

## What's Justice got to do with it?

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### Abstract

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Contrary to the common view that the four cardinal virtues are interconnected such that anyone possessing one must possess the others, I argue that there is an asymmetry between justice and the other three. While temperance, fortitude, and prudence are required for justice, justice is not required for any of the other three. This asymmetry occurs not only because justice is a motivational virtue while the other three are structural (or both structural and motivational) but also because justice must be seen in terms of right actions rather than good actions. While it is the case that prudence, temperance, and courage make an agent a good agent, one can be just without being good.

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Thomas Aquinas, among others, held that there are four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. They are cardinal in the sense that the other virtues hang on them. Since 'cardo' in Latin translates as 'hinge', they are aptly named because Aquinas believes that the other virtues hinge on the four.<sup>1</sup> That is to say, in order to possess any of the other moral virtues, one needs aspects of the four cardinal virtues. More importantly, in something of a nod to the traditional claim that there is a unity to the virtues, it is often held by virtue theorists that the four cardinal virtues entail one another. If, for example, one has justice, one must also possess prudence, fortitude, and temperance. And this view seems to make great sense. If we think of justice as an inclination to act justly, it seems that a person possessing justice should be practically wise (prudence), in control of his emotions (temperance), and steadfast in the face of difficulties (fortitude).<sup>2</sup>

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Socrates says as much to Protagoras, the sophist, in the Protagoras when he tries to undermine the unity of the virtues only to end up defending it.<sup>3</sup>

While few contemporary virtue theorists endorse the unity of the virtues (the view that in order to possess any virtue you must possess them all), it is not uncommon for these theorists to endorse the special interconnections of the four cardinal virtues.<sup>4</sup> But this is problematic. And its difficulty comes from the relationship that justice has to the other three virtues. While it is true to say that justice requires the other three cardinal virtues, the other three do not require justice. Why this is so reveals much about the nature of the virtues. Before we can appreciate the asymmetry between justice and the other three cardinal virtues, we need to explain what these virtues are.

## 1. Defining the Cardinal Virtues

Robert Adams and Robert Roberts regard fortitude (courage) – steadfastness in the face of difficulties-- as a structural rather than a motivational virtue.<sup>5</sup> Motivational virtues like honesty, charity, and friendliness are specific qualities we try to develop through specific intentions. We want to be honest, so we intentionally perform actions that are honest and avoid dishonesty. Structural virtues, on the other hand, are virtues that are more general skills and are typically instrumental for developing the motivational virtues. Moreover, they can be used by virtuous as well as non-virtuous agents. For example, a thief practicing his trade might well display great courage in the face of his lawful pursuers. That he uses courage for a non-virtuous end does not count against his showing courage in his crimes. Patience is also a structural virtue. A thief may be extremely patient in the pursuit of his coveted good.

Temperance can be thought of in different ways. While it is widely regarded as care in consumption of alcoholic drinks, it is better to generalize it and see it as control of one's emotions and passions. It is the proper governance of ourselves. It may well be thought of as a structural virtue since control of one's self is critical for developing any motivational virtue. But it is also a motivational virtue whose goal is harmony/balance of self.

Prudence is one of the most confusing and complicated virtues. People often view it as synonymous with carefulness. One who is prudent about financial matters is extremely careful about them, for example. But there is a long tradition that views prudence as practical wisdom. Aristotle seemed to treat it this way. In the Middle Ages, intellectual prudence was equated with practical reason; yet it was widely acknowledged that moral prudence was a moral virtue tied closely to intellectual prudence. One could either say that there were two prudences – intellectual and moral – or claim that prudence itself was both moral and intellectual. If one were to think of intellectual prudence as the general capacity to know what is appropriate in various circumstances, moral prudence was the specific knowledge of how to act in a specific circumstance that was derived from previous practice and conscious reflection on these practices. So understood, prudence (practical wisdom) is an element of every virtue, for each virtue is a way of acting or being in a recognized circumstance. It thus has many of the features of a structural virtue for it must be an instrumental part of every virtue since each virtue involves the proper behavior and intentions in appropriate circumstances.

Justice is a virtue that, in its usual conception, is directed outside one's self. For most thinkers, justice is pre-eminently the fair distributions of goods we make according to merit, virtue, or need.<sup>6</sup> There are, of course, various schemes for distribution and they are often divided into deontological and consequentialist views. There is another sense of justice, identified with the Platonic tradition. In this tradition, justice is seen as the harmony of parts: either parts of the individual or parts of a society. Harmony of the individual, however, seems to be a function of temperance.<sup>7</sup> To prevent unnecessary duplication among the virtues, it is appropriate to limit justice to the fair distribution of goods according to merit, virtue, or need. So seen, justice is decidedly a motivational virtue.

Given these understandings of the four cardinal virtues, it is not difficult to explain the oddity of justice among the four. Justice must require the other three cardinal virtues since the fair distribution of goods requires the control of one's emotions and passions (temperance), steadfastness in initiating and continuing/correcting the distribution (fortitude), as well as an understanding of the appropriateness of the distribution (prudence). But justice does not seem to be required for any of the other three cardinal virtues.

Detailing this asymmetry is particularly revealing of the nature of the relationship among justice and the other cardinal virtues.

If fortitude and temperance are structural virtues, it is not surprising that prudence would require them. But prudence does not seem to require justice. In fact, prudence in a particular circumstance might well lead one not to act justly.<sup>8</sup> If prudence is seen as practical wisdom and a necessary component of every virtue (thus functioning as a structural virtue), justice, fortitude, and temperance (and every non-cardinal virtue) will require prudence. Temperance will, of course, require prudence, but it will also require fortitude (as a structural virtue). Yet, temperance does not require justice, for one can have temperance (control of one's own passions and emotions) without justice. And fortitude does not require justice since one can be steadfast in the face of difficulties without engaging in what one deems the fair distribution of goods. It appears that the structural natures of prudence, fortitude, and temperance make them necessary for one another and for justice. The fact that justice is a purely motivational virtue makes it different from the other three cardinal virtues. Moreover, justice's role as controlling one's relationships with others makes it less like the other three that are focused on the self in isolation from others. While prudence and fortitude are very involved in our relationships with others, they are involved more as ways the self is brought to bear in our external relationships. Unless we are, as selves, prudent and courageous, we will not deal with others justly.

In his discussion of the cardinal virtues, Thomas Aquinas touches on some of these observations. Aquinas thinks that the moral virtues work with reason to control the appetites. He divides the appetites into the concupiscible (controlled by temperance) and the irascible (controlled by fortitude). Prudence is most directly connected with reason, since it is "right reasoning about what is to be done."<sup>9</sup> While prudence is an intellectual virtue (since it is connected with reason), it is also a moral virtue because of its matter: it rectifies the appetites.<sup>10</sup> Justice controls what is due to another.<sup>11</sup> It controls operations and the other three cardinal virtues control the appetites.<sup>12</sup> Justice is the highest moral virtue, according to Aquinas, because it is the closest moral virtue to reason (which is intrinsically superior to any other aspect of a human being). Since justice is so close to reason, it does not involve the passions and appetites as do the other moral virtues. Thus it is different from the other three according to Aquinas. The other three moral virtues affect one another in controlling the passions and emotions in an individual. Justice, according to Aquinas, does not relate to the passions since it is about operations external to the individual.

Of course, how the individual performs these operations will be dependent on how well he keeps his passions and emotions under control. It thus would not be surprising that for Aquinas justice depends upon the other three moral virtues but the three do not require justice.

According to David S. Oderberg, however, Aquinas does think that the four cardinal virtues imply one another and, thus, that the other three cardinal virtues do depend on justice (just as justice depends upon them).<sup>13</sup> He has two arguments for this view. The first is that, since Aquinas thinks that the four cardinal virtues are jointly necessary for the possession of every other virtue (he labels this “Cardinality Sub-thesis CT1”), the mutual dependence of the four cardinal virtues follows by simple logic. <sup>14</sup> The second argument rests on the Sub-thesis CT1 and the fact that every time a cardinal virtue is found in a person it is found as a species of the virtue in that person.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, both of these arguments are not convincing, confusedly identifying dependence with entailment. According to his second argument, the existence of humility in a person depends upon the existence of temperance in that individual (since one cannot be humble without controlling one’s passions). Oderberg captures this claim by saying that

### 1. Temperance Entails Humility

Given what Oderberg argues, (1) must be understood as stating that ‘being humble’ requires ‘being temperate.’<sup>16</sup> Given CT1, the possession of humility by an agent must also require that the agent possess the other three cardinal virtues. Oderberg captures this fact by claiming that

### 2. Humility Entails Justice, Prudence, and Fortitude

Clearly, the only way to understand (2) is as the claim that ‘being humble’ requires the presence of justice, prudence, and fortitude. Oderberg reasons that (1) and (2) and the logical principle of transitivity yields

### 3. Temperance Entails Justice, Prudence, and Fortitude

This is not correct, however. The type of argument Oderberg is using here based on transitivity works for logical entailment. But it does not work for the ‘entails’ relationship Oderberg finds among the virtues.

The 'entails' relationship in (1) is really the claim that where temperance is found humility must be found (since it is a species of temperance). This entailment is the type of entailment that obtains between a genus and the species that is a part of it. It is a logical relationship in the sense that a whole entails the existence of its parts. The 'entails' relationship in (2) is really the notion (from CT1) that any non-cardinal virtue requires the possession of all four cardinal virtues. This is not the same type of entailment found in (1). The two different senses of 'entailment' in (1) and (2) render invalid the deduction to (3). Similarly, Oderberg's first argument for the claim that the four cardinal virtues imply one another is flawed by equating 'requiring possession' with 'logical entailment.'

Whether or not Aquinas believed that the cardinal virtues imply one another, Oderberg's arguments do not show that Aquinas does or even that he should think they are so related. But we should give Oderberg credit for trying to argue for the unity of the four virtues rather than merely assert this unity. That anyone would think that the four cardinal virtues are mutually dependent is surprising once we look at the four virtues in detail.

## **2. Examples of the Interplay of the Cardinal Virtues**

Robert Louden in his "Some Vices of Virtue Ethics" complains that making virtuous agents the locus of virtues fails to take into account that even virtuous agents sometimes fail to act virtuously.<sup>17</sup> While both Rosalind Hursthouse and Robert Adams have responded sufficiently to Louden's criticisms, there is an element of truth to Louden's complaint, even if this element was not understood by him.<sup>18</sup> We learn about virtues and take some of our first steps to develop them by imitating stereotypes of the virtues. We are taught to be truthful by imitating "I cannot tell a lie" George Washington and we are introduced to honesty with stories of "Honest Abe" Lincoln. To be sure, both George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were flawed individuals who occasionally told untruths and behaved dishonestly towards others. But the cultural myths of Washington and Lincoln are what we are taught to imitate. And in these cultural stories, Washington is the truth-talker who would rather be punished by his father than lie and Lincoln is so honest that he walks several miles to return a borrowed book that is due. The cultural myth Lincoln and the cultural myth Washington never fail because as cultural myths they are the stories they embody and they never act contrary to these stories in non-virtuous ways.

It is difficult to come up with a cultural stereotype that embodies justice. Honesty has Abraham Lincoln. Truthfulness has George Washington. Courage has the John Wayne of movies. Temperance has Warren Buffet (perhaps). But justice is hard to find – or at least the stereotypic person embodying it is. Perhaps a movie character like Judge Hardy (played by Lewis Stone in the Andy Hardy series of films) or a fictional character like Atticus Finch from Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird is the best we can point to as a cultural icon of justice. So let us dwell on the fictional character Atticus Finch, the small-town lawyer and father, to give a concrete sense of the interactions of the cardinal virtues.

Atticus Finch has many virtues. He is hard-working. People regard him as an upstanding member of their community and continue to re-elect him to the state legislature. He cares deeply about his children, Jem and Scout. He has had to raise them as a single parent after the death of his wife. While he often feels at sea about how to relate to his children, he is kind and affectionate to them. He punishes his children (or at least threatens to) when necessary but cushions the punishment with kindness and explanation. Whenever possible, he tries to help his children learn from their mistakes. We learn indirectly that he likes his “moonshine” but we never see him intoxicated and he behaves temperately. He is humble. When called upon to shoot a “mad” dog from a distance the sheriff could not handle, Atticus lives up to his reputation as “One-Shot Finch.” His children had never been told by him about his prowess. He is diplomatic and well-regarded by even those who question his defending a black man, Tom Robinson, accused of raping a white woman.

It is his defense of Tom Robinson that makes Atticus Finch a paradigm of justice. To Kill a Mockingbird is set in Alabama in 1935. Racial discrimination is the order of the day. The White, Southern population dominates the Black population in every aspect of their lives. Atticus Finch is wisely appointed by the local magistrate, Judge Taylor, to defend Tom Robinson. Atticus knows that it is a hopeless case; Tom will be tried and convicted. But Atticus thinks that he must defend Tom and give him the best defense possible. For Atticus believes that the law is the great leveler. It makes “a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of Einstein, and the ignorant man the equal of any college president.”<sup>19</sup> But he also believes that laws must be flexible. In explaining to Scout why she must go to school when the Ewells do not, he tells Scout that “Sometimes it’s better to bend the law in special cases. In your case the law remains rigid. So to school you must go.”<sup>20</sup>

Atticus is able to make his fair and just decisions because of the virtues he possesses. His steadfastness (fortitude), temperance, and practical wisdom (prudence) lead him to do what he considers right and in the best interest of his family and community. In the story, we never receive a detailed explanation of his theory of justice. His decisions seem to be a combination of deontological views (“honesty is the best policy”; “all people should be treated equally before the law”) mixed with consequentialist reasoning (sometimes we don’t want to be completely honest with a neighbor or a relative because he or she might be offended by the unvarnished truth). He is the kind, dutiful, and pragmatic American citizen the story is intended to present.

Even though Atticus Finch is an ideal citizen, he is typical of most people in not being committed to some ethical theory. He does what he thinks is right and his sense of right comes from many sources: school, Church, family, friends, and so on. Few people, other than philosophers or theologians, think about actions as connected to ethical theories. Atticus’s sense of justice is developed in relation to others. He sees his just actions as helping to form the relationships he has with his family and friends.

While we can see how his just acts and his sense of justice require the other cardinal virtues he possesses, it is difficult to see how his other cardinal virtues are informed by his sense of justice. Even if we were able to categorize him as either a strict deontologist or a strict consequentialist, his sense of justice does not influence either his possession or his development of the other cardinal virtues he possesses.

The fact that Atticus is just does not make him temperate. One who is fiery-tempered or even self-indulgent may well be just in the sense of acting justly towards others and Atticus’s temperate nature seemed to be an early aspect of his character, formed long before he was called upon to perform just acts. Similarly, performing just acts does not yield fortitude since cowards may well be just. Atticus’s courage was not a product of his justice, having come from his upbringing in rural Alabama. Nor do just actions yield prudence. One who is intent on acting justly might well not act in a prudent manner. In the case of Atticus, prudence would have led him to decline the case especially when court-appointed defenses were usually given to “Maxwell Green, Maycomb’s latest addition to the bar, who needed the experience.”<sup>21</sup> Atticus certainly would have been prudent to yield to the demands of his neighbors and sister not to defend a Black man. So, each of the other cardinal virtues individually is not yielded by the virtue of justice.

Even combinations of virtues with justice do not seem to yield the other virtues in a manner similar to how justice is yielded by the other three cardinal virtues. Justice combined with temperance does not yield either prudence or courage. The just and temperate person may well be a coward or lack in prudence. Nor do justice and temperance yield courage and prudence. The just and temperate man may well be a coward and not be prudent. Justice and courage do not yield temperance and prudence (William Wallace and Franklin Roosevelt, for example). One who is just and prudent can be so without courage and temperance. That the just and prudent person is likely to be courageous and temperate is due to the presence of prudence rather than justice. Similarly, the presence of prudence in the courageous and just person makes temperance more likely, just as prudence in combination with justice and temperance renders courage more likely.

It is apparent that justice, courage, and temperance relate well to prudence. That is, a person who acts justly towards others, acts courageously, and is temperate also tends to be prudent. This may be the case because of the unique nature of prudence as practical wisdom. Practical wisdom leads one to act appropriately in the situations that confront us. Since temperance is governing one's own self and justice is governing the relationships we have with others and courage involves being steadfast in these governances, all the circumstances we confront are well-regulated by these three virtues under the guidance of prudence.

### **3. Virtues, Actions, Goodness**

Thus far we have thought about virtues as closely connected with actions. Is this a mistake? Could agents possess virtues without displaying them in actions? Robert Adams, for example, in his [A Theory of Virtue](#) offers an account of virtues emphasizing intentions, which, at first glance, seems to separate possession of virtues from observable actions. To be sure, for Aristotle, virtue is not merely performing appropriate actions; to be virtuous one must act with certain desires and intentions. To be just, for example, is to act as a person possessing justice would act.

The twofold nature of Virtue (actions and intentions) leads to two different views about virtues. On the one hand, virtue theorists like Hursthouse and Slote emphasize the actions virtuous agents perform.

On the other hand, Robert Adams emphasizes the intentions of the virtuous agent ("virtue is excellence in being for the good"). It is tempting to think of these two views as opposed to each other. This might well be a mistake, however. Perhaps the two views should be seen as different emphases in a unified phenomenon – at least when it comes to the cardinal virtues other than justice.

Robert Adams frequently indicates that virtue cannot be seen exclusively in terms of actions. For example, an elderly woman confined to a wheelchair who cannot perform many actions may well be a virtuous agent, even if she cannot act virtuously.<sup>22</sup> But Adams readily admits various connections between virtuous intentions and virtuous actions. He notes that one who possesses virtuous intentions is apt to perform virtuous actions; it would be difficult to think that the person who performs no virtuous actions during his or her life is virtuous. Moreover, our developing virtues depends importantly on learning about the virtues (and even the intentions associated with them) through observable virtuous behavior. According to Adams, we learn about virtues through various learning modules.<sup>23</sup> These modules are linked to observable behavior. Take the virtue of courage (fortitude), for example. It is, in fact, composed of many modules: physical courage, emotional courage, moral courage, and so on. We observe, for example, soldiers fighting in wars and firemen rescuing victims and form an idea of physical courage (roughly, putting oneself into physically demanding circumstances). But our idea of physical courage does not immediately transfer to an idea of moral courage (such as standing firm in one's principles in the face of opposition of various sorts). We learn the idea of moral courage by examining (and imitating) a different set of behaviors than those associated with physical courage. The fact that we learn certain modules of courage that are not readily generalized to other modules of courage helps to explain how someone, for example, may possess moral courage (is willing to speak up in general meetings for his principles) but lack physical courage (the same person tends not to risk his well-being in physical contexts or encounters). Such difference in behavior does not count against there being a virtue of courage so much as point to the fact that the virtue is not simple but complex (and composed of different types).

Given the interplay between behavior and intention in Adams's theory, we must understand him as seeing strong connections between actions and intentions. In fact, his theory of Virtue, which stresses intentions and desires, needs to be seen as an emphasis on this aspect of Virtue rather than a decoupling of Virtue and action.

The connection between virtue and action is important because some virtue ethicists tend to use the term 'right' as interchangeable with 'good' or 'virtuous.' Hursthouse, for example, claims "[a]n action is right iff it is what a virtuous agent would characteristically (i.e. acting in character) do in the circumstances."<sup>24</sup> Zyl, however, thinks that confusing rightness with goodness is a major problem with virtue ethicists.<sup>25</sup> That is to say, they frequently view a right action as one that is good and morally praiseworthy. But it is clear that one can do a right action (do what is necessary or required) and not do it from a praiseworthy motive. A doctor can save a choking patient not because this is the type of situation doctors have been trained to deal with but because it might bother his dinner if the person died near him. Saving the choking person is the right action but it is not a good/praiseworthy action when the doctor's motive is so repugnant. So rightness (right action) seems different from goodness (good/praiseworthy action).

In a similar vein, Christine Swanton in her Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View and other writings advocates a nuanced view of the relationship between virtues and actions.<sup>26</sup> She postulates targets for each virtue that are determined by the modes of moral responsiveness that agents bring to them. Rightness is not simply a matter of right acts; it is a complex relationship among the agent, the modes of moral responsiveness of the agents, and the intentions and limitations of the agent. There are many appropriate and varying actions agents may perform in the same circumstances since the rightness of an agent's action is a complex interaction of many factors. She blends the state of the agent in determining the rightness of actions with the independent notion of an act's rightness in a way different from Adams. Her emphasis on the modes of moral responsiveness separates her view from Zyl's more radical separation of rightness and goodness. But, perhaps, it is important to separate rightness from goodness when we are discussing justice even if we blend the two notions more when we think about the other three cardinal virtues.

Prudence, fortitude, and temperance are virtues that primarily concern the person. We develop these virtues in order to make us into a certain type of person, a good or admirable person. While we would expect this good person to act well towards others, we would regard a person of prudence, fortitude, and temperance as virtuous even if the person had no interactions with others.

Someone like Robinson Crusoe before he met Friday could well be prudent in what contributes to his survival, brave in warding off depression, and temperate in how he eats, drinks, exercises, and so on. He acts justly, however, only when he acts towards another person. And he has justice only if he would act rightly towards another person. To be sure, Robinson Crusoe might be a just man by virtue of having developed justice in his dealings with other people before he is shipwrecked. But he cannot have developed justice without interacting justly with others and, when there are no others present, he cannot perform just actions.<sup>27</sup> If an action is not the right action, although we might say it is performed by a person who is virtuous by possessing prudence, fortitude, and temperance, we could not say the action was a just action.

It does seem appropriate to think about justice in terms of rightness. The right action in circumstances is the just action in those circumstances. Justice, unlike the other three cardinal virtues, must be judged in terms of actions primarily since it is directed towards others. While one's intentions in performing a just action might well make it a good action, this is in addition to it being the just (right) action.

This link between rightness and justice provides the key to understanding why justice is different from the other cardinal virtues and why there is an asymmetry among them. If justice is primarily the performance of right actions relative to other persons, it makes great sense to think that prudence, fortitude, and temperance (all virtues internal to the agent) are required for justice but that justice is not required for any of the other three cardinal virtues. While we must be, say, temperate to respect the rights of others, the rights of others and the actions we perform to protect these rights do not influence our temperance. And it is similar for prudence and courage. These virtues constitute a good person, and good people are usually just. But one can perform just actions without thereby becoming good.

The fact that justice depends upon the other three cardinal virtues attests to their being structural virtues. Indeed, it seems that any virtue that is motivational (as is justice) requires the presence of the three virtues. If we think of the cardinal virtues as the hinges on the door that leads to the cultivation of further virtues, we should think that the door has three rather than four hinges.

## References

In Disputed Questions on Virtue, article 12, reply to 24.

The definitions of the virtues I offer seem to be the standard definitions of them. Perhaps they may be defined in other ways, but anyone urging alternative definitions surely has the burden of explaining the adequacy of alternative views.

Protagoras. See, for example, 360e-361c. John Cooper in his "The Unity of Virtue" (Social Philosophy and Policy, Volume 12, Issue #1, Winter 1998, pp. 238-277) offers a very different reading of the dialogue.

John Cooper in "The Unity of Virtue" comes close to endorsing a unity of all the virtues as a practical and personal desire: "But if in studying moral philosophy you are investigating how best to live yourself with the intention of then doing your best to live that way, then I think the ancients' ideas about the unity of the virtues, which grew out of a similar concern, are well worth attending to." Robert Adams explicitly endorses the view that the four cardinal virtues are necessary for any other virtue in his A Theory of Virtue (Oxford Press; 2006), p. 201. As we shall see shortly, David Oderberg endorses the unity of the cardinal virtues. Joshue Orozco discusses Aristotle's view about the unity of the virtues in his article "On the Limits of Virtue Epistemology" (American Philosophical Quarterly, Volume 50, Number 2, April 2013, pp. 103-119) and proposes on pages 109-110 a "modified unity thesis" ("An individual S fully possesses some virtue V only if S possesses all other virtues to some degree") as a plausible view.

Adams distinguishes the two in A Theory of Virtue, p. 37. Robert C. Roberts discusses the distinction in his "Will Power and the Virtues," Philosophical Review, 93 (1984), pp. 227-47. Adams's division of virtues into structural and motivational differs from Roberts's own division of the virtues but is based on it. I use Adams's formulation of the distinction throughout the present paper.

Michael Slote in "Justice as a Virtue" in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy ([www.plato.stanford.edu](http://www.plato.stanford.edu)).

John Cooper explains the difference between temperance and the Platonic sense of justice as ordering by contrasting the potential of order from actual order in his "The Unity of Virtue" (op. cit.) pp. 267-68.

One defending the unity-of-the-cardinal virtues view might well point out that performing just acts does not mean that one possesses justice and failing to perform just acts does not mean one does not have justice. That is, it is a mistake to connect so strongly actions with the presence of virtues as I do here and elsewhere in the paper. In the third section of the paper, I will offer considerations that tie the possession of virtues with the performance of the relevant acts.

Summa Theologiae, First Part of the Second part, Q. LVII, a. 4, responsio. (John A. Osterle, translator, A Treatise on the Virtues, University of Notre Dame Press, 1984, p. 73)

Ibid., (Osterle, p. 74)

Summa Theologiae, I of 2<sup>nd</sup>, q. LX, a. 3, responsio. (Osterle, p. 101)

Summa Theologiae, I of 2<sup>nd</sup>, q. LX, a. 2, sed contra. (Osterle, p. 99)

David S. Oderberg, "On the Cardinality of the Cardinal Virtues," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 1999, 7:3, pp. 305-322. It is important to note that Oderberg does not claim to give an historically correct analysis of Aquinas's views about the relationships among the cardinal virtues ("... but the account to be offered is presented more as a defence and elaboration of that tradition than as an exegesis or historical reconstruction of what Aristotle or St Thomas Aquinas actually claim." p. 306). He is more interested in what Aquinas should say about the cardinal virtues. So his comments are a mixture of what Aquinas says and what Aquinas should have said.

Ibid., page 318. "Further, if the tentative interpretation given above to the conditions of virtue laid down by Aristotle is correct, they entail each other on the mere assumption that an agent possesses one of them. I shall state the argument for the general case, since its modification for the special case of the simple possession of one of the cardinals is clear. So let us assume that a person has some arbitrary virtue  $V$  [1]. But CT1 says that  $V \rightarrow (P \ \& \ J \ \& \ F \ \& \ T)$  [2].<sup>18</sup> From this we can infer, by standard propositional logic,  $V \rightarrow (P \rightarrow (J \rightarrow (F \rightarrow T)))$  [3]. But from CT1, the assumption and repeated application of modus ponens, we can derive  $F \rightarrow T$  [4]. Rearranging  $P$ ,  $J$ ,  $F$  and  $T$  in [3], we can make similar derivations of the eleven conditionals in addition to [4] which link all the cardinals. This gives us the desired equivalence class, and so proves that, on the assumption that an agent possesses some arbitrary virtue, not only does he possess all the cardinals but the cardinals entail each other. QED."

Ibid. "So let us assume that some cardinal virtue  $C1$  entails some non-cardinal virtue  $V1$ , so that if an agent possesses  $C1$  he also possesses  $V1$ . But CT1 tells us that the agent must also possess the other cardinal virtues  $C2-4$ . So by transitivity  $C1 \rightarrow C2-4$ . Therefore, on the bare assumption that an arbitrary cardinal virtue entails the possession of some non-cardinal species, we can prove that the cardinals entail each other. QED."

Of course, Oderberg might well be thinking in terms of persons (although he does not say this explicitly) so that (1) is really the claim (1a) that every person who is temperate is also humble and (2) is really (2a) that every humble person is also a just, prudent, and courageous person. These claims are implausible. One need only think of Ralph Nader to invalidate (1a) and the large number of humble people who lack fortitude (courage) invalidates (2a).

Louden, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 21 (1984), pp. 227-36.

Adams in *A Theory of Virtue* and Hursthouse in *On Virtue Ethics* (Oxford, 1999), especially the first part of the book. Interestingly, Linda Zagzebski seems to understand the role exemplary figures play in the cultivation of virtues in her "Exemplarist Virtue Theory" *Metaphilosophy*, 41, Numbers 1-2 (January 2010), pp. 41-57. See, for example, p. 51: "As with natural kinds like gold and water, people can succeed in referring to good persons as long as they, or at least some people in their community, can pick out exemplars.<sup>6</sup> Practices of picking out such persons are already embedded in our moral practices. We learn through narratives of both fictional and nonfictional persons that some people are admirable and worth imitating, and the identification of these persons is one of the pre-theoretical aspects of our moral practices that theory must explain."

To Kill a Mockingbird copyright 1960 (Warner Books, Inc., NY, NY, 1982) p. 205.

Ibid., p. 30.

Ibid., p. 215. Of course, Atticus's desire to shake up the oppressive social order between Whites and Blacks might well have overcome any prudential considerations as well.

His example in A Theory of Virtue, p. 16.

Ibid., pp. 130 f.

On Virtue Ethics, p. 28. Slote makes similar claims in Morals from Motives (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 34-5 as does Adams in A Theory of Virtue, p. 3 and elsewhere .

Liezl van Zyl, "Accidental Rightness" *Philosophia* 37 (2009), pp. 91–104. See p. 102: "Perhaps the most plausible strategy, in my view, is to see justice as a set of rules or conventions stating which rights and obligations people have, and which is adopted by a community to make it possible for members of that society to flourish or live the best life possible." A similar view is expressed in Thomas Hruka's "Virtuous Acts. Virtuous Dispositions" *Analysis* 66:1 (January 2006), pp. 69-76. See p. 71, footnote 2: "Some virtue-terms such as 'just' have a different use that is independent of the agent's motives. Thus we may say that a storekeeper who gives accurate change performs a just act even if he does so only to avoid losing customers; here 'just' indicates a ground of rightness rather than anything connected to motivation. But other virtue terms have no such use. To call an act brave, generous, or kind is always to say something about the agent's motives."

Oxford, 2003. See also "A virtue-ethical account of right action." *Ethics*, Volume 112 (2001), pp. 32–52.

I put to the side questions about the relationship between justice in human beings and interaction with other sentient beings or nature itself.