

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



THE JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

THE JUBILEE CENTRE

for Character and Virtues

www.jubileecentre.ac.uk

CHARACTER AND
GLOBAL CHALLENGES
ORIEL COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
9 - 11 January 2025

A large, faint, stylized graphic of a compass rose or star shape is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page. It is rendered in a lighter shade of green than the background.

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

A warm welcome to Oxford and the thirteenth annual conference of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues. This year, we return to the beautiful and historic Oriel College.

It is an honour and a privilege to welcome so many distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends to the Jubilee Centre Conference. For many of you, I know this event has become a "fixture in your calendar", as it provides a unique opportunity to learn about the latest research in character education, establish new partnerships, make exciting plans for the future, and, importantly, catch up with friends old and new.

We received a fantastic response to our open call for papers, underscoring the importance of this year's theme: Character and Global Challenges. For the character and virtue agenda in philosophy, psychology, and education to maintain its contemporary relevance, it must address ongoing and future global challenges. It was heartening to see so many submissions tackling some of the most critical issues of our time, including: the mental health crisis; the rapid rise of AI and related technologies that open a Pandora's box of ethical concerns; growing environmental threats; and, perceived political dysfunction leading to increased polarization. These challenges, among others, threaten the moral ecology that supports healthy character development.

We are honoured to welcome our four distinguished keynote speakers: Daniel R. Porterfield, Jeffrey Rosen, Susan Shanahan, and Alessandra Tanesini. I am also grateful to Jon Cruddas, who, I know, will deliver an

after-dinner speech we will remember for years to come. Congratulations to Verónica Fernández and Gary Lewis, this year's deserving recipients of our Ambassadors of Character award. Finally, thank you to everyone presenting a paper or leading a symposium; I am confident you will share ground-breaking theory, research, and practices that will help address today's most pressing questions.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Kern Family Foundation for their generous support of the conference, helping ensure it remains the premier event for meaningful conversations about character, virtue, and human flourishing.

Finally, thank you to each of you for attending and participating. Since 2012, this conference has been known for its critical yet friendly, cross-disciplinary debates, and I am confident this year will be no different. We encourage you all, in both formal and informal sessions, to connect with new people, ask questions, share insights, and plant the seeds for projects with lasting real-world impact.

On behalf of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, thank you once again for joining us, and I hope you enjoy the conference.



Professor Tom Harrison
Director



PROGRAMME

Thursday 9 January 2025

11.15am - 12.00pm
Arrival and Registration
Hall

12.00 - 1.00pm
Lunch
Senior Library

1.00 - 1.15pm
Welcome
Harris Lecture Theatre

1.15 - 2.30pm
Key Note 1: Daniel R. Porterfield
Harris Lecture Theatre

2.30 - 3.00pm
Tea and Coffee
Harris Seminar Room

3.00 - 4.30pm
Seminar Session 1

4.40 - 5.30pm
**Optional Session: Cultivating
Character in the University (Special
Interest Group)**
Harris Lecture Theatre

4.30 - 6.45pm
Check into Bedrooms

6.45 - 7.30pm
Drinks
Hall

*Character Ambassador
Awards*
**Verónica Fernández
Gary Lewis**

7.30pm
Dinner
Senior Library

Friday 10 January 2025

08.00 - 09.00am
Breakfast
Senior Library

09.15 - 10.30am
Key Note 2: Suzanne Shanahan
Harris Lecture Theatre

10.30 - 11.00am
Tea and Coffee
Harris Seminar Room

11.00am - 12.30pm
Seminar Session 2

12.30 - 1.30pm
Lunch
Senior Library

1.30 - 2.45pm
Key Note 3: Jeffrey Rosen
Harris Lecture Theatre

2.45 - 3.15pm
Tea and Coffee
Harris Seminar Room

3.15 - 4.45pm
Seminar Session 3

4.45 - 6.30pm
Free Time

6.30 - 7.30pm
**Drinks and London Oratory School
Choir**
Hall

7.30pm
Conference Dinner
Senior Library

After Dinner Speaker
Jon Cruddas

Saturday 11 January 2025

08.00 - 08.45am
**Breakfast and Check Out of
Bedrooms**
Senior Library

09.00 - 10.15am
Key Note 4: Alessandra Tanesini
Harris Lecture Theatre

10.15 - 10.40am
Tea and Coffee
Harris Seminar Room

10.40am - 12.10pm
Seminar Session 4

12.15 - 12.30pm
Closing Remarks
Harris Lecture Theatre

12.30 - 1.30pm
Lunch
Senior Library

1.30pm
Depart

KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

Thursday 9 – Saturday 11 January 2025

Daniel R. Porterfield

Aspen Institute, USA

Chair: Professor Andrew Peterson

MINDSET MATTERS: THE POWER OF COLLEGE TO ACTIVATE LIFELONG GROWTH

Daniel R. Porterfield is the President and CEO of the Aspen Institute, the former President of Franklin & Marshall College, and the author of *Mindset Matters: The Power of College to Activate Lifelong Growth*. In this session, he will explore the key themes of his book, discuss the role of higher education in today's rapidly changing world, and emphasise the transformative power of growth mindsets in fostering academic excellence and personal development.

Professor Suzanne Shanahan

Institute for Social Concerns,
University of Notre Dame, USA

Chair: Professor James Arthur

GROWING THE COMMON GOOD: THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO CULTIVATE VIRTUE IN THE PROFESSIONS

This paper has three goals. First, this paper outlines the integral relationship between virtuous professions and redressing the world's most significant global challenges. Second, this paper demonstrates how the Virtues and Vocations initiative at the Institute for Social Concerns at the University of Notre Dame builds on theory and evidence from the literature on social movements to develop a national movement around cultivating virtue in pre-professional and professional education in the United States. Third, this paper offers initial findings on the successes and challenges of this movement using case studies of impact from Duke University and the University of Notre Dame.

Jeffrey Rosen

The National Constitution Center,
USA

Chair: Dr. Liz Gulliford

HOW THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS DEFINES AMERICA: A CONVERSATION WITH JEFFREY ROSEN

What did “the pursuit of happiness” mean to America's Founders, and why was it included in the Declaration of Independence? By reading the classical Greek and Roman moral philosophers who inspired the Founders, Jeffrey Rosen shows us how they understood the pursuit of happiness as a quest for being good, not feeling good - the pursuit of lifelong virtue, not short-term pleasure. Among those virtues were the habits of industry, temperance, moderation, and sincerity, which the Founders viewed as part of a daily struggle for self-improvement, character development, and calm self-mastery. For all six Founders, the pursuit of virtue was incompatible with enslavement of African Americans, although the Virginians betrayed their own principles. Rosen will explore this iconic phrase in the American lexicon and what it can teach us about how to live purpose-driven lives.

Professor Alessandra Tanesini

Cardiff University, UK

Chair: Professor Kristján Kristjánsson

CHARACTER AND AFFECTIVE POLARISATION ONLINE

Affective polarisation, understood as an affective phenomenon which results in increased partisan animosity, is generally seen as being a global threat to democracy. The rise in polarisation has many causes. In this talk, I focus on the roles played by social media platforms. The evidence that social media usage facilitates polarisation is mixed. These contradictory results likely indicate that individual psychological differences are at play. Some agents become more polarised when using social media, whilst others do not. In this talk I explore the kinds of character damage that might make one more susceptible to becoming affectively polarised online and consider which virtues might instead be particularly effective in reducing polarising effects when using social media.

SEMINAR SESSIONS

SEMINAR SESSION 1

3.00 – 4.30pm Thursday 9 January 2025

Harris Lecture Theatre

Chair: Liz Gulliford

Sarah Banks

Virtues and the Climate Crisis:
Perspectives on Hope, Courage and
Solidarity

Michael Lamb

Climate Change and the Virtue of Hope:
Lessons from Wendell Berry

Edward Brooks

Global Challenges and the Virtue of
Resilience

Robert Beddard Room

Chair: Michael Hahn

Claudia Vanney

Cultivating Intellectual Virtues: A Strategy
to Enhance Teaching, Research and
Curricular Innovation at Universidad Austral

**Miguel Osorio García de Oteyza and
Alberto López Rosado**

Humanities and Moral Ecology: The Need
for a Specific Valorisation of Humanistic
Knowledge in Universities to Recognise the
Importance of Character Formation

Emma Cohen de Lara

Teaching Resilience and Personal Purpose
in an Interdisciplinary University Classroom

Owen Walker Room

Chair: Verónica Fernández

Martin Brestovansky, Tiarnach

**McDermott, Roland Bernhard and Verónica
Fernández**

Character Education in Schools: A European
Comparative Study of Teachers' and Parents'
Attitudes in Response to Global Challenges

Francisco Moller and Juan Luis Fuentes

Empowering Students, Enhancing
Communities: Integrating Service Learning as
a Character Education Methodology in
Chilean and Spanish Schools

Roland Bernhard

School Leadership and Character: Tackling a
Global Education Challenge in Highly
Effective and Disadvantaged English Schools

MacGregor Room

Chair: Shane McLoughlin

Cristy Guleserian

THRIVE Collective: Developing Character
and Practical Wisdom to Address Global
Challenges through Principled Leadership

Kimberley Milani

Hope: Fuelling Character Leadership to
Solve Today's Grand Challenges

Jim McManus

Leadership: Virtues and Character in
Crises - Lessons from Current and Future
Pandemics

SEMINAR SESSION 2

11.00 – 12.30pm Friday 10 January 2025

Harris Lecture Theatre

Chair: Kristján Kristjánsson

Randall Curren

Overcoming Denial: The Role of Troubling Emotions in Failures to Meet Global Challenges and How Character Education Can Help

Claudia Navarini and Antonio Scoppettuolo

Territorial Intimacy and the Prosperity of the Earth: A New Moral Challenge

Matthew Clemente and David Goodman

Flourishing in the Therapeutic Age

Robert Beddard Room

Chair: Liz Gulliford

Oana Branzei and Dusya Vera

Character, Purpose, and ESG

Amalia Amaya Navarro

Virtue, Law and Futurity

Gerard Robinson

Incarceration and Character: Some Observations on Prison Education Programs in the United States, Norway and Brazil

Owen Walker Room

Chair: Shane McLoughlin

Peter Oldham

Character Education Research: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Jamie Brunsdon

The More Things Change, the More they Stay the Same: Uncovering the Realities and Challenges of the Physical Culture and its Impact on Young People

Verónica Fernández

Nurturing Flourishing Educators: A Proposal for Enhancing Teacher Well-being and Character Development

MacGregor Room

Chair: Sarah Banks

Cheryl Maurana

Bridging Across Differences Toward Flourishing in the Profession of Medicine

Lauris Kaldjian

Cultivating Character in Medicine through Practical Wisdom by Delineating Goals of Care, Concepts of Health and Flourishing in Morally Pluralistic Contexts

Julia Schmitt and M. Chris Decker

Experienced Based Training of Practical Wisdom to Medical School Faculty Facilitators

SEMINAR SESSION 3

3.15 – 4.45pm Friday 10 January 2025

Harris Lecture Theatre

Symposium: Character, Wisdom and Leadership Across Educational Contexts

Karen Bohlin

Evidence of Growth in Wise Leadership: Findings of an Executive Education Program for School Leaders

Christopher Anthony and Colette Kania

The Content of our Character (Measures): Using Natural Language Processing to Disentangle Content of Widely used Measures of Character

Mark Pacheco

The Complexities of Particulars: A Phenomenological Study of Practical Wisdom within School Leadership

Robert Beddard Room

Chair: Michael Fullard

Vion Ng

The Dual Inroads Pedagogy: An Initiative in Whole-school Approach to Values Education

Chris Clyne

The Challenge of Embedding Character Education Across a Large Multiple Academy Trust

Anita Calvert

How A Character Development Curriculum Could Support the Successful Integration of Immigrants into the UK Educational System

Owen Walker Room

Chair: David Goodman

Corey Crossan and Ana Ruiz Pardo

Leveraging Technology to Scale Character Development Across the Globe

Sungwoo Um

How to Treat AI Teachers Virtuously

Kathryn Toms

The Case for Civility Over Cancel Culture: The Benefits and Challenges of Free (Civil) Speech in the Age of Social Media

MacGregor Room

Chair: Paul Watts

Michael Hahn

Character Curriculum Across Cultures

Becky Park

Cultivating Character Amid Controversy: Wake Forest University's Principled Pluralism Fellowship

Ted Cross

Make a Good Living; Live a Good Life: Character and Higher Education

SEMINAR SESSION 4

10.40 – 12.10pm Saturday 11 January 2025

Harris Lecture Theatre

Chair: Kristján Kristjánsson

John Haldane

Education Towards a Reasonable Humanism

Ryan Olson

Putting the Human in Human Resources: Flourishing and Belonging in American Corporations, A 2024 Survey of HR Managers

Jörg Schulte-Altendorneburg

Lost in Polarisation? Aristotle and Gilbert Keith Chesterton on 'Dogmatic Thinking'

Robert Beddard Room

Chair: Paul Watts

Shelby Clark and Lynn Barendsen

The Role of Self-Reflection in Developing Practical Wisdom Among Adolescents

Maureen Spelman

Cultivating Virtue Literacy in Postgraduates: A Content Analysis of Writing Samples

Tenelle Porter

Intellectual Humility in Adolescence: The Role of Schools

Owen Walker Room

Chair: Andrew Peterson

Shao Jun Nicole Liaw

Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore: A Holistic Framework to Flourish the Learner

Marilyn Lim and Jeremy Pang

Applying Polarity Thinking in the Teaching of Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore

Tan Seow Hon

Success or Flourishing: The Impact of Laws and Policies on the Character and Ethos of a People - A Case Study from Singapore

MacGregor Room

Chair: Shane McLoughlin

Chiara Palazzolo

The Ethical Dimensions of Creativity: Individual and Collective Virtue for Social Progress

Katy Granville-Chapman

The Role of Global Youth Social Action: Global Social Leaders Case Studies

Schalk Engelbrecht

Virtue and Utopia: On the Relationship between Character Development and Social Change



The 14th Annual Conference of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues

CHARACTER CAUGHT, TAUGHT AND SOUGHT: THEORIES AND EVIDENCE

8th - 10th January 2026
Oriel College, Oxford

CULTIVATING CHARACTER IN THE UNIVERSITY (SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP)

Thursday 9th January 4.40 - 5.30pm
(Optional Session)

Chair: Tom Harrison

Recent years have seen a welcome increase, across the world, in research and educational initiatives focusing on the cultivation of character in higher education. This special interest group session presents an opportunity to hear from research projects and networks, to exchange perspectives, resources, and approaches, and to foster collaboration with others working actively to advance character education in the university. The session will include short overviews of research being carried out by Edward Brooks and Luna Wang (Oxford Character Project/ University of Oxford), James Burns (Saint Mary's University of Minnesota), Verónica Fernández (Universidad Francisco de Vitoria), Cristy Guleserian (Principled Innovation/Arizona State University), L. Gregory Jones (Belmont University), Michael Lamb (Educating Character Initiative/Wake Forest University), Nicole Liaw (Singapore Centre for Character and Citizenship Education, National Institute of Education) and Deborah Longworth (University of Birmingham).

SEMINAR PAPER ABSTRACTS

Seminar Session 1

Thursday 9 January 2025 3.00 – 4.30pm

HARRIS LECTURE THEATRE

Professor Sarah Banks

VIRTUES AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS: PERSPECTIVES ON HOPE, COURAGE AND SOLIDARITY

This paper explores aspects of the relationship between virtue ethics and the climate crisis, including: What contribution can a virtue ethical approach make to conceptualising, tackling and living with climate change? Are the contexts too hostile, and the cultivation of virtue too long-term, to be effective in tackling climate change? Do turbulent and challenging contexts provide fertile ground for character development? How can we understand climate activism in terms of virtues such as hope, courage and solidarity? How do climate activists mobilise hope, courage and solidarity in themselves and others amidst denial, fear, paralysis, 'business as usual' or indifference?

Dr. Michael Lamb

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE VIRTUE OF HOPE: LESSONS FROM WENDELL BERRY

Climate change is among our most pressing global challenges. Recent reports about its dangerous effects have generated two competing temptations: 1) presumption among those who deny the crisis and 2) despair among those who worry we are already too late to avert catastrophe. This paper challenges both temptations by defending hope as an ecological virtue. Drawing on numerous books, essays, and a rare personal interview with environmentalist Wendell Berry, the paper elevates Berry as an influential exemplar who acknowledges the difficult realities that tempt climate despair while supplying grounds for the hope needed to address it.

Dr. Edward Brooks

GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND THE VIRTUE OF RESILIENCE

The need for individuals and institutions to successfully navigate environmental, social, and economic challenges has brought the concept of resilience to the fore in public policy and academic discourse. However, the rise of resilience has not been universally acclaimed. Dissenting voices resist the use of the concept as a buzzword that supports a neo-liberal status quo. This paper focuses on the challenge of upholding democratic governance in the face of political polarisation and extremism. It develops the concept of democratic resilience; in view of recent critiques of resilience and offers an account of resilience as a civic virtue.

ROBERT BEDDARD ROOM

Professor Claudia Vanney

CULTIVATING INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES: A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE TEACHING, RESEARCH AND CURRICULAR INNOVATION AT UNIVERSIDAD AUSTRAL

From 2022 to 2026, a project to cultivate students' intellectual character is underway at UA. Inspired by the books *Deep in Thought* and *The Excellent Mind*, this project is driven by the validation of a scale to assess virtuous intellectual character and a study on its correlation with human flourishing. It involves 150 faculty members organised into 12 groups by careers. They have prioritised virtues for each degree and identified which curriculum subjects would be appropriate to cultivate them explicitly. In 2025, professors will focus on curriculum design. In 2026, pilot experiences will be carried out.

Professor Miguel Osorio García de Oteyza and Professor Alberto López Rosado

HUMANITIES AND MORAL ECOLOGY: THE NEED FOR A SPECIFIC VALORISATION OF HUMANISTIC KNOWLEDGE IN UNIVERSITIES TO RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER FORMATION

An innovative measurement of the social impact of the humanities can help to recognise universities and their professors in their different actions of transfer of humanistic knowledge. Professors of virtue ethics, moral psychology and character education have been developing important work for the training of students in moral ecology, which in the 21st century takes on special relevance so that future generations can face social challenges and crises with solid foundations. We will propose some basic elements for the creation of a system of recognition and valorisation of the humanities.

Dr. Emma Cohen de Lara

TEACHING RESILIENCE AND PERSONAL PURPOSE IN AN INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM

The premise of the course "Health, Resilience, and Human Flourishing," taught at the honours college of the University of Amsterdam, is that people who experience a sense of personal purpose and meaning in life tend to do better in times of stress, and have a greater ability to bounce back from trauma. In developing the course, the question was how we may help students develop resilience as a good character trait by gaining a greater sense of purpose in their own lives. The paper presents both the course design and the first qualitative findings.

OWEN WALKER ROOM

Dr. Martin Brestovansky, Dr. Tiarnach McDermott, Professor Roland Bernhard and Professor Verónica Fernández

CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS: A EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' AND PARENTS' ATTITUDES IN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

This paper sheds light on the TEPACE project which explores the perspectives of teachers and parents toward character education in schools across Europe. The study compares results based on datasets from Austria, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Spain (Nteachers>3.000; Nparents>5000), showing cross-country differences in preferences for particular virtues in CE; in respondents' views on the importance of CE compared to academic achievement; and explains the role of demographic variables in these relations. The findings enhance our comprehension of teachers' and parents' views on CE and offer valuable insights to policymakers, school administrators, and education officials in Europe.

Dr. Francisco Moller and Dr. Juan Luis Fuentes

EMPOWERING STUDENTS, ENHANCING COMMUNITIES: INTEGRATING SERVICE LEARNING AS A CHARACTER EDUCATION METHODOLOGY IN CHILEAN AND SPANISH SCHOOLS

Service learning has gained attention in Europe and America for its ability to promote various virtues, linking academic, performative, civic, and ethical skills. This study evaluates a 7-week intervention in Chile and Spain that integrated service learning and project management to foster empathy, civic engagement, and project skills. The intervention involved 280 students, and results were measured through pre- and post-tests, focus groups, and teacher feedback. Findings highlight the need for better teacher training and resources and underscore the role of community engagement and moral reflection. The study provides evidence for promoting character education from a neo-Aristotelian perspective.

Professor Roland Bernhard

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND CHARACTER: TACKLING A GLOBAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE IN HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AND DISADVANTAGED ENGLISH SCHOOLS

This paper explores how highly effective schools serving disadvantaged students in England approach quality development and character education. As part of the large scale mixed-methods project, funded by the Austrian Science Fund, qualitative interviews were conducted with 43 leaders from 17 highly effective English schools. The paper examines beliefs and practices regarding character education, particularly in schools that have improved significantly. Findings reveal that while improving teaching quality is the central concern in such schools, character education also plays a role. The paper offers insights into the potential of character education in school improvement.

MACGREGOR ROOM

Cristy Guleserian

THRIVE COLLECTIVE: DEVELOPING CHARACTER AND PRACTICAL WISDOM TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP

In a world marked by rapid generational and technological shifts, the need for principled and transformational leadership that places character, virtue, and human flourishing at the centre of decision-making is more pressing than ever. This presentation will provide an overview of THRIVE Collective, an initial six-month immersive experience designed to cultivate personal and relational practices that foster principled leaders, flourishing teams, and human centered organisational cultures. By introducing practices aimed at developing key character and relational dispositions, THRIVE creates a community of leaders who are committed to fostering conditions conducive to personal, organisational, and systemic growth. This paper will explore the experience design, implementation, and preliminary outcomes, highlighting its potential to meet the rising generation's evolving expectations of leadership and organisations.

Kimberley Milani

HOPE: FUELING CHARACTER LEADERSHIP TO SOLVE TODAY'S GRAND CHALLENGES

This session will explore the perspectives of global leaders in our book, *Character: What Contemporary Leaders Can Teach Us About Building a More Just, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future*, that made two imperatives clear: to address today's grand challenges and enable tomorrow's flourishing, leadership must be infused with character and fuelled by hope. As cited by leaders - such as Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, Erika Cheung, Theranos whistleblower, Joan Chittister, Benedictine nun, and Nobel laureate, Maria Ressa - cultivating hope can create an infusion of energy to overcome our current state of inertia and generate the momentum necessary for widespread, systemic change.

Professor Jim McManus

LEADERSHIP: VIRTUES AND CHARACTER IN CRISES - LESSONS FROM CURRENT AND FUTURE PANDEMICS

Global public health threats and major civil emergencies have accelerated learning on functions of leaders including decision-making and style of leadership. Much recent policy and scholarship across disciplines from leadership to disaster management and ethics suggests that crisis leadership should seek the good of everyone in and through a crisis. The author contends that this requires a dynamic interplay across various issues and stakeholders, founded in relationships and dependent on good practical wisdom and judgement. Using the virtue of prudence and the principal of relational leadership as two markers for a major emergency he will identify principles and practices which acted as way markers for leaders during the Covid-19 crisis and other crises.

Seminar Session 2

Friday 10 January 2025 11.00 – 12.30am

HARRIS LECTURE THEATRE

Professor Randall Curren

OVERCOMING DENIAL: THE ROLE OF TROUBLING EMOTIONS IN FAILURES TO MEET GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND HOW CHARACTER EDUCATION CAN HELP

The term denial covers a range of phenomena of knowing or having reason to believe something but acting as if one does not know it. An influential analysis of denial regards it as a product of troubling emotions and social norms that regulate attention, emotional expression, and speech. It is seen as a key factor explaining the inadequacy of response to climate change and the disruptive potential of Artificial Intelligence. We argue that in order for character education to respond meaningfully to such challenges it must foster integrative emotion regulation, which is more adaptive and consistent with virtue than denial.

Professor Claudia Navarini and Dr. Antonio Scoppettuolo

TERRITORIAL INTIMACY AND THE PROSPERITY OF THE EARTH: A NEW MORAL CHALLENGE

In our paper we propose the notion of territorial intimacy in relation to the place where we live, as an approach that simultaneously preserves the role of humanity and its responsibility to valorise the place. This concept implies the recognition of the value of natural resources and the awareness of human cultures. What should be preserved and what should be innovated in an ethical vision of the Earth? The meeting point may be found in the value of life itself. Life can be the measure of the encounter between the flourishing of the earth and the flourishing of existence. The acquisition of territorial intimacy becomes a task that implies a collective virtuous perspective.

Dr. Matthew Clemente and Professor David Goodman

FLOURISHING IN THE THERAPEUTIC AGE

It is no exaggeration to say that one of the greatest educators of character in the modern world is the field of psychology. And yet for all its impact and cultural cache, psychology has not been especially well equipped to address the fundamental questions of character and human flourishing. What is needed, the authors of this paper contend, is a corrective for the constrictive therapeutic understandings of character and flourishing on offer today, one which underscores the fundamentally relational nature of human beings by placing a concern for the wellbeing of others and the community at the fore.

ROBERT BEDDARD ROOM

Professor Oana Branzei and Professor Dusya Vera

CHARACTER, PURPOSE, AND ESG

This paper draws on the insights and learnings from three trans-Atlantic roundtables with 50 top executives steering ESG strategies in different sectors. To appeal to their increasingly polarised stakeholders, strategic leaders have been actively scrutinizing old and synthesising new meanings of ESG. We identified three master frames that analogise these strategies: rules and referees (games), deciders and doers (positions), and money matters (capitals). We introduce and illustrate character paradoxes at work, whereby leaders straddle seemingly opposite character traits (courage-humility; transcendence-humanity; justice-accountability) to enact strategic continuity in times of polycrisis.

Professor Amalia Amaya Navarro

VIRTUE, LAW AND FUTURITY

This paper explores ways in which the law may help us flourish in uncertain and challenging times. More specifically, it argues that the law can enhance our capacity to thrive in the future by shaping personality and polity in distinctive ways. The paper is divided in three parts. In the first part, I discuss key traits of individual and community character that are critical for creating, anticipating, and navigating the future(s), i.e., creativity, foresight, collaborativeness, hope, flexibility, and the virtues of fraternity, which include, most prominently, humility, compassion, and service. Secondly, I investigate three main venues through which the law may contribute to inculcating these character traits, thereby leaving an imprint on citizens' character and social ethos, namely, educational policy, institutional design, and cultural intervention. Last, I conclude by examining the extent to which the claim that law is a critical tool for crafting personality and polity in ways that foster human flourishing in futurity calls into question central tenets of contemporary liberal legal orders.

Professor Gerard Robinson

INCARCERATION AND CHARACTER: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES, NORWAY AND BRAZIL

Approximately 11 million people were incarcerated across the globe in 2024, marking an all-time high in modern history. Although our invention of the prison as a punishment for crime dates to antiquity, our contemporary challenge remains how best to prepare incarcerated men and women to re-enter civil society. This paper describes the work of character-focused programs operating inside American, Norwegian, and Brazilian prisons. They provide practical recommendations for university and think tank scholars, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders interested in how best to address challenges associated with crime, punishment, and second chances.

OWEN WALKER ROOM

Peter Oldham

CHARACTER EDUCATION RESEARCH: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Character Education is a key feature of education pan-globally. This paper provides an overview of the extant literature in the field. The search term 'Character Education' was entered into the SCOPUS and Web of Science databases, with a final pool of 942 articles. Article data was extracted into an AWS-RDS database, with data reliability established through verification of a sample by a second rater. The analysis reveals trends and patterns within Character Education research, including national and institutional strengths and weaknesses. A detailed, methodological evaluation of empirical articles then identifies gaps in the corpus and potential solutions are proposed.

Dr. Jamie Brunson

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME: UNCOVERING THE REALITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE PHYSICAL CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

There are a plethora of political, conceptual, and pedagogical challenges acting to inhibit the moral educational potential of movement areas and subsequently the character development of people engaging with physical culture(s) on daily basis. The purpose of this presentation, is to acknowledge this challenge by (a) identifying ten important challenges linked to promoting effective character education practices in movement areas, (b) describing how and why these challenges exist, (c) discussing how they connect and influence one another, and (d) providing example initiatives meant to rectify, or at least contribute to the vision of rectification associated with these challenges.

Professor Verónica Fernández

NURTURING FLOURISHING EDUCATORS: A PROPOSAL FOR ENHANCING TEACHER WELL-BEING AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

This proposal highlights the crucial role of teacher well-being and character development in fostering student flourishing amidst global challenges like mental health crises, emerging technologies, and political polarisation. Drawing from the OECD's "New Flourishing Agenda in Education," it emphasizes collaboration between teachers and parents, integrating flourishing agendas in teacher training, and addressing moral complexities in education. A well-being scale assesses teacher leadership and needs, while ongoing formation courses support educators' personal and professional growth, creating flourishing school communities that promote shared responsibility and authority in education.

MACGREGOR ROOM

Professor Cheryl Maurana

BRIDGING ACROSS DIFFERENCES TOWARD FLOURISHING IN THE PROFESSION OF MEDICINE

This session will address the unprecedented challenges to diversity of viewpoint and constructive disagreement facing US academic medicine and the profession of medicine. The presenter will share insights regarding open inquiry and constructive dialogue that support mutual understanding during discussions of complex, divisive, and challenging topics and speak to how the KNN Framework for Flourishing, with its focus on character, caring, and practical wisdom, is key in fostering bridging and civil discourse. Highlights and potential broader applications from the KNN Demonstration Project Initiative, a collaborative with nine US medical schools to identify methods and resources for bridging, will be shared.

Dr. Lauris Kaldjian

CULTIVATING CHARACTER IN MEDICINE THROUGH PRACTICAL WISDOM BY DELINEATING GOALS OF CARE, CONCEPTS OF HEALTH AND FLOURISHING IN MORALLY PLURALISTIC CONTEXTS

The virtue of practical wisdom entails a *telos*, accurate perception of context, integration of multiple moral virtues and principles, deliberation, motivation, and harmony between reason and emotion. It is central for the medical professional's character and the moral practice of medicine. By fostering a teleological view of intentionality, it connects treatments and tests, goals of care, concepts of health, and human flourishing. It also encourages a person-centered approach to shared decision making in a morally pluralistic world which respects the moral agency of patients and professionals and appreciates conscience as a core human capacity for moral reasoning, emotion, and motivation.

Julia Schmitt and Dr. M. Chris Decker

EXPERIENCED BASED TRAINING OF PRACTICAL WISDOM TO MEDICAL SCHOOL FACULTY FACILITATORS

At the Medical College of Wisconsin, we trained faculty mentors to access their own practical wisdom to lead ethical dilemma discussions with their students in learning communities. Through five human-centered questions, we activated their existing skill sets in a relatable way. We bridge their experience into a moral reflection model based on work by Kaldjian and Plews-Ogan. Surveys show this process helped them access their practical wisdom and become more comfortable with facilitating ethical dilemma discussions. We incorporated five of the seven strategies for character development put forth by Lamb in the Oxford Global Leadership Initiative case study.

Seminar Session 3

Friday 10 January 2025 3.15 – 4.45pm

HARRIS LECTURE THEATRE

SYMPOSIUM: CHARACTER, WISDOM AND LEADERSHIP ACROSS EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

Dr. Karen Bohlin

EVIDENCE OF GROWTH IN WISE LEADERSHIP: FINDINGS OF AN EXECUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

One of the virtues most vital for school leadership is Aristotle's *phronesis* and collective *phronesis*, that practical wisdom crucial to ethical decision-making. This study explores the growth in wise leadership across school leaders who participated in the *Practical Wisdom for Agile Leadership: Formative Education's Core DNA* (PWAL). We used a mixed methods approach across two cohorts of school leaders participating in PWAL independently. Our findings suggest participants activated their capacity to take practically wise action, improve reasoning and flourishing. These findings warrant a larger study on the program effectiveness to promote collective *phronesis* and flourishing within formative school communities.

Dr. Christopher Anthony and Colette Kania

THE CONTENT OF OUR CHARACTER (MEASURES): USING NATURAL LANGUAGE PROCESSING TO DISENTANGLE CONTENT OF WIDELY USED MEASURES OF CHARACTER

One of the most pressing needs facing character education lies in the area of measurement. Among other difficulties facing adequate measurement of character is lack of clarity regarding what specific content should be included under the broad umbrella of character. To address this challenge, we utilised natural language processing (NLP) methodology to systematically consider content of items included on 43 measures of character identified in a recent systematic review (Aluri & Kelly-Hedrick, 2023). Results inform continued efforts to improve character education assessments to promote growth in character and flourishing throughout the world.

Dr. Mark Pacheco

THE COMPLEXITIES OF PARTICULARS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF PRACTICAL WISDOM WITHIN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

This presentation reports findings from a phenomenological study of school leaders' perspectives on practical wisdom. More specifically, it uses Gee's theory of Discourse to understand the ways in which individuals construct and enact practically-wise identities in diverse contexts of practice. Findings from semi-structured interviews with 16 school leaders across six states detail the "complexities of particulars" of practical wisdom in schools, showing how leaders align resources, virtues, goals and identities when making wise decisions. The presentation concludes with recommendations for nurturing practical wisdom within school leadership through professional development.

ROBERT BEDDARD ROOM

Dr. Vion Ng

THE DUAL INROADS PEDAGOGY: AN INITIATIVE IN WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO VALUES EDUCATION

While all teachers are assigned the role as values educators, most of them do not know how to discharge such a role through their own subject teaching. This new pedagogy, to be adopted in a whole-school approach curriculum framework, can suggest a breakthrough to enable all of them to do so effectively, by focusing either on the understanding and reasoning (knowledge) or practicing (behaviour) aspects of preferred values (The Dual Inroads Pedagogy). More significantly, this new pedagogy would contribute to help achieve the original subject-based learning objectives, instead of undermining the professional autonomy of the school subjects. The experiences of 48 pilot subject teachers in Catholic schools of Hong Kong have confirmed the validity of such an initiative.

Chris Clyne

THE CHALLENGE OF EMBEDDING CHARACTER EDUCATION ACROSS A LARGE MULTIPLE ACADEMY TRUST

Embedding character education across United Learning, the largest multi-academy trust in the UK with 104 schools, presents unique challenges. This paper explores these challenges and offers solutions for effective implementation across its secondary academies. Key issues include establishing a common language of character and measuring success beyond traditional metrics. The Jubilee Centre *Framework* is adapted to assess character development, which then allows for targeted support from 'schools of character' within the trust. This paper also highlights the importance of shared resources and leaders understanding their context to allow for a consistent and impactful character education programme.

Dr. Anita Calvert

HOW A CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM COULD SUPPORT THE SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS INTO THE UK EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The integration of immigrants into the UK educational system presents challenges, especially in light of the global political discourse surrounding migration. As educators are at the forefront of navigating biases and seeking effective strategies for inclusion, the paper explores the character development curriculum themes that could create a more ethical environment for integration among students. Drawing upon the philosophical insights of Aristotle and Alasdair MacIntyre, the paper highlights the significance of virtues related to friendship, vulnerability and interdependence. It then addresses the critical issue of how educational institutions can foster moral dispositions for striking the right balance between openness and resistance to novelties.

OWEN WALKER ROOM

Dr. Corey Crossan and Dr. Ana Ruiz Pardo

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO SCALE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE GLOBE

The global challenges of our time require us to strengthen our character. However, scaling up character development programmes across the globe is a daunting challenge. Strengthening character at scale demands us to rethink the design, delivery, and evaluation of such programmes and harness novel tools and methods. We delivered two global character development programmes for approximately 450 young leaders that allowed us to examine the scalability of character development across the globe using technology. In our session we plan to share how we have embedded the seven strategies of character development (Brooks *et al.*, 2021) into the technology-based programme in addition to our learnings arising from these programmes.

Dr. Sungwoo Um

HOW TO TREAT AI TEACHERS VIRTUOUSLY

This talk addresses the ethical question of how to treat AI teachers virtuously. AI is increasingly taking on roles traditionally held by human educators. But should students respect, trust, or feel gratitude toward AI teachers in the same way as human teachers? By exploring concepts of respect, gratitude, and trust, I aim to initiate the discussions on how to educate students on virtuous behaviour toward AI teachers, fostering meaningful learning without confusing ethical treatment with that of human instructors.

Lt Col Kathryn Toms

THE CASE FOR CIVILITY OVER CANCEL CULTURE: THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF FREE (CIVIL) SPEECH IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Free Speech is the lifeblood of a free society. John Stuart Mill's seminal work "On Liberty" explicates the importance of engaging in civil discourse to consider opponents' views. Doing so, he argues, is salutary to both society and the individual. But today's culture encourages habits contrary to those that Mill lauds: social media makes echo-chamber-living, "cancel culture" and vitriolic discourse all too easy. Can this trend be reversed? Does Mill still apply today, or could the flow of (mis-) information become so potentially damaging that we ought to curtail free speech? If so, under what conditions?

MACGREGOR ROOM

Dr. Michael Hahn

CHARACTER CURRICULUM ACROSS CULTURES

Beginning in 2020, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, a Catholic university in the United States, revised the curriculum of its Educational Administration program to integrate an explicit focus on character and virtue and, in 2022, partnered with a K-12 school with Islamic values in Kuwait to offer this education to its teachers and aspiring leaders. With examples from this partnership, the paper argues for the value of adopting a neo-Aristotelian approach to character education as it transcends cultural and religious differences.

Dr. Becky Park

CULTIVATING CHARACTER AMID CONTROVERSY: WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY'S PRINCIPLED PLURALISM FELLOWSHIP

The Principled Pluralism Fellowship at Wake Forest University seeks to help students develop the skills and virtues to work constructively across differences of identity, political ideology, religion, and more. This presentation will provide an overview of the fellowship and present the results from four cohorts of the fellowship (2021-2024), assessed through a mixed methods pre-post research design. These results suggest that the model represented by the Principled Pluralism Fellowship possesses many promising possibilities and a few potential limitations that can inform future attempts to cultivate character across differences.

Dr. Ted Cross

MAKE A GOOD LIVING; LIVE A GOOD LIFE: CHARACTER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

This paper emphasises the importance of integrating character education into higher education to foster both professional success and personal fulfilment. While technical skills such as data analytics are critical in today's job market, the ability to manage relationships and display character traits like leadership, collaboration, and temperance are equally, if not more vital. Institutions like Arizona State University are addressing this need by adopting flexible models like Principled Innovation, which encourages values-based learning without imposing rigid lists of virtues or character traits. The article argues that higher education should re-focus on character development, not only because it is important for living a good life, but increasingly essential for operating in the professional sphere.

Seminar Session 4

Saturday 11 January 2025 10.40 – 12.10pm

HARRIS LECTURE THEATRE

Professor John Haldane

EDUCATION TOWARDS A REASONABLE HUMANISM

Early modern thinkers looked to human nature as a source of values and ideals and for the development of toleration. Thus, were born the philosophies of enlightenment rationalism and political liberalism. While these began as constructive and benevolent they developed into ways of thinking that have themselves come to seem prejudicial, coercive and dismissive of ordinary human feelings and loyalties, and to divide rather than unite. What went wrong and how can those errors and present troubles be escaped? I will suggest that the turn to the investigation of human nature was correct but that it erred in focussing on abstract reason and individual psychology, neglecting affective aspects and social embeddedness.

Dr. Ryan Olson

PUTTING THE HUMAN IN HUMAN RESOURCES: FLOURISHING AND BELONGING IN AMERICAN CORPORATIONS, A 2024 SURVEY OF HR MANAGERS

Addressing differences is among our greatest global challenges. According to our 2024 survey of 305 US HR managers, 64% of all respondents think DEI is very/extremely important to their company's success, but 45% think that DEI programs "promote a political ideology, cause division in the organization, and are not focused on delivering better individual and organizational outcomes." Of those with DEI programs deemed at least somewhat effective, nearly half think they are divisive. Our early tests of alternatives show that HR managers believe the concepts of "virtue," "mutual benefit," "human flourishing," and "connection" could propel their companies' efforts with diversity.

Dr. Jörg Schulte-Altdorneburg

LOST IN POLARISATION? ARISTOTLE AND GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON ON 'DOGMATIC THINKING'

One of the most dangerous and demanding challenges societies worldwide are facing is polarisation. Polarisation can be understood as an almost insurmountable disagreement among distinct groups, individuals or their opinions, resulting from a narrowing of perspectives across debates. That and to what extent this sort of a cognitive bias is apparently caused by a certain kind of 'dogmatic thinking' and the uncritical reliance on prejudices, is what Aristotle and Gilbert Keith Chesterton emphasise in a comparable way, from a philosophical and a culture-critical perspective. This presentation will shed some light on their positions and on their conclusions for character education as a solution.

ROBERT BEDDARD ROOM

Dr. Shelby Clark and Lynn Barendsen

THE ROLE OF SELF-REFLECTION IN DEVELOPING PRACTICAL WISDOM AMONG ADOLESCENTS

This mixed-methods study explored how teaching students to engage in self-reflection could promote the meta-character virtue of *phronesis*, or practical wisdom. A sample of 986 students from 14 countries were engaged in The Good Project's dilemmas-based lesson plans, which promote self-reflection on aspects such as the youths' values, role models, and purpose. Findings indicate that students increased in wise actions according to the Situated Wise Reasoning (SWIS) measure, as well as increased emotional control during conflicts. Such results highlight the potential for such curricula to foster practical wisdom and emotional regulation amongst youth.

Dr. Maureen Spelman

CULTIVATING VIRTUE LITERACY IN POSTGRADUATES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WRITING SAMPLES

Perception, knowledge and understanding, and reasoning comprise the core elements of virtue literacy. This study explored the impact of interventions designed to develop virtue literacy in postgraduate students. Instructional strategies, course activities, and assignments were intentionally designed to cultivate the development of virtue literacy. The hypothesis predicted that leadership candidates would demonstrate advancements in their development of virtue literacy. Students completed writing samples at three distinct points throughout the two-year program in educational leadership (N=75). Qualitative data analysis demonstrates a noticeable increase in naming and describing virtues, recognizing situations involving virtues, and discernment regarding situation requiring the application of virtue.

Dr. Tenelle Porter

INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY IN ADOLESCENCE: THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

Adolescents around the world are navigating environments that challenge their ability to discern truth from falsehood and that reward bluster and bombast over nuance and careful thought. Intellectual humility, which involves recognising the limits of our knowledge and behaving accordingly, predicts several adaptive responses to such contexts in adulthood. Here, we describe why cultivating intellectual humility is achievable and needed in adolescence, identifying four developmental tasks on which intellectual humility can help youth succeed. We then target school as a critical context, reviewing evidence that experiences in school shape development of intellectual humility during adolescence.

OWEN WALKER ROOM

Shao Jun Nicole Liaw

CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE: A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK TO FLOURISH THE LEARNER

This paper presents a comprehensive framework for Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Singapore, addressing the global challenges of a complex, uncertain world. CCE's evolution reflects Singapore's blend of Eastern and Western influences, responding to issues such as identity, artificial intelligence, and societal fragmentation. The framework emphasises the integration of purpose, values, virtues, and social-emotional competencies to develop well-rounded individuals capable of ethical decision-making and active contribution to society. Intentional implementation, including integration, explicit teaching, and immersive learning, is key to ensuring CCE's impact, supported by school leadership in building a virtue-centered culture, teacher development and empowerment, and community involvement.

Marilyn Lim and Jeremy Pang

APPLYING POLARITY THINKING IN THE TEACHING OF CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

Polarity Thinking, a framework developed by Barry Johnson, is a key pedagogical approach employed in the Character and Citizenship (CCE) curriculum for older adolescent students in Singapore. It focuses on developing students' ability to think about and manage polarities (seemingly opposite but complementary ideas), enabling them to be agile in decision-making while grappling with complexity in a balanced way. This presentation shares findings from a study on the use of Polarity Thinking in CCE lessons on students' ability to understand and navigate complex issues. It informs future lesson design and professional development needs to support quality lesson experiences for students.

Dr. Tan Seow Hon

SUCCESS OR FLOURISHING: THE IMPACT OF LAWS AND POLICIES ON THE CHARACTER AND ETHOS OF A PEOPLE – A CASE STUDY FROM SINGAPORE

This project examines the effect of laws and policies on our capacity and desire to live examined lives in pursuit of eudaimonia or flourishing. How can laws and policies support an ecology conducive to increasing individual capacities and desires for human flourishing or, conversely result in an ecology that diminishes such capacities and desires? If there is a diminution of such capacity or desire, what pursuits do individuals in such a society orientate towards in substitution for living examined and/or flourishing lives? Living an examined life contributes to the attainment of virtues and is essential to character formation; contrariwise, living for a poor counterfeit of flourishing deteriorates character of people and a society.

MACGREGOR ROOM

Dr. Chiara Palazzolo

THE ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF CREATIVITY: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE VIRTUE FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS

The paper explores the connection between creativity and morality, focusing on creativity as a virtue of character. Traditionally associated with the arts and sciences, creativity also applies to everyday contexts. Through the theories of Gaut, Swanton, and Kieran, the article examines creativity's role as both an individual and collective virtue, with a focus on its ethical dimensions. It argues that creativity, driven by intrinsic motivation, helps address societal well-being and global challenges. Additionally, the paper highlights the social responsibility of creative geniuses and artists, concluding with an analysis of collective creativity in orchestral collaboration, showcasing music as a model for group virtue.

Dr. Katy Granville-Chapman

THE ROLE OF GLOBAL YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION: GLOBAL SOCIAL LEADERS CASE STUDIES

We propose that empowering young people to design and deliver social action projects in partnership with local communities is an impactful way to prepare them for complex global challenges. Our presentation examines four case studies from Global Social Leaders, a program through which over 10,000 students (aged 8-17) have completed over 3,500 social action projects across 105 countries. Cases include Rwandan teenagers improving veterans' mental health; Hong Kong students co-creating a book with younger children on the UN Sustainable Development Goals; Indian youth addressing desert farming challenges; and Lebanese teenagers supporting Syrian refugee children.

Dr. Schalk Engelbrecht

VIRTUE AND UTOPIA: ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

To address the challenges of our age climate change, inequality, polarisation, artificial intelligence risks many scholars urge a turn to virtue, including green virtue, techno-moral virtue, and epistemic virtue. Simultaneously, we recognise that character change takes time, while humanity needs urgent and radical (utopian) systemic change to save the planet and flourish collectively on it. This paper considers the link between virtue and utopia, or how character development relates to radical social change. I argue that character development can promote utopian change through social contagion and the re-education of desire that prepares us for different ways of being.

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