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The Ethics of Reflexivity: Pride, Self-Sufficiency, and Modesty

Jeremy Fischer

University of Alabama in Huntsville, USA

Jeremy.Fischer@uah.edu

Abstract: This essay develops a framework for understanding what I call the *ethics of reflexivity*, that is, the norms that govern attitudes and actions with respect to one's own worth. I distinguish five central aspects of the reflexive commitment to living in accordance with one's personal ideals: (1) the extent to which and manner in which one regards oneself from an evaluative point of view, (2) the extent to which one cares about receiving the respect of others, (3) the degree to which one interprets one's personal ideals in an individualistic or collective manner, (4) the degree to which one's commitment to living in accordance with one's personal ideals is rigid or flexible, and (5) the worthiness of one's personal ideals. This framework, I argue, illuminates the nature and moral significance of virtuous and vicious forms of the character trait of pride.

Key Words: Pride, Self-Sufficiency, Virtue Ethics, Bernard Williams, Modesty

The Ethics of Reflexivity: Pride, Self-Sufficiency, and Modesty

In Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*, Ethan's lessor, Mrs. Hale, relates the following observation to somebody who recently visited Ethan: "I don't believe but what you're the only stranger has set foot in that house for over twenty years. He's that proud he don't even like his oldest friends to go there..." [1970: 86]. If we thought that being proud consisted in feeling pride about some personal accomplishment, then we would be baffled by Mrs. Hale's remark. Experiencing the pleasant emotion of pride is unlikely to motivate anyone to dislike visits from their oldest friends. As the context of Mrs. Hale's remark makes clear, if Ethan feels anything, it is not pride, but shame at the prospect of having to face those who might condemn or pity him.

But we do know what Mrs. Hale means, though it's not easy to explain. 'Proud' conjures up a rich image of Ethan, his actions, and his view of his standing among others. Mrs. Hale, rather than referring to an emotion, is both describing and evaluating Ethan's character as proud.

I will show that thinking through the descriptive and normative matters that relate to the character trait of pride takes us to the heart of what I call the ethics of reflexivity, that is, the ethics of what Martha Nussbaum has called the domain of 'attitudes and actions with respect to one's own worth' [1988: 35]. It is notable that the recent philosophical literature on the ethics of reflexivity has typically been framed in terms of the virtues of humility and modesty, which restrain us from thinking too highly of ourselves [Driver 1989], caring too much about our social status [Schueler 1997], or having other manifestations of vicious pride. Such framing, I suggest, obscures the potentially positive value of characteristically proud attitudes and actions by encouraging the assumption that pride is merely a vice opposing one of these supposed virtues. Although Ethan is viciously proud, one would be mistaken in assuming that that all pride is vicious. There is a virtue of pride in addition to the vicious form of pride that we see in Ethan, and in addition to the supposed virtues of modesty and humility. This virtue should not be overlooked.¹

¹ For notable exceptions to the trend of characterizing pride as uniformly vicious, see Sachs [1981], Taylor [1996], and Kristjánsson [2002].

In this paper I set the record straight by developing a descriptive and normative account of the character trait of pride and showing that there is a virtue as well as a vice of pride. In Section 1, I motivate the general account of the trait of pride by making sense of the intuition that the viciously proud are characteristically motivated by considerations relating to self-sufficiency. I explain the concern for self-sufficiency by distinguishing between ideal-desires, which take the reflexive form, ‘I want that I live in accordance with my personal ideal, *L*,’ and all other desires. I argue that the proud characteristically care about the objects of their ideal-desires, and that the viciously proud do so excessively or with respect to unworthy ideals. I identify some of the conditions under which the concern for meeting one’s personal ideals drives one away from the assistance of others: in particular, when such assistance can threaten to compromise one’s standing with respect to some of one’s personal ideals.

In Section 2, I argue that there are five primary dimensions to the character trait of pride that correspond to five aspects of the commitment to living in accordance with one’s personal ideals: (1) the extent to which and manner in which one regards oneself from an evaluative point of view, (2) the extent to which one cares about receiving the respect of others, (3) the degree to which one interprets one’s personal ideals in an individualistic or collective manner, (4) the degree to which one’s commitment to living in accordance with one’s personal ideals is rigid or flexible, and (5) the worthiness of one’s personal ideals. I argue that proper pride requires that with respect to each of these five dimensions one is properly disposed in one’s thoughts, emotions, and actions. In other words, having an improper disposition with respect to any one of these five dimensions is a sufficient condition for lacking the virtue of pride.

In Section 3, I conclude by suggesting a conceptual topology of the virtues of reflexivity according to which modesty is a proper part of the virtue of pride. According to this account, much of the recent controversy about the nature of modesty is best understood as controversy about what dimension or dimensions of pride ‘modesty’ refers to.

Before I begin, I should clarify the scope of this paper. The topic of this paper is pride the character trait, as commonly understood today. So, I do not engage with the burgeoning psychological literature on the emotion of pride [e.g., Tracy and Robins 2007]. Contrary to much of that literature, I assume that when we talk about arrogance, vanity, and hubris, as well as virtuous forms of pride, we are concerned with character traits, not mere emotions.

Second, I do not engage substantially with the historical dimensions of debates about reflexive character traits.² Although our concept is likely to bear the marks of earlier philosophical conceptions of it, the present paper's discussion of the former makes no attempt to stay true to the latter and in several respects the present account strays from these earlier conceptions. For instance, by remaining agnostic about the nature of persons and the source of their value, it strays from Kantian accounts in denying that proper pride is necessarily a response to the dignity one has as a rational agent. The account is also anti-Aristotelian in insisting that the virtue of pride is fully accessible to people in modest circumstances and to people not worthy of great things. Finally, although the proud person's attitudes to honor and recognition is one dimension of the account, the account strays from the Aristotelian focus on such considerations.

However, in an important respect I follow Aristotle, by arguing that proper self-regard is best understood as a 'medial' trait of character. That is, I argue that having proper pride is a matter of being disposed in one's thoughts, emotions, and actions in a way that is intermediate between vices of excess and deficiency.

² There is a wealth of literature by historians of philosophy that examines, in the work of canonical philosophers, the conceptualization of reflexive character traits. Recent examination of Aristotle's account of *megalopsuchia*, the virtue with respect to one's attitudes towards one's deserving great honor, focuses on whether this account renders virtue objectionably elitist or otherwise unappealing. See Curzer [1991] and Russell [2012]. Study of Confucius's account of the *junzi*, the exemplary person, and study of Augustine's account of *superbia*, or vicious pride, highlight the appeal of the value of humility and the apparently Anti-Aristotelian renunciation of pride. See Sim [2012] and Krom [2007]. Hume discusses emotional pride at length, and both he and Adam Smith argue that the reflexive character trait of greatness of mind is both useful and agreeable to the self and to others. See Taylor [2012] and Corsa [2015]. Finally, studies of Kant's views about proper self-regard center on his conception of self-respect. See Stark [1997] and Dillon [2015].

1. SELF-SUFFICIENCY

*Father, with God's help even a worthless man
Could triumph. I propose, without that help,
To win my prize of fame.'*

[Sophocles 1957: l. 769-771]

In developing our intuitions about what form the virtue of pride takes, consideration of pathological forms of pride assists us in two different respects. First, instances of vicious pride display the elements of the trait of pride more vividly than their more proper cousins. Second, as a result, we are more in agreement about what sorts of pride are vicious than we are about what constitutes virtuous pride (or even about whether there is, in the first place, a virtuous form of pride).

One central feature of many of those whom we consider to be viciously proud is their desire for self-sufficiency.³ As Wharton illustrates throughout *Ethan Frome*, a viciously proud person characteristically abhors asking for assistance, especially when doing so requires an admission that one is 'in a tight place' and possibly 'going under.' Consider how Ethan deliberates about how to ask his employer, Andrew Hale, for an advance on his earnings:

Ethan felt that if he had pleaded an urgent need Hale might have made shift to pay him; but pride, and an instinctive prudence, kept him from resorting to this argument. After his father's death it had taken time to get his head above water, and he did not want Andrew Hale, or any one else in Starkfield, to think he was going under again. Besides, he hated lying; if he wanted the money he wanted it, and it was nobody's business to ask why. He therefore made his demand with the awkwardness of a proud man who will not admit to himself that he is stooping; and he was not much surprised at Hale's refusal...

'See here—you ain't in a tight place, are you?'

'Not a bit,' Ethan's pride retorted before his reason had time to intervene. [1970: 37; 39]

³ For discussion of self-sufficiency and its relation to autonomy, see Code [1987] and Mackenzie and Stoljar [2000].

Ethan refuses to admit to being in urgent need and resents the fact that satisfying his needs requires either making his dependency publicly known or lying about it. What might motivate a person to crave a public image of self-sufficiency and why might one in the first place regard asking for help as stooping?

Perhaps proud individuals do not wish to admit or to let it be known that they are failing to live in accordance with some of their personal ideals, and so desire self-sufficiency to the extent that it is required for not having to publicly admit to failure. Call this *the public failure account*. Ethan cares about being a decent person and financially dependable. When he fails to even minimally approximate these ideals, he cannot bear the shame of admitting the fact to others (nor, perhaps, to himself, though that inability is of secondary importance according to the public failure account), and so cannot accept their assistance. The public failure account has two principle strengths. It highlights the significant fact that the proud do not want others to know of their distress. It also explains the proud concern for the opinion of others in terms of the agent's shame, a notoriously public emotion that is commonly associated with the trait of pride.⁴ This explanation thus accords with a central feature of the phenomenology of being a proud person.

When we think of a proud person refusing help we often imagine someone who is struggling and in need of assistance, someone who is *not* like the narrator of the Temptations song, 'Ain't Too Proud to Beg.' Such dramatic examples absorb our attention, and it is remarkable that anyone would refuse aid when in desperate need. So it is natural to suppose that the proud are opposed to receiving help only when they desperately need it. But this assumption is false. It is not just shame about one's failures that drives the proud to desire self-sufficiency. Moreover, even if it were only such shame that motivated the proud drive to self-sufficiency, the ultimate explanation for a person's refusal of aid could not be her shame, because such shame itself calls for an explanation.

The proud are disposed to resist assistance when they are succeeding just as much as when they are failing. The epigram to this section illustrates why a proud person might spurn assistance in contexts other than failure. As Sophocles represents him, Ajax refuses assistance in his pursuit of his heroic military ideals, even (and especially) in contexts in

⁴ See Deigh [1983], Williams [1993], and Calhoun [2004] for three accounts of shame as a public emotion

which he is successful. Ajax takes the fact that ‘with God’s help even a worthless man / Could triumph’ to count in favor of spurning the goddess Athena’s help, which indicates that he cares deeply about not just triumphing, or being a worthy man, but also about the connection between the two. In this respect, Sophocles’s *Ajax* dramatizes a familiarly stoic set of views about the self-sufficiency of a good person. In the *Republic*, Socrates claims that a criterion of a good person is that ‘a good person is most self-sufficient when it comes to living well, and is distinguished from other people by having the least need of anyone or anything else’ [2004: 387d-e]. Even Aristotle appears to endorse the claim in his argument for the superiority of the life of theorizing to the political life [1984: X.7, 1177a27-b1]. A proud person endorses such a conception of the good life, and he construes the proffered help of another as a threat to his worth, even in contexts in which he has not failed.

What grounds such a conception of personal worth, if not shame about public failure? Aristotle’s notorious portrait of the *megalopsuchos* (translated by Ross as the ‘proud man’) provides an important insight that takes us beyond the public failure account of pride: ‘... he is the sort of person to confer benefits, but he is ashamed of receiving them; for the one is the mark of a superior, the other of an inferior’ [ibid.: IV.3, 1124b9-11]. This relational explanation of the logic of pride in terms of a desire for interpersonal superiority helps us to make sense of several features of pride. Perhaps Ethan Frome proudly refused to beg for assistance because he did not wish to be socially inferior to his benefactors or to others who are more self-sufficient. Perhaps at the root of the desire for self-sufficiency is a concern to be free from the threat of domination. Call this the *domination avoidance account* of pride.

The domination avoidance account reduces pride to attitudes about relations of social power and status. These features do improve upon the public failure account of pride. However, the proud person is characteristically committed to living in accordance with particular personal ideals, and not merely to relations of non-domination as such. Ajax wants to be a military hero; Ethan wants to be honest and a traditionally masculine provider for his romantic partner. These reflexive normative commitments differentiate pride from other sorts of dispositions one might have with respect to domination, such as greed or the desire for economic security, which are not necessarily based in particular personal ideals.

The trait of pride seems to be conceptually tied to a concern for one’s living in accordance with particular ideals, such as being a heroic warrior, a concern that is not a mere proxy for the concern about dominance over, or equality with, other people. Rather,

any equality with or domination over others that may be desired must be equality (or dominance) with respect to some personal ideals. This is not to say that the proud must desire interpersonal superiority of any kind. Ethan is, I suggest, too proud to grovel or lie for an advance on his earnings because he is committed to personal ideals of honesty and hard work, not because he wants to be *more* honest and hard working *than others* are.

How shall we distinguish between the proud and the merely idealistic, who are also committed to their ideals? Let us begin with a tautology: for people to whom it is important that they live in accordance with their ideals, it is important that *they* live in accordance with their ideals. Ajax would much rather that he live in accordance with his heroic ideal of defeating his enemies on the battlefield than that another should defeat them. In this formal sense he is egoistic: he is driven more by the desire that he do good than by the desire that there be good in the world.⁵ Some sorts of egoistic motives are not essentially related to, or illuminative of, the psychology of the proud. That I want to sunbathe, or have dinner with a friend, or see a movie—and that I want to do these things myself—need not indicate anything about whether I am a proud person. For, these desires might simply reflect my love of sunbathing, of my friend, or of the movies, whereas proud desires reflect my reflexive concern with living in accordance with personal ideals to which I am committed.

Bernard Williams's account of 'reflexive' motives is helpful in the task of characterizing the egoism of the proud. Although Williams develops the distinction between first-order motives and reflexive motives in the context of his discussion of the charge of moral self-indulgence, which I briefly discuss in the next section, the ethical import of reflexive motivation is confined neither to the charge of moral self-indulgence, nor to the domain of moral motivation, narrowly construed as motivation to perform our moral duties. Williams considers the following examples:

⁵ Of course, this form of egoism need not be substantively, or crudely, selfish. Formally egoistic desires of the sort that I consider can have the good of others as their object, e.g., as when I desire that I help someone in need. Williams [1973] develops a similar distinction in terms of what he calls 'I-desires,' where he distinguishes I-desires from non-I-desires on the basis of whether characterizing the state of affairs, *p*, in the formula, 'I want that *p*,' requires 'I' (or related expressions, such as 'my').

One thing the thought [of moral self-indulgence] can express is the suspicion that what the agent cares about is not so much other people, as himself caring about other people . . . a person may act from generosity or loyalty, and act in a counter-utilitarian way, and not attract the charge of moral self-indulgence, but that charge will be attracted if the suspicion is that his act is motivated by a concern for his own generosity or loyalty, the enhancement or preservation of his own self-image as a generous or loyal person. [In non-moral cases] there are highly analogous contrasts in the matter of reflexivity. It is one thing for a man to act in a counter-utilitarian way out of his great love for Isolde, another for him to do so out of a concern for his image of himself as a great Tristan. [1981: 45]

Williams cautions that ‘After that very general recognition [of the distinction in each of these example-pairs], however, there are many respects in which even at the analytical level, let alone in psychological reality, boundaries are quite unclear’ [ibid.: 46]. One might hazard to formulate the distinction as follows. In each case, where the first-order motive takes the form of wanting to act or respond in such-and-such a way, the second-order or reflexive motive takes the form of wanting to live in accordance with the image of oneself as disposed to act or respond in such-and-such a way.

The proud, I suggest, are most of all characterized by their reflexive motivational structure and reflexive evaluative dispositions. Ajax wants that ‘I [Ajax] live in accordance with my ideal of heroism,’ whereas a less proud soldier might have only the formally non-egoistic desire that, say, ‘the enemy be defeated.’ (Even if both soldiers desire both things, such a reflexive desire may be more salient at the time of action in a proud soldier than in others.) The suggestion applies with respect to commonplace ideals as well: consider how a proud person might care more about being a good friend than about their friend, or more about being a good host than about their guest. The proud have a kind of formally egoistic desire that is directed at their living in accordance with their personal ideals, that is, their norms about what sort of character, commitments, concerns, attitudes, and relationships they should have [Anderson 1993: 6]. Call these desires ‘ideal-desires.’ Personal ideals, like honesty and diligence, are norms of evaluation that may take individual persons as their objects, in contrast to social ideals, like justice and democracy, that may take groups as their objects. This contrast does not imply that personal ideals are unrelated to social practices.

Personal ideals need not be, and perhaps rarely or never are, idiosyncratic or totally unconventional.

Since a personal ideal includes an image of oneself as disposed to act or respond in some way, the notion of an ideal-desire captures, at least roughly, Williams's notion of a reflexive motive. Calling these motives 'ideal-desires' makes explicit the central conceptual role of personal ideals. A *personal ideals-based account* of pride centers the analysis upon such desires.

The proud are generally disposed to take themselves to have good, and often sufficient, reason to try to fare well with respect to their personal ideals whenever they have the opportunity to do so. The viciously proud characteristically take it that the most important of their aims is living in accordance with their ideals.⁶ This claim might seem tautologous at first blush—if one takes some ideals to be worthy then, it might seem, one takes it that the best thing one can do is to try to live in accordance with those ideals. But there might be, by one's own lights, important goods the achievement or pursuit of which do not in any significant way contribute to one's living in accordance with one's personal ideals. It may be better, by the lights of one's own first-order desires, to contribute modestly to a collaborative effort of great importance than to achieve something of less importance by oneself, even if one is approximating one's personal ideals more closely in the latter case than in the former. Suppose, to return to Sophocles's tragedy, that with Athena's guidance Ajax could slay two warriors (but without deserving much credit for doing so), and that without her help he could slay but one warrior. If Ajax's sole concern is to win the war then he should allow Athena to help. But if his overriding concern is to live in accordance with his heroic military ideals, which it is, then he should refuse Athena's help, which he does. Pride involves a desire to leave one's stamp on the world, which is very different from the desire that the world be stamped.

The Ajax story brings to light that there are ways to do what is best without doing anything for which one can feel proud. Consider Nozick's results machine, 'which produces in the world any result you would produce and injects your vector input into any joint activity' [1974: 44]. As Ajax might have said, with the result machine's help even a worthless man could triumph. Entering the machine could satisfy one's first-order desires. But, in

⁶ This is not to say that the proud tend to formulate this disposition as a principle that they think about as a guide in their activity.

general, one would have no cause for experiencing the emotion of pride in bringing about those consequences, or for regarding it as a meaningful activity, which indicates that bringing about those consequences may not help one in living in accordance with at least some of one's personal ideals. The merely idealistic, in contrast to the viciously proud, would not hesitate to step into the results machine in order to bring about their desired outcome. Idealistic people are primarily characterized by the strength of their commitments to agent-neutral ideals, such as the reform of a political system or the abolition of some oppressive social practice, and by the relative paucity of ideal-desires amongst their motives. A properly idealistic revolutionary cares far more about revolution happening than she does about her status as a revolutionary.

However, the fact that the proud care about their ideal-desires does not by itself entail what we are trying to explain, namely that the viciously proud desire self-sufficiency to the extent that they do. It is possible that living in accordance with one's ideals would demand accepting all the help one can get. The explanation of vicious self-sufficiency requires, in addition to the fact of caring about one's ideal-desires, a belief about the nature of personal worth specifying that the degree to which one lives in accordance with one's ideals is inversely proportional to the degree to which one depends upon the assistance of others. The viciously proud often believe that the more others help you to succeed, the less you succeed. Call this the *dilution thesis*.

The dilution thesis is false. Consider the personal ideal of being a good teammate. The success of a team generally depends upon the success of its weakest member. Being a good teammate, then, involves not only helping one's teammates but also accepting the help of others when one needs it. A person who refuses help in such circumstances is, we might say, too proud to be a good teammate. The viciously proud, insofar as they are viciously proud, interpret their personal ideals in a peculiarly individualistic way. There is a spectrum along which interpretation of one's ideals might fall: at the *collective* end, assistance from others is understood to contribute to one's living in accordance with one's ideals, while at the *individualistic* end, assistance from others is taken to detract from one's living in accordance with one's ideals. Interpretations that lie at these ends of the spectrum are not in every instance misguided. As I argue in the following section, proper pride requires individualism in some parts of one's life and collectivism in others.

The issue of individualism should be distinguished from two additional qualities by which we typically characterize and evaluate proud people: the content of their personal ideals and the flexibility (or stubbornness) with which they pursue these ideals. Pride based in heroic and individualistic personal ideals is paradigmatic of pride; but it is not the only paradigm. One can also be a proud teammate (e.g., a proud Marine), a proud citizen (e.g., a proud American), or a proud resister of oppressive group treatment (e.g., a person with Black pride or gay pride). All proud people are proud in reference to their personal ideals, but these ideals can have any content whatsoever (even the value of servitude, as in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel about the life of a proud butler, *The Remains of the Day*) and need not be interpreted individualistically. Second, we should distinguish the individualistic pursuit of personal ideals from the stubbornness that is often also thought to characterize this pursuit. Ethan stubbornly refuses to compromise on his masculine breadwinner ideals, but he could have been flexible in this pursuit. It is also possible to stubbornly pursue collective personal ideals, and to refuse to be reasonably flexible in so doing. So, one's stubbornness is logically independent of the individualism of one's pursuits.

This brings us back to the case of Ethan refusing the aid of others when he is in need. I began by considering the suggestion that Ethan's refusal is motivated by his shame at having failed to live in accordance with his ideals. As noted above, the ultimate explanation for Ethan's refusal of aid cannot be his shame because the shame itself calls for explanation. The personal ideals-based account of pride, together with the dilution thesis and the notion of an individualistic interpretation of one's personal ideals, provides such an explanation. Although Ethan already sees himself as a failure, he would consider help from others as threatening to further dilute the little worth he takes himself to have retained. This fear is based in his individualistic interpretation of his ideals, his view that living in accordance with one's ideals requires refusing the assistance of others. According to that individualistic view, being in a condition in which one requires such assistance is, in itself, shameful. So, although it is not misleading to say that Ethan is moved by a desire to avoid shame, this explanation must be supplemented by an appreciation of Ethan's particular fear of further dilution of his worth. Rather, Ethan's understanding of what is worth doing involves the idea of ethical dilution and an interpretation of personal ideals that calls for individualistic accomplishments. Of course, a less proud person would brush aside the concern for such

accomplishments when important needs must be met, but for Ethan, satisfying his reflexive desires requires stubborn refusal of the assistance of others.

The dilution thesis also helps to explain why such refusal is also characteristic of the well off proud, who need not have anything to be ashamed of. I argued that the concern to live in accordance with one's ideals, under certain conditions, entails a concern for self-sufficiency. These conditions include the conditions under which one is viciously proud. I emphasized one such condition, that the viciously proud have an overly individualistic mode of interpreting their personal ideals. This mode of interpretation involves a commitment to the dilution thesis. In the next section, I relate these conclusions in a more systematic way to our ethical evaluation of pride and to other considerations that bear upon this evaluation.

2. PROPER PRIDE

The preceding remarks prepare the way for a systematic descriptive and normative account of the trait of pride. I have mentioned five primary dimensions to the character trait of pride: (1) the extent to which and manner in which the proud person regards herself from an evaluative point of view, (2) the extent to which the proud person cares about receiving the respect of others, (3) the individualistic or collective manner in which she interprets her personal ideals, (4) the rigidity or flexibility of her commitment to living in accordance with her personal ideals, and (5) the worthiness of her personal ideals. This five-dimensional account of the trait serves to flesh out the general characterization that being proud is having a firm commitment to living in accordance with one's personal ideals. Commitments of this sort are the states of character having to do with one's choices and responses in the sphere of experience relating to one's own worth.

Having the virtue of pride, in turn, is having a proper commitment to living in accordance with proper personal ideals. In particular, being properly proud is being disposed to choose and respond well with respect to each of the trait's five dimensions. One's dispositions with respect to the first four dimensions of pride have interrelated cognitive, conative, and behavioral elements. Accordingly, my discussion of the trait does not privilege any one of these elements. Thoughts and qualitative experiences, such as pleasures and pains, do not merely cause an agent's behavior; such mental states make a person's behavior intelligible as the particular goal-directed activity that it is. Likewise, an agent's behavioral activity is not merely an effect of his thoughts, desires, and emotions; such activity also helps

to render a person's mental states intelligible as the mental states that they are. This interpretive holism also applies when interpreting cognitive states in light of a person's conative states, and vice versa [Smith 2005]. As such, an evaluative discussion of any single aspect of a person's interdependent cognitive, conative, and behavioral life must take into consideration other aspects of this life.

So, in what follows, I illustrate, in reference to each dimension's basic consideration, ways in which the properly proud get matters cognitively, conatively, and behaviorally right and ways in which those who lack this virtue go astray. I do not presuppose any particular foundational normative theory of what it is to get these matters right or wrong, or indeed that any such theory is plausible. Thus, although my evaluative discussion references paradigmatic expressions of virtue or vice, I leave open how moral judgments about those expressions are ultimately to be justified, whether on eudaimonistic, consequentialist, or deontological grounds (or, alternatively, on anti-theoretical or particularist grounds). Since there are more ways to miss the mark than to hit the mark, I select for discussion symmetrical mistakes that serve to highlight, in Aristotelian fashion, what it is to hit the mean and to get things right.

2.1 Taking up the evaluative point of view

By framing the discussion in terms of a person's ideal-desires, I have thus far only stressed one conative aspect of taking up the evaluative point of view. In addition to having certain patterns of desire, taking up the evaluative point of view includes having certain patterns of belief, attention, pleasure, and emotion. Because there already exists an immense philosophical literature on whether possessing virtue requires knowledge of one's merits, I will continue to focus on conative aspects of taking up the evaluative point of view. I begin by discussing patterns of attention, followed by patterns of pleasure, and patterns of emotion.

One troubling aspect of the viciously proud is their systematic misdirection of attention and, more generally, of concern. Williams sketches an example of a person who is concerned with being generous, but whose reflexive motivation should be classified as morally self-indulgent:

...he is concerned with his own generosity, where this implies that he had substituted for a thought about what is needed, a thought which focuses disproportionately upon the expression of his own disposition, and ... he derives pleasure from the thought that his

disposition will have been expressed—rather than deriving pleasure, as the agent who is not self-indulgent may, from the thought of how things will be if he acts in a certain way, that way being (though he need not think this) the expression of his disposition... [This sort of reflexivity] involves a reversal at a line which I take to be fundamental to any morality or indeed sane life at all, between self-concern and other-concern; it involves a misdirection not just of attention, though that is true too, but genuinely of concern, and they both issue in differences in what actually gets done. [1981: 47]

According to Williams, the mental activity of the morally self-indulgent involves (1) a misdirection of attention, focusing disproportionately upon the expression of one's own disposition instead of upon those considerations that count in favor of action ('what is needed'), in cases where those two objects of focus are distinct; (2) pleasures derived from thoughts about the expression of one's own disposition rather than from thoughts about how things will be if one acts in a certain way; and, what may already be entailed by (1) and (2), (3) a misdirection of concern. This misdirection of concern in turn affects the agent's behavior ('what actually gets done').

One can take up the self-evaluative point of view when one should not, as there are occasions when it is blameworthy to measure one's moral worth. A benefactor should not in general pay attention to her own ethical status rather than to the needs of those she benefits; doing so provides evidence not only of a failure of generosity, but also of moral self-indulgence. This is not to say that attending to one's dispositions is in itself objectionable; instead, as Williams notes, it is the *disproportionate* focus upon himself rather than upon the morally salient needs of others that is problematic. Another occasion during which it can be a blameworthy misdirection of attention to measure one's moral worth is in the course of deliberating about what to do. As we saw in Sophocles's representation of Ajax, who decides against accepting Athena's help because of considerations about his worth, the viciously proud sometimes reason about what to do from general considerations about who they aspire to be.

In addition to this misdirection of attention, Williams highlights the moral self-indulgence of taking excessive pleasure in the expression of one's disposition rather than in how things will be if one's acts in a certain way. As with misdirection of attention, the former sort of pleasure is not in itself objectionable, provided it does not displace the latter sort of

pleasure. Taking excessive pleasure in one's own good dispositions or qualities is a frequently named attribute of the viciously proud. For instance, Thomas Hurka claims that the vice of pride essentially 'involves excessive pleasure in certain aspects of one's own good,' such as one's knowledge, achievement, or virtue [2000: 98]. Hurka claims that such excessive pleasures are expressions of the viciously proud person's general misdirection of concern: 'At the root of his vicious pride is an excessive concern for his own as opposed to others' good' [ibid.: 99].

However, since a viciously proud person can be thoroughly and chronically disappointed in himself, experiencing excessive pleasure in one's own good qualities is not a necessary condition of possessing the vice of pride. The examples of Ajax and Ethan Frome show that the viciously proud can instead feel disproportionate *pain* at the thought of the failed expressions of their dispositions. So Hurka's necessary condition should be modified to read that the viciously proud are necessarily *disposed* to experience excessive pleasures and pains in their good and bad qualities, respectively.⁷ Moreover, the personal ideals-based account of pride makes it clear that it is not just any aspect of their own good that the viciously proud take excessive pleasure in. If a viciously proud person doesn't care about being a knowledgeable person, then he will not take excessive pleasure in being one (nor will he take excessive pain in being foolish). A viciously proud person takes excessive pleasure (or pain) in succeeding (or failing) in living in accordance with his personal ideals.

⁷ In his brief, but illuminating, discussion of excessive pride and shame, Hurka also discusses self-hatred and shame under the banner of the 'vice of excessive shame' [ibid.: 99], which he describes as 'the opposite vice' of excessive pride. Hurka's distinction between these two vices might indicate that his focus is the emotion of pride and not the character trait of pride, which, on my account, may involve both the 'vice of excessive (emotional) pride' and the 'vice of excessive (emotional) shame,' among other things. Since Hurka does not explicitly distinguish between the emotion and the trait of pride, it is difficult to discern which sort of pride he refers to. However, since Hurka considers as a competing account of the 'vice of excessive pride' a cognitive account, according to which the vice is identical with belief that one is superior to others when one is not, I take it that he is providing an account of the vicious character trait of pride.

Finally, let's turn to patterns of emotional response, which overlap with patterns of attention and pleasure. Thus far, we've discussed paradigms of vicious pride involving taking up the evaluative point of view when one should not. It is important to recognize that it is possible to take up the self-evaluative point of view insufficiently as well as excessively. Failure to evaluate oneself is commonly thought to be a bad thing insofar as such evaluation provides a safeguard against vice [Dillon 2004; Mason 2010]. The shameless typically fail to engage in proper self-evaluation, either as a result of having a dearth of ideals against which to evaluate themselves or as a result of failing to 'take stock' of themselves with respect to their ideals.⁸ The shameless fail to experience the pain attending recognition of what is shameful. A virtuously proud person is disposed to experience shame whenever it is warranted. Likewise, when a virtuously proud person succeeds in living in accordance with her personal ideals in some significant way, she takes note of this fact—and not merely dispassionately so. One who fully grasps the significance of one's significant merits experiences the emotion of pride. Likewise, one who grasps the significance of significant personal failings experiences the emotion of shame. These emotions are the cognitive and conative resonances of what we take to be significant in understanding ourselves in relation to our personal ideals. There is, *prima facie*, something objectionable about a person who never takes pride in her accomplishments, just as failing to experience anger, shame, guilt, hope, or love when these emotions are warranted provides evidence of some character flaws [Taylor 1975].

If there are occasions when it is inappropriate *not* to measure one's worth (as in the case of the shameless) as well as occasions when it is inappropriate to measure one's worth, then it follows that there is some Aristotelian mean to be sought. Possessing the virtue of pride involves *properly* taking up the evaluative point of view on oneself—that is, considering oneself from this point of view on the occasions on which it is appropriate, to the extent to which it is appropriate, and only in these ways.

2.2 *Concern for Receiving the Respect of Others*

To consider what evaluation one merits differs from considering what evaluations others make of oneself. Furthermore, to judge that one merits evaluative respect from oneself and

⁸ There may also be a masochistic sort of shamelessness that revels in the violation of personal standards. So, shamelessness doesn't require a lack of self-evaluation.

others differs from caring about whether others actually respect oneself. It is possible to judge that one merits the admiration of others without caring whether people actually give one the respect that one deserves. Likewise, and perhaps more commonly, one can vainly care about receiving the evaluative respect and admiration of others (and about avoiding their evaluative disrespect and contempt) without judging that one merits it. The nature and extent of one's concern for receiving the respect of others partially determines whether one is properly proud.

Although I will focus in this section on concern for receiving the evaluative respect of others, the trait of pride also involves the concern for receiving moral recognition respect, that is, the concern for being treated by others as a moral equal. There are two reasons for my selective focus: first, there is an extensive literature already available on moral recognition respect, its significance, and, to some extent, its relation to pride [Hill 1973; Boxill 1976; Darwall 1977; Sachs 1981]. Second, within this extensive literature it has not been sufficiently appreciated that justified evaluative respect can provide evidence of recognition respect and that a lack of justified evaluative respect can provide evidence of a lack of recognition respect. These two facts have led to a neglect of the ethical significance of evaluative respect, which I'll begin to remedy here.

A virtuously proud person, I claim, is concerned about receiving the evaluative respect, and avoiding the evaluative disrespect or contempt, of representative members of his moral practice. The appropriate intensity of this concern may range from merely noticing the presence or absence of others' self-directed evaluations to actively seeking out such evaluations and being distraught or elated when one discovers it. A person's commitment to living in accordance with his personal ideals requires a concern about the opinions of at least some of those with whom he shares a practice. This is so for at least two reasons. Representative members of the practice, by definition, largely share his commitment to the relevant personal ideals. It is virtuous to be concerned to know these people's opinions because having this information helps the proud person to interpret his ideals and his standing relative to those ideals. Call these *the epistemic grounds for concern* about the evaluative respect of others. As Cheshire Calhoun [2004] has argued, there are also *practical grounds for concern* about the self-directed evaluative judgments of co-members of our social practices. We develop and learn how to apply our personal ideals largely by interacting with representative members of our neighborhoods, professions, families, religious organizations,

and other social practices. These interactions are vital for developing norms that help to adjudicate problems facing members of a practice, and for setting goals about what the practice-specific aims and goods ought to be. As Calhoun puts it, norms ‘get hammered out among people who already share a social world’ [ibid.: 140]. We therefore need, for practical reasons, to be sensitive and emotionally vulnerable to the evaluative appraisals, both positive and negative, of at least some others who participate in our social practices. When we fail by the lights of representative members of our social practices we have good reason, both epistemic and practical, to feel shame; likewise, when we succeed by these lights we have good reason to feel pride. In short, we should be sensitive to the self-directed evaluative judgments of at least some others.

We should also sometimes be sensitive to the absence of self-directed evaluative judgments by others. When we have reason to take ourselves to have succeeded by the lights of representative co-members of our social practices, and thus to have good reason to feel pride, we also have good reason to expect the evaluative respect of representative co-members of these practices. For our evaluative judgments often invoke shared norms of our social worlds. On occasions in which one’s judgment about the object of one’s pride differs from the judgment of representative co-members of the relevant social practice, we have both epistemic and practical reasons to care about resolving the discrepancy.

The properly proud person has *discriminating* concern for the opinions of certain others. A person’s indiscriminate concern about others’ opinions of him is vicious because some people are not in a position to capably judge him. So, indiscriminate concern is at the least epistemically unjustified. Moreover, opinions that uninformed or unconcerned people hold about a person will tend to be superficial. This fact points to the distinctively ethical flaw of having indiscriminate concern for the opinions of others about oneself, namely, that such concern is likely to be a form of vanity. For example, it would be appropriate to describe as vain Ethan Frome’s aversion to his fellow townspeople’s coming to believe that he is in need. On the other vicious extreme lies a person who lacks any concern for the opinions about him that others hold. Such a person might believe they possess an admirable sense of autonomy and self-possession, perfect virtue and perfectly sound judgment. Be that as it may, if a theory of ethics is designed for humans and not gods, then indifference to the opinions of others is both epistemically and morally undesirable. Total indifference to the opinions of others is epistemically bad because there is no realm of life, not even in

mathematics, in which an individual can possess objective certainty.⁹ (Mathematicians generally appreciate the role that public deliberation plays in certifying the soundness of a proof.) The human epistemic condition requires at least some degree of epistemic humility, even about matters that can be justified a priori [Roberts 2009]. One necessary feature of epistemic humility, I argue, is some degree of receptivity to the opinions of at least some others. Though it may seem paradoxical, the virtue of pride must be compatible with humility insofar as the latter is also a virtue.

This epistemic consideration brings us to the moral vice of arrogance. Receiving the advice of knowledgeable others is sometimes indispensable for successful activity. To reject advice across the board would be as absurd as it is rare—not even the most arrogant and hubristic would always refuse to consult with advisors. In light of this epistemic fact, a person who is properly committed to living in accordance with her personal ideals will sometimes be receptive to the opinions of some people about her standing relative to her ideals. Moreover, she will be at least temporarily dismayed when a person whom she respects voices a negative judgment about her evaluative standing, and will carefully consider the matter in light of this person’s judgment. She will not follow Aristotle’s proud man in despising any dishonor as undeserved—at least not prior to careful consideration [Aristotle 1984: 1124a10].

2.3 Individualistic and collective interpretations of personal ideals

In Section 1, I argued that a proud person’s refusal of assistance in favor of acting in what seems to him a more praiseworthy manner manifests her individualistic interpretation of his ideals. Ajax would refuse to kill two enemies with the help of Athena in favor of killing one by himself. The viciously proud may view assistance with disdain, since it seems to him to undermine his praiseworthiness even if, say, it promises to lead to better results. Only solitary action reflects well upon him, he thinks. Is there also a contrary mistake, in too readily giving up on the individualistic pursuit of excellence, in too rarely insisting upon doing things oneself, and in thinking that only action undertaken with the assistance of

⁹ D. H. Melton similarly notes: ‘Vulnerable selves are proudly non-autonomous individuals who are dependent on others for understanding and see the dependence others have on them for understanding. Vulnerability aids in cognition because through exposure and openness to others, vulnerable selves are poised to “know” better’ [2009: 162].

others can reflect well upon oneself? It is not that such a collectively disposed person would neglect to take up the evaluative point of view; rather, when he did evaluate himself, he would do so relative to collectively interpreted personal ideals. This person would think so little of his individual agency that he would regard living in accordance with his personal ideals as requiring a dependence upon the provisions of others. He would not think a project worth doing unless others are committed to joining him. Only collective action would be regarded as reflecting well on him.

Such a person seems possible and, more importantly for our normative purposes, seems to be flawed. Some measure of individualism is necessary when, for reasons beyond one's control, others are unavailable or unwilling to help you to achieve genuine goods. In such circumstances, one may indeed be praiseworthy for pursuing a goal that would have languished without one's activity. Even if well-intentioned collaborators are available, such people may not be well qualified to collaborate. Though I may be willing to help a friend to choreograph his new ballet, since I am not well qualified to do so, he is doubtless better off rejecting my offer of assistance. However, the important point is that even when well-intentioned and well-qualified people are available, a properly proud person will sometimes regard the delegation of her personal projects to them as a loss. This claim is plausibly justifiable by multiple foundational normative theories, so I will continue to remain agnostic about the correct foundational theory of virtue. However, at a less foundational level we can appreciate that the occasional refusal to delegate one's most important personal projects expresses and partially constitutes the excellent exercise of one's capacities and the value one should place on this exercise. After all, personal ideals are norms about what kind of person, in the broadest sense, one should be; concern to live in accordance with these ideals is thus concern about being a good person. I take the claim that such a concern is laudable as a premise that I shall not here defend. If this claim is true, and if one cannot always delegate the satisfaction of this concern to others, then the properly proud will sometimes interpret their personal ideals in an individualistic manner.

Therefore the general refusal to engage in solitary projects or even to consider such projects as potentially valuable is vicious. So, this dimension of pride also admits of an Aristotelian medial analysis. This conclusion does not conflict with the claim that the disposition to *prefer* to join and to feel pride in collective ventures rather than in solitary activity is praiseworthy. Such preferences appear to be more common in 'collectivist

cultures,' like China, than in the United States. According to one study, Chinese participants claim both that they would take more pride in their child's acceptance to a prestigious university than in their own acceptance, and that they would take more pride when their athletic team performed well and they performed badly than they would when their team performed badly and they performed well [Stipek 1998]. However, the blanket denial of the value of individualism is no more tenable than Ajax's blanket denial of the value of collectivism. The properly proud, like the self-reliant, are disposed to care in some circumstances about doing things themselves and to sometimes regard the assistance of others as potentially damaging to the success of their enterprise and, ultimately, to their worth. Unlike the self-reliant person, the properly proud sometimes care about engaging with others, building upon others' achievements, and even altering their own values in light of others' concerns. The properly proud appreciate that living a full life requires creating and sharing it with others. Collective and individualistic pursuits are both good and necessary for a good and properly proud life.

2.4 The flexibility or rigidity of one's commitment to one's ideals

The fourth dimension of pride concerns the flexibility or rigidity of a person's commitment to her ideals. Assessments of the rigidity of such a commitment in a given person are a function of that person's resolution of three sorts of conflicts: (1) conflicts between living in accordance with one's personal ideals and achieving goods in such a way that does not contribute to one's living in accordance with one's personal ideals; (2) conflicts between living in accordance with individualistic personal ideals and living in accordance with collective personal ideals; and (3) conflicts between living in accordance with non-moral personal ideals and living in accordance with moral personal ideals. Ethan's refusal to ask for a needed advance on his wages in order to preserve his pursuit of living in accordance with his personal ideals provides prima facie justification for the claim that he is stubbornly proud. Likewise, a teammate who invariably sacrifices the interests of the team whenever he is able to satisfy demands set by individualistic personal ideals is, prima facie, pursuing such ideals in a rigid way. A disposition, on the other hand, to uniformly resolve disputes of these two sorts in the other direction is plausibly evidence of excessive flexibility and lack of pride. Resolutions of the third sort of conflict, between moral and non-moral demands, correlate less straightforwardly with virtue and vice. Depending on the relevant non-moral ideals and

the severity of the moral infraction, pursuit of non-moral personal ideals at the expense of meeting moral claims may or may not provide evidence of stubborn pride. Because this claim requires adjudication of the matter of the priority of morality over all other values, I will not attempt to defend it here. I merely note that a properly proud person will adjudicate such conflicts sensitively, though there should be no expectation of devising an algorithm that will prescribe such sensitivity.

2.5 The Worthiness of One's Ideals

Finally, possessing the virtue of pride requires that the personal ideals to which one is firmly committed are worthy. The virtue of pride consists of a proper commitment to proper personal ideals, and so there is no such thing as a properly proud moral monster. The proud white supremacist is debarred from possessing the virtue of pride by the immorality of the Aryan personal ideals to which she is firmly committed. Developing a general account of the worthiness of personal ideals would require a separate treatment. However, I suggest for consideration two necessary and jointly sufficient criteria for the worthiness of personal ideals: a worthy personal ideal (i) contributes to the meaningfulness of one's life and (ii) is consistent with moral obligation.

One might argue, though, that the evaluative status of pride is a function only of the status of the commitment to one's personal ideals—that is, only of the first four dimensions of pride—and independent of the worthiness of the proud person's ideals. For, the proud Aryan's vice consists not in her being too proud; it consists in, among other things, her being cruel and disrespectful. Indeed, we would not primarily advise the proud Aryan to swallow her pride, and we would not primarily blame her for lacking a proper sense of humility. If this is correct, then our evaluation of a person insofar as she is proud is independent of our evaluation of her personal ideals, which indicates that proper pride does not require a commitment to worthy ideals.

We can object to this argument by noting, first, that it is possible for a person to have simultaneously more than one vice. It is possible for a person to be both cruel and viciously proud because of that cruelty, just as it is possible for him to also be rash, stingy, and unfriendly because of his cruelty. The viciously proud Aryan is, perhaps, even more vicious than a humble Aryan, insofar as the former would be more firmly disposed to stand fast with

her ideals in the face of the criticisms of others, and would be less sensitive to others' self-directed evaluative judgments.

This leads to a second defense of my claim that the worthiness of one's ideals is relevant to the assessment of one's pride, namely, that the form of a person's commitment to her ideals cannot be cleanly demarcated, even in principle, from the content of her particular personal ideals. The demarcation is made fuzzy by the fact that certain ideals call for particular sorts of commitments—moral ideals plausibly call for a relatively rigid commitment from the agent (the fourth dimension); some superficial ideals call for frequent self-evaluation (the first dimension); the ideal of being a good teammate typically calls for a collective interpretation (the third dimension); and so on. Therefore, the suggestion that the evaluative status of pride is orthogonal to the evaluative status of one's personal ideals is untenable. The worthiness of one's ideals is a dimension of pride.

In this section, I outlined the five primary types of considerations that determine whether and in what way one is proud. In any given case, these considerations supply the answers to the five most important types of questions about the ethics of reflexivity. Thus, the five-dimensional account of pride fleshes out what it is to be committed to living in accordance with one's personal ideals. The account provides a framework that enables us to map a descriptive and normative topography of the varieties of pride. Since pride's five dimensions are to some degree independent, one can go astray in a large number of ways. This independence creates the logical space for many varieties of pride and much conceptual grey area between these varieties. However, whether for psychological or sociological reasons, some varieties appear to be more common than others. Ajax epitomizes vicious extremes in each dimension: he regards himself from the evaluative point of view when he should not, he is excessively concerned about receiving honors, he is excessively individualistic, his commitment to living in accordance with his ideals is overly rigid, and the normative status of his heroic ideals is dubious. Excesses in each dimension might be mutually supporting. Excessively regarding oneself from an evaluative point of view, for instance, is plausibly correlated with particular tendencies in other dimensions of being committed to living in accordance with one's ideals, such as a tendency to individualism. But other types of vicious pride are possible [Taylor 2006]. In addition to across the board correlation between excesses of each dimension, correlations may be more restricted, such that a particular orientation in two of the dimensions is correlated with a particular orientation in a third

dimension. For instance, vanity is primarily a matter of indiscriminate concern for receiving the positive evaluations of others, and secondarily a matter of excessively taking up the evaluative point of view on oneself, often in combination with caring about living in accordance with superficial personal ideals. Possessing the first two of these three tendencies is plausibly correlated as a matter of fact with possessing the third tendency, since living in accordance with superficial personal ideals is easily observable and so provides third parties with greater opportunities for praising oneself.

In addition to its explanatory power with respect to vanity (as well as arrogance, conceitedness, and other varieties of pride) this account of the virtue correlated with the sphere of attitudes and actions pertaining to one's worth suggests a fruitful reframing of the proliferating literature on modesty, to which, in conclusion, I now turn.

3. A MODEST CONCLUSION

I shall conclude by briefly sketching how the foregoing account of pride's five dimensions helps us to make sense of some recent debates about the nature of modesty. Recent accounts of modesty can be grouped on the basis of what dimension of the reflexive ethical sphere they focus upon. For instance, so-called underestimation accounts of modesty, according to which modesty is ignorance of one's merits, and attention-based accounts of modesty, according to which modesty is the proper disposition to pay attention to one's evaluative status, are profitably understood as claims about the proper disposition with respect to two aspects of the first dimension of pride. On the other hand, status-based accounts of modesty that identify modesty with a proper concern (or lack of concern) with receiving the evaluative respect of others focus on the second dimension of pride. Also plausible, although currently absent from the literature, would be accounts of modesty that focus on the third or fourth dimensions of pride. For, modesty plausibly relates to how stubbornly or flexibly one pursues one's ideals: a modest person is willing to suspend this pursuit on occasions in which conflicting goods are attainable. Alternately, the modest person is plausibly willing to work towards collective ends and the immodest person may be objectionably individualist in her conception and pursuit of her personal ideals. In short, part of what is at issue in such debates is which ethical domain modesty is supposedly a virtue of.

If I am right that determining the relevant ethical domain of modesty is at issue in these recent debates, then some of these debates have a merely nominal import. For, in the

absence of a non-question-begging reference-fixing characterization of the ethical sphere relating to modesty we have no reason to believe that there is a correct answer to the nominal disagreement about which ethical domain deserves to be called the domain of modesty and which other dimensions are mere pretenders to the throne. By contrast, virtue theorists agree that, roughly, courage is the proper disposition with respect to the domain of bodily dangers and related emotional experiences; that temperance is the proper disposition with respect to so-called bodily pleasures; and that generosity is the proper disposition with respect to one's property in relation to the needs of others. These rough characterizations fix disputes between competing accounts of each virtue, making it possible to understand these accounts as competing accounts of one trait [Nussbaum 1988]. Since there appears to be a standoff about which is the ethical sphere of modesty, we may wonder whether, say, underestimation accounts of modesty are in meaningful competition with attention-based and status-based accounts.

In light of this cautionary methodological claim, which I have only briefly defended, I suggest that the question of what modesty *really* is should be shelved. (Likewise, as I discuss presently, if there should prove to be controversy about which ethical domain the virtue of pride governs, then we would have little reason to pursue the question of what pride *really* is.) Shelving this question will refocus the important work of determining what excellence in each of this reflexive ethical sphere's five dimensions amounts to: whether, for instance, excellence with respect to the dimension of self-evaluation requires self-knowledge of one's merits, and whether excellence with respect to the dimension of concern for others' evaluations of us requires indifference. The five dimensional account of this ethical sphere also suggests as fruitful topics of investigation further questions that have been largely neglected, such as how we should assess the flexibility or rigidity of our commitment to living in accordance with our personal ideals, and how we should evaluate the worthiness of our personal ideals.

Is there similar cause for concern about the question of what pride *really* is? Since 'pride' is the name of a kind of emotion, one might reasonably wonder whether it is helpful to use the same term to name a character trait. Perhaps the methodological caution I urge in the case of modesty should also lead us to call the character trait under discussion by another

name, such as ‘a proper sense of self-worth.’¹⁰ The following two considerations, however, support using ‘pride’ to name both an emotion and a character trait. First, ordinary language considerations support this terminology. Edith Wharton’s usage is still with us: a person’s proud character can explain their refusal to beg in a way that their feeling proud of some accomplishment cannot. Indeed, ‘pride’ is now also a common element of political rhetoric that names not the mere feeling of pride, but rather self-assertion in the face of oppression, commitment to one’s social identity, and the demand for proper recognition (e.g., James Brown’s ‘Say it Loud—I’m Black and I’m Proud’ and ‘Gay Pride’). Second, this ordinary language usage makes good theoretical sense. ‘Pride,’ although it is used to refer to both an emotion and a character trait, is not a mere homonym, as are ‘bark’ and ‘bank.’ The emotion and the trait share a core dependence on one’s personal ideals. *Feeling pride* is called for when one succeeds in living in accordance with one’s ideals, and one has *the virtue of pride* when one is properly committed to living in accordance with worthy personal ideals, regardless of whether one succeeds in living in accordance with them [Fischer 2012, forthcoming]. So there is good reason to name this character trait ‘pride.’

If the virtue of pride is the proper disposition with respect to the five-dimensional domain of attitudes and actions with respect to one’s own worth, and if modesty corresponds to some subset of this five-dimensional domain, then modesty is some proper part of the virtue of pride. I welcome this result. Hume provides a precedent for this claim in his discussion of the virtue of pride, which he calls ‘greatness of mind’ [2000: 3.3.2]. As useful and agreeable as possession of the trait of pride can be to its possessor, Hume observes that interaction with a proud person can be unpleasant for others.¹¹ Modesty, which Hume understood as a species of politeness, can therefore serve to dull aspects of pride that might

¹⁰ I am grateful to the anonymous referee who urged me to address this concern.

¹¹ Hume emphasizes, in particular, the immodestly proud person’s disagreeable quality of thinking well of him- or herself. Although I deny that possessing the character trait of pride requires having inordinately high self-regard, I agree that other potentially disagreeable, or at least unsociable, qualities attend being well-disposed with respect to some of pride’s five dimensions. For instance, the proud are disposed to maintain their commitment to their personal ideals even if it displeases those who make unreasonable demands upon them. That is, the proud do not bend easily to the wills of others.

be unpleasant to others, and to render its possessor fit for society. I suggest that accounts of virtuous modesty are best understood in this broadly Humean way, not insofar as they are behavioral accounts but, rather, insofar as they provide necessary conditions on the virtue of pride. Once we accept this somewhat deflationary interpretation of some of the modesty debates, we may profitably reinterpret these disputes to be mapping the various dimensions of ethical reflexivity, and we may get to work on getting clearer about the virtue of pride.¹²

University of Alabama in Huntsville, USA

Jeremy.Fischer@uah.edu

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