

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Ryan S. Olson, D.Phil. (Oxf.)
CHS Fellow, Harvard University
Director, Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture,
University of Virginia

INTRODUCTION

The story of character education is a complex one, deeply involved with the intellectual, cultural, and institutional narratives of particular historical contexts. Some argue character does not exist; others claim character is (or should be) the cardinal concern of central societal institutions such as schooling. In general, character education or moral education is a field of endeavor that attempts to produce the kinds of persons who pursue the goods toward which a culture is directed. Character education broadly defined can claim a long history, beginning perhaps in ancient Greece some 2,800 years ago when middling farmers took responsibility for handing down—through hard work and freedom—a cultivated piece of private property to their next generations and fostered a culture from which arose a *polis* dedicated to the flourishing of as many citizens as possible. Character is a Greek word connoting features deeply etched. Though character has usually been considered to be more social in its constitution—reflecting the ideas, institutions, and individuals who constitute a moral culture—it has in modernity come to be considered as almost exclusively psychological in nature, reflecting the personal choices, brain functioning, preferences, and/or “values” of autonomous individuals. However, one cannot separate philosophical anthropology or epistemology from character formation. Acknowledged or not, such assumptions define the ends toward which character education is aimed. What are goods one ought to pursue with one’s life? How can one be worthy of such goods? Why are others worth treating with respect in a society? Answering these questions with educational efforts is problematized by the shifting sources of character—formerly religious texts, commonly revered stories, symbols, practices and ideas—no longer shared in societies within which relations are made increasingly complex by the interaction of multiple cultures. Many character curricula exist today, taking such diverse approaches as the instilling of moral habits, learning of decision-making techniques, practice of service, creation of caring communities, clarification of one’s values, inculcation through public policy fiat, reading of religious texts and catechisms, exercise of social democratic practices and the like. This sprawling field will surely continue to grow. The integration of sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and neuroscience have yet to deeply exert influence. Similarly, globalization is leading to cosmopolitan ideas of character and citizenship that are relatively recent avenues of exploration, and countries continue to wrestle

with how to educate for character within increasingly multicultural societies where moral education is contested.

GENERAL OVERVIEWS

Overviews of character education vary widely in their scope and perspective. Three encyclopedia articles offer short summaries: Ryan 2002 is more inclusive than Hotter and Narvaez 2009, while Huitt and Vessels 2003 is more expansive historically. The book-length Arthur 2003 is more comprehensive with reference to geography and academic disciplines. Many emphasize thoroughly psychological approaches to character education, and Peterson and Seligman 2004 complement the deficit-focused model with positive psychology. Doris 2002 argues against the existence of character altogether while situating the polemic in the context of moral psychology. Offering a strong critique of psychological approaches, Hunter 2000 articulates an interdisciplinary perspective on the cultural conditions necessary to foster good character: particularity that fosters discipline, attachment and autonomy. The ideas and practices summarized here occur in a long intellectual history and are especially influenced by modern and late modern notions of identity, which Taylor 1989 masterfully explores.

Arthur, James. 2003. *Education With Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling*. London and New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

The leading British character education researcher provides nearly comprehensive background and history of character education in primary and secondary schooling; excellent introductory resource that offers much bibliography for the reader's deeper research.

Doris, John M. 2002. *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behavior*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Overview of moral psychology and character in a book that argues that character relies on a conception, "globalism," that entails untenable arguments, Doris contends, regarding consistency of behavior, stability of traits and evaluative integration that would make one trait predictive of similar ones. Hence character does not exist.

Hotter, Anthony C. and Darcia Narvaez. 2009. "Moral Development and Education." In *Encyclopedia of the life course and human development*, vol. 1. Edited by Deborah Carr, 312-316. Detroit: Macmillian Reference USA.

Provides a brief overview; emphasis is mostly on developmental psychological approaches to character, especially Piaget, Kohlberg, and their intellectual descendants.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good and Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Gives a thorough overview of the dominant approaches to character education and notes their aims, pedagogies, and results. The book also very helpfully articulates the often inexplicit philosophical and sociological underpinnings of modern and late-modern character education.

Peterson, Christopher and Martin E. P. Seligman. 2004. *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Oxford, New York and Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association and Oxford Univ. Press.

A taxonomy of traditional and progressive strengths and/or virtues in six groups: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Working within the framework of positive psychology, scholars chose 25 separate strengths and summarized consensual definitions, research, bibliographies, and developmental techniques for each.

Ryan, Kevin. 2002. "Moral Education." In *Encyclopedia of education*, vol. 5. Edited by James W. Guthrie, 1683-1688. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

One of the foremost researchers in the field gives a concise history of moral and character education, explains a few of the approaches (infusionist, service learning, value of the month), notes concern about the influence of religion but the hope, in his view, that "character" offers over "moral" to overcome such worries.

Taylor, Charles. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press.

Breathtaking in its scope and range, the book traces changes in human identity from "porous selves" to "buffered selves" detached from the world through instrumental reason, developing toward exclusive humanism; Taylor highlights the accompanying stances toward the self that set the stage for contemporary character education approaches.

Huitt, William G. and Gordon G. Vessels. 2003. "Character Development." In *Encyclopedia of education*, vol. 1. Edited by James W. Guthrie, 259-263. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Very brief overview of character education, including history (from 1640), current curricula and outlook for character in schools.

REFERENCE WORKS

Character education reference works are rare. Bibliographies by a leading empirical researcher in the field, Leming 1983a and Leming 1983b, as well as in McClellan 1992, helpfully categorize and annotate a sprawling literature. Topical summaries are provided in Power et al. 2008; Nucci and Narvaez 2008 includes much longer articles on major topics in the field. In the field of positive psychology, rigorous discussions of several character traits, with bibliographies and some histories, appear in Peterson and Seligman 2004. One approach to character education that lends itself to reference collections is the story or narrative strategy; Bennett 1993 provides literary work titles, introductions, and works or excerpts. Brooks 2015 covers a number of historical periods and approaches to character education, sketching a meritocratic American culture that excels at the "résumé virtues" but often neglects the "eulogy virtues."

Bennett, William J. 1993. *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Compiled and edited by a former U.S. education secretary, the book features literary works to teach character under ten headings: self-discipline, compassion, responsibility, friendship, work, courage, perseverance, honesty, loyalty and faith.

Brooks, David. 2015. *The Road to Character*. New York: Random House.

Brooks, a *New York Times* columnist who frequently writes about character and moral themes, draws a profound argument from Joseph Soloveitchik's *The Lonely Man of Faith* about tension between two human tendencies, utility and redemption. Character requires loves outside the self, ongoing battle with sin and weakness, and moral exemplars.

Leming, J. 1983a. *Contemporary Approaches to Moral Education: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Research*. New York and London: Garland Publishing.

Though now relatively old, this source summarizes many resources that are still relevant to character/moral education curricula.

Leming, J. 1983b. *Foundations of Moral Education: An Annotated Bibliography*. Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood Press.

A dated but useful resource by a leading empirical researcher in the field.

McClellan, B. Edward. 1992. *Schools and the Shaping of Character: Moral Education in America, 1607-present*. Bloomington, Ind.: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education.

Chapter 6 provides a 19-page annotated bibliography.

Nucci, L. P. and D. Narvaez. 2008. *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*. New York and London: Routledge.

Substantive essays by leading researchers who define the field, examine new approaches, and consider character education initiatives within and beyond schools. Covers many important topics in the field today.

Peterson, Christopher and Martin E. P. Seligman. 2004. *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Oxford, New York and Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association and Oxford Univ. Press.

Provides extensive bibliography and descriptions of assessment tools for twenty-four "character strengths" chosen by psychologists.

Power, C. F., R. J. Nuzzi, D. Narvaez, D. K. Lapsley and T. Hunt. 2008. *Moral Education: A Handbook*. 2 vols. Westport, Conn. And London: Praeger.

Extensive list of entries are provided with short but important bibliographies. As leading scholars in the field, the editors are helpful guides to the experts and topics.

DEFINING CHARACTER EDUCATION

The sources in this section seek directly or by extension to define character education. Some define it by distinguishing among similar programs. Doris 2002 argues against the existence of "character," positing that situations, rather than patterns of behavior or attachment to ideals, are predictive of human behavior, while Winton 2008 defines an explicitly political end: alternatives to capitalism through formation of children. The contours of character education can be defined when contrasted with fields potentially considered to be different: Davies et al. 2005 finds that while citizenship education aims to help people "relate to a polity," character education is aimed

at the idea that a person can become something other than what he or she is naturally, morality inside and outside a school. Alhof and Berkowitz 2006 argues character and citizenship/civic education to overlap significantly. Elias et al. 2007 finds that (certain expressions of) character and moral education overlap in two of four areas with social-emotional learning, “performance character” and “problem-solving/decision making.” Reviewing several definitions of character, Hunter 2000 argues that the form of character is comprised of three elements: moral discipline, moral attachment, and moral autonomy; that is, the ability to exercise self-restraint in pursuit of a greater good, a good to which one is attached and that therefore is binding on the conscience, not coercively but as a reflection of one's autonomy. This form requires particular and therefore diverse content.

Alhof, Wolfgang and Marvin W. Berkowitz. 2006. Moral Education and Character Education: Their Relationship and Roles in Citizenship Education. *Journal of Moral Education* 35.4:495-518.

Discusses much of the most important literature in these three (arguably two) very closely related fields. Character and citizenship education are envisioned as two circles in a Venn diagram in which the knowledge bases are “minimally overlapping,” the “targeted dispositions are highly overlapping” and skill sets “partially overlapping.”

Davies, I. S. Gorard and N. McGuinn. 2005. Citizenship Education and Character Education: Similarities and Contrasts. *British Journal of Educational Studies* 53:341-358.

Differentiates citizenship and character education and provides helpful definitions and maps of each domain, finding considerable overlap.

Doris, John M. 2002. *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behavior*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Doris argues against character's reality, claiming that humans are conditioned by the situations they confront, rather than consistent patterns of behavior or commitment to ideals. Character education through practice, reasoning, discussion, or any other activity, is not a valid activity, but choosing situations that will elicit an appropriate response.

Elias, Maurice J., Sarah J. Parker, V. Megan Kash and Ed Dunkeblau. 2007. Social-Emotional Learning and Character and Moral Education in Children: Synergy or Fundamental Divergence in Our Schools? *Journal of Research in Character Education* 5.2:167-181.

Taking as a goal of these three fields to find “more effective ways of managing emotional experiences and social relationships,” the authors conclude that the orientation of social-emotional learning toward action and skill can be merged with the concern for volition and intention often found in character and moral education programs.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good or Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Hunter defines character and therefore character education, emphasizing its social embedding, from a different perspective than most working in the field today.

Winton, S. 2008. “The Appeal(s) of Character Education in Threatening Times: Caring and Critical Democratic Responses.” *Comparative Education* 44.3:305-316.

A progressive review of definitions and contexts of character education that argues for a link with “neoliberal discourses” to consider “alternatives to free-market capitalism” through an ethic of caring and “critical democratic education.”

HISTORY

Few sources thoroughly treat the full history of character education. A major shift to observe from ancient to modern to late-modern conceptions of character (and, by extension, character education) is the relationship of the self/agent/person to an external moral law or code. Before modernity, the goal of character or moral education was to conform oneself to a moral standard—the Platonic Forms of justice, truth, goodness or other formulations of virtue; divine command and/or a personal relationship with God; the Confucian concern for living in conformity with the natural order or traditional values; and so on. Percy 2000 and Lewis 2001 are helpful for grasping the significance of this shift, whether it is seen as long-awaited liberation or disastrous folly. Arthur 2003 provides a long, thorough history of character education from a British perspective, while Lanham 1979 provides comparative nineteenth and twentieth century history on character and citizenship education of two of the opposing powers in World War II, the United States and Japan; this provides background on McGuffey Readers, which are important for the American context. Wren 2008 provides a basic grounding in important features of the intellectual history of the field. Hall 2008 provides a very brief and general history of character education. Most works take a narrative approach, but Peterson and Seligman 2004 consider the history of particular virtues identified by their team of psychologists. A review of the history, ideas and practices of eight religions—often important sources of moral authority and content for character education among their adherents and for those choosing parts of various traditions—is provided in Prothero 2010.

Arthur, James. 2003. *Education With Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling*. New York and London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Several chapters, including one explicitly on history, discuss the history of character education in Great Britain and the United States.

Hall, Scott E. 2008. “Character Education.” In *Moral Education: A Handbook*, vol. 1. Edited by F. Clark Power, Ronald J. Nuzzi, Darcia Narvaez, Daniel K. Lapsley, and Thomas C. Hunt, 63-65. Westport, Conn. and London: Praeger.

Brief history of character education with bibliography. Complemented by Cunningham 2008.

Lanham, Betty B. 1979. Ethics and Moral Precepts Taught in Schools of Japan and the United States. *Ethos* 7.1:1-18.

Comparative history of moral education that emphasizes McGuffey Readers and Golden Books, important in the U.S. context, as well as Japanese programs before and after World War II.

Lewis, C.S. 2001. *The Abolition of Man*. New York: HarperOne.

The well-known essayist and novelist tackles in this short book the loss of what he calls the Tao, an objective moral law, which was considered during most of history to be the distinguishing feature of humanity, and dramatically warns of its loss.

Percy, Walker. 2000. *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book*. New York: Picador. Hilariously funny, this novelist gently helps the reader to see what he considers to be the maladies of the modern self. The book contains an abundance of moral philosophy and psychology, unconventionally communicated. A perennial hit with students.

Peterson, Christopher and Martin E. P. Seligman. 2004. *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Oxford, New York and Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association and Oxford Univ. Press.

Chapter 2 gives a history of several virtues across several cultures, including discussions (rare in the field) of Islamic, Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist virtues.

Prothero, Stephen. 2010. *God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World*. New York: HarperOne.

In this thorough and important book, a Boston University religion professor offers historical and theological background on Islam, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba Religion, Judaism, Daoism. See also his book *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know--and Doesn't*, published in 2008, for information on possible sources of character.

Wren, Thomas. 2008. "Philosophical Moorings." In *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*. Edited by Larry P. Nucci and Darcia Narvaez. New York and London: Routledge. Provides intellectual history from Socrates through British empiricism to Rawls and MacIntyre. Very accessible for undergraduates.

Classical

Many works on character education perpetuate in saccharine fashion an ongoing interest in Aristotle's ethical ideas, especially the golden mean and the role of habits in shaping character. So Sherman 1989 is a welcomed study to more than fill out often inadequate portrayals of Aristotle. Lear 1988 sticks more closely to Aristotle's texts and uses Aristotle's own language, but both resources are helpful for beginners and more advanced enquirers alike. Plato's *Republic* considers the fundamental good that ought to be pursued—justice—in a complex argument described by Kraut 2007 that has been part of character formation considerations since the Classical Greek period. Jaeger 1943-1945 paints a much broader landscape of Greek thinkers, beginning with Homer, to show the importance of character for Greek education and culture. Marrou 1982 describes, largely from literary evidence, education in ancient Greece, including character's pride of place, and the transference of this and other ideals and practices to Roman educators, including Virgil, Quintilian and Cicero, each of whom deserves more attention from late modern character educators. A more technical study of this topic (third century BC through the eighth century AD) based on school materials accidentally preserved on ancient paper known as papyrus, Morgan 1998 reveals much evidence of emphasis on virtue in school writing lessons. These ideas come from intellectual elites, but Hanson 1999 offers a compelling corrective and the earliest foundation of moral education in the classical world: the work ethic, discipline and other virtues exhibited by middling farmers after the fall of Mycenaean Greece. They obtained title to their property and pioneered innovative agricultural techniques that allowed them to create prosperity for their own subsequent generations. Perhaps more importantly, these virtues

also created the culture conducive to the Greek *poleis* that fostered the output of Greek technology and literature that became the basis of cultures around the world.

Hanson, Victor Davis. 1999. *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization, with a New Preface and Bibliographic Essay*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and New York: Univ. of California Press.

Hanson is a leading scholar of Greek agriculture and military history. This book is his doctoral dissertation; it broke new ground in the field of classics and the study of comparative literature.

Jaeger, Werner. 1943-1945. *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*. Translated by Gilbert Highet. 3 vols. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.

A translation of *Paideia: die Formung des griechischen Menschen* that appeared in 1934, the three volumes cover Archaic Greece (especially Homer) and the Greek philosophers (especially Plato and Aristotle) and explicate the central concern for human formation among Greek thinkers.

Kraut, Richard. 2007. "The Defense of Justice in Plato's Republic." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, 311-337. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

While there are countless good entry points to the topic of Plato's notion of the good and how it should be pursued, this is a strong introduction to the notion of the greatest good as Plato discusses in the *Republic*, justice—the soul whose parts are harmonious or well-ordered.

Lear, Jonathan. 1988. *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. A leading Aristotle scholar, Lear provides a rigorous and thorough reading of Aristotle's work on character formation with not infrequent references to Plato.

Marrou, H. I. 1982. *A History of Education in Antiquity*. Translated by G. Lamb. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

First published as *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* in 1948. While Marrou's scope is a discussion of ancient sources related to education in its fullest sense, character formation was a chief end of education among Greeks and Romans. Marrou emphasizes the foundational importance of Socrates in this. Helpful bibliography included.

Morgan, Theresa. 1998. *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Path-breaking in its field, Morgan's study finds much evidence in school papyri of lessons on virtue, especially what was expected in social relations. Important virtues were truth, earning a good reputation, justice, a worthy death, loyalty to friends, trustworthiness; the Roman rhetorician Quintilian insisted on the importance of moral instruction.

Sherman, N. 1989. *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sherman succeeds in explaining Aristotle's theory of character; the book helpfully explains the centrality of the person of practical wisdom (*phronimos*) as one who possess good character,

contextualizing the more common focus only on Aristotle's ethical habituation with one's requisite shaping of desires through perceiving, forming beliefs, and acting.

Late Antique and Medieval

Augustine of Hippo's voluminous work deals extensively with character or moral formation as the pursuit of the supreme good; Kent 2001 well summarizes this, and Brown 2000, a biography of Augustine, gives a much broader view of relevant material. Members of early Christian monastic communities fled ecclesiastical careers and material concerns to attend to purify the soul in dialogue with God, illustrated by Bunge 2009. Laker 1974 exemplifies that the formation of character in monastic life involved intense communities comprised of friendships. Shatz 2005 expounds important moral texts of the towering Jewish philosopher Maimonides. Confession of one's sins based on a system of virtues and vices was central to those in religious orders and to laity alike, Firey 2009 shows, which required that those who were literate and could access such a system would inform those who could not. Wallach 1955 shows the ways in which the earlier Alcuin of York, an advisor to Charlemagne, advised the lay person Wido to read daily from a breviary to encourage the formation of virtue and fleeing of vice in his daily secular pursuits, reflecting an older tradition he received from such leaders as Gregory the Great. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century revived Aristotelean notions of character or moral action, and McNerny 1993 describes the Thomist notion of the human agent as one who acts with a view to the good, or to virtuous ends, to ends that conform to a thing's natural or proper function.

Brown, Peter. 2000. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography, Revised Edition with a New Epilogue*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Brown, one of the foremost scholars of Late Antiquity, originally published this book in 1967. His chapter on Pelagius, who believed human beings could be perfect and with whom Augustine engaged in a major controversy, is relevant to character, as is much of the book. Epilogue accounts for new manuscripts.

Bunge, Gabriel. 2009. *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread: The Teaching of Evagrius Ponticus on Anger and Meekness*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press.

Evagrius (d. A.D. 399) was admired by Sozomen as subduing "vanity and pride" such "that he was neither inflated by applause...nor indignant at an insult." This close reading provides but one example of monastic confrontation of inner vices through prayer, demonstrating the depths of inner life explored in this period.

Firey, Abigail. 2009. *A Contrite Heart: Prosecution and Redemption in the Carolingian Empire*. Leiden: Brill.

Example regarding character formation: "In the morally oriented analysis of guilt emerging in Carolingian legal discourse, both the personal and social fabric needed repair. The interior condition of the culprit required change, and the social conditions that permitted or encouraged Christian souls to succumb to the vices should be improved."

Kent, Bonnie. 2001. "Augustine's Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 205-233. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. Offers a reading of Augustine covering his scope of work well that is historically situated but not

overly preoccupied, as some Augustine studies are, with a discussion of influences (especially Platonism) on Augustine. Basic entry-point to Augustine; *City of God* Book 8 and *Confessions* (Oxford edition edited by Chadwick) recommended.

Laker, Mary Eugenia, trans. 1974. *Aelred of Rievaulx. Spiritual Friendship*. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications.

Part of the Cistercian order (12th Century) led by Bernard of Clairvaux, Alered composed this work as a dialogue, illustrating stylistically the medieval but timeless crucible of character formation. Deeming Cicero's *De amicitia* insufficient, Aelred articulates friendship's ascent to the love of God and descent to service toward one's friend.

McInerny, Ralph. 1993. "Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*. Edited by Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, 196-216. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
Aquinas expert offers an introductory level but rigorous analysis of the *Summa theologiae*.

Shatz, David. 2005. "Maimonides' Moral Theory." In *The Cambridge Companion to Maimonides*. Edited by Kenneth Seeskin, 167-192. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
Introduction to Maimonides' moral and ethical texts—*Eight Chapters, Laws of Character Traits*, and *Guide of the Perplexed*—which, following Aristotle, prioritized intellectual virtue (which teaches "true opinions concerning the divine things") over moral virtue. An incisive discussion of the morality that creates conditions for "intellectual perfection" and consequent morality.

Wallach, Luitpold. 1955. Alcuin on Virtues and Vices: A Manual for a Carolingian Soldier. *Harvard Theological Review* 48.3:175-195.

Examines Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*, which was to be read frequently and memorized so the reader could learn what to do and avoid: life is a war between the cardinal virtues (justice, fortitude, prudence, temperance) and eight major vices (pride, gluttony, lust, avarice, anger, sloth, sorrow and vainglory).

Modernity

The sources in this section are extraordinarily diverse and incomplete because of the cataclysmic shifts that occurred during the long period of modernism. Early in the period, the sixteenth-century Protestant reformers focused much attention on the notion that a person's salvation from sins occurred as a result of one's faith alone, rather than deeds or other personal merits, thus focusing on the nature of personal responsibility before God. Arand and Kolb 2008 describes how Martin Luther approached character formation with catechesis in the Christian home after a child had received justification through the sacrament of Baptism. Bousma 1988, on John Calvin, demonstrates the rigor of "sanctification" in the Swiss Reformer's life and theology. Personal reception of and interaction with the Bible was central, as it was for the Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation but often in a contemplative mode, seen particularly, as Endean 2008 demonstrates, in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola. Taylor 1989 draws on the Protestant Reformers, Descartes, Locke, Rousseau and others to explain the genesis of the modern individual as a "buffered" self who experiences and can control the external world only through the mediation of the mind (Descartes) and, in another form, attempts to recover from this "disenchantment" with the natural world by becoming authentically expressive of one's unique

nature (see especially Rousseau 1956). Taylor shows how this move affects the understanding of time, interiority, and knowledge, all of which are essential to the notion of making over, managing and/or authentically expressing the self, which is an essential background understanding for many character education approaches. Based on the Hebrew Bible and Rabbinic texts, eighteenth-century Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto composed works still used today for character education (Leibler 2004). Kant retains an external moral law to which one must make oneself conform by his rational nature to fulfill one's duties, as Denis 2007 explains. Freud threw off such conformity in dramatic fashion: Rieff 1979 reveals the ways in which Freud used person types from drama to show how character develops through crises unearthed from the deep inner recesses of a person through the memory and talk of psychoanalytic therapy.

Arand, Charles and Robert Kolb. **"Conversations on the Catechism."* Concordia Seminary, iTunes University. January 14, 2008.[<https://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/conversations-on-catechism/id426795618?mt=10>]*.

Lutheran scholars provide expert video discussion of the essence of Martin Luther's life, pedagogy and work. Each part of Luther's Small Catechism, as well as Luther's pedagogical approach, is explored, including unmerited justification, sacraments (Baptism and Lord's Supper), the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the Table of Duties/Responsibilities.

Bousma, William J. 1988. *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait*. New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

This book offers an important biography of an important figure of the Protestant Reformation. Drawing from Calvin's sermons, commentaries, and his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Bousma situates the importance of education and of moral instruction in the context of Calvin's own formation, historical situation and theology.

Denis, Lara. 2007. "Kant's Conception of Virtue." In *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*. Edited by Paul Guyer, 505-537. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. Situates Kant's moral philosophy within a concisely, thoroughly articulated context of moral philosophers from Plato to Hume. Kant is important for Dewey, Kohlberg and others in the character education field.

Endean, Philip. 2008. "The Spiritual Exercises." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*. Edited by Thomas Worcester, 52-67. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. Summarizes the Ignatian exercises which are the foundation of the Jesuit order and (continue to) influence moral formation among laity in the Roman Catholic Church.

Leibler, Yosef, translator. 2004. Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, *The Path of the Just*. Jerusalem and Nanuet, N.Y.: Feldheim Publishers.

English translation of *Mesillas Yesharim* appears on the facing page with Hebrew text. The work provides "methods and devices" for overcoming "natural states" to perfect character. Adopted by the Musar movement in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century. Could be used with *Gates of Repentance* or other Musar texts.

Rousseau, Jean Jacques. 1956. *Emile*. Translated by William Boyd. New York: Teachers College Press.

Originally published in France (*Émile, ou de l'Éducation*) in 1762, *Emile* is one work that establishes Rousseau as the source of Romantic expressivism. This movement is influential in many approaches to character that take the conscience or sentiments as part of nature and therefore as defining what is good.

Rieff, Philip. 1979. *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*. 3rd edition. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press.

Brilliant monograph—Rieff's doctoral dissertation—originally published in 1959, explaining Freud in his own terms. The epilogue added to the third edition, "The Emergence of Psychological Man," is deeply incisive and, with his *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud*, provides important context for understanding character formation.

Taylor, Charles. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press.

In this landmark study, Taylor's language and style are accessible to undergraduates, but his topic is daunting and his argument rigorous. Phenomenologically, Taylor details the three major themes of the modern identity—inwardness (detached, instrumental reason), affirmation of ordinary life, and the voice of nature (romanticism)—and cross-pressures among these.

North Atlantic and Continental

McClellan 1992 demonstrates that character education was important to the early settlers in the United States, as it was for the early founders of the U.S. republic, who drew especially from the classical tradition of Greece and Rome, as argued by Richard 1995. Dewey 1909 locates moral and/or social concerns at the center of education. The study Hartshorne and May 1924-1929 of character education efforts found that direct moral instruction had no effect on the behavior of U.S. students in grades five through eight (see *Empirical Research*), but Leming 2008 finds that contemporary and subsequent programs were not revised. A growing pluralism begins to impinge on character education, as Hunter 2000 shows for the U.S. context and as Condorcet 1932 evidences in other ways in his eighteenth-century polemic in France. Arthur 2003 lays out a narrative showing the transition from the specificity of a dominant source of character education to universal sources. Public opinion in the United States supported a prioritization of character in 2000, Hunter and Bowman 2000 shows, but its form, content or formation are vague and general.

Arthur, James. 2003. *Education With Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling*. New York and London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Several chapters discuss important historical developments in both Great Britain and the United States regarding policy, programs and intellectual underpinnings for character education.

Condorcet, Marie Jean Nicholas de Caritat. 1932. "Report on the General Organization of the Public Instruction." In *French Liberalism and Education in the XVIII Century*. Edited and translated by F. De La Fontainerie, 313-378. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company. Originally published in 1792, during the French Revolution, Condorcet here gives a defense of universal education that should include teaching morality to students.

Dewey, J. 1909. *Moral Principles in Society*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

A brief, clear, concise statement of Dewey's educational philosophy and its implications for character education; Dewey gives his explanation of character as comprised of "force" (power to stand up, initiative, persistence), judgment (evaluation of knowledge to find valuable ends), and action (not attachment to rules, but sympathetic, flexible and open).

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good or Evil*.

Demonstrates the striking degree to which character education reflects the historical situatedness of moral culture throughout American history, from its Puritan beginnings through a long period of pan-Protestantism to universal values, driven by an increasing religious pluralism and multiculturalism.

Hunter, James Davison and Carl Bowman. 2000. [*Survey of American Public Culture: The Politics of Character*](#). Charlottesville: Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia.

Publication reports results of a survey on the importance of character, its relationship with democracy, and the contours of moral communities, finding notions of character—though considered by an overwhelming majority to be important—weak or very vague. Important historical source for those interested in character in the United States.

Leming, James S. 2008. Theory, Research, and Practice in the Early Twentieth Century Character Education Movement. *Journal of Research in Character Education* 6.2:17-36.

A widely cited reinterpretation of the effect of a seminal character education study in the United States.

McClellan, B. Edward. 1992. *Schools and the Shaping of Character: Moral Education in America, 1607-present*. Bloomington, Ind.: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education.

Thorough study examining early America, the desire for liberty and self-restraint in the nineteenth century, the relationship of moral education and religion, modernity (especially through Dewey's influence), the decline of character education after World War II and its revival through values clarification and neoclassicism in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

Richard, Carl J. 1995. *The Founders and the Classics: Greece, Rome and the American Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press.

Introductory-level text that demonstrates the importance of training in virtue that the American founders inherited from their own education in the Greek and Roman philosophers, historians, and dramatists. Richard's text clearly establishes that the founders saw virtue as necessary to the survival of the republic.

Late Modernity

The notion of universal moral laws is deeply suspect to many working on moral philosophy and, by extension, character education in late modernity. Rorty 2007 and Rorty 1999 are excellent examples, and, from a different angle, Doris 2002 attempts to demonstrate that even the notion of

character is empirically dubious. Indeed, this kind of view has permeated into popular culture and deeply affects moral views and religious practice as part of a phenomenon that Taylor 2007 calls the “nova effect,” a “galloping pluralism” that began as a reaction among elites in modernity to exclusive humanism, which caused cascading differences to appear as it became part of our everyday belief and practices as expressive individuals. Addressing the idea that the sanctions of moral authority “are declining in force,” Richards 1970 argued that something was needed to take the place of the “old order” for the “moral ordering of the impulses” and poetry offers such a prospect. Rawls 1971 attempts to locate a theory of justice that could apply universally to hold together democratic societies, which is influential on Kohlberg and many others working directly in the character education field. Concern is also registered about ideologies and institutions that dominate individuals and their bodies, and Foucault 1995 provides a paradigmatic case in direct relation to methods of developing discipline. Contrary to much of this, Lasch 1997 raises alarm about these and other features of late modernity.

Doris, John M. 2002. *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behavior*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Thoroughly argued and rigorously documented. Doris rejects globalism for situationism: “Engaging situationism can enable loving friendship because affection for others would not be contingent on their conformity to unrealistic standards of character. With luck, situationist tuning of the emotions could increase our ever-short supply of compassion, forgiveness, and fair-mindedness.”

Foucault, Michel. 1995. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Modern Prison*. New York: Vintage Books.

One of the famous late-modern philosopher’s most lauded works. Originally published as *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison* in 1975, the book rigorously argues that the Western prison developed techniques to coerce and dominate individuals by training the body’s habits and behavior, notions that Foucault sees as applying broadly.

Lasch, Christopher. 1997. *Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company.

This popular book exposes the ways in which features associated with late modernity—devaluation of history, the erosion of authority, diminishing role of certain institutions like the family, and the influence of therapeutic techniques throughout U.S. society—have led to significant cultural decline.

Rawls, John. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press.

This widely influential and much-discussed work that has been republished several times has informed many working on character education, including Kohlberg.

Richards, I.A. 1970. *Poetries and Sciences*. New York and London: W.W. Norton.

Originally published as *Science and Poetry* in 1926. Richards was an early critic of modernism, a literary scholar who argued that criticism should offer a theory of value, which required that critics engage in social and moral questions often avoided in the arts. His views are often associated with Utilitarianism.

Rorty, Richard. 1999. *Philosophy and Social Hope*. New York: Penguin.

Rorty builds on his philosophical work, especially his early *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, to suggest, as a pragmatist with Dewey, that we stop asking traditional questions about epistemology and metaphysics. He discusses the implications of these ideas for education in Chapter 7.

Rorty, Richard. 2007. Dewey and Posner on Pragmatism and Moral Progress. *The University of Chicago Law Review* 74.3:915-927.

One of the most influential late-modern philosophers posthumously restates the importance of Dewey and moral progress, despite the loss, in his view, of an objective point for judging whether progress has been made: we can “hope that we will look good to our future selves, and to future generations.”

Taylor, Charles. 2007. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press.

The renowned philosopher argues, in 850 pages, secularity is best understood not as religion’s retreat from the public square, nor decline in religious practice, but the cultural conditions that led to the shift from the inconceivability of disbelief in God to the inconceivability now of not choosing belief or unbelief.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

These references include studies of the audiences with which character education is practiced and institutions in which it is applied, as well as the overlap between the two. Character education programs usually focus on children and adolescents. Davis 2009 and Hunter 2009 give important sociological insights about working with youth. Character education programs usually take place in schools, often in high schools, and Romanowski 2005 gives a faculty-level view of this; DeRoche and Williams 2001 offers background and guidance to public school leaders, while Seider 2012 examines character education in Boston, Massachusetts, public schools as a guide to educators and policy makers. Several sources address character formation in higher education, and Rivers 2004 provides a good start. Sports programs, typically involving youth, are a growing area of interest, which Shields and Bredemeier 2008 explores. Theories and practice about moral education appear in criminal justice and corrections; Hampton 1984 offers an example. Social work is another field that involves moral or character development, a feature about which Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman 2010 theorizes, as well as prescribing practices, approaches and programs.

Davis, Joseph E. Adolescents and the Pathologies of the Achieving Self. 2009. *The Hedgehog Review: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Culture* 11.1:37-49.

Extraordinarily revealing study of the pressures faced by adolescents in the institutions of family and school that can cause sadness, anxiety and obsessiveness when they fail to perform.

DeRoche, Edward F. and Mary W. Williams. 2001. *Character Education: A Guide for School Administrators*. London: Scarecrow Press.

A manual that gives a fairly comprehensive overview of character education programs available and tools for administrators to implement these curricula.

Hampton, Jean. 1984. "The Moral Education Theory of Punishment." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 13.3:208-238.

This theory and its practice involve objective judgments about right and wrong, moral responsibility and autonomy of criminals. The article distinguishes among competing theories of punishment: punishment is not for treatment of a sickness nor success in society, but rather a message about what is moral and growth in morality.

Hunter, James Davison. Wither Adulthood?. 2009. *The Hedgehog Review: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Culture* 11.1:7-17.

Traces the reasons for childhood's extension into later ages such that adulthood is likely to be remade with consequences for the ability of social institutions to encourage character (responsibility, commitment, loyalty, industry) that led to external marks of maturity (ongoing employment, marriage, economic stability), even as those institutions helped to remake adulthood.

Rivers, Thomas M. Ten Essentials for Character Education. 2004. *Journal of General Education* 53.3-4:247-260.

Addresses the responsibility of higher education to address character. Not systematic or invoking scholarly reference, the essay discusses promoting virtues related to being "a good knower," which should be "liberating." Character is comprised of "privileged personality traits" that should be developed as part of the overall university curriculum and approach.

Seider, Scott. 2012. *Character Compass: How Powerful School Culture Can Point Students Toward Success*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Education Press.

Character education programs and practices in three urban public charter schools are aimed at improving academic outcomes rather than as a competitor to academics, as character education is sometimes framed in discussions of public education. Adopts Berkowitz's three-fold division: "moral," "civic," and "performance" character.

Shields, David Light and Brenda Light Bredemeier. 2008. "Sport and the Development of Character." In *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*. Edited by Larry P. Nucci and Darcia Narvaez, 500-519. New York and London: Routledge.

Thorough discussion of a growing application of character education to sports, including topics such as sportsmanship, moral reasoning, game reasoning, and moral atmosphere of teams. The essay provides a discussion of studies on morality in sports and motivation for achievement.

Zastrow, Charles and Karen K. Kirst-Ashman. 2010. *Understanding Human Behavior and the Social Environment*. Belmont, Calif.: Brooks Cole.

An example of a social work textbook with several character education programs' approaches in evidence. These include developmental frameworks of various stages of childhood and adolescence, strategies to build self-esteem, conflict resolution, pro-social behavior, and Kohlberg and Gilligan's strategies of moral development.

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Many approaches to character education involve the development of the individual through a psychological process in which increasing cognitive functionality leads to a change in perspective. Applications of such theories, such as Jean Piaget's described in Carpendale 2009, abound in character education. Piaget's theories are applied, for example, by DeVries and Zan 1994. Building on Piaget in some ways, Kohlberg and his followers in Power, et al. 1989 argued for a process through which children ascend in five stages by reasoning in guided discussions to reach a sixth stage in which one is motivated by a Rawlsian and Habermasian explanation of a Kantian notion of justice: maximum liberty that allows for the same liberty for others and equality that does not accept inequality except as would be acceptable to those with the least power, status, and goods. Kohlberg's notions repose on Dewey, who argues for a democratic process of creating rules in a just community of which schools should offer direct experience, and on Emile Durkheim, who argued that the community inspires in members the discipline to follow the group's rules, as well as the altruism to give up one's private goods to the group or its members. Gilligan 1993 critiqued Kohlberg's stages by arguing for gender differences (missed by Kohlberg) that point to an ethic of care. Park 2004 argues that a Kohlbergian approach overemphasizes cognition and does not consider behavior robustly enough. Character Lab 2015 adapts psychological research of character strengths, growth mindsets, belonging, and pro-social purpose for various school-based applications. Nucci 2008 argues that children's moral cognition involves distinct domains of conventions specific to a cultural setting, of common moral concerns of fairness and welfare and of private behavior with personal discretion, and that "concepts of morality [e.g., stealing, slander] are not dependent upon adherence to religious faith." While this may obtain in controlled studies about cognition, Hunter 2000 argues that without strong sources—like symbols, stories, religious texts, practices and the like—it is impossible to develop the moral discipline necessary to form character, one of the few full critiques of the psychological approach. See *Modern Character Programs* for more discussion of the psychological approach.

Carpendale, Jeremy I. M. 2009. "Piaget's Theory of Moral Development." In *The Cambridge Companion to Piaget*. Edited by Ulrich Müller, Jeremy I.M. Carpendale and Leslie Smith, 270-286. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Carpendale explains Piaget's theory while also describing how this theory has been used, rejected, and re-interpreted. Kohlberg's use of Piaget is discussed extensively.

Character Lab. 2015. "[What is Character?](#)".

Character Lab applies psychological research to K-12 schools, drawing especially on the work of Martin Seligman, Angela Duckworth, Carol Dweck, William Damon, Greg Walton, and Walter Mischel. Offers a Character Growth Report Card, descriptions of selected "character strengths" from positive psychology, videos on various techniques, and links to research.

DeVries, Rheta and Betty Zan. 1994. *Moral Classrooms, Moral Children: Creating a Constructivist Atmosphere in Early Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Applying Jean Piaget's theories about the moral and cognitive development of children, this book advises teachers how to shape children's morals with techniques for creating a classroom environment, resolving conflict, structuring group work, discussing morals and the like.

Gilligan, Carol. 1993. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press.

A student of Kohlberg, Gilligan's work has spanned decades; in character education, this book and other of her works are used to argue for a differentiated process of moral development in boys than girls, who are motivated by care and responsibility for others in need.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good or Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Hunter offers extensive discussion of psychologists who address character education, usually allowing them to speak for themselves with heavy quotation. Nonetheless, he decisively rejects the psychological answer to the question, Why be good?, which is typically, because you will feel better about yourself.

Nucci, Larry P. 2008. "Social Cognitive Domain Theory and Moral Education." In *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*. Edited by Larry P. Nucci and Darcia Narvaez, 291-309. New York and London: Routledge.

A concise summary of Nucci's domain theory, for which he has argued much more extensively in monographs and journals.

Park, N. 2004. "Character Strengths and Positive Youth Development." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 591:40-54.

Takes a strengths-based, rather than a deficits-based, approach characteristic of the growing field of positive psychology.

Power, F. C., A. Higgins and L. Kohlberg. 1989. *Lawrence Kohlberg's Approach to Moral Education*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.

Reviews the results from "just community" experimental schools, assesses the viability of the Kohlbergian approach, and hopes to replace techno-bureaucratic strategies of problem solving in schools to form institutions that embody "cherished values" (306).

Tappan, Mark. 2008. "Narrative/Hermeneutic Approach." In *Moral Education: A Handbook, Volume Two*, 308-310. Edited by B. Power, C. F., R. J. Nuzzi, D. Narvaez, D. K. Lapsley and T. Hunt. Westport, Conn. And London: Praeger.

The approach emphasizes the self as a product of language rather than simply a user of language, and relationships and conversations rather than individual development. It examines not moral reasoning but the "voices" that mediate moral experience.

COMMUNITARIAN APPROACHES

Arthur 1998 is very useful for background understanding and practical emphases of communitarianism and its concern for character education. Communitarianism shuns an individualistic approach and affirms the need to build a cohesive community, emphasizing consensual values. Perhaps the leading intellectual and advocate of a communitarian approach to character education is Amitai Etzioni. One good example of his advocacy work is Etzioni 1983. Developing common values by having shared experiences is key to this approach, and service learning projects are the most efficient and direct methodology. Billig et al. 2008 assesses one

such project in Philadelphia. Andersen 1998 provides guidelines for educators and others. As Etzioni 1998 argues, the strategy involves identifying values that are held in common despite other differences, a strategy evidenced by the Josephson Institute.

Andersen, Susan M. 1998. [Service Learning: A National Strategy for Youth Development](#). Several members of the Communitarian Network advised Andersen on this web-based publication. The site makes recommendations for developing partnerships, finding seed funding, ensuring quality, and assessing impact.

Arthur, James. 1998. Communitarianism: What are Implications for Education? *Educational Studies* 24.3:353-368.

Provides extensive discussion of the underpinnings and popular expressions of communitarian thought and social action, including the extensive emphasis on moral education, virtue, and character.

Billig, Shelley H., Dan Jesse and Michelle Grimley. 2008. Using Service-Learning to Promote Character Education in a Large Urban District. *Journal of Research in Character Education* 6.1:21-34.

The article analyzes a four-year study that found statistically-significant results for service-learning projects that reflected high-quality practice and in which the teachers were sufficiently experienced. The program involved having students identify community needs, develop and implement plans, and reflect on their experiences.

Etzioni, Amitai. 1983. A Remedy for Overlearning: A Year of Required Service. *Change* 15.4:7-9.

Argues that citizens require shared experiences to develop “shared values that are essential if the polity is to reach agreement on courses of action with sufficient speed and without disruptive conflict.” In response, Etzioni proposes a mandatory year of service.

Etzioni, Amitai. 1998. How Not to Discuss Character Education. *The Phi Delta Kappan* 79.6:446-448.

Emphasizes the influence of the whole school on character, the importance of developing self-discipline and empathy, and teaching only those values “that we all share.”

Josephson Institute. [Six Pillars of Character](#).

This brief web page describes the Character Counts! program's approach to character education using “ethical values that everyone can agree on—values that are not political, religious, or culturally biased.”

NEO-CLASSICAL APPROACHES

In response to moral relativism of the values clarification movement of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as other approaches that attempt not to offend those who hold differing views, some have advocated for a return to classical virtues. One approach, virtue ethics, is defined by Carr and Steutel 1999 as concerned that moral education aim to develop virtue and argues that the approach refers to scalar properties (a person or act cannot be less obligatory or rightest but can

be more courageous or less admirable) of agents, acts, or a hybrid. Classical virtues are often built into classical education frameworks and programs, and Wise and Wise Bauer 1999 is an excellent example. Reading and discussing stories in which traditional values or classical virtues can be readily identified has been a popular pedagogical approach that can be seen in Bennett 1993 and Guroian 1998. Such collections can be edited with different perspectives, however, so a less-traditional example is Greer and Kohl 1995. Wilson 1993 takes a different approach and argues for common moral sentiments that should be cultivated through practice and formation of habit, invoking a common source for neo-classical approaches: Aristotle. A neo-Aristotelian curriculum is offered by Wright, et al. 2015 for teachers of late-primary and secondary-school students. Scoggin 2013 outlines the approach taken by Great Hearts Academies, a network of public charter schools that uses a Great Books curriculum and Socratic seminars to form character in its K-12 students.

Bennett, William J. 1993. *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Popular book with selections that attempt to illustrate values. Useful for parents and schools. (See *Reference Works*)

Carr, D. and J. Steutel, eds. 1999. *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education*. London and New York: Routledge.

Introduction and conclusion provide helpful mapping of the field, and chapters engage with boundaries between virtue ethics and other approaches, such as Kantianism and utilitarianism.

Greer, Colin and Herbert Kohl. 1995. *A Call to Character: A Family Treasury of Stories, Poems, Plays, Proverbs and Fables to Guide the Development of Values for You and Your Children*. New York: HarperCollins.

In addition to more traditional values like self-discipline and responsibility, this collection includes others such as playfulness, creativity, adaptability, idealism and fairness. Range of literary selections covers about four centuries.

Guroian, Vigen. 1998. *Tending the Heart of Virtue: How Classic Stories Awaken a Child's Moral Imagination*. Oxford and New York: Oxford Univ. Press.

Organized around the topics of growing up, love and immortality, friends and mentors, evil and redemption, faith and courage. Insightful discussions of character education, the theory of using stories, and material on the importance and salient points of the ten featured stories.

Scoggin, Dan. [Educating Great Hearts: Liberal Education and Inscribing Character](#). Phoenix: GreatHearts Academies.

Scoggin provides an overview of how character education occurs in this network of schools—not through a program but through the whole curriculum, culture and faculty of the schools. Thoroughly classical in its approach.

Wilson, James Q. 1993. *The Moral Sense*. New York: The Free Press.

Rather than taking a view that the loss of moral bearings or religious attachments have caused moral disorder, the well-regarded political scientist argues that people have persuaded

themselves not to pay attention to their innate moral sense. Moral sentiments come from human nature, family experiences, biology and gender, and culture.

Wise, Jessie and Susan Wise Bauer. 1999. *The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home*. 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton.

Mother and daughter lay out in great detail a classical curriculum (grammar, logic/dialectic, rhetoric as components), where classical virtues are often embedded. Also contains chapters dealing with socialization and with character. Widely influential among homeschooling parents, as the approach is among private educational providers. See also its [companion web site](#).

Wright, Dan, Ian Morris and Matt Bawden. 2015. [Character Education: A Taught Course for 11 to 16 Year Olds](#). Birmingham, UK: The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues.

Written by secondary school educators, this teacher's guide offers one version of a neo-Aristotelian approach to character education with a useful introduction, three approaches to using the curriculum, 31 themes, and self-reporting evaluation. [Downloadable resources for each of the 31 themes](#) include a PowerPoint and plans for more than 100 lessons. Useful annotated reading list.

MODERN CHARACTER PROGRAMS

Character education curricula are legion. Leming 1997 finds widespread diversity among several programs' pedagogies and content. Hunter 2000 offers a thorough critique of many exemplary programs. Lickona and Davidson 2005 is a program for high schools that draws from communitarian, neo-classical and psychological approaches; it reflects Lickona's earlier work that attempts to provide a guidebook for parents and schools to shape the elements of good character: moral knowing (awareness, knowledge of moral values, perspective-taking, reasoning, decision-making, self-knowledge), moral feeling (conscience, self-esteem, empathy, loving the good, self-control, humility), and moral action (competence, will, habit), thereby uniting approaches to character as diverse as those of Aristotle, Piaget, Kohlberg, and C.S. Lewis.

****Character Education Partnership**** uses nearly the same approaches but offers awards as incentives and benchmarks of best practice. Ryan 2003 emphasizes the importance developing virtue through habits, engaging parents and all school staff, making character part of the school's community, and drawing curriculum components from the long history of moral education. Sanchez 2008 provides an example of an "infusionist" approach, adding character themes to literature or other curricular topics. Most programs attempt to avoid imposing particular morals on anyone; perhaps the clearest example, now discredited, is Rath, et al. 1966. An increasingly popular approach—using positive psychology to focus on identifying and developing character strengths in students—is described by Park and Peterson 2009. Several other programs are described in the empirical literature, which is summarized in **Empirical Research**.

[Character Education Partnership](#).

National and state award program that selects schools that meet certain standards based on self-assessment and artifacts. The objective is to improve character education in the United States by inspiring other schools through these exemplars and by profiling best practices centered on eleven principles through publications and an annual conference.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good or Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Hunter offers the most thorough review of character education curricula from the dominant psychological, communitarian, and neoclassical approaches; allowing the aims, pedagogy and content of the curricula's authors to speak for themselves, Hunter provides a fair-minded and critical analysis.

Leming, James S. 1997. Whither Goes Character Education? Objectives, Pedagogy, and Research in Education Programs. *Journal of Education* 179.2:11-34.

Reviews major emphases in U.S. character education programs since 1966 and discusses the objectives, pedagogy, and evaluation of ten prominent character education programs, including the Character Education Curriculum, the Child Development Project and the Responsive Classroom.

Lickona, Thomas and Matthew Davidson. 2005. *Smart and Good High Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School, Work, and Beyond*. Cortland, N.Y. and Washington, D.C.: Center for the 4th and 5th Rs and Character Education Partnership.

The reader will recognize in this 250-page book definitions, methods and priorities from several approaches to character—psychological, neo-classical and communitarian. Character is divided between “moral” and “performance” traits. The book is intended to serve as a step-by-step guide to implement its ideas.

Park, Nansook and Christopher Peterson. 2009. “Strengths of Character in Schools.” In *Handbook of positive psychology in schools*. Edited by Rich Gilman, E. Scott Huebner and Michael J. Furlong, 65-76. New York and Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Describes how schools can use character strengths, especially the strengths classification, a survey instrument prepared and managed by the Values in Action Institute. Among fascinating findings: youths studied by the authors “show most of the components of good character” and a majority “have developed a set of ... strengths.”

Ryan, Kevin. 2003. *Building Character in Schools: Practical Ways to Bring Moral Instruction to Life*. New York: Jossey-Bass.

This curriculum, by one of the leaders in the field, is accompanied by a resource guide with a reading list, film guide, and a model framework. Resources available on Boston University's

Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character[<http://www.bu.edu/education/caec/>]

Raths, Louis E., Merrill Harmin and Sidney B. Simon. 1966. *Values and Teaching*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing.

The originating text for “values clarification,” whereby teachers were not to “preach” or “indoctrinate,” but help students to make explicit what they themselves believed.

Sanchez, Tony R. 2008. Harry Truman and the Atomic Bomb: An Excursion into Character Education Through Storytelling. *American Secondary Education* 35.1:58-65.

A University of Toledo professor uses history to stimulate discussion and reasoning about character. Questions for discussion include: What values can be readily identified? Are these

values still important today? Are the decisions relevant to situations today? What contemporaries could be compared with the primary actor in the story?

CHARACTER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

Laws in the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries have intended to require that primary and secondary schools include character education in their curricula. Arthur 2003 and Arthur 2005 provide very good overviews, though the latter work is more thorough in its policy discussion on the U.K. Cooley 2008 evaluates a North Carolina law but sees it as paradigmatic of laws in other states. Glanzer and Milson 2006 provides a more systematic evaluation of laws in several U.S. states. Hunter 2000 shows how such laws have become more general over time. Regardless of political commitments, all of these works are pessimistic about the ability of such legislation to provide the conditions needed to form character. Sikkink and Hunter 2015 promises exposition of how schools form public (citizenship) and personal (character) virtue in ten educational sectors: urban, rural, elite independent, public charter, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, pedagogical, and home schooling. This multi-disciplinary, empirical research offers insights for policy makers, educators, parents, and the public into how schools and a web of complementary community institutions undertake character and citizenship education.

Arthur, James. 2003. *Education With Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling*. London and New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

A preeminent scholar working on the field includes in this comprehensive book the list of concerns that policymakers use to raise awareness of the need for character education (Chapter 1), as well as the politics of character education in the United Kingdom and in other contexts (Chapter 6).

Arthur, James. 2005. The Re-emergence of Character Education in British Education Policy. *British Journal of Educational Studies* 53.3:239-254.

Traces the introduction of policies by both Conservative and Labor governments from 1979 through the 2000s to mandate character education, establish consensus values, require citizenship training. Arthur warns against a tendency toward behaviorism.

Cooley, Aaron. 2008. Legislating Character: Moral Education in North Carolina's Public Schools. *Journal of the American Educational Studies Association* 44.3:188-205.

Cooley sees the 2001 law as an extension of character education's history, particularly neo-classical approaches (see * Neo-Classical Approaches*). Cooley finds the approach problematic pedagogically and philosophically, arguing that these problems ultimately hinder the law's ability to affect its stated purpose. Uses Richard Rorty's framework for ethical and political solidarity.

Glanzer, Perry L. and Andrew J. Milson. 2006. Legislating the Good: A Survey of Character Education Laws in the United States. *Educational Policy* 20.3:525-550.

Provides a thorough survey and critical evaluation of U.S. state laws, evaluating them on the basis of local autonomy, integration of programs, comprehensiveness, involvement of other community institutions, implementation in schools, and staff allocations. Pessimistic about ability to deliver intended results.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good and Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Discusses the laws in several U.S. states that mandate character education. Hunter shows how they shifted from being prescriptive and specific to being capacious and vague.

Sikkink, David and James Davison Hunter. 2015. [School Cultures and Student Formation Project](#).

The purpose of this multi-sector, interdisciplinary ethnographic research is to “understand competing institutional settings and ways in which personal and public virtue is formed within school-aged children” and “fill the void in the scholarship on the relationship between schooling and the formation of moral sensibilities and habits among the young.”

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Much empirical research attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of various character education programs uses a “tripartite model,” assessing impact on moral reasoning, moral feeling and moral action. Bebeau et al. 1999 proposes a four-part model: sensitivity, judgment, motivation and character. Other variable arrangements are considered in Haegerich and Metz 2009. Research is often mixed for reasons discussed by Skaggs and Bodenhom 2006, a study unique because of its focus on student achievement results, on which character education programs had no effect in the five districts studied. Hunter 2000 finds negligible significant positive effects for programs. Hartshorne and May 1924-1929 is often cited as an example of character education’s lack of effects, though the data have been re-interpreted and recontextualized. Peterson and Seligman 2004 offer a compendium of research methodologies and summaries for twenty-four character strengths chosen by a team of psychologists as most important. The most comprehensive review of empirical research on current programs is Berkowitz and Bier 2006, considering more than seventy studies of thirty-three programs. Lifting the measurement from an individual or single-organization level to a community level, the Thriving Cities Project offers measurement of the critically important, extraordinarily complex but often ignored ecosystem that bears on character education.

Bebeau, Muriel J., James R. Rest and Darcia Narvaez. 1999. Beyond the Promise: A Perspective on Research in Moral Education. *Educational Researcher* 28.4:18-26.

Several programs and studies are reviewed, so bibliography helpful to those becoming familiar with the field (see *General Overviews*). They recommend viewing disparate approaches to character education as complementary and focusing on designing programs that can be evaluated rigorously to determine what will work when implemented broadly in the field.

Berkowitz, Marvin W. and Melinda C. Bier. 2006. *What Works in Character Education: A Research-driven Guide for Educators*. St. Louis: Center for Character & Citizenship.

Most comprehensive review of empirical research, on fifty-four character education programs (thirty-three with studies deemed by the authors to be scientific) aimed at affecting risk behavior, pro-social competencies, school-based outcomes and general social-emotional skills. Limited in ability to influence practice because many reviewed reports did not explain content and pedagogy.

Haegerich, Tamara M. and Edward Metz. 2009. The Social and Character Development Research Program: Development, Goals, and Opportunities. *Journal of Research in Character Education* 7.2:1-20.

The U.S. Department of Education, Centers for Disease Control, Mathematica Policy Research and seven research centers are collaborating to evaluate seven different SCD programs in K-5 schools. They are evaluating school climate, social and emotional competence, behavior and academics. Article helpful as one framework for designing empirical research in character.

Hartshorne, Hugh and Mark May. 1924-1929. *Studies in the Nature of Character*. 3 vols. New York: The Macmillan Company.

These landmark studies found no significant effect from direct moral instruction on students' behavior, particularly lying. The work is frequently referred to in U.S. character education research. See *History: North Atlantic and Continental*.

Hunter, James Davison. 2000. *The Death of Character: Moral Education in an Age Without Good and Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Chapter Eight examines empirical literature for several kinds of character education programs, including sex and drug education programs. The endnotes for Chapter Eight offer extensive discussion.

Peterson, Christopher and Martin E. P. Seligman. 2004. *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Oxford, New York and Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association and Oxford Univ. Press.

Summarizes metrics for and empirical research on twenty-four character strengths identified by psychologists using a positive psychological framework.

Skaggs, Gary and Nancy Bodenhom. 2006. Relationships Between Implementing Character Education, Student Behavior, and Student Achievement. *Journal of Advanced Academics* 18.1:82-114.

Analyzes effect of four different programs in five different U.S. east-coast districts. Programs' effect on perceptions of behavior was "demonstrable"; on behavioral indicators, results were mixed; and there was no relationship between the presence of a program and student achievement. Good discussion of limitations relevant to most programs and implementations.

[Thriving Cities Project.](#)

Pioneered at the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, the Thriving Cities Project is led by a multidisciplinary team that has created a "coherent framework for discerning among proliferating lists of metrics and indicators" and has put them "into a context for wise civic action."

NEW CONTEXTS OF SOCIOBIOLOGY & NEUROSCIENCE

Sociobiology, neuroscience and evolutionary psychology extend and amplify the challenge of modernism (see *Modernity*) to notions of character in a more fundamental way than traditional

psychology. Wilson 1978, by an entomologist, is essentially the cornerstone of the field. Neuroscience attempts to fill out the picture of the brain's mechanisms and chemistry; Snarey 2008 gives a scientific summary, while Brooks 2011 summarizes much of the research on human behavior and brain science. Some implications of these approaches are summarized in Narvaez 2008. Rue 1998 argues that the primary difference between humans and the most closely related species, chimpanzees, is symbol processing, and offers ways of "overriding" the "default morality," which is "chimplike." Midgley 2010 summarizes and responds to key scholars applying evolutionary theories to moral philosophy. The research is sympathetically engaged by Narvaez and Vaydich 2008, which offers an agenda for advancing character research and practice. Reviewing significant social science bibliography, Davis 2011 provides critical reflections on notions of the self related to these and other developments.

Brooks, David. 2011. *The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement*. New York: Random House.

The New York Times columnist introduces a popular audience to the fields of neuroscience, evolutionary psychology, and others, interweaving the stories of two people whose lives reflect the research findings. Brooks leaves some room for personal responsibility, despite the overwhelming influence of biological programming, in his chapter on morality.

Davis, Joseph E. 2011. The Shifting Experience of Self: A Bibliographic Essay. *The Hedgehog Review* 13.1:52-58.

Discusses works that illuminate ways the vast inner depths of the modern self are being flattened by psychology, cognitive neuroscience and the like. The notions of the self that are emerging emphasize plasticity and "exteriorization," notions that have implications for what was considered to be happening "inside," including character.

Midgley, Mary. 2010. *The Solitary Self: Darwin and the Selfish Gene*. Durham, UK: Acumen. Returns to Darwin's texts to argue that the "selfish gene" of Richard Dawkins' and others' moral theories that draw heavily on an un-Darwinian model of natural selection. Midgley untangles neo-Darwinian ideas from metaphysics, biology, and psychology to argue for a Darwin who was aware of the social nature of humans.

Narvaez, Darcia. 2008. "Human Flourishing and Moral Development: Cognitive and Neurobiological Perspectives of Virtue Development." In *Handbook of moral and character education*. Edited by Larry P. Nucci and Darcia Narvaez, 310-327. New York and London: Routledge.

Advocates "moral expertise development," characterized by declarative, procedural, conditional knowledge; ability to notice patterns; behavior as automatic and effortless; adaptability with complex problems; well-developed intuitions; and motivation for excellence. Proposes a process from psychological, evolutionary, and neurosciences which focus on limbic system and related structures for moral processing and behavior.

Narvaez, Darcia and Jenny L. Vaydich. 2008. Moral Development and Behaviour Under the Spotlight of the Neurobiological Sciences. *Journal of Moral Education* 37.3:289-312.

Uses relevant neurobiological research as evidence for moral sensitivity, judgment, motivation and action. Triune Ethics Theory—"three types of affectively-rooted moral orientations emerged

from human evolution”—is proposed to integrate the fields, since the three “ethics” can be “shaped by experience”: security (self-preservation), engagement (face-to-face affiliation) and imagination (future-orientation).

Rue, Loyal. 1998. Sociobiology and Moral Discourse. *Zygon* 33.4:525-533.

“...all behavior ultimately comes down to lock-and-key molecular systems. If the biochemistry stops, behavior stops.” The task of morality can be to override the “default” programmed into emotional systems by heredity with the moral code reprogrammed into them by culture. Rue takes religious symbols as examples of reprogramming.

Snarey, John. 2008. “Neural Basis of Moral Cognition.” In *Moral education: A handbook*, vol. 2. Edited by B. Power, C. F., R. J. Nuzzi, D. Narvaez, D. K. Lapsley and T. Hunt, 313-316. Westport, Conn. and London: Praeger.

This three-page encyclopedia article draws on neuroscience to posit that moral stages are reached when changes in the brain have been sufficient to produce the change in cognition. Draws on studies of brain injuries, lesions, and brain imaging; at least nine areas activated during moral cognitive functioning, including prefrontal cortex.

Wilson, Edward O. 1978. *On Human Nature*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard Univ. Press.

Rather than reflecting one’s character, “[h]uman emotional responses and...general ethical practices have been programmed to a substantial degree by natural selection over thousands of generations. The challenge of science is to measure the tightness of the constraints caused by programming,...find their source in the brain, and...decode their significance...”

NEW CONTEXTS OF GLOBALIZATION & COSMOPOLITANISM

The philosophical and ideational commitments of a cosmopolitan approach to character are discussed in Snauwaert 2009, and Dill 2009 reviews a broader range of literature regarding cosmopolitanism, its definition and applications. Jeong and VanSickle 2003 make many suggestions to foster the development of just and equitable societies by leading students through activities to develop critical thinking about morality. Connecting this direction of educational philosophy to a much-trusted intellectual leader in the field, Striano 2009 explores the ways in which John Dewey’s work provides content for educating the moral sensibilities of global citizens. Zajda and Daun 2009 takes a values-education approach and discusses methodologies for handling the challenges of multiculturalism in various countries. Sacks 2007 takes an entirely distinct approach to handling difference, by using readings of carefully selected sacred texts. Jubilee Centre (undated) offers a framework for character education that attempts not draw upon particular moral traditions or systems.

Dill, Jeff. 2009. Cosmopolitanism: A Bibliographic Essay. *The Hedgehog Review* 11.3:125-133. An excellent, comprehensive discussion of the broad topic by an emerging scholar in the field.

Jeong, Changwoo and Ronald L. VanSickle. 2003. Moral Education in the Context of Globalization and Multiculturalism. *International Social Studies Forum* 3.1:233-242.

To answer the question What can we do to encourage critical thinking that is morally directed?, the authors advocate interdisciplinary perspectives and contextual understanding to help students discuss practical problems. Suggestions for curriculum are offered to develop character while attempting to confront differences among people.

Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues. Undated. [A Framework for Character Education](#).

The Jubilee Centre's document frames character education as promoting a "core set of universally acknowledged cosmopolitan values." Based at the University of Birmingham, UK, the Centre offers a database of research papers and links to curricula.

Sacks, Jonathan. 2007. "[The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations](#)."

Lecture delivered at Duke University, Durham, N.C.

The Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth uses different readings of the Bible's stories of Isaac/Ishmael and Jacob/Esau. He posits that truly fraught relationships are not those between fathers and sons (Freud) but siblings (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), and suggests these readings as models of engaging difference.

Snauwaert, Dale. 2009. The Ethics and Ontology of Cosmopolitanism: Education for a Shared Humanity. *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 12.1:14-22.

Contrasts cosmopolitanism with "realism": whereas realists assert the precedence of national or community identity, cosmopolitans focus on shared humanity. This requires an ethic that recognizes the dignity of all human beings, and education should aim to cause the internal transformation necessary to respond to the dignity of all people.

Striano, Maura. 2009. Managing Educational Transformation in the Globalized World: A Deweyan Perspective. *Educational Theory* 59.4:379-393.

Discusses the features and effects of globalization; in education, these include both transnational influence and governance, and decentralization. Dewey's emphasis on education as moral force could be used to develop "competent moral agents in the global neighborhood," since Dewey required that education break down racial, class and territorial barriers.

Zajda, J. and H. Daun. 2009. *Global Values Education: Teaching Democracy and Peace*. New York: Springer.

These eleven essays posit education as a way to inculcate the values of students for a global society. Zajda's introductory essay provides an overview and bibliography. Essays expose readers to practices used globally for developing values to handle difference, especially Leenders and Veugelers, Smolicz and Secombe, Roth, and Kochan.