

# Reply to Critics

LISA TESSMAN

*Tessman responds to her three critics' comments on Burdened Virtues, focusing on their concerns with her stipulation of an "inclusivity requirement," according to which one cannot be said to flourish without contributing to the flourishing of an inclusive collectivity. Tessman identifies a naturalized approach to ethics—which she distinguishes from the naturalism she implicitly endorsed in Burdened Virtues—that illuminates how a conception of flourishing that meets the inclusivity requirement could carry moral authority.*

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I want to begin by expressing both thanks to Marilyn Friedman, Cheshire Calhoun, and Christine Koggel for all of their wonderful comments and (in keeping with my fondness for regret) much regret that I am unable to respond to every one of the interesting and thought-provoking points they have made.<sup>1</sup> I have opted to focus primarily on one concern that emerged as a theme through the three commentaries, though each author raised it in different ways. I chose this focus in part because of how much I have enjoyed the level of rethinking that it calls on me to do.

In chapter 3 of *Burdened Virtues*, I introduce what I will refer to as the "inclusivity requirement" on flourishing, in response to a problematic implication of what I took to be the Aristotelian way of arguing for the claim that virtue is necessary for flourishing. Briefly, in that chapter, I present Aristotle as reasoning that virtue is necessary for flourishing because, as social creatures, humans need to live in a flourishing social collectivity in order to flourish themselves, and no social collectivity can flourish if its members do not exercise the virtues. But since one could, according to this line of reasoning, flourish as a member of an exclusive collectivity whose well being may even depend upon the suffering of those excluded, I determine that what I call the "ordinary vices of domination" are (for Aristotle, who does not acknowledge that these are vices at all)

compatible with flourishing. I thus introduce the inclusivity requirement to block the possibility of counting people as flourishing if they exhibit (what I, but not Aristotle, consider to be) vices in their relations to excluded or subordinate others. My inclusivity requirement stipulates “that the pursuit of one’s own flourishing cannot qualify as morally praiseworthy (and what one attains cannot count as flourishing) unless one is engaged, as part of that pursuit, in promoting the flourishing of an inclusive social collectivity” (2005, 75–76). All of my critics had concerns about this, and understandably so: I think I did not fully understand, at the time of writing *Burdened Virtues*, why I had to “stipulate” inclusivity rather than argue for it.

Friedman raises excellent questions about the *scope* of the inclusivity requirement, and whether one might be “off the hook” regarding those whose “oppression is *not* a condition of [one’s] privilege” (193, emphasis added). Calhoun, too, is concerned about whether I can argue for a wide enough scope of a virtue such as sensitivity and attention to unjust suffering. Assuming that my argument regarding scope takes the form of showing that, as social animals, we need others’ flourishing for our own, Calhoun points out that even *with* the inclusivity requirement, the scope may be limited, since it is implausible to think of all collectivities as global. Koggel comments that my inclusivity requirement implies a “rejection of liberal individualism” (200), and thus suggests that in spite of my claims not to be offering a full account of what human flourishing is, I am implicitly taking a position against some accounts of flourishing such as one culled from Martha Nussbaum’s capabilities approach. My discussion of the trait of sensitivity and attention to unjust suffering needs supplementing, she notes, with “a distinction . . . between the sensitivity to others’ suffering displayed by those who assume and accept the norms that are in place and sensitivity to others’ suffering displayed by those who reveal and question the norms” (203); that is, the need for the inclusivity requirement only emerges through “critical reflection on and rejection of a norm of human flourishing that allows so many people to remain complacent in the face of great injustice and enormous suffering” (203). I hear Koggel as urging me to find a place in my theory for this kind of critical reflection—a critical reflection that among other things could yield a full(er) account of human flourishing. I hope to respond to this today by investigating and elaborating on the role of critical reflection in my framework.

As I mentioned, in chapter 3 of *Burdened Virtues* I try to draw on Aristotle’s assumptions about the natural sociality of humans in order to ground the necessity of the so-called other-regarding virtues. I am now suspecting that this interpretation of Aristotle—consistent with the work of, for instance, Philippa Foot—is not the best, and that it commits me to a sort of naturalism that is not the sort that I want, because it does not leave enough room for the role of critical reflection in shaping what “mere nature” otherwise suggests. The comments

from my critics have helped me see the importance of emphasizing a different reading of Aristotle's characterization of the relationship between virtue and flourishing, and of turning to a correspondingly different sort of naturalism—a naturalism that will allow me to argue from within a eudaimonist virtue ethics framework for normative values that Aristotle himself would never have argued for, including the value of inclusivity. These normative values can be reached through critical reflection, “the kind of critical reflection,” as Koggel puts it, “that can reveal and question the embedded assumptions and norms that perpetuate and sustain systems of oppression” (203); if critical reflection can indeed do this, it could authorize my assertion that one should not count a pursuit of one's own flourishing as morally praiseworthy if this pursuit permits one to exclude some others from the scope of one's attention. I will proceed by explaining a distinction between two different naturalistic approaches, and adopting one of them as the proper companion to my eudaimonist virtue ethics framework.

According to the interpretation of Aristotle that I now suspect to be a problematic interpretation, the virtues should be developed and exercised *because* they are necessary for the well being of a social collectivity, and given the assumption that no one can flourish apart from a flourishing social collectivity, even those traits that have come to be called the other-regarding virtues are necessary for any individual's flourishing. I point out in the book something unfortunate (especially for feminists) about where this line of reasoning, at least without the addition of another premise, leads: according to Aristotle, one can flourish as a member of a flourishing but *exclusive* social collectivity, so there seems to be no way from within Aristotelian theory to argue for the necessity of those virtues that contribute to the flourishing of an *inclusive* social collectivity.

The trait that I cast as the opposite of the metavice of indifference is a trait in the sphere of sensitivity and attention to unjust suffering. A trait in this sphere could be a metavirtue (even if a burdened one) by preventing the development of the ordinary vices of domination and facilitating instead virtues related to ending unjust suffering. As Calhoun puts it, “because this metavirtue, unlike generalized compassion or pity, is specifically attuned to suffering that is *unjust* and *systemic*, it is suited to play a central role in a *liberatory* virtue ethics” (184). However, Calhoun goes on to suggest that I will be unable to support the necessity of this virtue beyond a limited scope, given that, as she puts it, on my “Aristotelian eudaimonistic view, a necessary feature of the other-regarding or social virtues is that they promote . . . the flourishing of the social collective *on which one's own flourishing depends*. Sensitivity to unjust and systemically produced suffering will thus be a necessary condition for one's own flourishing only to the extent that such sensitivity contributes to *one's own* social collectivity” (184). What I take Calhoun to mean here is that while one needs the

virtues that help to correctly—justly—order any social collectivity of which one is a part and on which one’s flourishing thus depends, the breadth of such a collectivity will not always be global.

My own worry about how to argue for the inclusivity requirement expressed a similar concern. As I argue in the book, there is no plausible human nature claim from which inclusivity could be derived: “humans are *not* actually dependent on a sociality that is inclusive of everyone; interdependent community can be constructed to support the flourishing of those within it, disregarding or even undermining the flourishing of those excluded” (2005, 76). My concern was thus not exactly the same as Calhoun’s. She worries about those social collectivities that one is not a part of at all, but does not worry about whether, within social collectivities in which one would be positioned as a beneficiary of oppression, the virtue of attending to unjust suffering within that social collectivity is a necessity. Perhaps she does not worry about this because she is satisfied with my inclusivity requirement, and having granted this requirement, it follows that one cannot flourish without the flourishing of any social collectivity of which one is a part, because, as she puts it, “Oppression impedes the flourishing of an inclusive collective, because individuals will not be properly related to each other under such conditions” (183). My worry extends further because I am not satisfied with the fact that when I introduced the inclusivity requirement, I did so by simply *stipulating* it. Friedman, too, comments that “we need a fuller account from Tessman of what sorts of relationships are grounds for the requirement to have moral concern for the well being of particular people who are oppressed,” raising questions that—as long as my inclusivity requirement remains just a stipulation—I am unable to answer in a more than arbitrary way, questions such as: “does the requirement hold only when someone’s oppression is *in fact* the condition of my privilege?” (193, emphasis added).

In the book, I acknowledge that there may not be a way “to argue for inclusivity from within every possible eudaimonistic framework” and suggest that what is needed is to begin with a conception of flourishing that has inclusivity built into it: “one needs a eudaimonistic framework to be informed by a particular conception of flourishing in order to yield inclusivity from the principle of pursuing one’s own flourishing.” I even suggest that one might need to use “concepts imported from outside of a eudaimonistic framework” (2005, 76) to theorize the details of inclusivity. This is echoed and pushed a bit further by Calhoun’s comment that to be able to “generate a *cosmopolitan* metavirtue . . . we would need to connect virtue not to individual and social flourishing but to something more Kantian like the fundamental value of all persons” (184).

I do not think we necessarily have to go to something more Kantian. What I hope to do now is to outline an alternative, naturalized approach that is consistent with a different reading of Aristotle than the one I emphasized in *Burdened Virtues*, and that would offer a way of authorizing a moral claim

about the value of inclusivity, thus enlarging the scope (while unfortunately also enlarging the burden) of the burdened virtue of sensitivity and attention to unjust suffering.

I need to borrow, now, from John McDowell's distinction between "Two Sorts of Naturalism" (1998). The first sort of naturalism is based on what McDowell takes to be a misreading of Aristotle. He critiques (the early) Philippa Foot for this reading, and his critique applies equally well to my argument described above, according to which the virtues are to be practiced because, given the social nature of humans, practicing the virtues is the way to achieve flourishing.<sup>2</sup> McDowell takes Foot to have inferred from the Aristotelian "notion of what is necessary as that without which good cannot be attained" (McDowell 1998, 167; he cites *Metaphysics*  $\Delta 5$ , 1015a22–6), that the virtues must be necessary in the sense that, *given human nature*, the human good cannot be achieved without the virtues. However, McDowell argues, because the human good (*eudaimonia* or flourishing) is defined by Aristotle in terms of virtuous activity, and because the virtues are to be practiced for their own sake, we cannot interpret Aristotle as beginning with a conception of the human good as independently given by nature and determining on the basis of that given good what the virtues must be. We must begin instead with a conception of the virtues as appealing to reason directly (168–69). The mistaken reading of Aristotle leaves Foot unable to appreciate the crucial difference between human nature and other animals' natures, a difference that rests on the critical capacity of human rationality. For Foot, and consistent with her reading of Aristotle, human rationality is taken to do nothing more than discern what the given human good is and to derive the virtues from this given good. McDowell argues for a greater, and more critical, role for human rationality. He observes that humans share with other living beings a sort of nature that he refers to as "mere nature" or "first nature," and that, in addition, human practical rationality can be developed into something that we can think of, following Aristotle, as a "second nature." He maintains that "the concept of nature figures here, without incoherence, in two quite different ways: as 'mere' nature, and as something whose realization [for humans, that is, for creatures whose capacity to reason is part of their nature] involves transcending that" (1998, 173). This is at the same time a Kantian and a very un-Kantian move, for McDowell follows Immanuel Kant in releasing reason from determination by "mere" nature and in casting reason as "something that does not need certification from outside itself," but he also insists contrary to Kant that "we no longer need to think of practical *logos* as external to nature" (184). Instead, he writes, "The practical intellect's coming to be as it ought to be is the acquisition of a second nature, involving the moulding of motivational and evaluative propensities: a process that takes place in nature. The practical intellect does not dictate to one's formed character—one's nature as it has become—from outside. One's formed practical intellect—which is operative

in one's character-revealing behaviour—just is an aspect of one's nature as it has become" (185).

McDowell urges us to reject the modern wish for foundations that leads either to a misinterpretation and misappropriation of Aristotle as supposedly providing a foundation for virtue in the facts of nature, or to a desire for a Kantian grounding of morality in a transcendental realm that is wholly distinct and separate from human nature. Once we are willing to do without foundations, the practical reasoning involved in ethics can be conceived of as Neurathian, that is, captured by Otto Neurath's image of sailors repairing their boat one plank at a time while at sea;<sup>3</sup> we must critically scrutinize all parts of our ethical beliefs, but we can only do this while standing on the other planks of the boat, namely the rest of our ethical beliefs and practices. Our second natures—acquired through our ethical upbringings—will seem to provide us with reasons for acting, but of course not all ethical upbringings will do this well. For Aristotle, McDowell points out, "what is distinctive about virtue . . . is that the reasons a virtuous person takes himself to discern really are reasons; a virtuous person gets this kind of thing right" (1998, 189). Aristotle did not critically consider what should count as a virtue, but we can—as long as we do so in a Neurathian fashion, and not, as Foot does, by appealing to an independent foundation—in this case a *telos*—given by mere nature; mere nature or first nature can constrain the possibilities of our moral practices, but it cannot determine what goodness is for humans. While the first sort of naturalism takes morality to be naturally *given*, the second sort of naturalism takes morality to be naturally *made* by the (natural) human use of practical rationality while we are at sea on Neurath's boat. In conceiving of morality as issuing from our second nature and being constrained by our first or mere nature, this account has a claim to still being a sort of naturalism;<sup>4</sup> nature, however, does not provide a *foundation* for morality in this account, for we express our natures (which includes our practical rationality) in such a way that we simultaneously may transform our nature and in so doing we leave morality itself open to contestation and transformation. Under the first sort of naturalism, the list of the virtues is derived from a naturally given account of the good life for humans (in Foot's [2001] language, "natural goodness") and as I found, one cannot argue for the value of inclusivity from a species-based analysis of what humans naturally need as social creatures. According to the second sort of naturalism, some social, critical process is the *source* of moral values; thus there is potential for creating values like inclusivity that stand in opposition to oppression.

Margaret Urban Walker's version of naturalism is, I believe, a naturalism of this second sort, and one that provides the critical apparatus necessary for thinking about how feminist moral claims, such as a claim to support the value of inclusion, might be authorized. The first sort of naturalism (whether or not one is convinced that it is based on a misconstrual of Aristotle) is simply not

sufficiently critical for a feminist. Walker's naturalism, on the other hand, suggests that I could do something better than just pulling a stipulation out of the air. It might even make it possible for me to satisfy Calhoun's wish for a metavirtue with a wider liberatory scope and answer Friedman's questions about scope nonarbitrarily; it also, I believe, enables me to find a place in my theory for the kind of critical reflection that Koggel calls for, namely critical reflection "on our role in perpetuating forms of oppression created by these global forces" (197).

Walker offers a nonfoundationalist account that takes morality to come from nowhere but human social groups, who create and change their moralities while standing on other parts of these moralities. It remains a form of naturalism because it takes the human activity of creating moral practices and understandings of these practices to be a natural activity. Walker expresses this when she notes that "morality is a naturally occurring structure of all human social groups" (2003b, 108).

What Walker emphasizes that McDowell does not is that "morality is not socially modular" (1998, 17), namely it cannot be separated from other social practices. To get to moral knowledge requires empirical work aimed at finding out what *actual* social-moral practices are. It then requires critical reflection, the main aim of which is to discover which actual practices evoke the sort of trust that is indicative of the practice's moral authority. To guide this critical reflection Walker develops the idea of "transparency testing," a process motivated by the belief that "moral relations . . . ought to be something like what they appear to be" (12). Relations that require participants to understand them to be other than they are in order for the participants to participate willingly in them cannot withstand transparency testing. Furthermore, a practice carries "the specifically moral authority of morality" (2003b, 108) only if it continues to compel its practitioners' trust after they have determined that they really do understand the practice and that it does not appear other than what it is. Transparency testing can be thought of as a process of demystification. A practice that is revealed through demystification to depend on force or coercion will fail, Walker argues, to continue to command trust, and this loss of would-be practitioners' trust constitutes a loss of moral authority.

Though I am not (nearly) as optimistic as Walker is about the prospects for effectively demystifying oppressive social practices, I do see the social, critical reflection of transparency testing as our best bet for stripping oppressive practices of their apparent moral authority and for establishing and maintaining the authority of liberatory values. If a claim about inclusivity—such as the claim I needed in order to give the virtue of sensitivity to unjust suffering sufficient scope—is to come from anywhere, it must come from actual moral communities engaged in the Neurathian process of refining actual moral practices through transparency testing. The first sort of naturalism—where the necessity of a

virtue must be derived from human's social nature—could not get me to an inclusivity requirement, but the second sort of naturalism potentially can. Or rather, it cannot get *me* by myself there, but it can explain how some actual moral community could potentially arrive at and authorize an inclusivity requirement with sufficient scope.

An actual moral community, through a process like transparency testing, might expose an exclusionary practice as implicitly valuing some lives more than others. When the practice is exposed in this way it may fail to maintain the confidence of those who could manage to keep up their confidence in the practice only as long as the practice remained masked under apparent values such as, say, privacy. Ultimately, liberatory conceptions of the good can gain their moral authority (only) from the endorsement of actual moral communities. Thus when I said in *Burdened Virtues* that “one needs a eudaimonistic framework to be informed by a particular conception of flourishing in order to yield inclusivity from the principle of pursuing one's own flourishing” (2005, 76), what I needed was an account that explains where such a conception of flourishing might come from, and what would lend it the moral authority that it would need. I am suggesting now that a naturalistic account such as Walker's can do this.

Koggel remarks on my “reluctance to formulate a fully developed account of human flourishing” (199). I did indeed shy away in *Burdened Virtues* from giving a full account of human flourishing, and indicated there only that communities engaged in liberatory struggles held implicit accounts of flourishing that were consistent with their liberatory aims. One would expect these implicit accounts to recognize that, as Koggel puts it, “human beings do not and cannot flourish by accepting existing and prevailing conditions of oppression” (199). Maintaining an Aristotelian eudaimonistic virtue ethics, but also drawing now on Walker's naturalized ethics to explain how moral claims gain their “specifically moral authority,” I can now see these implicit accounts of flourishing as morally compelling: the fact that these conceptions of flourishing and of the set of virtues with which such flourishing accords are held confidently by communities that have subjected them to some demystifying process such as transparency testing is what gives them moral authority. Koggel does some of the work of unpacking the details of the conceptions of the good that could plausibly be confidently endorsed by communities of resistance, interpreting the “relationality underlying the inclusivity requirement” as “a rejection of liberal individualism” (200). I would agree with this interpretation.

But has any actual moral community authorized an inclusivity requirement of the sort that I suggest must accompany a eudaimonistic virtue ethics, and if so, with what sort of scope? (And notice that the answer to this question is the answer to Friedman's question about whether one is off the hook regarding oppressions that are not a condition of one's own privilege.) This question, of course, has to be answered empirically, but my guess is that while many moral



communities have aimed at making others' flourishing a necessary part of their own flourishing and have professed a commitment to attending across differences of race, class, gender (and so on) to unjust suffering, many practices of groups committed to fighting oppression remain self-deceived or mystified practices; while these groups may engage in consciousness-raising efforts that should serve as tests of the transparency of their own practices, it is overambitious and overoptimistic to expect all unjust and oppressive practices to be revealed as such. Furthermore, even when they *are* revealed, it is—given the vast amount of unjust suffering that there is to attend to—absolutely impossible to actualize a commitment to critically attend to all this suffering. The inclusivity requirement, one might say, is overdemanding, and the more so the greater the scope is.

Indeed, Calhoun points out that a theory such as mine is overdemanding, in that I leave no room for the concept of just doing one's part by, for instance, joining some collective resistance activities but not others.<sup>5</sup> What I wanted to express in *Burdened Virtues* and that came across as a form of overdemandingness is the effect on the moral self of recognizing the impossibility of actualizing this kind of moral commitment, and yet experiencing it just like the agent experiences a moral remainder in the aftermath of facing a moral dilemma (especially a tragic dilemma) and living with the "*ought* that is not acted upon" but that also does not get canceled out (Williams 1973, 175). I still want to claim that this is at least a descriptive account of what some moral selves experience as their culpable failure to carry out the "*ought* that is not acted upon" (175) when they choose to attend to some injustices and not others. That is, some moral selves encounter the world as impossibly demanding and experience something like Karl Jaspers's "metaphysical guilt."<sup>6</sup> Such guilt is not reduced by knowing one has done all that one reasonably can (and is also not *produced* only by thinking that one is *causally* responsible for some wrong, as Calhoun suggests is the situation for the triage doctor but not for the political resister). That some actual moral selves experience the world in this way has implications, for given the naturalistic approach that I have endorsed, moral practices gain authority by withstanding transparency testing and evoking confidence. Do moral arrangements whereby one "does one's part" knowing that much injustice will be left unattended evoke confidence even when fully transparent? I think some people *do* have confidence in such arrangements, and their confidence may stem in part from knowing the impossibility of being morally "clean" in this very nonideal world. Others (like myself) have difficulty resting easy with—and trusting—this moral arrangement, despite lacking a proposal for a better moral arrangement. This may indicate nothing more than an inevitable lack of confidence in even the best moral arrangements that are *possible* in nonideal conditions, which in turn implies that we need to live with moral arrangements that lack strong moral authority.

## NOTES

I first developed this response for an Author-Meets-Critics session on the main program of the Pacific Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, in San Francisco, California, in April 2006. I thank Christina Bellon for organizing this session, and I thank the audience for their useful comments.

1. The fact that there are so many comments on different topics, combined with my preference for developing one line of thought thoroughly in my response rather than touching on several, means that I am leaving several points without a response. However, I can say extremely briefly: To Friedman's first comment (Friedman's comments are numbered), my response is that character-centered ethics indeed needs to (and often does) consider right action, but right action need not be *centered*. Many of Friedman's smaller points under her second comment are well taken and I accept the criticisms (for example, that I rely on a stereotype of wealthy people, commit a "virtue switch," and overlook adoptive and other families that cross lines of race and class). To Friedman's third comment I have a mixed response: it is indeed true that a full theory of what sort of responsibility attaches to privilege is needed; however, I would deny that I "hold that oppressed persons do *not* bear individual responsibility for their circumstances" (194), for my endorsement of the idea that because of moral luck one can be responsible for more than just that which one controls suggests that even victims of oppression may claim or take (partial) responsibility for their condition through, for instance, the presence of agent-regret. And I appreciate the direction of Friedman's thinking in her fourth, fifth, and sixth comments. Calhoun questions whether the burden of the virtue of sensitivity to others' suffering is best characterized in terms of its accompanying psychic pain, in part because she thinks that the kind of attention to suffering that results in psychic pain (namely a focus on particular suffering others) is not the kind of attention that is called for (what is called for according to her is awareness of suffering conceptualized more abstractly in terms of categories); I would respond that the two should not be separated (though they can be distinguished), and since both are necessary, the psychic pain persists. But I certainly agree that it is not *only* psychic pain that burdens the virtues under adverse conditions, and I think Calhoun has successfully identified some of the other means of burdening. Koggel, too, has successfully identified further sources of burdens, especially those that are due to the "proliferat[ion of] suffering and injustice" (204) under globalized capitalism.

2. He is responding to Foot 1978. See also Foot 2001.

3. W. V. O. Quine used Otto Neurath's image of sailors to metaphorically describe the nonfoundational approach to critiquing and revising one's "conceptual scheme": "we must not leap to the fatalistic conclusion that we are stuck with the conceptual scheme that we grew up in. We can change it bit by bit, plank by plank, though meanwhile there is nothing to carry us along but the evolving conceptual scheme itself. The philosopher's task was well compared by Neurath to that of a mariner who must rebuild his ship on the open sea. We can improve our conceptual scheme, our philosophy, bit by bit, while continuing to depend on it for support; but we cannot detach ourselves from it and compare it objectively with an unconceptualized reality" (Quine quoted in Hursthouse 1999, 165). McDowell assumes that there is a parallel in ethics to the

naturalized epistemology that Quine develops for the philosophy of science and that Neurath's metaphor is useful for both. Walker (2003a) argues explicitly for a parallel between Quine's naturalized epistemology and a naturalized moral epistemology, though she is also careful to point out aspects of Quine's epistemology that moral epistemology should reject.

4. Held (2002), who is critical of what she understands naturalism to be, argues that the term *naturalist* should not be adopted by (or applied to) theorists such as McDowell (and Walker) who depend on some form of critical reflection to yield normativity. Rehg and Davis (2003) also argue that theories that are developments of McDowell's second sort of naturalism—such as Hursthouse's, which they dub a “‘second-nature’ naturalism” (594)—have an illegitimate claim to the term *naturalist* and that they “depend on a convenient relabeling of what counts as ‘natural’” (586). Julia Annas argues for the contrary claim, insisting that virtue ethical theories that emphasize the human use of reasoning—even those that make the strong claim that our animal or biological natures are subordinate to our rational natures, as indicated by the thesis that virtue is not only necessary but also sufficient for flourishing—should still count as versions of naturalism, because the fact of our rationality (and the details of how we exercise it) is itself a natural fact about us (2005, 28). I tend to agree with her on this point (though not with her support of a Stoic denial of the relevance of everything but our rationality for ethics). Elsewhere, Annas writes:

When we look at other species, it has long been clear that we can discern patterns of flourishing particular to the species. There has been a reluctance to extend this to humans, on the grounds that we, unlike other animals, can choose and create different patterns of living, and evaluate them, sometimes rejecting and changing them as a result. It is only recently that it has been realized that this is not a reason for rejecting naturalism. For this fact about our species is, precisely, a *fact* about our *species*. It is because we are rational beings that we can create and evaluate different ways of living, rather than carrying on in the set patterns that members of other species follow. And this is a fact about us of the same sort as the facts about other species on the basis of which we study them. Human rationality is not something that cuts us off from the rest of the biological universe; it is just what is most distinctive about us as a species. If we take this point seriously, then a naturalistic account of humans needs to come up with patterns of flourishing as we do for other species, but specific to humans, thus taking account of the way our life patterns are dominated by the fact that we are rational beings. (2006, 527)

5. Swanton's (2003) pluralistic virtue ethics includes a claim that virtue is a “threshold concept,” which in turn permits her to argue for what she calls a moderately demanding morality. See her development of virtue as a threshold concept in chapter 3 and her discussion of demandingness in chapter 9.

6. Jaspers writes that “there exists a solidarity among men [sic] as human beings that makes each co-responsible for every wrong and every injustice in the world, especially

for crimes committed in his presence or with his knowledge. If I fail to do whatever I can to prevent them, I too am guilty. If I was present at the murder of others without risking my life to prevent it, I feel guilty in a way not adequately conceivable either legally, politically or morally. That I live after such a thing has happened weighs upon me as indelible guilt" (1947/1961, 32).

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