42	10.50
15	learning	3.78	4.11	0.33	8.25
16	bravery	3.41	3.82	0.41	10.25
17	forgive	3.45	3.94	0.49	12.25
18	hope	3.29	4.06	0.77	19.25
19	industry	3.38	3.72	0.34	8.50
20	religiousness	2.84	3.97	1.13	28.25
21	zest	3.36	3.91	0.55	13.75
22	prudence	3.25	3.72	0.47	11.75
23	modesty	2.98	3.64	0.66	16.50
24	Self-regulation	3.17	3.56	0.39	9.75

On one hand this is an elementary observation. On the other hand, this goes against the grain of all manner of theorising about virtues for several millenia. It shows that Human Nature constrains human beings from large deviation from the mean human being in virtues. In other words, not only does *Human Nature* exist in a well-defined manner, but that there are exponential bounds on deviation from the mean human nature in virtues. Since the global bounds are small, we certainly have a single human race by our virtues and morals.

This is a strong result that refutes all sorts of ideological assumptions and racial theories of moral superiority and gives us a clear quantitative understanding of our Character.

2. THE CONFUSIONS REGARDING HUMAN NATURE

I bought a number of books recently on Human Nature, various compendia on thirteen theories of Human Nature from Aristotle to Marx, these sorts of things. I was not interested in this question so much when I was younger, but then I had my own ways of dealing with friends of different nations and ethnicities who were close to me and was not concerned about universality of human nature being a matter of concern.

You see, we don't live in a vacuum, and British Empire was prominent for some centuries and Victorian England was a nation of taxonomists. Immanuel Kant was enthusiastic about anthropology and the the 'pioneering spirit of discovery' turns out to pretend that some Western people will be Indiana Jones in all parts of the

world where they will have all sorts of adventures with exotic people who will be some part of the European taxonomy of the zoo of the world. These sorts of things do not lead to serious understanding of Human Nature.

I am proposing much more serious effort at understanding human nature. These are based on 99.9% of the letters of the human genome being exactly identical across the globe. Human languages did not evolve with this sort of knowledge being part of all cultures. So previous thought about human nature are ambitious efforts that may not have seen clearly the actual issues involved. We do not have language to describe or think about what consequences there are of this frighteningly strong uniformity in our genetic code. Bounding variation by measurements of character strengths is a serious quantitative characterisation of the regularity that is deep across the globe in our inner psyche.

I congratulate Martin Seligman, Christopher Peterson, and Nansook Park for extraordinarily important work that will allow us to understand clearly what Human Nature is without getting into a morass of confusion. Obviously if you are pretending that you will be discovering human nature while pretending to be Indiana Jones in the Temple of Doom you won't get anything serious about Human Nature. You will be more interested in various sexual pleasures you can get from exotic women without having to settle down with them and raising kids. Anthropology has some good achievements but here I am presenting far more serious notions of Human Nature.

REFERENCES

- [1] Nansook Park, Christopher Peterson, Martin Seligman, Character Strengths in Fifty-four Nations and Fifty US States, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, July 2006; 1(3): 118–129