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## 5

# Diverse Environments, Diverse People

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

I was fortunate to work in provincial and national parks in Canada as an environmental and cultural heritage educator. The vast majority of the time this was a tremendously rewarding pleasure, not just because of the wondrous park surroundings but also because of the visitors and fellow colleagues. Indeed, the surroundings often seemed to bring out the best in people. But sometimes people would differ markedly from each other in the character traits and attitudes they expressed when discussing environmental issues, keeping me on my toes as an educator. This sparked my interest in the different roles that different academic approaches to environmental ethics envision for human character traits. I was especially interested in the approach called *environmental virtue ethics* (EVE), because in some ways it gives the most ethical significance to character traits.<sup>1</sup>

After working in many parks, and interacting with many people in them, and being fortunate enough to visit parks and other protected environments in many other countries too, I was struck by a more specific and bird’s-eye observation about diversities: diverse environments seemed to benefit from the character diversity found within human groups. For our diverse environments, many human character differences are complementary differences.

This observation about diversities has broad relevance for environmental ethics, but I prefer to exemplify this at a level of detail that a chapter can usually achieve only if it restricts its focus to one view or

issue. Here I zoom in on what has been called the “most common” EVE view (Sandler 2005, 4). The diversities observation led me to see that a question facing this view is more challenging than has been appreciated. This essay clarifies that question and why it is challenging, then begins developing an answer inspired by Canada’s diverse places and people, as well as some Canadian philosophy of science. The novel focus on character diversity should also be fruitful for those working outside the EVE view investigated here.

I call the popular EVE view I focus on *interpersonal extensionism* because it attempts to extend the normative range of traditionally recognized other-regarding or *interpersonal* virtues, such as compassion and generosity, from our interactions with other humans to our interactions with our non-human environments as well.<sup>2</sup> The challenging question for this view is then philosophical rather than psychological. As a matter of psychology, I will simply assume that some people have interpersonal character traits that include *environment-regarding* aspects. Happily, for example, many people I know seem to have compassion that is directed at both our fellow humans *and also* at our environments and non-human beings within them. But the philosophical question facing interpersonal extensionism is this: do any such environment-regarding aspects of interpersonal character traits help *constitute* human flourishing? This is the Constitution Question.

The next section of the chapter clarifies why interpersonal extensionism needs to justify a “yes” answer to that question. We will then see that this is challenging because the bar for “yes” answers to questions of this kind has traditionally been set much higher than interpersonal extensionists typically recognize. The relevant traditional virtue theories have implied that we should believe an aspect of a character trait helps constitute human flourishing only if we can show it is *necessary* for human flourishing.

I will argue that interpersonal extensionism cannot meet this necessity demand. For example, as laudatory as I find an environment-regarding aspect of compassion to be, reflection has forced me to concede that neither this nor any other environment-regarding aspect of a virtuous interpersonal character trait is strictly necessary for human flourishing.

But I then defuse this result to help interpersonal extensionism. I argue there are reasons to believe some environment-regarding aspects of interpersonal character traits help constitute human flourishing

even though they are not necessary for such flourishing. So a “yes” answer to The Constitution Question could be justified without meeting the necessity demand. Surprisingly, it turns out that character diversity is both the reason the necessity demand cannot be met as well as the reason to embrace different demands. But first let me introduce interpersonal extensionism in more detail.

## 2 INTERPERSONAL EXTENSIONISM

Interpersonal extensionism offers principles, norms, and judgments about human interactions with the environment and its features.<sup>3</sup> An example of one judgment is that there is a strong moral reason to think it was wrong for decision-makers in the Montreal borough of Verdun to choose a verdant park alongside the St Lawrence River as the location to dump over 1,500 tonnes of toxic waste from a road construction project (Leclair 2014).

Interpersonal extensionism tries to ground the principles, norms, and judgments it offers by appealing to some further and more foundational principles about *interpersonal virtues*. Suppose details about the Verdun case reveal that decision-makers considered the environment too carelessly during their deliberations, showing a lack of *humility*. If humility is an interpersonal virtue, then a principle about humility could be used to ground the critical judgment of the decision-makers.

A virtue, or any other character disposition, is interpersonal exactly when it is an *other*-regarding trait that pertains, among other things, to some of our relationships with other persons. Such a trait disposes its bearer to think and feel and act in a complexly integrated set of ways, and, in some sense or other, have this be *directly fixed on* or *for the sake of* the others in question. Being honest, compassionate, just, and generous are obvious examples. One isn't generous just because one gives large sums of money to charity; one may do so only to save on one's own taxes. Humility is a less obvious example. Having humility is being disposed toward reasonably accurate and unabsorbed self-assessments of one's own strengths and weaknesses *in relation to others*, and tending to selflessly look at matters from the perspectives of *others*, with *their* interests and taking into account relevant facts about them (Barker and Friend Lettner 2017; Samuelson et al. 2015; Davis, Worthington, Jr., and Hook 2010). Humility is thus interpersonal because of how it is other-regarding.

Clearly, interpersonal extensionism needs to explicitly or tacitly use criteria for an interpersonal character disposition's counting as an interpersonal *virtue*. Such criteria come from that view's theoretical foundations. In my way of distinguishing EVE views from each other, any instance of interpersonal extensionism has a neo-Aristotelian foundation (even though some of these instances are sometimes parts of larger, more pluralistic and inclusive views).<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, interpersonal extensionism's virtue criteria are drawn from the neo-Aristotelian concept *eudaimonia*, or, as I will say, *human flourishing*. This is not mere subjective happiness, even though such happiness may often be one among other parts of it. Instead, the type of flourishing in question (there may well be others) is the *excellence* that is characteristic of humans who are indisputably good – exemplary – not just at their jobs, or as parents, or as friends, etc., but *as human beings*. According to neo-Aristotelianism, this flourishing is a fundamental human good, and interpersonal extensionism says an interpersonal character disposition is a virtue if and only if possessing and acting from it is part of what *constitutes* human flourishing.

The virtues are not the only things that help constitute human flourishing. Certain ends do too, ends that are fundamentally good partly because of how the human species is – as a matter of empirical fact – mortal, sentient, conscious, and social. The constitutive ends include survival, enjoyment, and freedom from pain, continuance of the human species, and the good functioning of social groups (Hursthouse 1999; Sandler 2007).

The status of interpersonal virtues as helping constitute flourishing stems from their relation to the ends. Each virtue is a character disposition that is crucial over the course of human life for helping achieve some or all of the fundamentally good ends (being inimical to none), even though such dispositions now and then (Hursthouse 1999) or perhaps more frequently (Swanton 2003) diminish or fail to enhance a person's subjective happiness.

What does interpersonal extensionism try to extend? Answer: the normative range of interpersonal dispositions that some people traditionally have, or would, upon reflection, recognize as virtues within a neo-Aristotelian framework. For the sake of simplicity, this is just what I will mean when referring to *traditional interpersonal virtues*. For any such virtue, there is putatively a corresponding set of virtue principles. Those principles ground some further moral judgments, principles, or norms that concern or are about human thoughts,

feelings, and actions. It is the set of such thoughts, feelings, and actions that constitute the *normative range* of the corresponding virtue.

An interpersonal virtue whose normative range includes human thoughts, feelings, and actions that are directly fixed on or for the sake of other humans, but also those directly fixed on or for the sake of the *environment and its non-human features*, is an *extended interpersonal virtue*. In short, an extended interpersonal virtue is an other-regarding disposition with both human-regarding aspects *and* environment-regarding aspects.

Thus, interpersonal extensionism says or implies that some traditional interpersonal virtues are also extended interpersonal virtues with both human-regarding and environment-regarding aspects. If compassion is such a virtue, then not only does compassion in some people have, as a matter of fact, both a human-regarding and an environment-regarding aspect, but the normative range of the virtue also includes principles pertaining to its environment-regarding aspect. Principles about compassion could then ground further principles, norms, and judgments about how we ought to think and feel and act toward suffering non-human beings.

Finally, we can more accurately tease out interpersonal extensionism's non-anthropocentric and anthropocentric elements. Because extended interpersonal virtues are partly environment-regarding, they have a non-anthropocentric element. And because their environment-regarding aspects involve inclinations to think and feel and act in complexly integrated ways, their associated non-anthropocentric element is significantly about the psychology that motivates people. So call this element *motivational non-anthropocentrism*.

At the same time, if we turn and ask how – as a philosophical rather than a psychological matter – interpersonal extensionism *justifies* the call for non-anthropocentric thoughts, feelings, and actions, its answer is anthropocentric: the environment-regarding aspects of some extended virtues help constitute *human flourishing*. There is no logical contradiction in trying to use this *justificational anthropocentrism* to support a motivational element that is instead non-anthropocentric. Interpersonal extensionists can simply say that flourishing as a human involves sometimes having something other than humans move you, even if it is the nature of human flourishing that ensures this.

To connect this back to The Constitution Question, which asked whether the environment-regarding aspects of some extended interpersonal virtues really do help constitute human flourishing, it is now

clear that interpersonal extensionism answers “yes.” But there must exist sufficient reason to believe this answer, if interpersonal extensionism is to succeed.

### 3 THE NECESSITY DEMAND AND ITS NECESSITY CLAIM

To determine whether there is sufficient reason for the “yes” answer, we need to determine how any disposition helps *constitute* human flourishing. I have said this is for the disposition in question to be crucial for helping achieve some or all of the fundamentally good ends (being inimical to none). But what more does this involve? In a word: necessity. Or at least this is so according to relevant virtue theories. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, such theories have implied that we should believe an aspect of a character trait helps constitute human flourishing only if we can show it is *necessary* for human flourishing.

This necessity demand stems from an ontological claim routinely made by virtue theorists in normative ethics:

*The necessity claim:* If a character disposition or aspect of one helps constitute human flourishing, then it is necessary for human flourishing – one cannot achieve such flourishing without it.

The implication is not that a person’s life is bad if she lacks one of the character dispositions that helps constitute flourishing. She may still have all other virtues and be good to quite an impressive degree. It is just that she will not surpass the lofty neo-Aristotelian threshold that lands her squarely in human flourishing.<sup>5</sup>

Rosalind Hursthouse (1999), for example, articulates a neo-Aristotelianism on which “a virtue is a character trait a human being needs for *eudaimonia*, to flourish or live well” (1999, 29). Hursthouse implies that without virtues being required to achieve the good, virtue principles lose their obligatory bite and some of their ability to imply which persons we should model and measure our acts by.

In a different argument, Philippa Foot (2001) cites famous Germans who stood on trial for resisting Nazi causes. Letters they wrote to family from prison indicated they were by and large the sorts of people who seemed well positioned to live deeply good and fulfilling lives when among family. But most of us will claim that had they lacked

the justice that led them to resist, which would have resulted in compliance that they hoped would have them released to their families, then they would still have fallen short of flourishing. Foot thinks this claim is true, and that the best or only explanation for this is that the virtues are necessary for flourishing, going so far as to say this is a conceptual necessity, so that we would know a priori that a person fails to flourish if we know she lacks a character disposition that helps constitute flourishing (2001, 91–7).

Aside from those arguments, widely accepted metaphysical considerations appear to support the necessity claim. We typically understand a property *P* to be at least partly constitutive of membership in a kind *K* exactly if *P* is part of what *makes* for *K*hood. But it seems that a thing cannot be a *K* if it does not have a property that is part of what makes for *K*hood. For example, gold atoms need the property of having 79 protons. That property is constitutive of being a gold atom, and a thing cannot be a gold atom without it (Ellis 2002; see also Kripke 1980; Putnam 1975).

If the necessity claim is true, as these considerations suggest, then, to justify a “yes” answer to The Constitution Question, interpersonal extensionism faces the associated necessity demand. It must show that at least one or more of the environment-regarding aspects of interpersonal virtues – not just the human-regarding aspects of those virtues – is necessary for flourishing.

#### 4 NOBODY HAS OR COULD MEET THE NECESSITY DEMAND

There is a strong inductive case for believing that no interpersonal extensionists have explicitly attempted to meet the necessity demand. This is clear upon noting, as Sandler does (2005, 4), that most arguments for interpersonal extensionism share a common strategy, and then seeing that this strategy fails to address the necessity demand (perhaps because the demand is not detected). It fails at this by bottoming out in the claim that the normative range of this or that traditional interpersonal virtue extends to human-environment interactions because there is *no relevant moral difference* between those interactions and the human-human interactions covered by the virtue. No further clarifications about what could or would make for a relevant moral difference between such cases are offered. Most arguments for interpersonal extensionism thereby beg the question against

anybody pressing the necessity demand: these arguments simply *pre-suppose* that environment-regarding aspects of some traditional interpersonal virtues are necessary for flourishing.<sup>6</sup> Other authors, devoted to other ethical frameworks, such as Singer's preference-satisfaction consequentialism, have tried to spell out what "no relevant moral difference" means within their frameworks. But I have not found this done for interpersonal extensionism.

We could attempt to rectify this lack in a way that meets the necessity demand, but I think that must fail. Not only has nobody met the demand; nobody could.

To see this, keep in mind that virtues of any type are not mere tendencies to produce certain actions, but rather are deeply seated dispositions to reliably act, when appropriate, in certain ways (e.g., compassionately), for certain reasons, in certain manners (e.g., eagerly), and with the relevant emotions or affects (e.g., sorrow) (Hursthouse 1999, 11–13). A person does not have the virtue of compassion, for example, simply because she routinely appears to act compassionately when appropriate. Being compassionate minimally involves, as Nancy Snow puts it, "a 'suffering with' another that includes an altruistic concern for the other's good" (1991, 196–7). This is elaborated through either belief-based or imagination-based analyses of what it is for one to identify with a misfortunate being. For instance, for Maki to have compassion for Toni is for Maki to identify with Toni, which is to perceive suffering in Toni and believe or imagine that Toni's plight stems from or is associated with vulnerabilities that are similar to Maki's own, or to those of Maki's loved ones, thereby allowing Maki to more directly understand Toni's plight. This alerts Maki to the gravity of Toni's plight and facilitates Maki's quickly having benevolent desires for Toni's good (Blum 1987; Snow 1991; Nussbaum 2003).

That complexity of compassion is typical of interpersonal virtues. They involve a range of human emotions and reasoning, attributing these things to others as well, and relating one's self to them in various ways because of those complex attributions. These are among the many psychological abilities that are typical (not universal) in human beings and are said to help distinguish – without making any better or worse – the human species from others (Carruthers 2006, 150–7). This makes it unsurprising that the dispositions are often primarily just human-regarding rather than also environment-regarding. More important, a neo-Aristotelian *shouldn't* say that somebody necessarily fails to flourish if it is not through such complex dispositions that she



interacts with the environment and its features. This is clear through reflective equilibrium that tests that belief, and then compares the test result with the relevant neo-Aristotelian theories.

For the test, consider Flourishing Valley, where inhabitants appear to have hit upon the good life. They uphold rich traditions of family, social, intellectual, and political activity, and everyone has mastered an uncanny practical wisdom. They apparently balance the expression of all traditional virtues with the mastery typical of only the greatest leaders of nations.

They are especially committed to environmental conservation. Everyone lives in straw bale houses, favours renewable energy, donates to species-at-risk programs, etc.

A favourite autumn pastime is hunting for ducks, pheasants, deer, and rabbit, which they eat. This causes some animals to suffer – when wounded animals escape and are not killed, but even sometimes when animals are killed relatively quickly.

Generations of Valley inhabitants have fostered hunting conventions to reduce these forms of suffering; the conventions have become formalized in policies, but that is hardly needed because inhabitants already widely follow them. This is out of senses of duty and long-embraced habit. Most inhabitants do not imaginatively or rationally identify with the animals – that may not even be possible given the immense cognitive and emotional differences between the hunters and the hunted. But this does not mean the hunters relish animal suffering. They never hunt maliciously. (It would be quite astonishing if they did, given the enviable degree to which they exemplify traditional virtues.) Indeed, they routinely go out of their way to curb animal suffering, often because they just think it is the right thing to do, without identifying with the animals and their vulnerabilities. They also minimize suffering for the sake of their friends and family, and for greater goods, e.g., they disrupt animal habitats and behaviours minimally so that Valley ecosystems remain stable for future human generations.

These altruistic acts are no aberration. The compassion that the hunters and all human Valley inhabitants have for each other and for fellow humans outside the Valley is astounding to us mere onlookers. Without fail, they urgently desire and eagerly act for the good of people whose vulnerabilities (whether everyday human vulnerabilities or exceptional ones) they perceive to have led those people into misfortune. A particularly seasoned hunter, Tim is especially renowned

for his compassion toward family, friends, and strangers – and indeed for the degree to which he exemplifies all the traditional virtues that are common among inhabitants in Flourishing Valley. Those of us outside the Valley may find it hard to distinguish between the remarkable characters of each of the Valley inhabitants. But the inhabitants themselves notice that Tim is outstanding, a model to behold.<sup>7</sup>

Now ask yourself, would Tim count as an excellent, flourishing human?

When running this thought experiment test in a methodologically sound way, I believe the result will be a “yes” answer: outstanding Tim would count as an excellent, flourishing human. It is a struggle to deny this, even though Tim’s impressive efforts to preclude and diminish animal suffering and environmental harms have motivational sources *other than* the particular psychological complexities of his compassion being extended toward and sometimes directly fixed on the environment and its non-humans. Although his *behaviours* are environment-regarding in some impressive senses, there is no doubt that his *compassion*, in particular, lacks an environment-regarding aspect. That was simply stipulated in the thought experiment.

Appreciating this part of the experimental design helps show that one way a person might deny the “yes” result would signal a methodological error. If a person answers the experimental test question by saying “no, I believe Tim falls short of *full compassion*,” then they don’t really address the test question at all.<sup>8</sup> The question posed is about flourishing, not compassion. We already know the extent of Tim’s compassion – that it lacks an environment-regarding aspect. To express an answer about compassion is to methodologically confuse two variables that need to be kept separate.

To see this, compare it to an experiment that tests whether you can achieve a high degree of health with only limited rather than regular exercise. If designed well, this test will include a group of participants exhibiting only limited rather than regular exercise, and will then check (during and after suitably long periods) whether any of those people achieve high degrees of health. And it will do this by directly focusing on signs of health, not on signs of regular exercise. Assuming people in the limited exercise group conformed to the experimental design, we already know they did not exercise regularly. Analogously, in light of all the details provided about outstanding Tim and Flourishing Valley, we need to ask ourselves directly whether Tim seems to be an *excellent flourishing human*, not whether his

compassion has an environment-regarding aspect. When instead our focus drifts to his compassion and we underscore that it is “not full,” we do so either descriptively or normatively. If we do so merely descriptively – e.g., we just state the extent of Tim’s compassion, without suggesting this is good or bad – then we merely state what we already know by experimental design. If instead we do so normatively – e.g., we reveal that we are critical of Tim’s compassion failing to extend to the environment – then we risk clinging unreflectively to a pre-test conviction of ours about environment-regarding compassion, rather than undertaking the new reflection that the test encourages. When variables are not conflated and we run the test in a methodologically sound way, we give the test a chance to teach us something, even a chance to surprise us, just as a sound test of health and exercise might.

This isn’t to say that pre-test convictions or relevant theories count for nothing. We need to, and momentarily will, factor them in. But first we need to generate unbiased test results to compare those theories against. Our test result that Tim would count as an excellent, flourishing human is thus strong but not yet conclusive evidence that, upon reflection, we do not believe that an environment-regarding aspect of compassion is strictly necessary for human flourishing. The content of that belief implies that interpersonal extensionists cannot meet the necessity demand via the virtue of compassion. Moreover, the Flourishing Valley example could be suitably modified for any of the traditional interpersonal virtues, giving the same result and implication. For each of these, we can imagine cases in which people lack an environment-regarding aspect of that virtue, and yet have its human-regarding aspect and all other virtues to astonishing degrees while living in favourable conditions. And we will, I think, insist or concede that these people flourish, thus implying that interpersonal extensionists cannot meet the necessity demand via *any* interpersonal virtue.

The relevant theories for interpersonal extensionists to now compare the experimentally elicited beliefs to are the neo-Aristotelian theories, introduced above, about the nature of flourishing and the relations of the virtues to it. I suggested these theories will agree with and corroborate the elicited beliefs. But why? How do the theories suggest that environment-regarding aspects of traditional interpersonal dispositions are not, like the human-regarding aspects, crucial for achieving fundamentally good human ends, such as survival, enjoyment,

and freedom from pain, species continuance, and the good functioning of social groups?

Empirical facts about human biology, psychology, sociality and rationality help to ensure that lacking or feigning traditional interpersonal virtues with other *humans*, rather than being genuinely virtuous in these respects, will very probably land you in social quandaries that work against you and others, impeding the social relationships that help mark excellent human lives. If these lacks become widespread, risks to the continuance of our species will very likely arise.

But there seems to be no analogy that involves *environment*-regarding aspects of these virtues. It is certainly important to protect clean environments and biodiversity, but it seems this can be done *other than* for the sake of the environment and its features, and other than by directly fixing on the environment independently of humans, without thereby leading to social quandaries and hampering the achievement of social relationships and other fundamentally good human ends that mark excellent human lives.

Some of the relevant facts behind this pertain to *expectation* and *reciprocation*, the nature and evolution of which are now extremely well-studied in connection with social norms (e.g., Bicchieri 2006; Sterelny 2014; Smead and Forber 2016). Through complex skills such as mental state attribution, other humans typically *expect* us to develop an array of interpersonal dispositions and are capable to a large degree of *reciprocating* the sentiments, tendencies, attitudes, and emotions in which those dispositions partially consist, and which we in turn expect of them. Human expectations and abilities of reciprocation create a tendency for human life to go poorly when we do not develop and express the traditionally recognized interpersonal virtues.

Such facts largely do not hold for our relations with the environment and its features, for a variety of well-established biological, psychological, and social reasons (Carruthers 2006, 150–7). With the possible exception of our nearest mammalian relatives, the environment and its non-human beings – herons, mountains, ecosystems, bacterial colonies – typically do not expect us to develop and act from certain character traits to anywhere near the degree that humans typically do. Nor are they usually similarly able to develop and act from these complex dispositions themselves.<sup>9</sup> We certainly require good relations with our environments, but developing and expressing complex dispositions to think, feel, and act for the sake of the

environment and its features do not seem crucial to that. This provides neo-Aristotelian corroboration of beliefs summoned by Flourishing Valley cases.

## 5 CLUSTER KINDS AND FLOURISHING

My arguments entail that *if* interpersonal extensionism faces the necessity demand, then we should reject interpersonal extensionism because it both has not met and cannot meet that demand. But on behalf of interpersonal extensionists, we can accept and try to defuse this conditional conclusion by arguing that the antecedent within it is not satisfied. We can try arguing that interpersonal extensionism does not face the necessity demand by targeting the ontological necessity claim that fuels it. That strategy will seem unpromising at first, given existing considerations in favour of the necessity claim that were summarized above. So after developing the strategy I will return to and address those considerations.

Human flourishing is a potentially long-standing state that one can be in. Typically it is neither quickly achieved nor quickly lost; in that sense it is like the states of being happily married, chronically stressed, or wealthy with old money. Neo-Aristotelians have presumed this type of state is a *kind* to which instances of flourishing, in this or that person, belong. Moreover, they presume it is what I call a *traditional kind*, one demarcated from other things by an essence in terms of which we should define our word for it. Such an essence is a set of conditions that are singly necessary and (in favourable circumstances) jointly sufficient for instantiating the kind, while also explaining many elements that are typical of kind members. In the case of flourishing, the singly necessary and explanatory essential conditions are thought to be the ends and virtues constitutive of flourishing.

But traditional kinds are not the only ones. Figure 5.1a depicts the structure of a traditional kind, *K*. Each of the conditions, (a) through (e), is an essential condition for *K* instantiation. That means each condition *both* helps constitute and is necessary for *K* instantiation. And together the conditions are, *ceteris paribus*, sufficient for *K* instantiation.

In contrast, figure 5.1b depicts the structure of a *cluster kind*, *K\**. Some of the definitive conditions, (a) through (e), may be necessary for *K\** instantiation, but unlike with traditional kinds, this needn't be so. It may be that none, or only some, of those conditions are

a. Kind $K$ , with traditional kind structure	b. Kind $K^*$ , with cluster kind structure	c. Kind $K^\circ$ , with nominal kind structure
<p>(a) = <i>necessary</i>                      (b) = <i>necessary</i>                      (c) = <i>necessary</i>                      (d) = <i>necessary</i>                      (e) = <i>necessary</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">} Combination = sufficient</p>	<p>{(a),(b),(c),(d),(e)} = <i>sufficient</i>                      {(a),(b),(c),(d), } = <i>sufficient</i>                      {(a),(b),(c), (e)} = <i>sufficient</i>                      {(a),(b), (d),(e)} = <i>sufficient</i>                      {(a), (c),(d),(e)} = <i>sufficient</i>                      { (b),(c),(d),(e)} = <i>sufficient</i></p> <p>It is <i>necessary</i> to have at least one of those six subsets</p>	<p>{(a),(b),(c), } = <i>sufficient</i>                      { (d),(e)} = <i>sufficient</i></p> <p>It is <i>necessary</i> to have at least one of those two subsets</p>

5.1 Traditional kinds vs. cluster kinds vs. nominal kinds

necessary. So each condition can help constitute  $K^*$  without being necessary for  $K^*$  (cf. Sandler 2007, 31). Nonetheless, different subsets of the conditions are each, ceteris paribus, sufficient for  $K^*$  instantiation. In this particular example, the sufficient subsets are: {(a),(b),(c),(d),(e)} and {(a),(b),(c),(d)} and {(a),(b),(c),(e)} and {(a),(b),(d),(e)} and {(a),(c),(d),(e)} and {(b),(c),(d),(e)}. If instead the only sufficient subsets were {(a),(b),(c)} and {(d),(e)}, as in figure 5.1c, then we'd suspect we are dealing with a merely nominal kind; call it  $K^\circ$ ; this would be a kind united only by our giving it a name, perhaps distracting us from two separate traditional kinds, one with the essence {(a),(b),(c)} and the other with the essence {(d),(e)}. This makes  $K^\circ$  quite different from  $K^*$ .

As the depicted list of sufficient subsets for  $K^*$  shows, the conditions for belonging to it tend to co-occur. Between the six sufficient subsets there is striking, even though not perfect, overlap in the conditions. Furthermore, necessity is not lost altogether. For a thing to have or belong to  $K^*$ , no one of the conditions is necessary, but having at least one of the six subsets is. Finally, that the conditions tend to co-occur is not happenstance. In some cluster kinds, various underlying causal mechanisms are responsible for the homeostatic (reliable but not perfect) co-occurrence of the conditions; hence the now widely used name “homeostatic property cluster kinds” (Boyd 1988, 1991, 1999). In other cluster kinds, the typical co-occurrence has different explanations (Slater 2014).

Increasingly, a variety of kinds studied in biological, psychological, and sociological sciences – including the human species (Wilson,

Barker, and Brigandt 2007), human nature (Samuels 2012), and well-being (Bishop 2015) – are revealing themselves to be cluster kinds. A basic reason is that variation is the main fuel for evolution by natural selection (Sober 1980). Since many groups of organisms have evolved by selection, it is not surprising that they are characterized by variation – that they are deeply heterogeneous and rich in cluster kind divisions, rather than neat and tidy traditional kind divisions (Wilson, Barker, and Brigandt 2007).

Because human flourishing is, according to neo-Aristotelians, a fundamentally good state that is also to a significant degree biological, psychological, and social, it would be astonishing if it were a traditional kind rather than a cluster kind. In plain terms, there are very probably many (partially overlapping) ways to achieve exemplary human excellence (even of the specific *eudaimonistic* sort), rather than just one way that involves a traditional sort of essence.

This provides a framework for arguing that some environment-regarding aspects of traditional interpersonal virtues help constitute human flourishing, even though they are not, as Flourishing Valley and theoretical investigation taught, necessary for that flourishing.

Restricted for visual simplicity to just the virtues (not also the ends) that are constitutive of human flourishing, figure 5.2 depicts what this might look like. The figure outlines three different subsets of character dispositions that we can suppose for illustrative purposes are each sufficient for the character contributions to human flourishing (*ceteris paribus*). In 5.2a you see one subset, in 5.2b a similar but not perfectly similar subset, and likewise in 5.2c. (There could be several other subsets not shown.) Perhaps 5.2a represents Tim from Flourishing Valley. Only in the 5.2b subset do we see the proposal that an environment-regarding aspect of a traditional interpersonal virtue is a constitutive yet not necessary condition of human flourishing. Next I will argue that this is plausibly the case in actuality, in part because of how a person represented by 5.2b would relate to still other people, such as those represented by 5.2c.

## 6 CHARACTER DIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Nowadays you often hear slogans of the “diversity is good!” sort. These are vague and ambiguous. Let us help by getting more specific, focusing on *character diversity* in particular and starting on a very small scale.<sup>10</sup>

a. One way to flourish	b. Another way to flourish	c. Yet another way to flourish
Courage Benevolence Temperance Generosity Magnanimity Humility Patience Honesty Compassion  Friendliness Harmony Just	Courage Benevolence Temperance Generosity Magnanimity Humility Patience Honesty Compassion Compassion* Friendliness  Just	Courage Benevolence Temperance Generosity  Humility Patience Honesty Compassion  Friendliness Harmony Just

5.2 Three ways to have an overall character of a flourishing human  
 The asterisk (\*) signals that it is the environment-regarding aspects of the named disposition that are referenced.

Jackie was one of my colleagues at Parks Canada. In one park, she worked partly on wilderness policies and messaging.<sup>11</sup> Long an ardent environmentalist, she cared deeply about the resident flora, fauna, ecosystems, lakes, rivers, peaks and valleys, and claimed this was for their sakes. She believed there was value in them independent of human values, and feared that human influences tainted this value. Her contributions to policies and messaging constantly reflected this. She certainly seemed to have an environment-regarding aspect to her compassion.

In the same park, Henry was in front-line communications, delivering nature programs and cultural programs in campground theatres and at highway rest stops. This was his first dabble in Parks employment, having spent years running restaurants and plying his skills as a musician. He was a nature lover, but also thoroughly a people person, and this shone through in the programs he designed and delivered for park visitors. For the most part, those programs focused on the park's human history – narratives about memorable people and cultural trends that cumulatively helped shape the park, all of which he wrote into songs that he hoped would move visitors to feel the integration of people and place. Henry may have agreed that some parts of the park should remain relatively free of humans, but he urged people to come to many parts of the park, to learn about and



join the entwining of humanity and non-human nature that he sang about. Henry did not have the complex disposition we would call an environment-regarding aspect of compassion. But he had a disposition I will call *harmony* – he was inclined to believe people were connected with non-human nature in various harmonious ways that he felt were important.

Some of the character differences between Jackie and Henry complemented each other in the joint production of effects. Jackie created a pamphlet that taught how to leave a smaller backcountry footprint, introduced a new policy allowing campers to remove certain invasive species, and explained how to donate to various causes in the park.<sup>12</sup> Henry wrote a song about an isolated valley where nineteenth-century skiers once ventured, and played it often at a rest stop along the Trans-Canada Highway. Suppose three brothers, each with quite different values and means despite the blood ties, catch the song one day. While parked beside the highway, Henry's song inspires them to plan a backcountry trip in the park, to bond with nature and each other. They fill three spaces in a backcountry quota that other visitors would have taken if the brothers hadn't. They consider themselves to be pro-environment, but are rather naive; like many campers, they would leave bits of food waste at a campsite, thinking it would biodegrade without any environmental risks. But before venturing out they learn from Jackie's pamphlet that food waste can help habituate grizzlies to humans, which in turn increases the chance that the grizzlies will become fearless enough to frequent nearby town centres where their chances of being shot for public safety rises dramatically. They also learn of the new policy on invasive plants, and how to donate money to various park causes. Consequently, the brothers carry out their food waste, *and* waste left by others, *and* a few invasive plants. Upon returning home they donate money to both park interpretation programs and wilderness protection.

Think of the drop in mass of food waste and number of invasive plants, and the increase in collected donations, as effects occurring in the park. Jackie and Henry helped (along with the brothers) to jointly produce those effects. It is not just that Jackie's creating the pamphlet was one of the causes, and that Henry's writing the song was also a cause. Jackie's action would not have been a cause without Henry's, and vice versa. The actions causally complemented one another. Plausibly, the effects would not have happened were it not for the character differences between the two. We could easily specify

the details of the case so that the relevant parts of Jackie's pamphlet were born from her environment-regarding compassion, and Henry owed his inspiring song to his harmony disposition. It was how the manifestations of these different character dispositions *came together* in the experiences of the brothers that helped cause the stated effects.

Cases like this are, I shall say, cases of *causal character diversity*. On reflection, these are routine in many parks, and everyday life more generally.

This will most help interpersonal extensionism when considering the neo-Aristotelian ends of species continuance, and good functioning of one's social groups, because each involves group-level states. The state of being a socially good functioning group is, for instance, a property *of a group*, and one that no single individual can have. Producing such states often depends crucially on various relations between group members – how group members interact, how they are similar and how they are different, and so on. If you want to build a human body that functions excellently, for instance, then opting for certain relations between parts – the heart, brain, lymphatic system, and so on – that are each similar in some respects (some of their cellular properties) and quite different in others (do different things), is a far better bet than trying to relate, in some way, bodily parts that are all of a kind, e.g., all hearts.

Achieving the ends of species continuance and socially good functioning groups is like building a human body that functions well.<sup>13</sup> Crucial for achieving these ends is having certain relations between people who are similar in some ways but different in others, with causal character diversity among the differences. And, probably among the most effective types of causal character diversity is diversity in which some people have environment-regarding aspects of traditional interpersonal virtues, as with Jackie's compassion, and others instead have complementary dispositions, such as Henry's harmony. This is for a web of reasons.

Our human environments are diverse in many ways. The human species is also incredibly diverse, not just in character traits between people but also in values, goals, abilities, projects, means, and so on. These two sorts of diversity, environmental and human, are interdependent. Both our species and its good social functioning would be at great risk were it not for the diversity of our environments. Alpine glacial plains, the temperate rain forests of British Columbia, and equatorial regions that are dense with both human populations and

varied plant communities, are each very different from each other. For the foreseeable future it is only together that such very different yet delicately integrated environments provide the living conditions that our species continuance and good social functioning require.

To sustain that environmental diversity we must take into account the human diversity. Not all people find diverse environments and their features beautiful, or valuable for their own sakes, or demanding of our compassion, etc. (e.g., Appleyard 1979; Franzen and Vogel 2013). But some do. This and other forms of human diversity – diverse values, goals, means, projects, histories – make it probable that to sustain environmental diversity, and so our species continuance and good social functioning, a varied array of people, acting from diverse character traits, will be important. The case of Jackie and Henry is just one small example.

More generally, if healthy environmental diversity continues to diminish, as it is now (Cardinale et al. 2012; Costanza et al. 2014; Leadley 2010), then probably there will increasingly be important roles of this sort for people with environment-regarding aspects of traditional interpersonal virtues to play. Partly because not all people will express *generosity* that is *directly fixed on* environments and their features, having at least some people do so seems all the more crucial, as when the Nature Conservancy of Canada generously buys and sets aside land for protection from future human influence (e.g., Dedyna 2016; Nerman 2016).

Likewise for having a proper *humility toward* the environment. Having some people concede that we poorly understand many environmental complexities will help to more wisely guide our land uses and technological developments in ways that sustain or enhance environmental diversity and social functioning. Certain environmental advocates are now exemplifying this in their reasons for lobbying for protections of honeybee environments (Kindemba 2009). It may even seem that environmental humility is one of the best candidates for a disposition that *is* necessary for flourishing. But even here, connections between work in formal epistemology, evolutionary biology, psychology, and social sciences suggest that diversity is the better bet; historically, cooperation in human groups seems to have often been sustained against degenerative forces by having a mix of people with epistemic humility and those without (e.g., Vallinder and Olsson 2013; Weisberg and Muldoon 2009; Matthew Kopec, pers. comm.). This is unsurprising. More and less humble people – e.g., ambitious researchers who

believe they increasingly understand complex environmental interactions very well, and who thus push ahead ever feverishly with their valuable work – seem to complement each other in important ways, in the joint production of environmental protections that contribute to good social functioning and species continuance.

Likely, it will prove increasingly valuable to have some people with a sense of justice *for* the environment. Granted, environmentalists who are instead motivated primarily by addressing injustices they see fellow humans incurring also help the environmental diversity that our species depends upon, and it is certainly possible that such people flourish. But people whose environmentalism is additionally driven by the belief that we can, but should not, treat the environment *itself* unjustly will bring different perspectives, ideas, and strategies to environmentalism, some of which are likely to productively complement alternatives in important ways.

Summing up, we have reasons to think that environment-regarding aspects of several traditional interpersonal virtues will help make up causal character diversity that is, and will foreseeably be, important for achieving group-level states involved in the ends that constitute human flourishing. That character diversity is not merely causal; it is crucial with respect to human flourishing. Given that, and the other clarifications made in this chapter, interpersonal extensionism should update its neo-Aristotelianism as I am suggesting, to claim that environment-regarding aspects of several traditional interpersonal virtues help constitute human flourishing as a cluster kind, without being necessary for flourishing. It is an excellent thing that *some* people have the environment-regarding characters in question.

## 7 SOME IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE WORK

I started this essay by clarifying that interpersonal extensionism must justify a “yes” answer to The Constitution Question, the question of whether any environment-regarding aspects of interpersonal character traits help constitute human flourishing. Because the character diversity strategy I have recommended for doing this rejects the ontological necessity claim, the strategy is in tension with the support we saw earlier for that claim.

The metaphysical considerations turned on the idea that a thing could not belong to kind *K* if it did not have a property that is part

of what *makes* for Khood. But the sort of cluster kinds I discussed prompt a broadening of the making relation, so that the necessity of single properties is not implied when they help make for (cluster) kind membership. Recall that necessity is not abandoned though. Members of cluster kinds must have at least one of the subsets of constitutive properties that is sufficient for kind membership. So it is having *a* subset that makes for kind membership, and each of the constitutive properties in a subset helps make for kind membership.

Foot's argument instead turned mainly on a pair of premises. First, some counterfactuals of the following sort are true: if the German resisters had complied with Nazi demands partly because they lacked a type or degree of justice, then they would have fallen short of flourishing. Second, Foot implies that the best or only explanation of that counterfactual's truth is that each of the virtues, including being just, is necessary for flourishing – that, as she puts it, flourishing is “conceptually inseparable from virtue” (2001, 94). We now see that this second premise goes too far. To explain the truth of the counterfactual, we should not imply that *all* virtues are necessary for flourishing, but only some. My conception of flourishing as a cluster kind allows that justice is necessary for flourishing; what it denies is that every virtue is necessary.

Hursthouse's argument implied that virtue principles ground claims of moral obligation partly because each virtue is necessary for human flourishing; without the necessity, obligations are lost. My view may not make much practical difference for this claim of Hursthouse's, e.g., if it turns out that even though not all virtues are necessary for flourishing, the ones that Hursthouse has in mind when discussing obligations are necessary. But on a more interesting theoretical note, principles about a virtue that is not necessary *in general* for flourishing will still be able to ground obligations for a *particular individual*, if she needs that virtue for the combination of it and her other virtues to instantiate one of the subsets for flourishing. For instance, if Jackie had one of the sufficient subsets, but one of the virtues in it was her environment-regarding compassion, and her subset would be incomplete without that compassion, then principles about that compassion could ground obligations for her.

Now, if greeted by a different sort of case, where a person has such compassion, but even without it his other virtues would still suffice for an overall character of a flourishing human, then Hursthouse would probably say that principles about environment-regarding

compassion could not ground any obligations *for him*. But I think that result is sensible. Tim is an astonishing human being. On reflection, he flourished even without environment-regarding compassion, given his other remarkable dispositions and his context. It wouldn't have been bad if he also had such compassion, but no directly related obligations were binding on him. In hunting conscientiously as I described, he did not necessarily violate any moral principles. This implies that different people sometimes face different moral obligations. But that already seems obvious enough.

So my view has the resources to address the support on offer for the necessity claim it rejects. Nonetheless, the reasons I have provided for my view are not decisive. Rather they make it promising enough that researchers should try further developing and defending it. I would like to see this involve various EVE authors joining the types of more technical interdisciplinary research that I cited when discussing expectation and reciprocity, and epistemic humility. This is sorely lacking in virtue ethics more generally. Ultimately, ends such as species continuance and good social functioning need to be specified more often as more quantitatively measurable variables, and various actual and possible structures of character diversity within groups need to be dynamically evaluated for their relative contributions to changes in the specified variables; empirical results need to then inform probabilistic predictions that can be tested. We now have more reasons to aim for this.

#### NOTES

I thank Ron Sandler, Jenny Welchman, and an anonymous referee for constructive comments that helped me improve this essay. For helpful comments on an earlier essay that gave way to this one, I'm grateful to Jim Anderson, John Basl, Matt Ferkany, Russ Shafer-Landau, and Rob Streiffer.

- 1 For a sampling of EVE work, see all papers in the special issue on EVE in the *Journal of Agriculture and Environmental Ethics*, volume 23, issue 1–2 (2010), and Sandler 2013; Thompson 2012; York and Becker 2012; Bina and Vaz 2011; Sandler 2007; Hursthouse 2007; Sandler and Cafaro 2005; Hull 2005; Cafaro 2004; Sandler 2003; Newton 2002; Frasz 2001; Cafaro 2001; van Wensveen 2001; Welchman 1999; Erickson 1994; Frasz 1993.
- 2 For examples, see Erickson 1994; Frasz 1993; Hill Jr. 1983; Hursthouse 2007; O'Neill 1992; Shaw 1997.

- 3 By “environment” I will mean any non-human features of humans’ surroundings (including non-human animals, plants, bacteria, rivers, mountains, ecosystems, etc.) plus relations between these or between these and humans, as well as any properties to emerge from either type of relation.
- 4 If a type of extensionist view has a wholly alternate foundation, it is simply an extensionist view other than interpersonal extensionism. This does not render interpersonal extensionism too narrow a view to be of broad interest. Neo-Aristotelianism remains the dominant foundation within virtue ethics more generally, even though other promising foundations have been developed. And virtue ethics largely owes its revival in the twentieth century to neo-Aristotelianism’s appeal (Chappell 2013). These points motivate investigating the prospects for giving EVE views a neo-Aristotelian foundation, especially given that many EVE authors write applied papers that do not have the space to address foundational issues. Additionally, influential EVE authors already implicitly or explicitly adopt neo-Aristotelianism as part or all of their foundation. Sandler (2007), for example, explicitly makes a form of neo-Aristotelian extensionism one among several other parts of his overall pluralistic EVE view.
- 5 Others might say she wouldn’t achieve *full* flourishing. Either way, this needn’t make flourishing a mere idealized goal. Virtue theorists can plausibly argue that some actual people demonstrate flourishing’s requisites.
- 6 When authors appeal to the notion of “no relevant moral difference” in defence of extensionisms that are *not* neo-Aristotelian in the manner that interpersonal extensionism is, they may not beg the question in this way. But we are investigating interpersonal extensionism here.
- 7 Cases like this suggest that the lack of environment-regarding aspects of virtues need not preclude people from enjoying and appreciating and conserving nature, all while living affectively rich lives rather than moving through life as automatons of practical or instrumental reason. This weakens the connection, drawn by Haught (2010), between such instrumental reasoners (epitomized by Hume’s knave) and motivationally anthropocentric people.
- 8 I am grateful to an anonymous referee for suggesting that this needs to be addressed.
- 9 With these points, neo-Aristotelian virtue theory does not entail an ableism on which it is okay for one’s compassion or other interpersonal virtues to be directed at only typical humans rather than all humans. There are many grounds on which a neo-Aristotelian could consistently claim that human flourishing requires that such dispositions be directed at all human beings, or at all members of all species or groups in which some threshold

degree of the relevant expectations and reciprocation are typical, and so on. However, as I will clarify in subsequent sections, I do think neo-Aristotelianism should embrace diversity and variation in ways it cannot when subscribing to the ontological necessity claim.

- 10 Ron Sandler (2007) also underscores the diversity of ways to be good to the environment by discussing example cases. Further below, my discussion will motivate more specific claims of this sort.
- 11 I have changed people's names in this example, to protect their privacy.
- 12 To help clarify the main philosophical ideas in this example, I will supplement my memory of Jackie's and Henry's work with added details.
- 13 This is not least of all because we now appreciate that each species is more like an internally varied yet cohesive entity than it is like a mere class to which organisms belong in virtue of some essential intrinsic similarities (Barker and Wilson 2010; Sober 1980).