



Interdisciplinary, Innovative  
MORAL SELF RESEARCH

FUNDED BY THE  
TEMPLETON RELIGION TRUST

## SELF, MOTIVATION & VIRTUE PROJECT NEWS

### IN THIS ISSUE

- **LEAD ARTICLE:** *How to Train a Better Scientist: Intellectual Virtues, Epistemic Reasoning and Science Education*, by Daniel Lapsley, Ph.D. & Dominic Chaloner, Ph.D.
- **MEET OUR RESEARCHERS:** *Featuring Dr. Mark Alfano & Mr. Joshua August Skorburg*
- **RECENT PUBLICATIONS & NEWS**
- **SMV LEADERSHIP TEAM ~ RECENT PUBS & PRESENTATIONS**

### HOW TO TRAIN A BETTER SCIENTIST: INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES, EPISTEMIC REASONING AND SCIENCE EDUCATION



[Daniel Lapsley, Ph.D.](#)

*Dept. of Psychology  
University of Notre Dame*

[Dominic Chaloner, Ph.D.](#)

*Dept. of Biological Sciences  
University of Notre Dame*

It would not take long for any gathering of university professors to lament the incurious or desultory

intellectual climate of their classrooms or the absence of genuine intellectual engagement with ideas

by students. Although no disciplinary major is immune from such concerns, students' seeming want of intellectual passion and curiosity is a pressing concern in university science departments, if only because science is widely acknowledged as the premier knowledge-generating enterprise; and "if anything can deliver the epistemic goods, it is science" (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p. 4).

Of course, it is neither fair nor accurate to place the blame solely on students. In many ways, incoming university students are clearly intelligent and motivated, at least as attested by standardized tests, GPA and class rank. They have learned how to strategically navigate the academic regimen of secondary education, often to the disadvantage of high level intellectual engagement with university coursework. Moreover, certain institutional realities constrain active student learning in ways that are not optimal. These include the sheer number of students in classes and labs, limited instructional resources, and traditional ("sage-on-the-stage") models of university teaching.

---

***...training in intellectual virtues along with science epistemology is not just for scientists anymore. Training better scientists and science literate citizens is an adjunct to forming better persons, which puts science education in the business of developing intellectual character.***

---

Yet, for all the challenges, the [Virtuous Scientist Project](#) at the University of Notre Dame is convinced that much more could be done to prepare university students for the practice of science in post-baccalaureate careers. This project, funded by the [John Templeton Foundation](#), is concerned to reform science education in a way that equips students with the intellectual virtues or character strengths that conduce to excellent scientific practice, but also to good citizenship at a time when science denialism and alternative-facts corrupt public discourse about matters of fundamental national interest. We are mindful that not every science major goes on to become a working scientist, but we are also convinced that training in intellectual virtues along with science epistemology is not just for scientists anymore. Training better scientists and science literate citizens is an adjunct to forming better persons, which puts science education in the business of developing intellectual character.

[Read more >>](#)



## MEET OUR RESEARCHERS

Mark Alfano, Ph.D.

[MARK ALFANO](#) (Ph.D., City University of New York Graduate Center) is



Associate Professor of Philosophy at Delft University of Technology and Professor of Philosophy at Australian Catholic University. His first book, [Character as Moral Fiction](#), was published by Cambridge University Press in 2013, and his second book, [Moral Psychology: An Introduction](#), was published by Polity in 2016. You can visit his personal website at [www.alfanophilosophy.com](http://www.alfanophilosophy.com).

My work in moral psychology encompasses subfields in both philosophy (ethics, epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of mind) and social science (social psychology, personality psychology). I am ecumenical about methods, having used modal logic, questionnaires, tests of implicit cognition, incentivizing techniques borrowed from behavioral economics, neuroimaging, textual interpretation (especially of Nietzsche), digital humanities techniques (text-mining, archive analysis, visualization), and of course good old-fashioned intuition-mongering. My biggest historical influence is Friedrich Nietzsche; I find his thoughts fascinating because he was so far outside the mainstream of philosophy in his own day, yet some of his insights are now finding support in contemporary social science.

I met the other members of my SMV team when I was Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oregon. Gus Skorburg was a PhD student in a course I taught, as well as a teaching assistant for an intro ethics course. Christina Karns was researching the neuroscience of gratitude (among other things) over in psychology. Because I'm very interested in the possibility of fruitful interactions between disciplines, these two made for terrific interlocutors and collaborators.

[READ MORE >>](#)

## Joshua Skorburg, Ph.D. Candidate



[JOSHUA AUGUST SKORBURG](#) is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy at the University of Oregon. Starting in December 2017, he will be post-doctoral fellow at Duke University.

My research is in moral psychology and applied ethics. After a brief stint in television news, I started my graduate work in philosophy studying American pragmatism. I became increasingly interested in the relationship between normative ethics and the philosophy of mind and my dissertation reflects this confluence. In a sentence, I argue that virtue theory is often overly individualistic, and that converging evidence from the biological and psychological sciences requires us to re-think operative notions of self, cognition, and affect.

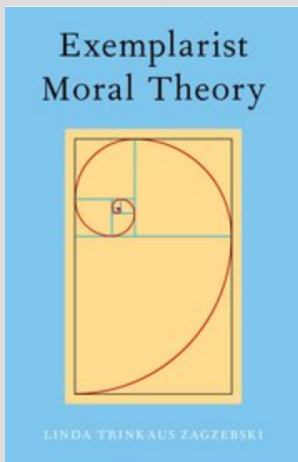
The best part about working on questions of self, identity, character, etc., is that it's very natural for the research to cross disciplinary boundaries. And it's in this spirit that Christina, Mark, and I started working together. We were all interested in the many ways that many aspects of the self (e.g., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, behavior) can hang together – or not. We came at these questions from different angles given our background and training, but what we've ended up with, I think, are some pretty cool philosophically-informed experimental designs, and empirically-informed theories of self, generosity, and integrity.

In hindsight, one of the things that got me really jazzed about studying philosophy was the research in situated cognition. I remember one of my teachers telling me that situated cognition was like the punk rock of

philosophy of mind. I liked that and it seemed right (though maybe it's a bit more mainstream and 'pop' now?). While I had read quite a lot about embodied theories of mind, meaning, emotion, etc., it never occurred to me (or anyone I was reading) to study the actual, physiological underpinnings of all of these theoretical constructs.

[READ MORE >>](#)

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS & NEWS



SMV Core Project Team Member, [Dr. Linda Zagzebski](#), recently published [Exemplarist Moral Theory](#) with Oxford University Press (2017). *Publisher's Description:* "In this book Linda Zagzebski presents an original moral theory based on direct reference to exemplars of goodness, modeled on the Putnam-Kripke theory which revolutionized semantics in the seventies. In *Exemplarist Moral Theory*, exemplars are identified through the emotion of admiration, which Zagzebski argues is both a motivating emotion and an emotion whose cognitive content permits the mapping of the moral domain around the features of exemplars. Using examples of heroes, saints, and sages, Zagzebski shows how narratives of exemplars and empirical work on the most admirable persons can be incorporated into the theory for both the theoretical purpose of generating a comprehensive theory, and the practical purpose of moral education and self-improvement." [Learn more>>](#)

SMV Project co-Director, Dr. Darcia Narvaez, won the [Expanded Reason Award](#) for her 2014 book, [Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality](#) (W.W. Norton & Co.).

The international selection committee for this award reviews works that answer the challenge of actively promoting a dialogue between sciences and theology/philosophy. They received 367 works from 170 universities in over 30 countries. Dr. Narvaez was one of two awardees selected in the "Research" category.

The awards ceremony will be held at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in Vatican City on September 27th. [Learn more >>](#)



### Journal of Character Education: CALL FOR PAPERS "The Development of Purpose"

Special Issue Guest Editors: Maurice J. Elias, Danielle Hatchimonji, and Arielle

*Linsky, Rutgers University*

The [Journal of Character Education](#) publishes peer-reviewed manuscripts that add to the body of knowledge of research and practical applications in our field. We are soliciting manuscripts for an upcoming issue of the JCE devoted to the best ideas for developing purpose in children and adolescents. As defined by Damon et al. (2003), purpose is, “a stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at once meaningful to the self and of consequence to the world beyond the self” (121). Research indicates that students with a stronger sense of purpose are more successful on academic and social outcomes compared to their less-purposeful peers (Bronk, Hill, Lapsley, Talib, & Finch, 2009; Damon, 2008; Hill, Edmonds, Peterson, Luyckx, & Andrews, 2016; Yeager & Bundick, 2009). Yet, little is known about effective methods to cultivate and assess purpose in youth, particularly in communities beset by structural and institutional inequities.

We are seeking manuscripts describing conceptual, theoretical, and practical examples of the development of purpose in children, adolescents, and emerging adults. For example, manuscripts might address all, or some, of the following areas of inquiry:

- Programs or processes that promote the development of purpose and how these interventions have influenced student, teacher, parent, school, and/or district social and academic outcomes.
- Meta-analysis or systematic review of current research on the development of youth purpose—what methods have been proven to be effective and what should future research seek to understand?
- Methodologies for assessing the construct of purpose throughout developmental stages.
- How the study of youth purpose fits into existing paradigms of character and moral development.
- Effective methods and/or relevant experiences relating to development of purpose from the practitioner perspective.
- Preference will be given to manuscripts that focus on underserved populations.

[Read more>>](#)

***Beacon Project Summer Seminar  
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS  
“Character and the Morally Exceptional:  
Empirical Discoveries and Moral  
Improvement”  
June 18-28, 2018***



**THE BEACON PROJECT**

Becoming a virtuous person is one of the central goals of the ethical life. But how good of a job are most people doing in becoming virtuous? And are there any plausible strategies for cultivating the virtues and becoming morally exceptional which can help us to do better? This seminar will examine these two questions in detail. In the first half, we will see whether character traits even exist in light of results in psychology. The second half will turn to various strategies for trying to bridge the gap

between the character we actually have, and the virtuous character we should strive to obtain. Developing and justifying such strategies is one of the most underexplored areas of ethics, although in recent years it has gained increased attention. Here we will look at new work by Nancy Snow, Jonathan Webber, Julia Annas, and Alan Wilson, among others, some of which has not appeared in print yet.

Participants will have their travel, meal, reading materials, and lodging costs covered. They will be housed at the Graylyn Conference Center ([www.graylyn.com](http://www.graylyn.com)), one of the nicest facilities in the country. Seminar meetings are expected to last roughly three hours per day, and will conclude on Thursday, June 28 so that all participants can attend the Beacon Project Final Conference on June 28-30.

The application deadline is December 15, 2017. For more details please visit:

[www.moralbeacons.org/summer-seminar/](http://www.moralbeacons.org/summer-seminar/)

We are actively seeking submissions for the SMV Project's [Moral Self Archive](#). Submit materials [here](#), or contact Max Parish ([smvproject@ou.edu](mailto:smvproject@ou.edu)) with any questions.

## SELECTED RECENT PUBS & PRESENTATIONS FROM THE SMV LEADERSHIP TEAM



### Dr. Owen Flanagan

- Flanagan, O. (2017). [Addiction doesn't exist, but it is bad for you](#). *Neuroethics* 10(1): 91-98.
- Flanagan, O. (2017). Forward for: [A mirror is for reflection: Understanding Buddhist ethics](#). New York: Oxford University Press.



### Dr. William Fleeson

- Fleeson, W. (2017). [The production mechanisms of traits: Reflections on two amazing decades](#). *Journal of Research in Personality*, 69: 4-12.
- Fleeson, W. (2017). [Challenging Doris' attack on aggregation: Why we are not left "completely in the dark" about global virtues](#). *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 20(3): 519-536. ([Open access article](#))



### Dr. Douglas Fry

- Anwar, F., Fry, D. P., & Grigaityte, I. (2017). [Aggression prevention and](#)



[reduction in diverse cultures and contexts](#). *Current Opinions in Psychology* (April 5).

- Fry, D. P., and Souillac, G. (2017). [The original partnership societies: Evolved propensities for equality, prosociality, and peace](#). *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies*, 4(1), 1-27.



**Jennifer Herdt, Ph.D.**

- Herdt, J. (2017). [The pain in the gift and the gift in the pain](#). *Studies in Christian Ethics*, 30(2): 158-166.
- Herdt, J. (2017). The importance of community for character formation: A Christian perspective. *Virtuous Character: Common Values, Shared Visions, Issachar Conference*, Amsterdam (July 13-15).



**Daniel Lapsley, Ph.D.**

- Lapsley, D., & Hardy, S. A. (2017). Identity formation and moral development in emerging adulthood. In L. M. Padilla-Walker & L. J. Nelson, Eds. (2017). [Flourishing in emerging adulthood: Positive development during the third decade of life](#) (14-39). Oxford University Press.
- Lapsley, D. (2017). Situationism and the pyrrhic defense of character education: Commentary on Sreenivasan. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong & C. B. Miller, Eds., [Moral psychology: Virtue and character, Vol. 5](#) (pp. 171-184). The MIT Press.



**Dr. Darcia Narvaez**

- Christen, M., Narvaez, D., & Gutzwiller, E. (2017). [Comparing and integrating biological and cultural moral progress](#). *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 20(55).
- Narvaez, D. (2017). [Getting back on track to being human](#). *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies*, 4(1), 1-21.
- Narvaez, D. (2017). The ontogenesis of human moral becoming. In A. Fuentes & A. Visala (Eds.), [Verbs, bones and brains: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Nature](#) (pp. 114-121). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Narvaez, D. (2017). Evolution, childraising and compassionate morality. In Paul Gilbert (Ed.), [Compassion: Concepts, research and applications](#) (pp. 78-186). London: Routledge.
- Junkins, T., & Narvaez, D. (2017). The development of virtuous habits. In G. Peterson & J. van Slyke (Eds.), [Habits in Mind: Integrating theology, philosophy, and the cognitive science of virtue, emotion, and character formation](#) (pp. 91-116) Leiden: Brill Publishing.
- Narvaez, D. (2017). Keynote Address: Evolution, neurobiology, and values: The need for interdisciplinary dialogue. *American Psychological Association, Division 24, Theoretical and Philosophical Society Midwinter Meeting*, Richmond, VA (Mar 10).
- Narvaez, D. (2017). Keynote Address: Building the nest: From brain function to flourishing children and communities of character. [Wisdom Thinkers Network Annual Conference](#), Mexico, NY (July 19).



#### Dr. Howard Nusbaum

- Nusbaum, H. C. (2017). [Robust science depends on understanding the science of humans](#). *Association for Psychological Science Observer* (Jan 30).
- Williams, P. B., Poljacik, G., Decety, J., & Nusbaum, H. C. (2017). [Loving-kindness language exposure leads to changes in sensitivity to imagined pain](#). *The Journal of Positive Psychology* (Published online 10 Apr).
- Nusbaum, H. C. (2017). Invited Keynote Address: [The role of experience in making wiser decisions](#). *Meeting on Character, Wisdom, and Virtue*, Oriel College, Oxford University (Jan).



#### Dr. Ross Thompson

- Newton, E. K., Thompson, R. A., & Goodman, M. (2016). [Individual differences in toddlers' prosociality: Experiences in early relationships explain variability in prosocial behavior](#). *Child Development*, 87(6), 1715-1726.
- Thompson, R. A. (2017). Is attachment theory a moral development theory? *The Development of Character: Attachment Theory and the Moral Psychology of Vice and Virtue, Conference 3: Attachment, Vice, and Psychopathology*, University of California, Davis, CA (April).
- Thompson, R. A. (2017). Keynote Address: What develops in moral development? *2017 Preconference on Moral Development, Biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development*, Austin, TX (April).



#### Dr. Nancy Snow

- Snow, N. (2017). Positive psychology, the VIA classification of character strengths, and virtue measurement. *Panel on Positive Psychology and Virtue, Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division*, Seattle, WA (Apr 15).
- Snow, N. (2017). Hope as a democratic virtue. [The Nature and Norms of Hope](#), Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (Apr 27). [Invited]
- Snow, N. (2017). False and unrealistic hopes. *Moral Failure and Pathways to Recovery Workshop*, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL (June 9).



#### Dr. Linda Zagzebski

- Zagzebski, L. (2017). Virtuous exemplars: Moral understanding, emulation, and resentment. *Malcolm Reid Lecture*, Gordon College, MA, (Oct 27).
- Zagzebski, L. (2017). [Exemplarist moral theory](#). New York: Oxford University Press.



#### Dr. Michael Zampelli

- Zampelli, M. (2017). [Keynote address at Georgetown University's lavender graduation](#). Washington, D.C. (April).





- Zampelli, M. (2017). Hecuba in Massachusetts: Classical theatre and US Jesuit education. *Visual and Performing Arts Conference*, [Athens Institute for Education and Research](#), Athens, Greece (May).
- Zampelli, M. (2017). Strutting and fretting on the seams: Jesuit performance and Catholicism in the United States. *Literature and the Arts Conference*, [Centre for Catholic Studies](#), Durham University, Durham, UK (July).

If you would like to contribute a news item, publication, or newsletter article, please contact Max Parish at [smvproject@ou.edu](mailto:smvproject@ou.edu).



*Copyright © 2017 The Self, Motivation, and Virtue Project, All rights reserved.*  
You are receiving this email because you opted in at the SMV Project website ([www.smvproject.com](http://www.smvproject.com)).

The Self, Motivation & Virtue Project  
The University of Oklahoma  
620 Parrington Oval, RM 207, Norman, OK 73019  
405.325.4574 | [smvproject@ou.edu](mailto:smvproject@ou.edu) | [www.smvproject.com](http://www.smvproject.com)

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)

MailChimp