

# VIRTUE ETHICS

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In the ancient world, virtue ethics was the dominant form of ethics, but in modern times, and until fairly recently, virtue ethics was largely forgotten in favor of other approaches to morality like utilitarianism and Kantian ethics. That has changed, however, over the past fifty years. In 1958 Elizabeth Anscombe published “Modern Moral Philosophy,” a paper that excoriated Kantianism and (utilitarian) consequentialism and recommended a return to Aristotelian moral psychology. Since then, virtue ethics has steadily revived, and in the past ten years it has come to be considered one of the major forms of contemporary ethical theory.

In what follows, I want to say what virtue ethics is and isn’t, and this will involve drawing contrasts between it and other philosophical approaches to morality. I then want to compare and contrast the main kinds of historical and contemporary virtue ethics and shall go on to discuss the major problems, or challenges, that present-day virtue ethics faces. Finally, I would like to describe some interesting similarities and differences between various forms of virtue ethics and other ways of thinking about morality.

## **What is virtue ethics?**

It is perhaps easiest to understand what virtue ethics is by drawing a contrast with Kantian and consequentialist or utilitarian approaches to moral philosophy. For Kantian ethics, rules and fundamental principles play a crucial and (some would say) a foundational role, and consequentialism treats the moral assessment of actions as a function of what can be said about the consequences of those actions. But rules/principles and consequences are not the basis for the moral evaluations virtue ethics makes. The ethical focus, rather, is on character and motive, which are naturally regarded as the key elements in determining whether someone is virtuous or has a particular virtue (like courage or kindness).

Some proponents of virtue ethics (e.g. Leslie Stephen 1882 and Edmund Pincoffs 1986) place so much importance on character and motive that they lose

interest in the moral assessment of actions. But almost all contemporary virtue ethicists do want to evaluate actions, and I shall confine our attention to such forms of virtue ethics. However, many philosophers who offer theories of the virtues are not virtue ethicists, and seeing this will help us better understand what virtue ethics, positively, is. For example, both Rawls (1971) and Kant (1964) have a great deal to say about what virtue or particular virtues consist in, and for both virtue involves acting in accordance with certain principles. But to conceive virtue in relation to principles is to treat the principles as ethically (more) fundamental, and, as I characterized virtue ethics above, this isn't virtue ethics. Kant and Rawls, and even some utilitarians, offer us theories of virtue or the virtues; but they aren't virtue ethicists if they don't see virtuous character or motivation as the most important element in (understanding) morality.

One important division *within* virtue ethics concerns the role of theory in moral philosophy. Kantianism and utilitarianism clearly offer us theories of morality, and in the early years of the recent revival of virtue ethics, most advocates of virtue ethics objected to the theoretical character of those two then-dominant traditions and therefore saw virtue ethics as a form of anti-theory. Those advocating the avoidance of theory argued, among other things, that our understanding of ethical phenomena is too complex, too *rich*, to be captured by any unifying theory. Rather than do ethics on the model of science, we should regard it as more like the writing of history or art connoisseurship, disciplines where sensitivity, experience, and judgment would seem to make general theories unnecessary and unhelpful. (The work of Bernard Williams [1985], John McDowell [1979], and Martha Nussbaum [1986, 1990, 1992, 2001] is relevant here.)

More recently, however, virtue ethicists have been increasingly willing to engage in theorizing and theoretical generalizations. This may have been because, given the importance of theoretical approaches like Kantianism and consequentialism in contemporary moral philosophy, it was thought unlikely that any anti-theory could ever be regarded as a serious alternative to them. It was seen that it would take a theory to beat a theory (shades of Thomas Kuhn), and at least three virtue ethicists – Rosalind Hursthouse (1999), Christine Swanton (2003), and I myself (2001) – have produced book-length, theoretical, virtue-ethical work in recent years. (Philippa Foot, who did so much to promote the revival of virtue ethics (1978), doesn't like to be called a virtue ethicist.) I myself believe that virtue ethics is now taken as seriously as it is by ethicists generally because it has been willing to stake out its own territory in theoretical terms that distinctly compete with or criticize other ethical theories like utilitarianism and Kantian ethics (including its contractualist forms).

So some current virtue ethics is anti-theoretical and some is very strongly in favor of theory, but in fact this distinction was not operative or evident in ancient ethical thought. Some ancient ethical thinkers (and I am speaking of classical antiquity, not of ancient Chinese and Indian ethical thought, about which I shall say something just below) were skeptical or nihilistic about values

and morals, but the major ethical philosophies of the ancient world – Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism – were all quite comfortable presenting themselves as general theories. In addition, all four schools took a fundamentally eudaimonistic approach to ethics, and this stands in marked contrast with most modern forms of virtue-ethical thought.

Eudaimonism is the idea that no trait of character can count as a virtue unless it serves the interests, promotes the overall well-being, of the virtuous individual – “eudaimonia” is, roughly, the Greek word for overall or long-term well-being, or the “good life.” Alternatively, and to borrow from Julia Annas (1993), the eudaimonism that is common to all ancient ethical theorizing assumes that the ethical agent’s own long-term well-being is the “entry point” for any individual’s ethical thinking. That doesn’t mean that ancient ethical thought was uniformly “egoistic,” that is, favorable to universally selfish motivation. Aristotle, for example, thought that a concern for values beyond the self – e.g. for the good of one’s own country or city state – was part of virtuous character, but at the same time he held that an individual who lacked such character would be worse off than one who possessed it (even if that meant giving up one’s life for the good of one’s country). So Aristotle is a eudaimonist, but is far from recommending that we be selfishly or egoistically motivated.

By contrast, much modern virtue ethics doesn’t accept eudaimonism and thinks that a morally virtuous individual may sometimes have to sacrifice her own (greater) good for the good of others. This difference from ancient thought seems at least partly due to the influence of Christianity, with its idealization of Jesus’s self-sacrifice on behalf of sinful, suffering humanity. But whatever its historical source, most modern and contemporary virtue ethics stresses our obligations to others at the expense, to some extent, of the well-being of the individual who has the obligations, and in this respect modern virtue ethics resembles Kantianism and utilitarianism more than it does the ancient modes of ethical thought that we have just mentioned. Eudaimonism is not, therefore, part of the definition or concept of virtue ethics. On the other hand, some forms of ancient and modern virtue ethics are avowedly egoistic – Epicureanism and Nietzsche’s philosophy being pretty clear examples – and so we can’t define virtue ethics as standing *opposed* to egoism any more than we can require it to be eudaimonistic.

In addition, not all forms of virtue ethics are rationalistic, i.e. committed to treating reason or rationality as the basis for ethical thought and action. The virtue ethics of classical antiquity is pretty uniformly rationalistic in its assumptions, but ancient Chinese and Buddhist thought in at least some instances stresses the emotional, or sentimental, side of ethics, and both Hume and contemporary virtue ethicists who are influenced by him also regard emotion and feeling, rather than human reason, as the basis of morality. Perhaps the Christian emphasis on love and compassion has made such sentimentalist forms of virtue ethics seem more attractive even to secular modern-day ethicists than it ever was

in the period of classical antiquity. But this means, once again, that rationalistic assumptions can't be built into the definition or concept of virtue ethics and that in certain respects rationalistic modes of virtue ethics have more in common with Kantian rationalism than with non-rationalist, sentimentalist, forms of virtue ethics (e.g. Hume's). I will return to this theme later in our discussion, but it is time now to say more specific things about the different forms of virtue ethics that have flourished in the past or more recently.

### Forms of virtue ethics

We can't possibly talk about every kind of virtue ethics that has ever been – our discussion needs to be governed by a sense of what is important and what is not so important, and, as a virtue ethicist myself, I am inclined to think that the importance of one or another mode of virtue ethics to contemporary ethical thought gives us some basis for deciding what to emphasize within the history of virtue ethics. In the ancient world, Stoicism, with its emphasis on the “divine spark” in all human beings, was much more popular and influential than Aristotelian ethics, with its clearly aristocratic leanings and commitments. But since Anscombe published “Modern Moral Philosophy” in 1958, reviving virtue ethics has emphasized and followed Aristotle more than any other ethical thinker. Indeed, for the longest time virtue ethics was simply identified with Aristotle's views; but over the past few years it has become evident that other forms of virtue ethics may be viable in contemporary circumstances. As Christine Swanton (2003) has put it, virtue ethics turns out to be a genus, rather than (as some had thought) a species. So I want to begin by speaking of Aristotle and of contemporary neo-Aristotelianism and then go on to speak of the history and present-day development of other kinds of virtue ethics.

For Aristotle virtue is a certain sort of habit or disposition of thinking, feeling, and acting. According to his “doctrine of the mean,” virtuous individuals act (and feel) in a way that lies in a mean between extremes, as when a person of courage, when faced with danger, chooses a course of action that is neither cowardly nor foolhardy. Where the mean lies is not given mathematically (it needn't be an exact halfway point between vices); and Aristotle thinks, more generally, that the dictates of virtue cannot be captured in rules or universal principles. In order to be virtuous, rather, a person has to become rationally sensitive to or perceptive about what is morally right in any given situation, and such practical wisdom is acquired as a result of parental training and accumulating life experiences. In addition, he holds that there is a unity to the virtues, that there cannot be conflict among them, so that, for example, courage never calls for one to do an act that is unjust or intemperate.

Aristotle's talk of perception and sensitivity can lead one to think that situationally determined facts about what it would be right or noble to do are

independent of any specification of the virtuous individual. In that case, virtue would consist in habitually knowing and appropriately responding to such facts. But Aristotle also says that the virtuous individual is the measure of what it is right to do or feel, and some, though not all, interpreters have understood this to mean that what is right counts as such *because* it would be chosen by a certain kind of, i.e. virtuous, individual. This would entail that one has to specify virtuousness independently of saying what makes an act right and that acts are right because an independently specified virtuous individual would choose them; and it is most frequently assumed that such an independent specification requires one to characterize the virtuous individual as someone leading a life of eudaimonia. There are other interpretive difficulties (and the threat of a circle too) because Aristotle is not entirely clear about whether eudaimonia consists (mainly) in a mix of practical and theoretical virtues or whether only the theoretical virtues are crucial to it.

Aristotle doesn't put much weight on virtues like kindness and compassion, but, quite possibly because of the pervasive cultural influence of Christianity, contemporary (neo-)Aristotelians like John McDowell (1979), Philippa Foot (1978), and Rosalind Hursthouse (1999) all mention kindness as a prime example of a virtue. Recent Aristotelian virtue ethicists also abandon Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, and for good reason, too, because it was that doctrine as much as any other that led to the long-term rejection and eclipse of ethical Aristotelianism beginning in the seventeenth century. At that time, Aristotelianism was seen as unable to accommodate emerging notions of human rights, but it also came to be recognized that virtues like truthfulness, loyalty, and fidelity to promises cannot be seen as involving a mean between extremes, and since modern-day ethicists want to insist on the importance of those virtues, the doctrine of the mean has/had to go.

During the past decade, the most influential work of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics has been Hursthouse's *On Virtue Ethics*. That book interprets Aristotle, in the second of the two ways mentioned earlier, as understanding right actions in terms of an independently specified notion of the virtuous individual. Hursthouse is definitely engaged in theorizing (at least if Aristotle was), but in work subsequent to the book she has disclaimed any attempt to give a foundational account of virtue. Still, the book emphasizes the ways in which what counts as a virtue depends on considerations about the good of the human species, of the given virtuous individual, and of the community that individual is a member of – though Hursthouse is somewhat non-committal about how these different considerations weigh against one another. In any event, neo-Aristotelianism has had the largest influence, at least till now, within reviving virtue ethics; but there are presently other forms of virtue ethics in play, and I want to mention some of these.

For some reason, one now sees very little virtue ethics inspired mainly by Plato or by the Epicureans, but there are a number of contemporary neo-Stoics,

among them Martha Nussbaum and Julia Annas. Nussbaum (along with others) has attempted to revive the Stoic view that emotions are nothing but mistaken or distorted beliefs or thoughts (2001); and Annas has in resourceful ways attempted to show that the Stoic doctrine that equates virtue with happiness or a good life is not as far-fetched as many, over the millenia, have taken it to be. Speaking now of more modern historical influences, there is also work nowadays on Nietzsche-style virtue ethics. Christine Swanton makes use of Nietzschean ideas in her book *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View* (2003); and I myself have discussed (but explicitly rejected) a Nietzschean version of virtue ethics in my book *Morals from Motives* (2001).

On the whole, however, I think the most important non-Aristotelian historical influence on recent virtue ethics has been that of Hume. Hume's *Treatise* (1978/1739) contains an unstable mixture of utilitarian, virtue-ethical, and deontological elements, but Hume lays great stress on the idea that the virtue or rightness of an action depends on the virtuousness of its underlying motive, and this is certainly virtue ethics. Very much unlike Aristotle, Hume also stresses the moral importance of benevolence, and (once again) this reflects the influence of Christianity even for a relatively secular modern moral philosopher. Hume treats considerations of human happiness as underlying considerations of virtue and to that extent anticipates utilitarianism; but his account of promise-keeping and of honesty or justice regarding property is very definitely not (purely) utilitarian in inspiration, and since Hume himself sees the difficulty of explaining just actions, etc., in terms of underlying independent motives, his account of deontology puts an enormous strain on his commitment to virtue ethics. (Hume acknowledges that his ideas seem to go in a vicious "circle.")

For that reason, contemporary neo-Humean virtue ethicists like myself seek to understand deontology and justice in ways that don't run in a circle, but that remain, nonetheless, within the terms and assumptions of virtue ethics. Hume was a sentimentalist who thought morality and virtue depended on feeling and feelingful motivation, rather than on reason or rationality, and neo-Humean virtue ethics takes a similar position. To that extent, I myself have found it useful and necessary to borrow ideas from what is perhaps the most influential of recent sentimentalist approaches to morality, the ethics of care. Deriving ultimately from the work of Carol Gilligan (1982) on the differences between the male and the female moral "voice," care ethics emphasizes connection *to* and caring *about* the welfare of others rather than the considerations of autonomy *from* and rights *against* others that rationalistic Kantian liberalism essentially appeals to. The latter tradition also stresses the importance of acting (rationally) from principles or out of respect for rules, whereas care ethics thinks moral action depends much more on emotional connection with people. Care ethicists soon realized that this distinction in ethical approaches doesn't correlate all that well with gender differences, but they argued that a focus on moral connection rather than separateness/autonomy can work as a much-needed corrective or

supplement to traditional rationalist ethical theorizing and may even support a total reconfiguring of previous philosophical thinking about morality (e.g. support thinking of just societies as basically, in some sense, caring societies).

Neo-Humean virtue ethics can usefully borrow from this new ethical tradition while at the same time remaining somewhat separate from it. For example, my own approach to virtue ethics stresses the inherent admirability of caring about others (genuinely caring about others isn't a virtue because it leads to good consequences, but because of the kind of motive it is, namely, one *aiming* at good consequences for others). But care ethics typically understands the value of caring as a motive or virtue as derived from the fact that it plays a role in good caring *relationships* like that between a mother and a child. It asserts that the value of, and in, relationships is the primary or most fundamental ethical value and holds that the moral value of individual traits or actions has to be seen as derivative from the value of certain relationships. By contrast, a neo-Humean virtue ethics of caring wants to say that the character trait of caring has an independent moral value, and it says this in part because even if both caring and being cared for play an essential role in paradigmatically good mother–child relationships, caring has a moral value (and virtue status) *that being cared for clearly lacks*. And this supports the virtue-ethical idea that (the individual trait of) caring is of independent and fundamental moral importance. But since caring is just a folksier way of talking of various forms of benevolence, a virtue ethics of caring remains very much within the sentimentalist Humean tradition (though care ethicists often acknowledge *their* indebtedness to Hume). It is worth adding, however, that for all his talk of benevolence, Hume also places a greater emphasis on self-love than either care ethicists or neo-Humean virtue ethicists would wish to do.

Finally, in this section, I should mention the seemingly virtue-ethical approaches to morality that one finds, historically, in Asian thought and culture. Confucianism and the ethical traditions, in China, that derive from it are often viewed by philosophers here in the West as very similar to virtue ethics in the West; and although analogies with Aristotelian ethics have been most frequently noticed, a number of contemporary scholars think that some forms of Confucian and neo-Confucian thought are actually more analogous to sentimentalist, Humean modes of virtue ethics. In any event, the centrality of compassion within Buddhist ethics clearly calls Hume to mind more than Aristotle, and several scholars are now doing work that seeks to help us all better understand the relations between virtue ethics here in the West and various Asian traditions of ethical thought.

### **Problems for contemporary virtue ethics**

Virtue ethics is no longer moribund or dormant, but it now faces some important challenges. If its approach to morality is to be fully persuasive in present-day

circumstances, it needs, I believe, to face up to the most important ethical/philosophical challenges that other traditions have made us aware of and offered their own solutions or responses to. For example, ethicists nowadays recognize that there is a problem about justifying deontology. Almost all people are deeply morally persuaded that it is wrong to kill, say, one innocent person to save the lives of five others, and Kantians rise to the challenge of deontology by trying to account for *why* such killing is wrong. Act-utilitarians and act-consequentialists, for their part, attempt to show why, despite initial strong intuitions, it can be all right and even obligatory to kill one to save five. So although virtue ethics doesn't have to give any other theory's answer to the problem of deontology, it does need to say something persuasive about it. Otherwise, it will be widely seen – at least by philosophers who are not virtue ethicists – as lacking in contemporary relevance.

Unfortunately, however, those who have lately defended neo-Aristotelian and neo-Stoic virtue ethics haven't focused on this problem – even to the extent of saying that our deontological intuitions simply have to be and should be taken at face value. Not surprisingly, my own work (see Slote 2007) does try to say something usefully explanatory (and supportive) about deontology and supererogation, but since I am a Humean, and a sentimentalist, about morality, I don't think what I have done would be of much help to or very persuasive for neo-Aristotelian rationalists. And it is in any event probably also worth mentioning that one advantage of virtue ethics generally over other traditions, like utilitarianism and Kantian ethics, is that it has a more positive view, or more positive views, than these others have of the role of the emotions and of human relationships in the moral life. Virtue ethics revived in some measure because it was seen as addressing these issues in a way that other, more accepted views did not, and so I am far from saying that the burden of relevance to central moral issues is all on the side of virtue ethics.

But let me also add, just briefly, some thoughts about how sentimentalist neo-Humean virtue ethics would propose to address the important issue of deontology. Hume's account of justice/honesty does deal with some important questions about deontology, for example, but, as I suggested earlier, it does so (and Hume acknowledges this) somewhat at the expense of the commitment to virtue ethics. Also, Hume has absolutely nothing to say about the issue of doing vs. allowing (of killing, say, vs. allowing to die) that surfaced above, when I said that almost all of us initially feel it is wrong to kill one person to save five. But this issue is central to deontology and I think a sentimentalist virtue ethics needs to address it. My own contribution here, if it is one, has been to suggest that deontology is just one modality of our partialistic, or perspectival, interactions with good or evil (bad things) in the world. Just as we morally prefer, other things being equal, to alleviate the pain of those immediately visible to us rather than alleviate the pain of someone whose pain we only know *about*, I think we prefer a less immediate causal connection to harm or disaster than a more immediate one.



But to kill is to be in a much more immediate and direct causal connection to a death than it is to merely allow someone to die, and that I think gives us a basis for deontology. Natural human empathy, as studied by psychologists, leads us to be more concerned about potential harm we are perceptually acquainted with than about more distant or merely known-about potential harm, and by the same token we empathically flinch more from the immediate causal connection that is involved in *doing* harm than from merely *allowing* similar harm. Empathy and empathic concern for others are arguably features of our emotional life, of feeling rather than pure or practical reason, so what I have just too briefly sketched is a sentimentalist approach to deontology.

But having said as much, let me bring up a whole other area where virtue ethics of every stripe faces a considerable contemporary challenge: political morality. None of the forms of virtue ethics that flourished in the ancient world advocated an egalitarian or democratic conception of social justice, so any contemporary virtue ethics that bases itself on ancient models runs the risk of appearing hopelessly retrograde in the political sphere or, if it avoids political issues altogether, is likely to seem incomplete and inadequate in comparison with theories like Kantianism and utilitarianism that can offer accounts of both individual and political morality.

In recent years, virtue ethicists have in effect been seeking a way out of this dilemma. Stoicism, with its talk of the “divine spark,” is friendlier to democratic/egalitarian ideals than either Plato or Aristotle was, and Martha Nussbaum (1992), for example, has proposed some ways in which Stoicism might be turned in the direction of modern-day democratic theory. But such shifts are also possible within neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics. To be sure, Alasdair MacIntyre has used Aristotle to argue for an anti-liberal conception of political morality, but Martha Nussbaum (1990) has pointed out that Aristotle’s *Politics* advocates a rather democratic and egalitarian ideal of social cooperation except for the conditions it attaches to citizenship. To the extent, then, that those conditions depend on now-rejected assumptions about the political incapacity of women, laborers, and non-Greeks, the contemporary neo-Aristotelian might be able to use the *rest* of Aristotle’s political views to defend a more contemporary and less retrograde ideal of social justice than Aristotle himself ever contemplated.

Rosalind Hursthouse (1991) also defends the contemporary relevance of Aristotle’s political philosophy, though along somewhat different lines. Aristotle held virtuous living to be the main component of eudaimonia or human good and regarded societies as just to the extent they enable their citizens to achieve eudaimonia. And Hursthouse believes that we can derive most modern-day political and civil rights from this Aristotelian conception of social justice rather than treat such rights as the *basis* for understanding justice.

However, neo-Humean virtue ethics can also address issues of social justice in relevantly contemporary terms. Where societies and their governments seek to preserve enormous differences in wealth or (political) power for the benefit of

some small elite, there is a pretty clear lack of concern or caring for the good of the country as a whole, and such concern or caring can in fact function as a/the touchstone of social justice for a modern-day sentimental theory. (See Slote 1998.) Since religious intolerance and persecution also demonstrate a lack of (empathic) concern for those who differ from one, neo-Humeanism may also be able to vindicate various civil rights in strictly sentimental terms (Slote 2007). So in fact the prospects of contemporary virtue ethics within the political sphere are by no means as dim as the previous history of virtue ethics might lead one to fear or suspect, and a virtue ethics that includes an element of “virtue politics” may be as capable as utilitarianism and Kantian ethics of offering a comprehensive account of morality.

### Some comparisons

Kantian morality places great weight on the autonomy of the rational individual and seems somewhat ethically atomistic by comparison with Aristotle and Hume, whose ethical views stress the social embeddedness of the individual. The Stoics, however, had a rather individualistic picture of human flourishing, and it is perhaps not surprising that their ideas (are often said to have) influenced Kant’s ethics more than the ideas of any other ancient school of thought. In that respect, most virtue ethics, whether ancient, modern, or contemporary, resembles communitarianism (see MacIntyre 1981; Sandel 1982) more than Kantianism does. But utilitarianism, with its commitment to our moral connection to anyone and everyone we are in a position to help or hurt, seems somewhat friendly to communitarian ideals. However, communitarianism has also tended toward a certain relativism and historicism about political/moral values – what is just or good depends on the tradition one grows up in – and to that extent communitarianism differs sharply from Kantianism, utilitarianism, and most forms of virtue ethics – all of which insist on a single universal standard of moral/political evaluation.

The comparisons fall out in a somewhat different way when one considers the distinction between rationalism and sentimentalism. Both Kantian and Aristotelian ethics (and their contemporary embodiments) treat moral thought and action as based in reason or rationality, and both regard explicit moral thinking about what is right/noble or wrong/ignoble as an indispensable element in morally/ethically acceptable or good conduct. By contrast, neo-Humean virtue ethics, care ethics, and (to some extent) communitarianism stress the emotional roots and non-rational justification of morality, and treat explicit or self-conscious moral thinking as ethically less desirable than Kant and Aristotle do. Interestingly, utilitarianism resembles neo-Humeanism more than it resembles Kant or Aristotle in these respects. Some forms of utilitarianism (e.g. Sidgwick’s) are avowedly rationalistic, but others (like Bentham 1982) don’t defend or seem

to depend upon rationalist assumptions, and the latter fact may reflect the immediate historical influence Hume had on Bentham. Similarly, almost all forms of utilitarianism are comfortable with the possibility that explicitly conscientious motives and thinking might have inferior results to those of acting and thinking on the basis of “natural” motives like compassion, gratitude, and even ambition or curiosity. To that extent, utilitarianism once again resembles neo-Humean virtue ethics, care ethics, and communitarianism more than it does Aristotelianism and Kantianism.

However, all these comparisons seem to me, at least, to show how well virtue ethics fits in with the insights and controversies that characterize the historical traditions of ethical thought and contemporary developments of those traditions. Virtue ethics is very much in play now within academic ethical theorizing, and its prospects seem brighter, much brighter, than, in the modern period, they have ever seemed before.

*See also* Ethical thought in China (Chapter 1); Ethical thought in India (Chapter 2); Socrates and Plato (Chapter 3); Aristotle (Chapter 4); Later ancient ethics (Chapter 5); Ethics and reason (Chapter 9); Ethics and sentiment (Chapter 10); Hume (Chapter 11); Utilitarianism to Bentham (Chapter 13); Kant (Chapter 14); John Stuart Mill (Chapter 16); Nietzsche (Chapter 18); Consequentialism (Chapter 37); Contemporary Kantian ethics (Chapter 38); Contractualism (Chapter 41); Feminist ethics (Chapter 43); Partiality and impartiality (Chapter 52); Moral particularism (Chapter 53); Justice and distribution (Chapter 58); The ethics of free speech (Chapter 64); World poverty (Chapter 66).

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