THE VIRTUES

Humility

EDITED BY

JENNIFER COLE WRIGHT

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Edited by Jennifer Cole Wright
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PART III
INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY

SERIES EDITORS' FOREWORD

Typically, having a virtue means being disposed to having certain kinds of perceptions, thoughts, motives, emotions, and ways one is inclined to act. The end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries have seen an upsurge of interest in the topic of virtue. This is true not only in philosophy but also in a variety of other disciplines, such as theology, law, economics, psychology, and anthropology, to name a few. The study of virtue within disciplines is vitally important, yet the premise of this series is that the study of virtue in general, as well as of specific virtues, can be enhanced if scholars take into account work being done in disciplines other than their own.

Cross-disciplinary work can be challenging. Scholars trained in one field with its unique vocabulary and methods do not always move seamlessly into another discipline and often feel unqualified to undertake the task of serious cross-disciplinary engagement. The upshot can be that practitioners of disciplines can become "siloed"— trapped within their own disciplines and hesitant to engage seriously with others, even on important topics of mutual interest.

This series seeks to break the silos, with fifteen volumes on specific virtues or clusters of virtues. For each book, an introduction by the editor highlights the unity of writings by identifying common themes, threads, and ideas. In each volume, the editor seeks to include a chapter from a "wild card" discipline, a field one would not expect to see included in a collection of essays on a particular virtue. We do this both to highlight the diversity of fields in the study of specific virtues and to surprise and challenge readers to broaden their horizons in thinking about virtue.

The audience for this series is practitioners of different disciplines who seek to expand their thinking about virtue. Each volume contains chapters that are accessible and of interest to scholars from many disciplines. Though the volumes are not comprehensive overviews of the work on virtue that is occurring in any given field, they provide a useful introduction meant to pique the curiosity of readers and spur further engagement with other disciplines.

Nancy E. Snow, Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Institute for the Study of Human Flourishing, University of Oklahoma

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Virtue: Theory and Measurement with Nancy Snow and Michael Warren (Oxford Press). Her research articles appear in a diverse range of psychology and philosophy journals, including *Cognition, Self & Identity, Journal of Moral Philosophy, Journal of Moral Education, Philosophical Psychology, Journal of Cognition and Culture, Personality & Individual Differences, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Mind & Language, Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, Social Development,* and *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly.*

HUMILITY

Introduction

JENNIFER COLE WRIGHT

This volume is part of a multidisciplinary series, The Virtues, edited by Nancy E. Snow. The aim of the series is to showcase scholarly work on specific virtues or clusters of virtues from a variety of disciplines. Humility, the topic of this volume, is explored from a variety of philosophical and psychological perspectives, as well as in specific contexts such as hospice care, business management, competitive contexts, and political history.

Moral humility is a virtue with a long and checkered history. Its benefits and pitfalls (indeed, even its status as a virtue) have been hotly debated over the centuries by philosophers and theologians. Recently, there has been a renewed interest in moral humility, as well as the controversies surrounding it, which has led to new attempts to conceptualize it as a virtue and locate it and its importance within the larger context of our lives.

Examples of these efforts can be found in this volume. Indeed, the overarching aim of this volume is to provide a multidimensional, genuinely interdisciplinary perspective on humility that secures its place among the virtues and highlights its significance and value within a variety of life domains.

Part I explores several accounts of moral humility, each providing a different way to conceptualize humility as a moral virtue. Part II explores moral humility as a virtue in the context of our daily lives—what roles it plays (e.g., in fostering happiness and managing unhealthy pride) and where it can most readily be found and/or cultivated (e.g., in contexts of "deep caring" with others).

Although much of this book is dedicated to humility as a moral virtue, it would be remiss to not also touch upon (albeit too briefly) humility as an intellectual virtue—a virtue that has been much discussed of late in both virtue epistemology and psychology. Part III of this volume will do just that.

Not surprisingly, these parts do not represent hard boundaries, and there will be a fair degree of overlap between them. We hope that the approaches featured in this volume will give some indication of the depth and vigor of recent thinking about humility. Though common themes pervade the chapters, conceptual issues about humility remain far from settled, and empirical work on humility is growing. The complexity of humility and the scope of its applicability in our lives remain lively topics for further research.

HUMILITY AS A MORAL VIRTUE

When we consider humility as a moral virtue, several important questions arise. The chapters in this part work hard to address these questions, including, first and foremost, what is the nature of humility, and why should it be considered a moral virtue? They also address questions about the relationship between humility and other virtues, as well as other desirable features of human life, such as loving relationships. They explore the relationship between humility and pride—can and should the two coexist? And they consider the problem of humility, greatness, and leadership—can people who are

highly skilled, talented, and accomplished, and/or in a leadership role, be humble? Finally, several authors explore the question of how humility is best cultivated.

The first two chapters, by Alan Morinis and Erik Wielenberg, introduce a religious conception of moral humility and a secular conception. **Chapter 1,** "Occupying Your Rightful Space" by Alan Morinis, explores the nature of humility (*anavah*) from within the Jewish tradition of self-development known as Mussar. According to the Mussar tradition, humility develops through our aspiration to be faithful servants of God, setting aside our selfish personal aspirations so that we can serve the needs of others, in allegiance with the divine. One becomes a "nothing" through which God's will can be done—a process that requires an extensive personal transformation to overcome our natural self-importance and self-orientation. This makes humility, Morinis argues, virtue's "foundation stone" (p. 26), upon which all other virtues depend (a theme that will come up again in my chapter).

One might worry that Morinis's account advocates servility, meekness, and passivity—a criticism leveled against the dominant Christian view of humility by philosophers like Hume and Nietzsche (as discussed in Wielenberg's chapter). Yet, according to Morinis, this is not the case. Indeed, in the Mussar tradition Moses is held up as one of the great exemplars of humility—raising the question of the relationship among greatness, leadership, and humility that emerges in several chapters in this volume. Instead, the key to humility for the Mussar is learning to *occupy your rightful space*, whether that space be physical, emotional, verbal, financial, or some other form. The Mussar ideal is to learn to take up exactly the amount of space that is necessary—even when that space, as in the case of Moses, is fairly large—to fulfill one's mission of service in life, not more or less. His point is that occupying less than the appropriate space (as in the form of self-denigration) is as much a defect in one's humility as

the opposite. Humility promotes and requires an inner dignity, one that allows us to recognize and value our worth so that we can stand strong in the face of whatever trials and tribulations may come our way. This highlights the importance of an appropriate level of pride in the healthy expression of humility—a view shared by many of the authors in this volume.

While Erik Wielenberg in chapter 2, "Secular Humility," agrees with Morinis that humility has historically been viewed as an important virtue in prominent monotheistic religions, he argues that there is a virtue meriting the title of humility that can be disentangled from religious trappings, rendering it purely secular. For Wielenberg, humility resides in two things. First, it resides in the secularized recognition and acceptance of three fundamental universal limitations— limitations we all experience because of our humanness: *helplessness, fallibility*, and *moral frailty*. That is, our ultimate *helplessness* in the face of forces beyond our understanding and control; our *fallibility* (i.e., our vulnerability to ignorance and error; and our *moral frailty* (replacing a more theistic notion of sin), which requires us to acknowledge our moral imperfection and our daily battles with weakness and vice. Second, while in Morinis's theistic account of humility, we are humbled before God, in Wielenberg's account of secular humility, we are humbled instead before our *relative insignificance*, our small place within a much larger awe-inspiring universe.

Wielenberg argues that the combination of these two—the recognition and acceptance of our universal limitations and of our relative insignificance—generates humility insofar as it creates a resistance to arrogance and excessive pride and guards against feelings of entitlement, of deserving more than others, as well as jealousy and envy. It also promotes open-mindedness and feelings of gratitude, respect, forgiveness, and appreciation for others, since we recognize our fates as bound up together with them. It helps break down the barriers between "us" and "them," so we can see our moral differences

as largely a function of our human limitations rather than indicators of goodness and evil.

But what if your "place" in the larger scheme of things is truly greater than someone else's? This once again raises the question of greatness and humility—can someone who is truly outstanding be humble? Agreeing with Morinis, Wielenberg argues that, yes, people who are truly outstanding can possess humility, and they can do so while remaining fully cognizant of their value, objectively speaking. Indeed, he argues that they may even overestimate, to some degree, their value (e.g., overestimating their capacities, strengths, and skills relative to their competition) and yet remain humble—as long as they recognize their universal limitations and maintain an appreciation for the fact that they are only a part (even if a potentially important part) of the larger scheme of things.

Chapter 3, "A Critical Examination and Reconceptualization of Humility," by Mark Leary and Chloe Banker, takes a different approach to humility. They start by reviewing the common features of most psychological accounts of humility, noting that such accounts (including some in this volume) commonly include features such as accurate self-knowledge, awareness of one's limitations, modest self-presentation, and other-oriented interpersonal orientation as critical components of their accounts. Yet, each of these, Leary and Banker argue, are problematic as reliable and valid indicators of humility for reasons they cogently articulate in their chapter.

What, then, is the core ingredient—the necessary and sufficient attribute—of humility, the one thing that would meaningfully separate a humble response from a nonhumble response and a humble person from a nonhumble person? Leary and Banker argue that the core of humility is the understanding and acceptance that no matter the greatness of our personal accomplishments or positive characteristics, no one is fundamentally more special than anyone else because of them. Nor should anyone be viewed or treated as more special,

especially outside the domain of their accomplishments or characteristics (but also to some degree within it).

Some—famous actors, athletes, business tycoons, and other public figures—seem to think that because they are particularly good in one arena, they are entitled to receive special treatment (extra attention, respect, and deference) from everyone else, wherever they go. Others, on the other hand, while certainly cognizant of their arena of excellence, do not expect this, and may even shy away from it. Here, Leary and Banker agree with Wielenberg that even if your estimation of your excellence is somewhat inflated, as long as it is not accompanied by this sense of entitlement to special treatment, you can still possess the virtue of humility.

Leary and Banker provide some preliminary evidence of this core, showing that 70% of the variance in people's attributions of humility was predicted by the degree to which they viewed a person as thinking she should receive special treatment, feels entitled to special treatment all the time, and thinks she is a special person. What is more, those people's humility (measured by the brief state humility scale) predicted their attitudes about their own specialness and entitlement to special treatment—the higher they were in state humility, the less they viewed themselves as special or entitled to special treatment for their skills, talents, and accomplishments.

In chapter 4, "A Relational Humility Framework: Perceptions of Humility in Relational Contexts," David Mosher, Joshua Hook, Don Davis, Daryl Van Tongeren, and Everett Worthington introduce a new model of humility. According to this model, humility is fundamentally *relational*, in the sense that it is best estimated through certain judgments those in relation to a person make about her. Or, as they argue, a person's humility is best estimated "by aggregating estimates from several relationships, at different times, and from diverse perspectives" (p. 93). The relevant judgments pertain to the person's self-knowledge (whether she has an accurate view

of herself), her other-oriented consideration for their welfare, and the degree to which her interpersonal behaviors are considered "socially pleasing" (p. 94)—i.e., marked by a lack of self-aggrandizing attitudes or emotions (such as pretentiousness or superiority). Thus, according to these authors, humility has an essentially *relational* function: people's attributions of humility to a particular person function as an estimate of how they are likely to be treated while in a relationship with her.

Additionally, they propose (and provide evidence) that humility governs and facilitates many forms of internal processes, other-oriented emotions, and social behaviors. Specifically, they view humility as a powerful relational buffer and support system, especially under times of stress and hardship. When situations arise that "tempt, test, or strain one's ego" (p. 96), a humble person is able to maintain her other-oriented stance, promote positive emotions in herself and others, and thereby deepen her relationships. In this way, humility facilitates the forming—and strengthening—of social bonds (i.e., social bonds hypothesis). Relatedly, humility serves as a sort of social lubricant (i.e., social oil hypothesis) that prevents relationships from being damaged by stressful events that would otherwise cause harm—e.g., conflict, suffering, grief, and other negative life events.

They conclude by examining these dual roles of humility in several specific contexts where difficult situations and relational stresses are likely to arise: marriages and family relationships, cross-cultural engagement, and businesses/organizations (also discussed in Austin's and Argandoña's chapters). Across all three contexts, they illustrate how relational humility predicts more positive short-term and long-term outcomes. Based on these findings, they recommend infusing humility into these areas, in particular through the education and training of professionals who are likely to cross paths with people in these contexts, especially during difficult times (e.g., counselors, therapists, doctors, consultants, and teachers).

In chapter 5, "Humility in Four Forms: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Community and Ecological," Darcia Narvaez also discusses relational humility, providing a developmental perspective on how it is embodied in our neurobiological systems. According to Narvaez, humility requires people to be neurobiologically "balanced" and healthy, able to approach uncertain and stressful situations calmly and with compassion (a view echoed by Mosher, et al.), and thus unlikely to become "socially threat reactive" (p. 121)—i.e., perceiving others as a threat—in challenging social encounters.

As a developmental process, humility is fostered and shaped through our daily interactions, where we encounter other-oriented care, respect, and concern, both as the receiver and the giver. Ideally, according to Narvaez, children are born into "evolved nests" where they are appropriately nurtured by responsive caregivers, their needs met in a respectful and loving fashion by a range of family and community members, thereby allowing them to develop secure emotional attachments (see also Kesebir, this volume). Under these conditions, humility naturally develops as a multilayered virtue, encompassing intra- and interpersonal, community, and ecological concerns, and relationships.

Here, Narvaez introduces a new aspect of humility—our connection to the larger living world around us. While other authors emphasize the importance of recognizing one's place in the grander scheme of things, Narvaez takes it a step further by illuminating one way in which humility connects us to that larger frame, highlighting our interconnectedness with and interdependence on other living beings, and on the natural world that sustains us.

She contrasts two worldviews: the first considers the universe to be sacred, unified, and living, where we are bound together by a sacred moral code; the second sees the universe as fragmented and amoral, largely filled with non-living matter to use as a resource for our benefit, with objects we can own and other living beings we can

dominate. The former worldview, Narvaez argues, is cultivated and reinforced through a "humble" upbringing, while the latter is fostered through the sort of upbringing modern humans are more likely to undergo—where children are exposed to toxic levels of stress across multiple dimensions (e.g., home, school, community, media), and parents are unsupported in their efforts to create evolved nests for their children. Such upbringings create people with "rigid, brittle, self-protective orientations" (p. 127) that chronically activate the brain's survival systems, resulting in hypervigilance, hyperactive stress responses, and feelings of deep alienation from and suspicion toward oneself, others, and the living world.

In chapter 6, "Humility as a Foundational Virtue," I also strive to locate the core of humility but end up in a different place than Leary and Banker. I argue that the need for humility arises from a universally experienced feature of our psychology—phenomenologically speaking, we experience ourselves as the center of the universe. This experience naturally gives rise to a "centeredness" that strongly orients us toward our own internal states. We experience our needs and interests as most important, and our values, beliefs, and commitments as more true and worthy of pursuit than others. Thus, it feels normal and unproblematic to privilege and prioritize ourselves. Yet, the ethical life requires that we transcend this, at least to some degree. And this, I argue, is where humility is vital, because at its core humility is an *epistemically* and *ethically aligned state of awareness*; a state of awareness that is free of the epistemic and ethical biases normally generated by our centeredness. This frees us up to directly engage with reality and experience the world as it really is and to find our place within the vast interconnected web of other morally relevant living beings, whose needs, interests, values, and goals are as valuable and as worthy of consideration and concern as our own.

I also argue that much of what other authors have located within the concept of humility—accurate self-knowledge, awareness of

limitations, modest self-presentation, occupying rightful space, a lack of entitlement and feeling that one deserves special treatment, an appreciation for the objective value in the world, and so on—follow naturally from this epistemically and ethically aligned state of awareness. Indeed, echoing Morinis, I argue that humility is a foundational virtue, one necessary for the full development and exercise of other virtues, and maturely virtuous character.

In closing, I consider various methods for cultivating humility, highlighting the importance of several contributions to this volume, such as the argument for secure attachment and other positive early life experiences and practices (Kesebir and Narvaez), as well as the need to expose ourselves to "deep caregiving" situations, where we encounter our own finitude, fragility, and helplessness in the unalterable and unavoidable vulnerability and suffering of others (Roberts and Spezio; de Vries). Finally, in line with Wielenberg and Narvaez, I emphasize the importance of awe-inspiring experiences, ideally through spending time in relationship with the natural world.

MORAL HUMILITY IN OUR LIVES

Starting this part, in chapter 7, "Humility: The Soil in Which Happiness Grows," Pelin Kesebir moves us in a somewhat different direction, discussing humility as an approach to one's self, others, and life in general that is most conducive to enduring happiness. She argues that humility—which she defines as "an ability to see oneself in true perspective and be at peace with it" (p. 177)—is vital to our lives because it fosters stable happiness, in the sense of enduring mental and emotional health.

It does so, according to Kesebir, in a number of ways. First, it facilitates healthy relationships with our selves. As many other authors have argued, people possessing humility see themselves for

who they are, harboring neither feelings of "entitled" superiority, nor inferiority. They have developed a "deeply secure self" (p. 184)—i.e., a firm, secure, and serene sense of self-worth and appropriate (or "optimal") self-esteem. This stabilizes the self against ego-threats and fosters a more "selfless" psychological functioning made up of reduced levels of self-preoccupation (e.g., hypo-egoic states; see also Leary and Banker).

Second, humility facilitates a healthy relationship with reality, insofar as it fosters (echoing previous authors) a "true perspective" (p. 186) of how and where we fit into the grander scheme of things, defusing any sense of specialness or entitlement. People possessing humility honestly look at reality because they feel able to deal with whatever they see. They can take responsibility, as appropriate, for both good and bad outcomes. Here, Kesebir reinforces the idea that humility protects against narcissistic entitlement and the expectation of "specialness" that leads to the presumptive and disrespectful treatment of others.

And finally, echoing Mosher et al.'s chapter on "Relational Humility," Kesebir argues that humility facilitates healthy relationships with others by protecting against the interpersonal friction created by selfishness, arrogance, entitlement, and other nonhumble qualities people can possess. Here she reminds us that previous research has found a strong connection between humility and helpfulness, generosity, gratitude, and forgiveness, as well as empathy and compassion.

In closing, Kesebir discusses the cultivation of humility. In line with Narvaez, she discusses the importance of secure attachment, as well as early exposure to exemplars of humility, along with various practices (e.g., mindfulness and meditative exercises) that are known to lower self-centeredness and promote humility-related virtues, such as compassion, gratitude, respect, and egalitarianism.

In chapter 8, "Self-Other Concept in Humble Love as Exemplified by Long-Term Members of L'Arche," Robert Roberts and Michael Spezio discuss the virtue of humility within the context of L'Arche communities, which began in a single home in 1964 and now boast 150 around the world. These are communities composed of people with varying intellectual disabilities (referred to as the "Core Members") along with non-disabled "Assistants." Rather than assuming a caregiver/care-receiver hierarchical approach often found in facilities that house and/or support people with disabilities, people in the L'Arche communities live together as equals and friends. By doing so, they achieve a deep capacity for love and humility, cherishing one another and acting in service of one another's good. The humility (or, as Roberts and Spezio call it, "humble love") found in these communities highlights the absence of several vices commonly found in society and in our everyday relationships: distorted agency (e.g., selfish ambition), empty self-display (e.g., vanity), corrupt entitlement (e.g., arrogance), invidious comparison (e.g., self-righteousness, envy), and tribal superiority (e.g., racism). Through sharing their lives with the Core Members, the Assistants learn to disentangle the fundamental value and worth of a person from what she is able to do or accomplish. This allows them the courage to open themselves to both giving and receiving love and friendship, and the self-discipline to dive into lovingly serve the needs of the community, creating a bi-directional communion reminiscent of Narvaez's discussion of the "evolved nest." In this way, L'Arche communities allow people to protect and heal themselves from the "Normal"—i.e., the toxic worldview that promotes selfishness, domination, and competition (again, see Narvaez)—and shed the vices they came in with that block them from deeply experiencing love and humility.

One important contribution of this chapter is the discussion of the relationship between humility and love, or *agapê*—the feeling of kinship and neighbor-love that leads you to care for the well-being

of another, even a complete stranger, for *their own sake*, rather than your own. Combined with humility, humble love rejoices in the well-being of others and in their excellence (rather than feeling threatened by or in competition with it). As other authors have stated, humility requires an appreciation for the objective value of others, as well as for the excellence they generate and contribute to the world. With humble love this appreciation becomes something more—a celebration.

Along a similar vein, in chapter 9, "Humility and Helplessness in the Realization of Limitations within Hospice," Kay de Vries discusses humility within the context of hospice care. De Vries argues that the hospice environment is one that naturally cultivates and requires humility because it is within this sacred "liminal" space that we encounter ourselves and others in our true state of weakness; we must face the unresolvable and unconquerable limitations of being human (something other authors in this volume have also highlighted as essential to humility). While this weakness may be encountered elsewhere, the hospice environment creates a unique opportunity: by accompanying and assisting others on the journey toward death, we experience the powerlessness and helplessness of being unable to save the sick or change the fate of the dying. We must instead become immersed in the deeply humbling tasks of caring, easing suffering, and holding the space for death to occur with dignity and respect.

De Vries argues that medical environments often foster inequality and a hierarchical dominance relationship between the caregiver and the patient, as doctors and nurses are perceived as the "specialists" with the all the power, knowledge, and control. Hospice, on the other hand, has the power to transform this purely clinical environment into a sacred one—one in which both caregiver and patient are confronted with, and humbled by, the great mysteries of life and death. The extreme weakness and suffering often encountered in the hospice environment strips away the nonessential features of

our lives, relationships, and self-narratives, leaving only that which resides at the core.

De Vries also observes that while caregivers within hospice are often deeply humble—and humbled by their experiences—they are also largely unaware of their humility. This highlights a potentially paradoxical quality of humility (and moral virtues generally)—is self-awareness of the possession of such virtues necessary for their possession or even desirable? Either way, de Vries argues, most hospice caregivers do not think about humility; rather, they simply see what is to be done and do it, thereby embodying the ideal of "selfless service." She remarks that, as with other humble people, they "have their feet planted firmly on the earth and go about their lives in a steady level-headed way" (p. 237). Also echoing several authors, she emphasizes the relational and collective nature of humility, something that nurtures social bonds and creates a sense of "deep collegiality" within groups.

Chapter 10, by Michael Austin, turns to the subject of "Humility in Competitive Contexts." In line with other authors, Austin defines humility as both proper self-assessment and self-lowering other-centeredness (i.e., the ability to put the interests of others ahead of one's own, when appropriate). Echoing Narvaez and I, he argues that this extends beyond the realm of human beings to encompass other nonhuman animals and the natural world. In addition, he argues that humility involves an accurate recognition and appreciation for objective value (in the forms of truth, beauty, and goodness) in the world, regardless of how it came to be or who created it. While not emphasized as much in other chapters, this is viewed as central in other accounts of humility (see, for example, Kupfer, 2003).

Austin points out that these characteristics of humility make it an apt trait for competitive contexts (contexts where we pursue excellence and objective value), even though historically it has been largely dismissed from this arena. It promotes a lack of insecurity

about how others view us, and therefore a willingness to be vulnerable, freeing us up to take risks and to try new things, even when failure is possible or even likely. He addresses the worry that there is a conflict between humility and competition—that humility makes us less competitive, since to be competitive is to be generally hostile toward (or at least unconcerned about) the interests of others. Here, he argues that, ideally speaking, competitiveness (i.e., proper ambition) is made up of the desire to *do well*, not to do *better than others*. Thus, the possibility of losing or placing second is not harmful to our self-worth; our value as persons is not tied to what we have done or accomplished. We are free to pursue excellence for its own sake. This relates back to appreciating objective value in the world—a competitive person is humble to the degree that they appreciate excellence wherever they encounter it, whether it be in themselves or others. This makes humility not antithetical to but actually good for competition, because it fuels our collective fire to seek greater heights, to achieve our best, not for our sake, but for the sake of bringing objective value into the world.

Austin discusses humility in the competitive contexts of sports, academia, and business, which meshes well with chapter 11, "Humility and Decision-Making in Companies" by Antonio Argandoña. Argandoña discusses humility in businesses—in particular, in those who occupy positions of authority in them—explaining the critical role it plays in appropriately motivating employees and gaining their voluntary participation (which often includes coordinating with others) in the firm's activities, aligning them with the well-being of the firm, seen as a human community. According to Argandoña, managers' responsibilities go beyond their own advancement and achievement because they "encompass the firm's mission, organization, structure, and culture" (p. 278). It is up to them to create an environment that promotes and accommodates ethical behavior and

prosocial interaction (e.g., teamwork) in the firm, meanwhile discouraging the opposite.

Argandoña defines humility as a "strength of character" associated with temperance—and, as such, he sees it as moderating our natural instincts to put ourselves first, to seek status and superiority. He explores humility along four dimensions (intellectual, emotional, motivational, and behavioral), arguing that humble managers possess realistic and objective self-knowledge, the desire to continue to gain knowledge and recognize their defects and errors, to seek objective information about their environments, and to appreciate any limitations imposed upon them by those environments. They also possess and display an openness to others (without feelings of superiority or inferiority), as well as the desire to behave in ways that promote virtue development, and excellence more generally, in their firm. Such managers genuinely care about the well-being of the members of their firm and seek opportunities to actively contribute to their advancement and development, both as employees within the firm and as persons. Contrary to what some may think, Argandoña argues that such caring is not only good for the firm's employees but also good for the firm (and the achievement of its goals).

He also addresses the question of how humility can be cultivated, in this case, within the context of managing a business firm. He emphasizes the importance of developing the habit of virtue, voluntarily seeking out constructively critical input from the other members of the firm (regardless of their position) and creating a safe environment for such open exchange, as well as engaging in active and uncompromising self-examination and reflection, which includes openly acknowledging and "owning" our mistakes when they are made known to us.

Part II ends with chapter 12, "Frederick Douglass and the Power of Humility," by David Bobb, in which he discusses the role

of humility in the life of Frederick Douglas, a 19th-century ex-slave and abolitionist. He argues that humility played a crucial role in not only Douglas's fight for his ultimate freedom from slavery but also his rise into the public life as a well-known orator and advocate for the abolishment of slavery (through which he would eventually become a friend and inspiration to Abraham Lincoln).

Bobb confronts the difficult question of the appropriateness of humility within the context of oppression, where possessing humility is seen as a potential barrier to rising up and confronting social injustice. He argues (and Wielenberg agrees) that there is a critical difference between *humiliation*—such as the humiliation that Douglas was forced to repeatedly experience as a slave—and *humility*. Consistently with the views of other contributors to this volume, Bobb locates that difference in the healthy pride that accompanies humility—a sense of internal dignity and worth that defies the self-denigration and devaluing typically associated with externally imposed humiliation. This means that, contrary to being a barrier, insofar as humility naturally coexists with an appropriate level of pride, it promotes our ability to combat oppressive practices and stand up for our rights and the rights of others.

Indeed, Bobb argues that humility not only opens the door for confronting our oppressors with compassion and grace—providing the intellectual, moral, and physical resistance necessary to fight for our dignity and freedom—but it also fosters a sense of hope for a better future. According to Bobb, it was humility that allowed Douglas to not only forgive his former owner, Hugh Auld, but to also embrace the United States as a nation worth fighting for. His pride and humility gave him the courage to become not only a voice against slavery but also a voice for a future in which his fellow countrymen could embrace the greatness of their nation, understanding that greatness is founded on a commitment to the equal and fair treatment of all people.

HUMILITY AS AN INTELLECTUAL VIRTUE

As noted, humility is not only considered a moral virtue, it has more recently been recognized as an intellectual virtue. Chapter 13, "Self-Trust and Epistemic Humility," by C. Thi Nguyen engages with intellectual (or what he calls "epistemic") humility through a puzzle: the puzzle created by the fact that certain intellectual domains (i.e., the moral, aesthetic, and religious domains) appear to require a special kind of intellectual autonomy—i.e., they require we think for ourselves and not simply believe on the basis of the testimony of others. This is a puzzle because it requires we ignore our fallibility and proneness to error. Normally an epistemic practice that required us to ignore our fallibility and proneness to error would be frowned upon. Yet, certain domains are "peculiar," insofar as they require that we think for ourselves (or self-legislate). As Nguyen notes, while there is "nothing wrong with unquestioningly following my doctor's orders" (p. 326) without understanding why, it would be morally problematic to, for example, unquestionably not harm others simply because we had been told not to, even if it was by a moral authority. After all, as moral agents, we must be able to grasp the grounds for our own moral beliefs, and forming moral beliefs (and/or making moral decisions) solely on the basis of others' testimony does not incorporate that "grasping." This leads to demand for "radical intellectual self-sufficiency" (p. 328) in these domains.

Luckily, Nguyen thinks we can solve the puzzle. To do so, he argues we need only recognize that because of our epistemic similarity with other human beings (our epistemic peers), the epistemic basis for our own self-trust—which justifies us having and trusting our own beliefs, despite evidence of our fallibility and proneness to error—can (and should) be extended to the trusting of others; even (if not especially) in the "peculiar" domains. What is more, he argues, intellectual (epistemic) humility requires us to weigh disagreeing

testimony of our epistemic peers alongside our own, thereby allowing it to appropriately decrease our confidence in the relevant beliefs that we hold.

Nguyen considers—and rejects—arguments for both epistemic nihilism (abandoning all claims to knowledge) and dogmatism (trusting only one's own epistemic authority). And finally, he argues that while the move he makes from self-trust to trusting our epistemic peers defuses the need for radical self-sufficiency, it is nonetheless consistent with the demand for intellectual autonomy, since discovering and taking into appropriate consideration others' disagreement is an important part of thinking for ourselves.

In our last chapter, 14, "Understanding Humility as Intellectual Virtue and Measuring It as Psychological Trait," Megan Haggard argues that intellectual humility should be considered a psychological "trait" and be measured accordingly. Unfortunately, as Haggard explains, there is substantial disagreement in the field about what that means and how it should be approached. Some have adopted the data-driven "factor-analytic" approach to traits (e.g., Values in Action; Peterson and Seligman, 2004), while others have relied on a top-down, theory-guided approach. Some have viewed intellectual humility as a single trait (Whitcomb et al., 2015), others as part of a constellation of distinct qualities—e.g., Roberts and Woods (2003, 2007) view intellectual humility as a conglomeration of low concern for intellectual status, an intrinsic desire for knowledge and truth, low intellectual domination, and a lack of unwarranted intellectual claims. There is also disagreement about the relationship between humility and intellectual arrogance. If intellectual arrogance is the inclination to regard one's beliefs as true because they are your own, is humility simply the disinclination to do so? Haggard thinks not, citing Gregg and Mahadevan (2014)'s definition of intellectual humility as "due deference to an epistemic principle that one subjectively regards as having legitimate authority" (p. 357).

In the end, Haggard argues for an account of intellectual humility as an Aristotelian "golden mean" between intellectual arrogance (deficiency) and intellectual servility (excess) that results in people being able to "own" (i.e., accept and not feel threatened by) their intellectual limitations, while at the same time desiring to improve them, which is grounded in and driven by a general appreciation for and desire to seek the truth. In support of this "limitations-owning" approach to humility (see Whitcomb et al., 2015), Haggard presents research suggesting that intellectually humble people (as measured by her limitations-owning intellectual humility scale) demonstrate more careful and open-minded thinking styles and thereby create more receptive, open intellectual environments for others. In line with other authors in this volume, Haggard argues that possessing intellectual humility does not result in a complete lack of concern for one's level of knowledge, skills, or abilities—nor for one's career. After all, our careers are often the means through which we accomplish good in the world, such as a professor who actively cultivates a love of wisdom in her students. Instead, once again, proper intellectual humility is accompanied by an appropriate level of intellectual pride.

CONCLUSION

Though humility is conceptualized somewhat differently across the chapters in this volume, there is nonetheless widespread agreement on several things. First, the authors agree that humility is not only a virtue but also an important—perhaps even foundational—one, with applicability across a wide range of human experiences and endeavors. Moral humility powerfully impacts our relationship to re- ality, to ourselves, to other human beings (both those with whom we are in relationship and those with whom we are not), to other living creatures, and to the natural world. Intellectual humility generates

epistemic responsibility, both individually and collectively—keeping us open to new ideas, willing to embrace our weaknesses and limitations, and able to give disagreeing voices their appropriate weight. Second, contributors maintain that humility is consistent with (and contributes to) appropriate, healthy pride. And third, they believe that cultivating humility makes us better humans, more open, compassionate, loving, and willing to be vulnerable—but also more willing to take risks, challenge ourselves, and do what must be done for others in their hour of need.

We now turn to more in-depth explorations of this complex and fascinating virtue.

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