

EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS MASTERS THESIS

Pride in Education: Conceptual Analysis of Pride in a Case Study

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## ABSTRACT

Pride may be a term in need of clarity, especially in consideration of citizenship and values education. This thesis outlines the background and etymology of pride from a modern western perspective and provides a conceptual analysis of the concept of pride, via Aristotelian, Christian and Tantra Buddhist perspectives, of a fictional narrative used as a case study. Implications of the research suggest modern research in western society may be inadequate to properly understand pride and a greater focus on virtue ethics may be warranted. This analysis offers itself as an apt example for how to inquire about pride in search of its meaning for oneself and others.

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## INTRODUCTION

Pride has been a vexing paradox for me. I have experienced this often within education where it is both encouraged and discouraged. Common sayings I have experienced in school from teachers have been, “It is important you take pride in your work,” or, “We need students to have pride in their school.” Conversely, I have also heard teachers say, “Pride comes before a fall,” or “You need to swallow your pride,” or “His pride was his undoing.” Attending graduation at my high school the principal gave a speech mentioning pride. He said, “It is important you do not forget the pride you have in your school. For now, that same pride will be expanded to encompass your community, future jobs and post-secondary education.” I remember wondering about that statement and realizing I did not truly understand what he meant. At first I thought it made sense, but upon thinking about the meaning of pride for myself, I discovered I did not know what pride actually is, or at least I was not certain about the kind of pride the principal was talking about.

When attending church I was exposed to a more apprehensive understanding of pride. Mark 7:21-22 *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) says, “<sup>21</sup> For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.” I was told pride is the root of all sin because its nature is selfish and it is what caused Satan to be cast out of heaven. Now, after hearing my principal’s speech, for the first time I began to wonder about the discrepancy between the definitions of pride inside and outside church. I wondered about the statement of my principal at graduation and considered whether he knew what he was talking about. However, despite what I understood about pride according to what I learned in church, I felt he did understand the meaning behind what he said

as something good and virtuous. Though it seemed ineffable, I also felt that I somehow did grasp the meaning behind his statement and that it probably did not conflict with what I learned in church, although I was not absolutely certain how. Questions about semantics of pride swirled in my mind for years. I wondered about it as I played and coached sports and competed in university athletics. Was it about pride when my Yugoslavian soccer coach, Jovo Radovic, disgusted by my team's poor first half performance, said with a thick Eastern European accent, "You must play hard! You must play like... this is MY Sarajevo! But for you... is Saskatoon." I wondered about it as I wrote essays in grad studies about racism and identity. I wondered about it as I taught students at levels and ages from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Throughout my career as an athlete, teacher and academic, the concept of pride continued to be an enigma for me. It became apparent I needed to clarify what pride actually is and the reasons for its ambiguity in my understanding. It is this ambiguity that has motivated me to research pride in the hope to better understand what it is and what it is not.

Under the guidance of Dr. Michelle Forrest I began my research examining the etymology of the word as well as traditional perspectives about pride. Dr. Forrest encouraged me to reach out to Dr. Daniel Vokey in reference to what he might generally be able to speak about regarding my thesis topic. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet and speak with him as our discussion helped to expand the scope of my perspective. He informed me it would be prudent to look at some perspectives on pride beyond those that heavily influence western thought about it. I took his advice and am grateful for doing so. Among those mainstream perspectives beyond the Western perspective I am accustomed to is the Eastern perspective, which has proven to be sometimes difficult for me to grasp, likely resulting from my modern Westernized Christian perspective. For example, I learned that Buddhist faith traditions view

pride as an essential part of achieving enlightenment. This concept was in stark contrast to the condemning Christian perspective I was familiar with. Vokey introduced me to the writings of Chogyam Trungpa, a Buddhist Rinpoche who sought to introduce Tantra Buddhism to western society.

According to Trungpa there are two types of pride in Buddhism, that of Vajra and Rudra:

*Student:* What is the difference between Vajra pride and the pride of Rudra?

*Trungpa Rinpoche:* That seems to be quite basic. The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 269)

Trungpa's use of the adjectives "overpower" and "conquest" being associated with Rudra suggest a correlation to disrespect and dominance. It would appear to be bold in demeanor and ferocious when threatened, just as a king might be when trying to protect territory. However, in Vajra pride there is no need to "defend" any territory because external events do not affect who you really are. In other words, with Vajra, one's honor and dignity is not dependent on things that happen to oneself. Trungpa explains further:

*Q:* Could you explain the difference between vajra pride and spiritual pride based on ego? I see numbers of young people involved with spirituality who just seem to be swollen with self-righteousness.

*R:* Well that seems to be a crucial point. It is the difference, speaking in terms of tantric practice, between the actual faith of identifying with a certain aspect of oneself as a deity and just relating with those deities as one's dream of the future, what one would like to be. Actually, the two situations are very close in some sense because even in the first case one would like to attain enlightenment. Now here the possibility is presented of relating with an enlightened being, or better, of identifying with the enlightened attitude. This brings it home to one that there is such a thing as enlightenment and that, therefore, one can afford to give up one's clinging and graspings. There could quite easily be quite a thin line between this situation and just considering self-righteously that one is already there.

I think ego's version of spiritual pride is based on blind faith, or what is colloquially known as a "love and light trip." This is having blind faith that since one would like to be thus-and-such, one already is. In this way one could become Rudra, achieve Rudrahood. On the other hand, vajra pride comes from facing the reality of one's nature. It is not a question of becoming what one would like to be, but rather of bringing one's actual energies to full blossom. The confused ego pride is the indulgence of wishful thinking; it is trying to become something else, rather than being willing to be what one is. (Trungpa, 2003, p.408)

The Vajra and Rudra relationship appears to be defined by the authenticity of oneself. This is different than a moralized, "right or wrong" perspective. Trungpa explains how Vajra pride is more enriching and true to oneself than Rudra as it is without confusion and wishful thinking. Though Trungpa does not explicitly define Rudra as being wrong, he does explain how Vajra is a more authentic way of being. So with this perspective in mind it may be helpful to be more concerned with the truth of one's actions rather than the moral distinction of them. In reading Trungpa's writings, I came to understand Tantra Buddhist perspective as one where appropriate evaluation of oneself will involve questions of, "Is this who I am, is this what I am about, and is this representative of myself?" rather questions of, "Is this right or is this wrong?" Upon reflection, this kind of perspective seemed to fit well with my question about the apparent duality of pride, whether it is morally right or wrong. In considering Trungpa's writings I began to wonder if perhaps pride may be something that is not right or wrong. Perhaps my confusion about the meaning of pride was the result of an inadequate perspective, rather than a lack of knowledge. At this I decided to expand the scope of my research to include a more thorough understanding of Tantra Buddhist perspective as it seemed to potentially offer helpful insight.

Regarding the bulk of the rest of my research into pride, I found there is an overwhelmingly long history and a large number of writings about the topic. I was able to scratch the surface of only a few in this document as it would be impossible to give a full account, though I wish I could as it is abundant with valuable reading. Some of the more



contemporary authors I have found, such as Michael Eric Dyson who has dedicated a volume of work specifically about pride within the *Oxford Series on the seven deadly sins*, have contributed pertinent, notable work that assist in navigation of the modern understanding of pride in western society. Dyson explains that “Pride can be a sin, especially when it’s wielded by unprincipled forces and immoral people. Pride is also a vice when it traffics in accomplishments that have little to do with genuine moral achievement but instead rest on the exercise of power or wealth” (Dyson, 2006, p.26). However, he then goes on to explain that, “Proper pride is a boon, a stroke of moral genius against those who would withhold its virtue in the false belief that they might increase their own” (Dyson, 2006, p. 26). The qualification of pride being proper or improper appears to depend on recognizing the context of its use.

Though I believe I am able to grasp Dyson’s conception about what proper and improper pride are, I have regularly encountered, especially in education settings, usage of the word “pride” without being able to know with certainty what conception of pride is indicated. This happened to me once when I asked a teacher why a certain student seemed to not be bothered by consistently being late for class and the resulting consequences for his actions, such as having to stay late after class or having to work in a separate room. This student was one of the best athletes in school and very popular with his ability to find comedy in social dynamics. The teacher said to me, “He’s proud of himself so he doesn’t care.” I wanted to ask more about concept of pride the teacher was indicating when he said that but I lacked the courage and the means to inquire about it. I decided not to ask about it as I did not even know how to form the questions to find out what he meant. So I was left to my own wonder to analyze our discussion in search of any helpful indication about what exactly was meant to communicate about pride. Ultimately, what he said in reference to pride did not make sense to me as it seemed to be

ambiguous about whether it was good or bad for the student to be proud. This was another example of my world perspective being inconsistent with another's resulting in my inability to identify or connect with their point of view.

Another author I went to was Alasdair MacIntyre, who introduces this problem in his book, *After Virtue* (2007/1981):

Contemporary moral argument is rationally interminable because all moral, indeed all evaluative, argument is and always must be rationally interminable. Contemporary moral disagreements of a certain kind cannot be resolved, because no moral disagreements of that kind in any age, past, present or future, can be resolved. What you present as a contingent feature of our culture, standing in need of some special, perhaps historical explanation, is a necessary feature of all cultures which possess evaluative discourse. This is a challenge which cannot be avoided at an early stage in this argument. Can it be defeated? (*After Virtue*, 2007/1981, p. 11)

Within a society, whenever there are pluralistic values and truths informing distinctive identities that are poorly understood or unreconciled among the collective, there is reason for people to be unable to relate or truly understand each other and their views. In the hope of potentially finding a resolution to this challenge, Vokey suggests:

It is neither necessary nor possible to meet the challenge of pluralism by attempting to discover or construct tradition-independent standards of moral and spiritual progress. To the extent consensus on such standards is possible, it will be achieved through on-going critical dialog between competing points of view that can both discover and create common ground. Daniel Vokey (2001)

Vokey's point about finding common ground is a virtuous ideal. It would seem that for any common ground to be found would require some deliberate force to push it into commencement.

Amy Guttmann is an author on education philosophy and appears to reiterate the importance of making an effort to find common ground in her promotion of 'deliberation'. "Deliberative citizens are committed, at least partly through the inculcation of habit, to living up to the routine demands of democratic life, at the same time as they are committed to questioning

those demands whenever they appear to threaten the foundational ideals” (*Democratic Education*, 1987, p. 52). This would seem to indicate that regardless of the differences between peoples and groups, it is essential to persevere in the pursuit of a common ground revelation upon which a correlative understanding can begin. It is my hope to be able to experience a correlative understanding about “pride” with others. If, in the process, I am able to uncover some way to aid or assist in reconciling the problems of pluralism in education, often a field full of pluralistic values, it may serve to help alleviate many incommensurable issues. This, I believe, is reason worthy of my deliberative efforts.

An understanding and awareness of the nature of pride and the context of its use may be necessary for the human condition, especially in education. Parker Palmer says, “Whoever our students may be, whatever subject we teach, ultimately we teach who we are” (*Evoking the Spirit in Public Education*, 1998, p.10) and similarly, Clement Mehlman states, “I have come to believe that students experience as curriculum what the teacher is doing inwardly and spiritually” (*New directions in education*, 1991, p. 306). What kind of pride does each and every teacher espouse? What values does each and every teacher implicitly communicate with their words, mannerisms and attitudes? How are students internalizing what they observe from interaction with their teachers? How does it affect their pride and how might their pride affect their internalizations? These may not appear to be the most “serious” or “immediate” concerns facing education today, but they may be at the heart of how teachers and students can begin to understand and relate to one another, which would render concern for these questions to be absolute in education.

Far too often I have seen education fail in regard to showing appropriate concern for such questions as I have posed. Upon reflection about my efforts as a teacher, while I have many

high points and positive experiences to speak of, I must also admit to some struggles with negligence toward supporting and promoting healthy values and identity, or apathy about connecting with and truly understanding students and their needs, or complacent tendencies I sometimes show when I should make an effort to be concerned. I believe the condition of who I am to be, at least somewhat, representative of a common occurrence within teaching professional challenge. My purpose of inquiry and acknowledgment of these failings is not to condemn teachers, but to honor a humble reflection that might serve to help myself, and others, do better.

This practice of inquiry, that is, revisiting behavior and misunderstandings, may be a helpful way to learn well. According to Paulo Friere, “One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people” (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, p. 95). This highlights how teachers and students need to share a mutual understanding, or have common ground, in order to communicate effectively. Teachers cannot just assume students understand what they have been taught until the filters of world views and values are properly understood. This involves consistently revisiting, reinterpreting and perhaps redefining of concepts by what Freire calls ‘praxis’. Long before Freire, Aristotle defined praxis as “imitation of action” (*Poetics* 6, 1449b24). A vital prerequisite of imitation is effective critical reflection. Similarly, critical reflection is also a necessary tool for effectively perceiving the relevant nature of what is to be understood. Freire’s reference to praxis shows how it is a necessary shared experience for understanding. “People will be truly critical if they live in the plenitude of the praxis, that is, if their action encompasses a critical reflection which increasingly organizes their thinking and thus leads them to move from a purely naive knowledge of reality to a higher level, one which enables them to perceive the causes of reality” (1970, p. 131). To be able to think on a higher

level, one must become more self-aware of one's behavior and effectively perceive why it occurs. Perhaps the most applicable educational aspect here is not to see misunderstandings that arise as obstacles to avoid, but rather, as opportunities for a more holistic learning experience.

Without critically reflecting on the nature of pride, it is a term that can be enigmatic or hold little meaning. It may further be confused when attempting to qualify it as either proper or improper. Take for example, some questions about having pride for one's country: At what point does taking pride in one's country become jingoism? <sup>1</sup> What values are exclusive to fascism as opposed to a virtuous pride in one's country? Moreover, who determines these values? Without knowing the philosophical context for pride it is unreasonable to expect people to share or truly understand each other's point of view about it.

Any employment of effective praxis about the self may concurrently need to consider its pride. This relates to the concept of pride being at the heart of the human disposition and essentially, the self. David Hume says, "The object of pride is the self. Any other considerations are always in relation to the self. And when the self does not enter into consideration, there can be no pride" (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739-40, 2.1.3.2). Aristotle describes pride as being something that seeks to honor and glorify the 'self' according to what the self deserves. To this he describes the proud man <sup>2</sup> as being one who, "thinks himself worthy of great things, and being worthy of them" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123b, trans. Ross). Suffice it to say, to attempt to disregard the significance of pride when considering the human condition would potentially be an effort to disregard the human condition outright, as the two are described as being codependent. It highlights the importance of understanding how pride may be interpreted and experienced.

For teachers it is not sufficient to assume that well-crafted school curricula are able to address the many disparate values and philosophies within a school district. Douglas Stewart speaks to this:

Public schooling continues to be valued primarily as a means for achieving a variety of extrinsic ends – political (to make the nation more competitive), socio-economic (to improve living standards), vocational (to prepare a skilled workforce) – rather than as an institution for humanization in its own right. To empower individuals with greater meaning and sense of the world, and of who they are, a progressive initiation into the achievements of the human mind and spirit is required. (Stewart, 2000, p.7, 13:2)

In what ways are current education curricula assessing its abilities to inspire the mind and spirit of students? Whose values might these assessments speak to? By what merit does one gain authority to dictate the kind of curricula that teachers are required to teach? By what means are teachers able to properly interpret and translate the implicit values within the curricula? These are not questions that can be answered without critical reflection, praxis, dialog and perhaps pride.

Engaging in these critically reflective efforts may not be attractive or easy tasks, especially in areas where it can be comfortable to depend on a world view that relies on quantifiable data and “matter of fact” types of approach. While these approaches tend to be appropriate for positivistic perspectives, choosing to adhere strictly to them in matters of philosophy can be problematic. Regarding educators, William Hare and John Portelli note, “The popular perception is that philosophical questions and concerns are trivial and irrelevant because they are too theoretical and, therefore, can be safely ignored by the practitioner. Some argue that, since philosophers have offered different and opposing views, teachers do not have anything to gain from philosophy of education” (*What to do? Case studies for teachers*, 1998, p. 4). This suggests uncharted or unclear topics, such as discussions about values and identity which are

inherently original for every class, may be disregarded as unhelpful and pointless as there is no foreseeable conclusion to open-ended discussion and thus, are avoided. This is not to say there is never a time when it is appropriate to avoid an issue. Indeed many topics are inappropriate for the classroom. However, it is important to consider whether, and why, some issues may be deliberately addressed while others deliberately avoided. With a fully engaged classroom in common pursuit of transcending the limitations of their understanding of each other and themselves, this may be possible. When considering matters of the “self”, as one must do when researching “pride”, it requires, philosophical understanding of self, and as far as we currently know, self cannot be reduced to a quantifiable measure. Therefore it is appropriate for me to inquire about pride by a means other than that which might rely on any quantifiable method, but may still yield verifiable results.

I have found that within the context of honesty, inquiry about pride can open discussion to highly philosophical topics. Some I will mention that are relevant here are self-identity, values, deductive and inductive reasoning, critical thinking, ethics and humanity. However, discussion alone may be erratic which is why it is helpful to have a method to draw upon through which an introspective analysis can be more easily followed. William Hare and John Portelli (1998) describe one method as being helpful in this regard being through the analysis of a case study. The case study serves as a philosophical example of how to critically analyze a potentially ambiguous topic in a way that is both enlightening and introspective. Hare and Portelli agree that case studies have proved to be valuable in a variety of philosophical fields of inquiry such as medicine, psychology, and business administration (1998, preface V). Extending this inquiry to citizenship education may find relevance in discourses about pride in relation to topics about policy and administration, school sports, or classroom pedagogy. It is my hope to establish a

meaningful and unambiguous understanding about pride through a critical analysis of the case study so that a personal and practical application that is helpful for teachers and students may be revealed.

The case I am using is a fictionalized narrative based upon social dynamics in schools. The case is full of elements relating directly to the concept of pride as well as justice. I intend to thoroughly explore these elements with conceptual analysis aided by research and guided through my own personal inquiry on my interpretations of the case by my supervisor. It is my intention that through this method I may be able to demonstrate how to effectively inquire about pride in a way that is practical and engaging. Also I hope to reveal through analysis how and why it may be an effective pedagogical framework for the classroom to engage students in philosophical inquiry and broaden the scope of their learning.



## CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS PRIDE?

Pride has two meanings I am familiar with. Both can be expressed in colloquial phrases. The first, *pride comes before a fall*, and the second, *take pride in your work*. The first has meaning indicative that pride is a precursor to a negative experience. In this way pride is seen as a bad thing, or at least, something to be avoided. Conversely, the second has meaning indicative that pride is a good thing in that it is something that helps to produce quality work. These seem to contradict each other with respect to agency, yet they are of the same word. To understand why we must look deeper into the meaning and usage context of the word *pride*. The following is an excerpt from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2017) for the historical definitions of pride:

Proud: praud having a high opinion of oneself OE; feeling honored ; stately, grand XIII; valiant XIV; overgrown, tumid XVI. Late OE. Prud (also prut) = ON. Prutr – OF. Prud, prod, nom. Pruz, proz, prouz (mod. Preux) valiant, gallant = Pr. proz, (at. Prou, It. Prode – Rom. Prodis (late L. prode, n. in pre-Vulg. A zoo), f.L. prodesse be of value, be good, f. prod var. of pro pro- + esse be (of. ENS) Pride, Prude.

Pride: praid high opinion of oneself OE.; consciousness of what is fitting to oneself; (arch.) magnificence, pomp XII (Laz); the prime or flower XV. Late OE. Pryde, secondary form (prob. After prud proud or ON. Prydi of pryte, prytu, abstr. f. prud, presumably on the model of such pairs as hlud loud/hlyd sound, noise, fule foul/fylyb filth. Hence Pride vbtbe proud; show oneself proud. XIII

The meaning of pride has evolved over time. It is important to consider the usage of the word in today's context has different meanings than it did at other points in history. It is also especially important to consider the meaning of pride when reading a translated text such as the Bible because the original author of the text did not speak English, and therefore did not use the word "pride" or "proud". It was only after careful transcription by one or a few persons that the word "pride" was determined to be appropriate to use. It is therefore necessary to have a well-informed understanding about the word "pride" as well as what it may have meant to the transcribers

compared to what it may mean to us today. This is essential to the process of attempting to properly understand the meaning of pride today.

For me, as briefly described in the introduction, the explanation and meaning of pride was most clearly defined at church. That being pride is a sin and it is not good to be proud. I remember hearing sermons, discussion and reading from the Bible about why pride is a sin. Pride was explained to be a sinful disposition because it is inherently selfish and therefore evil. I know this is a definition that has been true for others as well. C.S. Lewis, a celebrated Christian author, denounces pride for its exclusive quality, “Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man...”<sup>3</sup> It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition is gone, pride is gone” (*Mere Christianity*, 2001, p.61). Looking to understand where this concept came from I have looked to historical definitions of pride

The great philosopher David Hume might agree with the connotation that pride is a ‘selfish’ disposition. He describes pride as something that must always relate to the self; “The object of pride is the self. Any other considerations are always in relation to the self. And when the self does not enter into consideration, there can be no pride” (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739-40, 2.1.3.2). Also from Hume, “any expression of pride or haughtiness, [in others] is displeasing to us, merely because it shocks our own pride, and leads us by sympathy into a comparison, which causes the disagreeable passion of humility” (*Treatise of Human Nature*, bk. 3, sec. 2, 595, 596, 601). Pope Gregory I declared that once “pride, the queen of sin, has fully possessed a heart, she surrenders it immediately to seven principal sins, as if to some of her captains, to lay it waste.” (*Pride According to Gregory the Great: A Study of the Moralia*, 1986, p.79). Augustine perhaps had the most pertinent explanation for why pride is evil:

What could begin this evil will but pride, that is the beginning of all sin? And what is pride but a perverse desire of height, in forsaking Him to whom the soul ought solely to cleave, as the beginning thereof, to make the self seem the beginning. This is when it likes itself too well. . . . What is pride but undue exaltation? And this is undue exaltation, when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end and becomes a kind of end in itself. (*City of God*, 1996, 186–87.)

Simply speaking, at church I was told that pride is the root of all sin because it is selfish. I had learned this meaning for pride from a very young age, and it was reiterated at home by my parents, so I readily assumed it was true. I had little reason to think otherwise because it was the most in-depth and rational explanation I had been exposed to. Therefore whenever a teacher at the public school I attended told me to *take pride in my work*, it was a little confusing. Usually I was able to quickly figure out from the context of the situation that my teacher basically meant that I should *try harder* or *improve the quality of my work*. However, it did cause some frustration and anxiety when I would happen to wonder about the usage of the term. It was perplexing how the term ‘pride’ could have two contradicting meanings. One being that pride is a sin, the other, pride is a characteristic that helps us to be successful. The few people I asked about this would simply reply, “It means both” or, “People use it incorrectly.” But that was the extent to which they would explain it. I was young and recognized I still had much to learn, so I simply hoped I would probably be able to figure it out some day when I was older.

The first day I embarked on researching pride under the guidance of Dr. Michelle Forrest, she pointed me toward the Oxford English Dictionary:

From Oxford Dictionaries:

Pronunciation:/praɪd/

*noun*

[*mass noun*]

1 a feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, the achievements of one's close associates, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired: *the faces of the children's parents glowed with pride he takes great pride in his appearance*

a person or thing which arouses a feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction: *the pride of the village is the swimming pool*

*literary* the best state of something; the prime: *in the pride of youth*

2 consciousness of one's own dignity: *he swallowed his pride and asked for help*

the quality of having an excessively high opinion of oneself or one's importance: *the worst sin in a ruler was pride*

3 [*count noun*] a group of lions forming a social unit: *the males in the pride are very tolerant towards all the cubs*

*verb*

(pride oneself on/upon)

be especially proud of (a particular quality or skill): *he prided himself on his honesty*

Phrases

one's pride and joy

a person or thing of which one is very proud: *the car was his pride and joy*

pride goes (or comes) before a fall

*proverb* if you're too conceited or self-important, something will happen to make you look foolish.

pride of place

the most prominent position among a group of things: *the certificate has pride of place on my wall*

What I took from reading this definition was that the key to understanding pride seems to be in knowing oneself and being existentially aware of one's values and beliefs about oneself. This is a philosophical practice, to be able to see beyond the obvious and examine the internal dynamics and its implications, such as figuring out what motives a person might have to give them pride about something. An example could be from a father-son relationship. It is not uncommon for a father to feel pride in his son. I know this to be true in my own relationship with my father and

with my son. The pride of a father is felt in relation to his son and his son's actions. This seems to be a good thing despite my uncertainty of being able to say how it is good; I believe it to be so. However, if the father's pride becomes entangled with notions of superiority, that other sons are lesser than his son, then this disrespects others and therefore is problematic in the sense of being good. Say, if his son makes a lot of money and he is proud of this, it is necessary to inquire the motive for his pride. Is he proud because his son worked hard and earned his wealth honorably, or is he proud that his son has more money than others which is dishonoring to others? The former has more to do with virtue than the latter because the honor is directly related to the character of the son, that being his hard work and ability to earn his wealth. Whereas with the latter, dishonor is at the root of the motive. One way might be to think about if the son's wealth were taken away somehow, would the father still have reason to be proud of his son? This is the way I understand the Oxford English dictionary definition of pride. However, this still does not clarify all discrepancy of its usage.

I began looking to other sources and found that how the word pride is used in the English language is not necessarily a completely accurate representation of how it may be used in other ways. Common usage generally connotes one word, "pride" to hold positive or negative implications but in other languages this is not necessarily true. Jessica Tracy *et al* notes that where pride is concerned, "in French, a distinction is made between *fierté* and *orgueil*; similar terms exist in Italian and Spanish" (2009, 173 notes). So in English the scope of the meaning of pride encompasses more than just one meaning as opposed to other languages that have distinct terms denoting the meanings of pride. A similar example of how this may exist might be shown in the German language, where the German translation of both English words "love" and "lust" can mean the same German word "liebe".

The reasons for this apparent discrepancy are not overtly apparent in literary history. However, Jessica Tracy et al (2010) notes it has been suggested there may be cultural reasons that influenced the way this came about:

Although pride is a highly valued and sought emotion in many Western individualistic cultures [i.e., Australia, the Netherlands, United States], it is viewed as a negative or undesirable emotion in several more collectivistic cultures [i.e., China, Spain, Taiwan; Eid & Diener, 2001; Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2000]. One explanation for this distinction is that, in collectivistic cultures, the predominant conceptualization of pride may be tilted more toward the hubristic facet, whereas in individualistic cultures, which place value on the individual over the group, the predominant conceptualization may be more tilted toward the authentic facet. Alternatively, both facets of pride may be well accepted and valued in collectivistic cultures—as long as these pride experiences are about one’s group instead of one’s individual self [Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991].  
– (Tracy, 2010, p. 165)

Elisabeth Anscombe also offers a potential explanation when considering the limits of translation and our modern understanding of cultures:

In consequence of the dominance of Christianity for many centuries, the concepts of being bound, permitted, or excused became deeply embedded in our language and thought. The Greek word “αμαρτία,” the aptest to be turned to that use, acquired the sense “sin,” from having meant “mistake,” “missing the mark,” “going wrong.” (*Modern Moral Philosophy*, 1958, p. 5)

If Aristotle were to say, “hamartia” or in Greek, “αμαρτία” and by it mean to communicate, “missing the mark,” to then translate “αμαρτία” for us to mean “sin” may indeed miss the mark in that it imposes moral implications upon the word that Aristotle was ignorant of. Potentially a similar situation may arise for pride as I show later with regard to the Aristotelian perspective about “megalopsychia”.

Now, I am not focusing on attempting to define the proper usage of pride as determined by any historical or cultural reference. Regardless of my efforts here I expect people will use pride however they are accustomed to. My goal here is to inquire about the ambiguity surrounding usage of the word pride in our society. This is the crux of the problem for me with

pride in English. I am amazed at how so many people are content with pride having such contradictory definitions? Am I missing something so obvious that everyone else seems to know? The fact that it can be used to indicate a corrupt attitude, such as hubris, and at the same time be used to indicate a virtuous individual accomplishment, such as magnanimity, is most concerning for me. However, I do not intend to understand how or why every person may or may not find discrepancy with the usage of pride in English. That is beyond the scope of my research. Rather, my intent is to explore the meaning of pride in the hope of uncovering something which might lead me toward a way of reconciling the discrepant meanings of pride for myself. In doing so, I might then have sufficient reason to clarify the usage of “pride” by others and then have the means with which to engage them in dialog about it.

Mike McNamee is a sports ethicist who has explored the definitions of pride related issues in sports. He notes the need for sharper distinctions in sport:

How, as philosophers of sport, or reflective coaches or physical education teachers, we are to cultivate greater powers of reflection in our sports cultures is no easy matter. One philosophical challenge is to create better taxonomies of the emotionally laden virtues and vices of our sportsmen and women. Sharper distinctions can indeed help all involved in sport to mark out the ethically acceptable from the unacceptable territories. Crucially that will entail the analysis of concepts but in a way that is historically sensitive and socially situated. In articulating the shared roots of hubris and humiliation, we can help deliver the resources critically to initiate practitioners. (*Sports, Virtues and Vices*, 2008, p. 143)

McNamee suggests we need better articulation, perhaps referring to dialog, about philosophical terms such as hubris and humiliation. The same could be true for pride as it can be an ambiguous term which can create challenges for communication. However, these challenges may also be an opportunity, maybe even a gateway, for philosophical inquiry, in the classroom and elsewhere. Pride may find valid consideration across human behavior, such as with self-reflection, values, self-esteem, confidence, critical reflection, existential thinking, bias, to name a few. All of these

human facets are major components of any classroom dynamic where discussion takes place. The issues surrounding these facets are conspicuous, but at the same time are often confounding. They are not easily resolved and do not ascribe to any given formula or curricula. However, exploring them can be worthwhile.

Consider what Sam Toperoff wrote about why Roberto Duran decided to lose a boxing match to Ray Leonard:

Ray dropped his hands in mid-ring and exposed his chin, a look of teasing stupidity on his face. By merely twisting this way and that, he made Duran miss the too-tempting target. Frustration mounted. A few seconds later, again in the center of the ring, Ray wound his right arm like a pantomiming softball pitcher. The so called bolo motion is not one of boxing's classic punches, but as Duran watched the right hand warming up, Ray popped him with a quick left jab right on the schnoz. It was the sort of move my old man would have pulled on me during our first few weeks of sparring. Duran heard the crowd's derisive laughter. With only sixteen seconds left in the round, and with Ray working him along the ropes, Roberto Duran turned away and said to Octavio Meyeran, the referee, "no mas no mas" [no more no more].

Meyran said "Por que?"

Duran's non-answer "No mas"

Roberto Duran's quitting, unhurt in mid-fight, was so big a story that Ray Leonard's strategic and technical brilliance was overlooked. There were strong rumors of mysterious drugs that had sapped his will. More logical was the explanation that the macho man could handle anything except being made a fool of in public—it had never happened during his life on the planet: now it was happening for the world to see. So he chose dishonor over humiliation. (*Sugar Ray Leonard*, 1989, p. 140-141)

For some, and perhaps many, the dishonor of losing may be more desirable than losing dignity from being humiliated. For Duran, losing that high profile boxing match likely would have been devastating, but to be mocked and derided by the crowd as well as his opponent was too much. Losing to a respectful opponent fairly can still be honorable. Despite the disappointment one can still take pride in having competed or played well; taking pride in the fact they competed against



a worthy opponent. However, a disrespectful opponent insults a competitor so as to say he or she is not a worthy opponent, thus leaving the competitor with a lack of dignity, which is a more personal loss than a loss as a result of a valiant effort. In Duran's case, he backed down and gave up. Although, in reality, had he ignored the taunting and buffoonery, held his composure and fought well, would he have lost any dignity at all? Could he still have pride in the way he performed despite losing in such a manner? These questions are worthy of classroom inquiry as they have implications for the way we view each other and ourselves.

To put this concept into practice I endeavor to inquire about the meaning of pride and how it is understood. I will evaluate its merit from my own perspective and attempt to incorporate other perspectives as well in an effort to augment my understanding. This may be seen through analysis of a case study analysis. However, before embarking on the core of my analysis we must establish a foundational understanding of the perspectives about which I will attempt to analyze the case, those being Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhist. Also, an established foundation of literacy for essential terms and definitions is necessary. With this in mind I will begin in the next chapter with an explanation about the concept of virtue. This is important as I will be using virtue as a means to render the value of pride. If pride is virtuous then it may be something that is a good and worthy part of being human. If it is not virtuous then it may not be a good and worthy part of being human.

## CHAPTER 2: VIRTUE AND PRIDE

Before attempting to understand the concept of pride regarding the action of a person, or people, it may be helpful to consider its virtue, or lack of virtue. Seeking to understand whether pride is a virtuous condition, or not, may reveal the merit of its place, in human life. *Oxford English Dictionary* (2017) defines virtue as being, “A quality considered morally good or desirable in a person.” Given that “virtue” is something concerned with things worthy of pursuit, such as morally good or desirable things, if pride is found to be virtuous, then its value to the human condition may also be revealed. To assess the virtue of pride I look to virtue ethics, as ethics are concerned with correct practice and the correct practice of virtue is of great concern here with regard to assessing the virtue of pride.

Virtue ethics is one of three major types of normative ethics studied in modern academia, the other two being deontological and utilitarian, though our concern here is also meta-ethical in that we are searching for the meaning of pride, not just its moral prescription. (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Virtue Ethics*, 2016). In virtue ethics, morality and rationality are correlated in a way that is interdependent. Virtue ethics focusses on the importance of having good moral character in order to help make good decisions and feelings. Moreover, in order to have good moral character, it is necessary to make good decisions and feelings. Given this understanding it is logical to view a prideful character as one that informs prideful actions and feelings, as well as being informed by prideful actions and feelings. Character involves a sense of morality, and thus, a moral question about pride is valid to consider. Inquiry about the virtue of pride will better inform us concerning its relevance and value to the human condition in the meta-ethical sense. To observe pride within the perspective of virtue may offer the beginnings of a helpful evaluative assessment of pride’s meaning in the moral sense.

Plato and Aristotle are considered to be among the first to have championed virtue ethics in literature. However, virtue ethics became less the focus of study for a brief period in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Virtue Ethics*, 2016) until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Anscombe's article, "Modern Moral Philosophy" (Anscombe, 1958) initiated a return to seeing the value of virtue ethics. In turn, Alasdair MacIntyre has furthered inquiry into virtue ethics and the issues taken up by Anscombe. A major contribution of MacIntyre's modern works on virtue ethics is found in his book, *After Virtue* (2007/1981). Much of Anscombe and MacIntyre's work has especially highlighted the importance of virtue ethics in relation to Aristotelianism.

It is true that no doctrine vindicated itself in so wide a variety of contexts as did Aristotelianism: Greek, Islamic, Jewish and Christian; and that when modernity made its assaults on an older world its most perceptive exponents understood that it was Aristotelianism that had to be overthrown. But all these historical truths, crucial as they are, are unimportant compared with the fact that Aristotelianism is *philosophically* the most powerful of pre-modern modes of moral thought. If a pre-modern view of morals and politics is to be vindicated against modernity, it will be in *something like* Aristotelian terms or not at all. (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 118)

MacIntyre particularly emphasizes the importance of understanding the background from which a person may have moral tradition as it is important to consider when inquiring about morality. He describes this with an example of heroic society.

What I hope this account makes clear already is the way in which any adequate account of the virtues in heroic society would be impossible which divorced them from their context in its social structure, just as no adequate account of the social structure of heroic society would be possible which did not include an account of the heroic virtues. But to put it in this way is to understate the crucial point: morality and social structure are in fact one and the same in heroic society. There is only one set of social bonds. Morality as something distinct does not yet exist. Evaluative questions *are* questions of social fact. It is for this reason that Homer speaks always of *knowledge* of what to do and how to judge. Nor are such questions difficult to answer, except in exceptional cases. For the given rules which assign men their place in the social order and with it their identity also prescribe what they owe and what is owed to them and how they are to be treated and regarded if they fail and how they are to treat and regard others if those others fail. (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 123)

It is important to recognize there is a difference in the way ancient Greeks viewed virtue as opposed to today. MacIntyre notes the difference is not so much the result of time, but rather of the disparate traditions and philosophies within each culture. “The heroic self does not itself aspire to universality even although in retrospect we may recognize universal worth in the achievements of that self” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 126-127). Essentially, in MacIntyre’s view, we cannot successfully remove ourselves from our traditional understandings with regard to virtue because it is only by our traditional understandings that we are able to consider virtue in the first place. This makes it difficult to properly understand the real meaning and gravity behind what Aristotle said about virtue without understanding the milieu he spoke from. In this way, MacIntyre shows why it is important to understand the traditions and background of virtues in heroic society if we are going to be able to grasp the concept of virtues in the way Aristotle intends. “By performing actions of a particular kind in a particular situation a man gives warrant for judgment upon his virtues and vices; for the virtues just are those qualities which sustain a free man in his role and which manifest themselves in those actions which his role requires” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 122).

It is more common for people of modern times (especially in western society) to live within a pluralistic, culturally diverse society comprising many different (and often opposing) world views, traditions and virtues. In contrast, the culture of Aristotle being ancient Greek heroic society was far less diverse and its virtues more homogenous. These cultural influences certainly affected Aristotle’s perspectives and reasoning. In *After Virtue*, (2007,1981) MacIntyre explains how Aristotle’s perspective on honor cannot be properly equated to concepts of honor in modern times. MacIntyre notes the exceptional value of honor in this regard, “In many pre-modern societies a man's honor is what is due to him and to his kin and his household by reason

of their having their *due* place in the social order. To dishonor someone is to fail to acknowledge what is thus due. Hence the concept of an insult becomes a socially crucial one and in many such societies a certain kind of insult merits death” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 116). Suffice it to say, honor was valued differently in Aristotle’s time than it is now and MacIntyre connects how this concern for moral understanding applies to virtue and values from differing societies. “The conceptions of the virtues in the sixth century, in the early fifth century and in the later fifth century all differ in important respects and each earlier period leaves its mark on each of its successors. The effect of this is evident as much in modern scholarly disputes as in ancient moral disagreements” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 134-135). Hence, our disparity of moral understanding from Aristotle’s society is reason enough for us to always take it into account when attempting to understand that which Aristotle said and did. In a way, because of our uniquely removed position of moral understanding from Aristotle, our understanding of Aristotle seems to be somewhat at an advantage in that we have inherited that which has been successfully passed down from him, yet, we must not forget our disadvantage of not sharing the condition of his presence or his life experiences specific to him and his society.

Similarly, this also underscores the importance for us to have our own firm understanding of the traditions and cultures that influence our own society’s milieu. I realize from my vantage point this is a difficult thing to do as there is a long history of traditions and cultures that make up the foundation of the modern western society in which I live. It is a pluralistic society; one with diverse moral communities living and interacting with and amongst one another. MacIntyre says, “In a society where there is no longer a shared conception of the community’s good as specified by the good for man,<sup>4</sup> there can no longer either be any very substantial concept of what it is to contribute more or less to the achievement of that good” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p.

232). Given this environment, virtue might only exist as an enigmatic pursuit as there is no agreed standard of what is valued or worthy of pursuing. Moreover, without any shared concept of society's good as specified by the good for man, moral discourse becomes an incommensurable task. In this way, if there are various worldviews regarding the meaning of pride, then to have any effective conversation about issues depending on, or relating to, pride, requires deliberate inquiry about worldviews correlated with any moral dissonance.

To effectively deal with problems arising from moral dissonance can be a difficult, if not impossible, task. Without a shared perspective, or even a shared understanding of the issue, it is difficult to effectively resolve issues that directly stem from disparate perspectives and or understanding. Wherever people with disparate views may interact, issues relating to those disparate views may arise, such as within a multicultural society. Daniel Vokey says in his book *Moral Discourse in a Pluralistic World*, "a viable multicultural society is one whose members genuinely value pluralism" (Vokey, 2001, p. 9). Therefore, if this is true, then for people to better understand pride in the context of society, it is necessary for them to genuinely value the collective moral traditions and virtues of the people who make up that society. To start, I have researched only a selection of the many cultures within our society, as it would be an indomitable task to research them all. I have chosen to evaluate two traditions well established within the scope of academia, Aristotelianism and Christianity, as well as a less familiar tradition in western society, Tantra Buddhism, to show the nuance of a less familiar perspective in light of the more familiar Aristotelian and Christianity's perspectives on pride. I hope to effectively and respectfully provide relevant examples from each for the purposes of my inquiry into the topic of pride.

In setting the stage for an effective analysis of pride, I must first provide a sufficient background of information about the sources to which I make reference. For analyzing the concept of pride from differing perspectives, Aristotle, Christianity, and Tantra Buddhism have provided helpful insight. Also, to bring a more modern perspective, I draw reference to Michael Eric Dyson's work on pride for the *Oxford Series on the Seven Deadly Sins* (2006). His work is helpful as an example of one way in which pride may be conceptualized in today's world. Christianity is among the world's largest religions and undoubtedly has a profound influence on philosophy in western society. To show this profundity I refer mostly from the Bible and include quotes from Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine, and Gregory the Great to bring clarity to this perspective on pride. Buddhism, another great religion of the world, has deep roots within eastern philosophy. The writings of Je Tsongkhapa as translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, and also those of Chogyam Trungpa, a Tantric Buddhist who effectively contributed Tantra Buddhist philosophy to modern western literature, provides a distinct perspective on pride to help fill out the depth of this vast concept. Though it is debatable whether Aristotle talks directly about pride in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, his contribution to virtue ethics, notably his virtue of the mean, has provided an effective way to analyze Dyson, Christianity and Buddhism, with respect to virtue. However, before using Aristotle's "virtue of the mean" I must explain its purpose and clarify Aristotle's understanding of it.

### *Aristotelianism*

Aristotle describes virtue as a good condition of being:

Virtue, then, is a state involving rational choice, consisting in a mean relative to us and determined by reason - the reason, that is, by reference to which the practically wise person would determine it. It is a mean between two vices, one of excess, the other of deficiency. It is a mean also in that some vices fall short of what is right in feelings and actions, and

others exceed it, while virtue both attains and chooses the mean. So, in respect of its essence and the definition of its substance, virtue is a mean, while with regard to what is best and good it is an extreme. (*NE*,1107a)

The goal then, as defined by Aristotle for virtue, is to reach a mean, or a kind of midpoint between two extremes. While his intention for the mean is similar to a mathematical mean - an average of two limits - it is not intended to impose a quantifiable system on virtue. Aristotle gives an example of why that would not make sense with regard to virtue:

If, for example, ten are many and two are few, six is the mean if one takes it in respect of the thing, because it is by the same amount that it exceeds the one number and is exceeded by the other. This is the mean according to arithmetic progression. The mean relative to us, however, is not to be obtained in this way. For if ten pounds of food is a lot for someone to eat, and two pounds a little, the trainer will not necessarily prescribe six; for this may be a lot or a little for the person about to eat it... In this way every expert in a science avoids excess and deficiency, and aims for the mean and chooses it -- the mean, that is, not in the thing itself but relative to us.” (*NE*, II06b)

The mean, then, is more of a conditional point of harmony between two extremes than it is a weighted average between two limits. The condition being that one acted virtuously specific to all things considered within the situation in order to arrive at said point. Aristotle notes this is an important distinction to make when understanding the mean, “the nature of the mean deals with virtue of character, since it is this that is concerned with feelings and actions, and it is in these that we find excess, deficiency and the mean” (*NE*, II06b). It is not difficult to identify types of feelings and actions. This is a quantifiable way to identify characteristics of virtue. However, to attempt to quantify the relationship of one virtue, or action, to another is extremely difficult, if not impossible. The agency of feelings and actions within any situation, considering the dynamics of their relation to one another, are not reducible to any exclusively quantifiable state. They are part of what is the condition of the character of a person.

Aristotle acknowledges this in explaining how appropriate feelings and actions are foundational to finding the mean of virtue. Aristotle says:



fear, confidence, appetite, anger, pity, and in general pleasure and pain can be experienced too much or too little, and in both ways not well. But to have them at the right time, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is the mean and best; and this is the business of virtue. Similarly, there is an excess, a deficiency and a mean in actions. Virtue is concerned with feelings and actions, in which excess and deficiency constitute misses of the mark, while the mean is praised and on target, both of which are characteristics of virtue. Virtue, then, is a kind of mean, at least in the sense that it is the sort of thing that is able to hit a mean.” (*NE*, II06b)

How a person reacts with feelings and actions is indicative of their virtue. Aristotle talks about this with regard to courage. If the condition of a person calls for courage, the mean of courage is best as opposed to fear or confidence. Aristotle explicates this example. “In fear and confidence, courage is the mean. Of those who exceed it, the person who exceeds in fearlessness has no name (many cases lack names), while the one who exceeds in confidence is rash. He who exceeds in being afraid and is deficient in confidence is a coward” (*NE*, 1107b). The moment a virtue is beyond the mean it is no longer virtuous and it takes on a new form, such as with courage becoming fearful or rash.

Another example Aristotle uses is in reference to the eye and seeing well. “The virtue of the eye, for example, makes it and its characteristic activity good, because it is through the virtue of the eye that we see well... If this is so in all cases, then the virtue of a human being too will be the state that makes a human being good and makes him perform his characteristic activity well” (*NE*, 1106a). Therefore, if virtue can be evaluated in this way, the virtue of pride might also similarly be evaluated. If pride is a virtue, it may be considered to be a mean between two extremes. If it does not have a mean, then it does not qualify as a virtue in the Aristotelian sense. A person who does not have enough pride might tend toward acts and feelings of self-deprecation, or not valuing herself as one should. The person who has more than enough pride might be hubristic, or overvaluing herself in relation to her environment. Hubris and self-deprecation are not virtues and do not have a mean. The mean of virtue is never beyond the right

amount of action for a situation. It comprises only the proper condition of character whenever virtue is called for. Aristotle says, “If, then, the virtues are neither passions nor faculties, all that remains is that they should be states of character” (*NE*, 1106a). The mean of virtue refers to the most appropriate action in best consideration of character. For one to act well, or to live virtuously, one must also act or, as in the colloquial expression, ‘hit’ the mean of virtue. To act more or less than the mean is to ‘miss the mark’ of virtue. So in the case of pride, for it to be a virtue, it must be able to hit the mark of virtue, which is the mean and the appropriate amount of feeling or action called for as a best response to a situation.

Now, taking this into consideration for a pluralistic society or classroom, where a uniform understanding and definition of pride may not be realized, inconsistencies may arise due to the disparate understandings. For example, a person might assume that if pride is truly virtuous, then in the Aristotelian sense it must be so for everyone. However, where the understanding of virtue is inconsistent, then the definition of pride as a virtue would also be rendered inconsistently. This kind of scenario may indicate a limitation of translation or perhaps a failure of inquiry; perhaps what is assumed to be pride may actually be something else or perhaps the nuance of an original perspective is enough to obfuscate the process of inquiry. To deal with these inconsistencies it may be helpful to consider the diverse perspectives and inquire about their understanding to inform the collective regarding the many views of pride.

An example of an original perspective on pride may be with regard to Aristotle’s own explanation of pride. There is debate on the validity of this discussion. Traditionally, translations of the *Nicomachean Ethics* have largely taken what Aristotle calls *megalopsychia* to mean ‘pride.’ There are those who say Aristotle is talking about something that is most closely represented by what we know as pride. However, many modern scholars hesitate to directly

relate *megalopsychia* and pride. *Megalopsychia* is literally translated as “Greatness of soul” (Hartle, 2003, p.174). Some, like Alexander Sarch, argue that pride is an inadequate term to properly represent *megalopsychia* (*What’s Wrong With Megalopsychia?*, 2008). It is not clear whether this is because the meaning of pride has changed over time or that its meaning has evolved through being subject to changing traditions, values and culture over time. Some examples of translations I have seen for Aristotle’s *megalopsychia* are the ‘proud man’, ‘great souled person’, ‘magnanimous man’, and ‘high-mindedness’. This presents an enormous etymological potential for research about *megalopsychia*. However, *megalopsychia* has a long historical association with pride and it continues to be a veritable interpretation today, such as is shown in Dyson’s *Pride: The seven deadly sins* (2006). Regardless of how we might choose to translate *megalopsychia*, Aristotle’s mean of virtue is clearly indicated with regard to appropriate action for *megalopsychia*. Therefore, for the purposes of my research, if I demonstrate the virtue of *megalopsychia* as an original perspective for pride, when weighed against other perspectives, it may render greater understanding about the concept of pride. For this reason I will continue with the interpretation of *megalopsychia* as pride. Ultimately, what I intend to show is whether pride, as interpreted via three perspectives, (Aristotelianism, Christianity, Tantra Buddhism) is a virtuous mean within the context of each of the three perspectives.

Aristotle’s method for recognizing the achievement of a mean is pertinent to my purposes here in attempting to define a mean for pride within Christianity and Buddhism. In a similar fashion to Aristotle, I intend to show the meaning of pride, how it relates to virtue, as in its virtuous merit, and show its dynamic within the human condition, all respective to the original values and understandings of a given tradition, be it Aristotelian, Christian or Buddhist. If

successful, it may suggest potential for pride to be relatively understood among other perspectives as well and, perhaps, within a pluralistic society or classroom.

In *Nicomachean Ethics*, (*NE*) Aristotle describes the character of having *megalopsychia*, or being the proud person, (one who is full of virtue) as being something of great acclamation. “The proud person, then, is an extreme with regard to the grandness of his claims, but a mean with regard to their correctness; for he reckons his own worth in accordance with his real merit, while the others are excessive and deficient” (*NE*, 1123b). Aristotle’s proud person, then, is greatly concerned with the real merit of self and its worth. There is not too much concern with merit, nor is there too little concern. There is only as much concern as should be afforded in accordance with self and its worth. Pride is the mean of virtue for the character of self. “The proud person, since he is worthy of the greatest things, must be the best person of all. For the better a person is, the greater the things he is worthy of, and the best will be worthy of the greatest things; so the truly proud person must be good” (*NE*, 1124a). In this way, pride is determined by virtue. “Greatness in every virtue would seem to be a characteristic of a proud person... Pride, then, seems to be a sort of crown of the virtues, because it makes them greater and does not occur in isolation from them. This is why it is hard to be truly proud, since it is not possible without a noble and good character” (*NE*, 1124a). For Aristotle, to have pride is to achieve the mean of virtue with regard to the character of a person. *Megalopsychia*, then, is definitively concerned with greatness of self.

For Aristotle, coinciding with the prominence of pride is the affirmation of it. “If, then, he thinks himself worthy of great things -- and above all the greatest -- and if he is indeed so, he will be concerned with one thing in particular. Worth is spoken of with reference to external goods; and the greatest external good we should assume to be what we render to the gods, the

good most aimed at by people of worth, the prize for the noblest achievements. Such is honour, since it is indeed the greatest external good. The proud person, then, is concerned with honours and dishonours in the right way” (*NE*, 1123b). Honor is the reward and affirmation one receives for greatness whereas dishonor is the consequence for lack of greatness. Aristotle in fact dishonors those who do not think greatly of themselves when they ought to. “A person is thought to be proud if he thinks himself worthy of great things – and is indeed worthy of them (anyone who thinks like this when he is not worthy is a fool, and no one who lives in accordance with virtue is foolish or senseless); the proud person, then, is as we have described” (*NE* 1123b). To find the mean of being proud then we must be able to recognize the merit of being proud, which is ultimately determined by honor. Honor is garnered by worth via external goods which are in turn achieved by virtue of character.

To be worthy of greatness in Aristotelian terms is a grand achievement of virtue in that it is an ability to appropriately balance the greatness of oneself. “The proud person, then, is an extreme in respect of the greatness of his claims, but a mean in respect of the rightness of them; for he claims what is in accordance with his merits, while the others go to excess or fall short” (*NE*, 1123b). With this in mind I will now have a better grasp at attempting to recognize a mean for pride in other perspectives, beginning with a brief summary of Dyson and then a more thorough analysis of Christianity and Tantra Buddhism.

Michael Eric Dyson’s perspective must be considered in the modern context of our Western pluralistic society. With this in mind the question must be asked whether pride can be defined in a pluralistic society, and if so, how? When searching for definitions we may rely on reputedly agreed upon sources of information such as a dictionary or encyclopedia. For this reason Dyson has the advantage of *The Oxford English Dictionary* as a sponsor for his work.

They published a series on the seven deadly sins, which includes his book about pride that serves as an effort to define pride in the modern context.

To briefly summarize, Dyson takes Aristotle's term *megalopsychia* to mean pride. (Dyson, 2006, pg. 15) In *Pride: The seven deadly sins*, Dyson says pride can be qualified as either proper or, presumably, improper; the improper being sinful and the proper as virtuous. "Pride can be a sin, especially when it's wielded by unprincipled forces and immoral people. Pride is also a vice when it traffics in accomplishments that have little to do with genuine moral achievement but instead rest on the exercise of power or wealth" (Dyson, 2006, p.26). He explains further, "Proper pride is a boon, a stroke of moral genius against those who would withhold its virtue in the false belief that they might increase their own" (Dyson, 2006, p. 26). Dyson highlights a moral emphasis with regard to pride. It also indicates the malleability of pride in its capacity. He does not offer one resolute definition of pride, such as a dictionary might attempt to do, but rather interprets it by revealing the way it affects humanity within circumstances. The most prevalent circumstance he refers to is racism. "If Aristotle's "proper pride" is a virtue to blacks whose self-respect has been battered, then white pride is often the vice that makes black pride necessary" (Dyson, 2006, p.45). In this way, Dyson explains the necessity for proper pride is born out of oppression and antagonism; a virtue in response to oppression. Whereas improper pride is an unnecessary expression correlated to oppression and abuse. "White pride, which exists only to thwart nonwhites, was openly embraced in a segregated past that decried the alleged perversities of black or native identities" (Dyson, 2006, p.46).

In this way Dyson presents a morally dichotomized version of pride that holds a transcendent quality that neutralizes the ambiguity of contradicting definitions-- being proper and improper pride. It appears to have a codependent relationship with oppression, which

suggests it may not qualify as an Aristotelian virtue in this regard since it does not stand on its own in its own right. In this way it may be difficult at times to find a mean for proper pride as it must also consider a correlation to oppression. In the Aristotelian sense this may more closely reflect the qualities of rectificatory justice rather than *megalopsychia*. However, my intent is not to criticize Dyson’s perspective, but rather to show its modern attempt to clarify the contradicting definitions of pride. I am on a similar quest, as Dyson was, to clarify the meaning of pride in a modern context. However, my journey is different with method and sources. I hope to sufficiently offer my own perspective to effectively contribute to the discourse of this topic. I will revisit Dyson’s perspective again later on. Now I will look to consider a more established perspective in the form of Christianity.

### *Christianity*

Virtue in Christianity has to do with “righteousness”, or being “right with God.” This is because God, as Christianity understands, is the epitome of what constitutes Christian values. From the Matthew 6:33 in the *New Revised Standard Version* translation of the bible, Jesus spoke concerning how to live well and provide for oneself, “But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” And also in 1 Peter 2:24, (NRSV) “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” Christians understand God as being perfect, loving, holy, just and true, so for them, to be right with God is to also to be right in perfection, love, holiness, justice and truth. “This God—his way is perfect; the promise of the Lord proves true; he is a shield for all who take refuge in him” (Psalm 18:30, NRSV).

Traditionally, the Christian view of pride does not see much, if any, righteousness in pride. A number of verses view pride as a bad thing, to the point of moral turpitude. “<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; <sup>16</sup> for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever” (1 John 2:15-17, NRSV). Pride is not a Christian virtue as it is associated with foolishness and is opposed to wisdom, “Do you see persons wise in their own eyes? There is more hope for fools than for them” (Proverbs 26:12, NRSV). The Bible promotes humility over pride and presents them as opposing forces within oneself. “When pride comes, then comes disgrace; but wisdom is with the humble” (Proverbs 11:2, NRSV). “A person’s pride will bring humiliation, but one who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.” (Proverbs 29:23, NRSV) The bible emphasizes the benefits of grace and honor when one chooses to be humble rather than proud. “In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble”” (1 Peter 5:5, NRSV). Also in Matthew 23:12 (NRSV), Jesus said, “All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.” Rather than expecting honor for having pride, honor is bestowed by God upon those who are humble. However, it may be problematic reasoning as noted by Saint Augustine who says:

There is in humility something which exalts the mind, and something in exaltation which abases it. It may indeed seem paradoxical to say that exaltation abases and humility exalts. Godly humility, however, makes the mind subject to what is superior to it. But nothing is superior to God; and that is why humility exalts the mind by making it subject to God.” (In R.W. Dyson, 1998, book 14, ch, 13, p. 602)



Unlike Aristotle, Christianity's definition of greatness appears to have far more to do with humility and far less to do with pride. However, similar to Aristotle, the Christian pursuit of greatness of soul is a worthy goal. Thomas Aquinas describes pride as, "The appetite for excellence in excess of right reason" (Summa Theologica, Ia IIae, q. 162, a. 1, ad 1). Where right reason is the mean, to have more than the mean with excess is to miss the mark of what virtue aims for.

Regardless of how Aristotle relates to the Christian perspective on pride, it is clear that Christian tradition, on the whole, does not look favorably on pride. Gregory the Great named Pride as the "root of all evil" and "the beginning of all sin." Jesus grouped pride amongst a host of condemnable sin, "<sup>21</sup> For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person" (Mark 7:21-23, NRSV). Thomas Aquinas warns about pride having, "extreme gravity, because in other sins man turns away from God either through ignorance or through weakness, or through desire for any other good whatever; whereas pride denotes aversion from God simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule" (Summa Theologica, II q.162 ad.1). This 'unwillingness' is a common theme throughout the Bible. It begins with Adam and Eve who chose to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit, it continues with the Israelites and their kings who do not obey the commandments, it goes on with Jonah refusing to tell Nineveh to repent from their sins. Psalm 10:4 (NRSV) says, "In the pride of their countenance the wicked say, 'God will not seek it out'; all their thoughts are, 'There is no God.' These examples, and perhaps others, may all describe a narrative of prideful unwillingness.

Not all translations are the same with using the word pride. It is important to note the discrepancy between translations. For example, in the book of Isaiah, the *New American Standard Bible*, (NASB) has God use pride as a term of endearment for the people of Israel:

Whereas you have been forsaken and hated  
 With no one passing through,  
 I will make you an everlasting pride,  
 A joy from generation to generation. (Isaiah 60:15 NASB)

Whereas the *New Revised Standard Version* omits using pride in the same verse:

Whereas you have been forsaken and hated,  
 with no one passing through,  
 I will make you majestic forever,  
 a joy from age to age. (Isaiah 60:15 NRSV)

Another example is in 2 Chronicles 17:5,6. The NASB refers to pride favorably, “<sup>5</sup>So the Lord established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. <sup>6</sup>He took great pride in the ways of the Lord and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.” However, the NRSV replaces “He took great pride in the ways of the Lord...” with, “His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord...” Therefore, it is important to be mindful of the relevance of semantics and translation when reading into the context of these verses.

A notable exception where pride is favorable in the NRSV is Galatians 6:4, “All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for pride.” Other examples in the bible, though not so explicit, where pride is described in a favorable way involve usage of the word “boast”. While pride and boasting are not synonymous terms, boasting does connote an attitude of being proud. Paul apprises boasting about his faith in letters to the Corinthians, “We, however, will not boast beyond limits, but will keep within the field that God has assigned to us, to reach out even as far as you” (2 Corinthians 10:13 NRSV).

And again to the Corinthians Paul says, “<sup>17</sup> Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” <sup>18</sup> For it is not those who commend themselves that are approved, but those whom the Lord commends” (2 Corinthians 10:17-18 NRSV). This verse seems to say it is good to have pride in God and the bestowment of commendation is not for oneself, but reserved for the Lord.

Another exception for pride to be described positively in Christian tradition is in the *Summa Theologica*. Thomas Aquinas talks about pride and refers to Saint Jerome about Isaiah 61:6 being indicative of two kinds of pride:

Pride [superbia] may be understood in two ways. First, as overpassing [supergreditur] the rule of reason and in this sense we say that it is a sin. Secondly, it may simply denominate "super-abundance"; in which sense any super-abundant thing may be called pride: and it is thus that God promises pride as significant of super-abundant good. Hence a gloss of Jerome on the same passage (Isaiah 61:6) says that "there is a good and an evil pride"; or "a sinful pride which God resists, and a pride that denotes the glory which He bestows. It may also be replied that pride there signifies abundance of those things in which men may take pride. (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162 ad.1)

Aquinas specifies pride as referring to the Latin word *superbia*. This is another example of how understanding pride in English shows dependence on the translation of a word from another language. Aquinas defines pride as being understood in a sinful way yet also in a way that glorifies God. With regard to reason, pride is sinful, but when denoting a sense of super-abundant good, it is glorifying to God.

I am greatly disappointed at not having found more with respect to this denotation from Aquinas. It seems to be a very important point to discuss since it appears to be a lone exception to every other point about pride being sinful in *Summa Theologica*. Unfortunately I have not been able to find any credible Christian source about pride being of super-abundant goodness. From what I understand this seems to follow that taking pride in what is truly good, as in God, is good because it supports fellowship with God. Essentially this kind of pride boosts a Christian

relationship with God. It is not sinful as it does not put oneself before God. For in this kind of pride, the very reason for its existence is because of God -- God is the purpose for this kind of pride.

In the greater scope of the Bible's narrative, a necessary example of pride to consider is the story about Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel, chapter 4. This story is part of the Old Testament, and Hebrew Bible, but is considered an integral part of the canon for Christian scripture. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that made him afraid, "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living at ease in my home and prospering in my palace. I saw a dream that frightened me; my fantasies in bed and the visions of my head terrified me" (Daniel 4:4, 5, NRSV). Nebuchadnezzar sought to have the dream interpreted and Daniel, who is also called Belshazzar, does so. However, the interpretation is not good news for Nebuchadnezzar:

<sup>19</sup> Then Daniel, who was called Belshazzar, was severely distressed for a while. His thoughts terrified him. The king said, "Belshazzar, do not let the dream or the interpretation terrify you." Belshazzar answered, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your enemies!" <sup>20</sup> The tree that you saw, which grew great and strong, so that its top reached to heaven and was visible to the end of the whole earth, <sup>21</sup> whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and which provided food for all, under which animals of the field lived, and in whose branches the birds of the air had nests— <sup>22</sup> it is you, O king! You have grown great and strong. Your greatness has increased and reaches to heaven, and your sovereignty to the ends of the earth. <sup>23</sup> And whereas the king saw a holy watcher coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze, in the grass of the field; and let him be bathed with the dew of heaven, and let his lot be with the animals of the field, until seven times pass over him'— <sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O king, and it is a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king: <sup>25</sup> You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the wild animals. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, you shall be bathed with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and gives it to whom he will. <sup>26</sup> As it was commanded to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be re-established for you from the time that you learn that Heaven is sovereign. <sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: atone for your sins with righteousness, and your iniquities with mercy to the oppressed, so that your prosperity may be prolonged. (Daniel 4:19-27 NRSV)

The Bible does not say how Nebuchadnezzar takes the news of this interpretation by Daniel as the story immediately skips forward to the fulfillment of the dream:

<sup>28</sup> All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup> and the king said, “Is this not magnificent Babylon, which I have built as a royal capital by my mighty power and for my glorious majesty?” <sup>31</sup> While the words were still in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven: “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: The kingdom has departed from you! <sup>32</sup> You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the animals of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals and gives it to whom he will.” <sup>33</sup> Immediately the sentence was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven away from human society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers and his nails became like birds’ claws.

<sup>34</sup> When that period was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me.

I blessed the Most High,  
 and praised and honored the one who lives forever.  
 For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty,  
 and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.  
<sup>35</sup> All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,  
 and he does what he wills with the host of heaven  
 and the inhabitants of the earth.  
 There is no one who can stay his hand  
 or say to him, “What are you doing?””

<sup>36</sup> At that time my reason returned to me; and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My counselors and my lords sought me out, I was re-established over my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven,

for all his works are truth,  
 and his ways are justice;  
 and he is able to bring low  
 those who walk in pride.

(Daniel 4:28-37, NRSV)

In the end of the story (Daniel 4:36, 37, NRSV) Nebuchadnezzar’s character appears to now be in a different condition with respect to how he sees himself in his environment. In the beginning of the story he thought much about himself and his majesty. “Is this not magnificent

Babylon, which I have built as a royal capital by my mighty power and for my glorious majesty?” (Daniel 4:30, NRSV). However, also in the end of the story, his thoughts about himself have changed. He appears to be humbled, though it is not the result of seeing himself as less worthy. He regains his reason, majesty, splendor and sovereignty just as before. “... my reason returned to me”, “... my majesty and splendor were restored to me”, “... I was reestablished in my sovereignty...” In fact he indicates he is more worthy than before when he says, “surpassing greatness was added to me” (Daniel 4:36 NRSV). The change of his perspective is more obvious in the way he describes his new condition. He does not take back or find his reason, it is returned to him. He does not re-establish his sovereignty, he is reestablished. He does not add surpassing greatness to himself, it is added to him. Though it is not explicitly stated in the story, the language he uses to describe his new condition is indicative of a more humble demeanor, and yet, one who still recognizes his great worth. This is shown in the way he now honors God and acknowledges God’s superiority, “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are truth, and his ways are justice; and he is able to bring low those who walk in pride” (Daniel 4:37, NRSV).

This ending to the story does not definitively say whether Nebuchadnezzar was sinning or wrong for being prideful, but it does highlight God’s superior greatness and the importance for recognizing that truth. Nebuchadnezzar was put into a condition of turmoil by God for thinking too highly of himself and his accomplishments. His claim of presiding greatness was extreme in believing that he built the empire of Babylon. However, this belief was beyond the mean with respect to its correctness as God took exception to it:

<sup>31</sup> While the word was in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,<sup>32</sup> and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the

field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’ (Daniel 4:31,32, NRSV)

It is difficult to know exactly what Nebuchadnezzar went through and the exact feelings he had about himself at the time, but in the end it appears he reached a mean of sorts. He took on the virtue of honoring God and acknowledged that the Lord is greater than all. In changing his prideful attitude he was given his kingdom back and surpassing greatness was added to him.

This story about Nebuchadnezzar may speak to an important distinction between what is sinful and what is glorifying to God. John 7:18 (NRSV) says, “Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him.” In this way, Nebuchadnezzar, by seeking the glory of God, may be righteous. The kind of righteousness described here may offer a bit of explanation, perhaps, for Aquinas reasoning about pride being two kinds of *superbia*: one being *supercreditur* which is sinful and the other being a super-abundance for glorifying God (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162 ad.1). However, it is important to remember that ultimately, the general consensus about pride in Christianity is that it is not virtuous.

### *Tantra Buddhism*

Now that I have described Aristotelian and Christian perspectives about pride, I will introduce Tantra Buddhism third and final major perspective that will be considered for analysis. Buddhism is a religion extensive and rich with diversity and history. Within Buddhist tradition there are different systems of thought and practice. One specifically I have chosen to consider with regard to pride is Tantra Buddhism. Tantra Buddhist philosophy and practices can be found throughout the world with different claimed interpretations. I have chosen to focus specifically on Tibetan Tantra Buddhism. Je Tsongkhapa, a 15<sup>th</sup> century Tibetan shared extensive

foundational writings and insight for Tibetan Buddhism and may offer helpful insight into Tantra Buddhism's main tenets and philosophy.

In the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (SEP) Gareth Sparham describes Tsongkhapa as a man who devoted efforts toward reintroducing the essence of Buddhist understanding. “Tsongkhapa framed his insights not as original contributions, but as a rediscovery of meanings already revealed by the Buddha. In all his works he characterizes his philosophy as identical to the Buddha's. Further, he says his philosophy is based on Nāgārjuna's and Nāgārjuna's follower Ārya-deva's (third-fourth century) explanation of what the Buddha said” (SEP, 2011). Jeffrey Hopkins (1980) notes that Tsongkhapa founded the Gelukpa order, a school of Tibetan Buddhism that practices Tantra under the auspices of Buddhism by way of philosophy (*Tantra in Tibet*, p. 8). Hopkins (1977) also says, “Practitioners of the four tantras have the same intention in that they all are seeking others’ welfare. The object of attainment—the Buddhahood which is the extinguishment of all faults and fulfilment of all auspicious attributes—is the same for all” (p. 74). This description of Buddhist philosophy illuminates potential for achieving merit by way of, “extinguishment of all faults and fulfilment of all auspicious attributes” and the virtuous goal of attaining Buddhahood and the defining effect of practice as “seeking others’ welfare”.

Having a perspective more familiar with Western concepts and philosophy, I found the Tantra Buddhist understanding of pride to be a nuanced perspective about pride. Tsongkhapa did not write in English so we must rely heavily on Jeffrey Hopkins translation for what is said about pride. In an effort to clarify Tsongkhapa’s teachings about the best way to live life, Hopkins describes pride as being an essential factor in protection of one’s progression toward enlightenment:



The word 'mantra' means 'mind-protection'. It protects the mind from ordinary appearances and conceptions. 'Mind' here refers to all six consciousnesses -- eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mental consciousnesses -- which are to be freed, or protected, from the ordinary world. There are two factors in mantra training, pride in oneself as a deity and vivid appearance of that deity. Divine pride protects one from the pride of being ordinary, and divine vivid appearance protects one from ordinary appearances. Whatever appears to the senses is viewed as the sport of a deity; for instance, whatever forms are seen are viewed as the emanations of a deity and whatever sounds are heard are viewed as the mantras of a deity. One is thereby protected from ordinary appearances, and through this transformation of attitude, the pride of being a deity emerges. Such protection of mind together with its attendant pledges and vows is called the practice of mantra. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 47, 48).

The idea of pride as a means to protect oneself may also resonate with the writings of a more modern Tantra Buddhist Rinpoche, Chogyam Trungpa. Trungpa says of the path toward enlightenment, “We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery” (Trungpa, *The Lion's Roar*, 2003, p. 36). Tsongkhapa says, “‘Vajra’ means the indivisible and the great unbreakable. That is the Mahayana; this Mahayana is the Vajra vehicle” (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 107). *Mahayana* is the highest path to enlightenment and utilizes the power of desire, whereas *Hinayana*, another path to enlightenment, does not. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 37)

There is also difference in motivation between Mahayana and Hinayana,

The Hinayana motivation is the wish to attain liberation from cyclic existence for oneself whereas the Mahayana motivation is the wish to attain Buddhahood in order to help all sentient beings.” However, the core philosophy behind the Mahayana and Hinayana is still the same, ‘Hinayana and Mahayana are differentiated by way of method, not by way of wisdom.’ (Hopkins, 1977, p. 55)

In fact there are many types of yana's in Tantra Buddhism, with many types of methods, but they are all unified in the truth of the Buddhahood, “...the field of intent which is the welfare of

other sentient beings and the object of observation which is one's own attainment of Buddhahood. Trainees of Sutra and Mantra wish for highest enlightenment for the sake of others and take cognizance of the same fruit, a Buddhahood that is an extinguishment of all faults and an endowment with all auspicious qualities" (Hopkins, 1977, p. 54, 55). Though one may not have the appropriate capacity to do so, Mahayana, being the highest way to enlightenment, would be the most auspicious goal to reach and practice. Therefore its tenets and method are revered as such. In fact, to not practice Mahayana when one is able to will hold one back from enlightenment:

If one who has the ability to practice Mahayana does not practice it, and instead assumes Hinayana practices, this action will interrupt his progress to Buddhahood. It is not said that with respect to all people generation of a Hinayana attitude is an obstacle to Buddhahood. It is so only for those capable of practicing the Bodhisattva path. It depends on the individual. Nevertheless, Hinayana is not part of Mahayana. Hinayana paths are subsidiaries of the path to Buddhahood but not actual Mahayana paths. Mahayana has the complete paths for the attainment of Buddhahood: thus, there is a difference of incompleteness and completeness, and hence inferiority and superiority, between Hinayana and Mahayana. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 44)

Geshe Tashi warns it is not wise to think in terms of patriarchy with regard to yana's. "It is very risky for Mahayana practitioners to think that the Mahayana teachings are the highest, the most complete or advanced teachings and that the other teachings such as those of the Theravadin are lower or incomplete. Having such a feeling is really a very heavy negativity"

(<<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>). This would suggest terms of superior and inferior might refer more to aspects of completeness rather than status.

Vajra pride is an indestructible way to go about achieving enlightenment. "*Vajra* means "adamantine," which is like diamond, or superdiamond" (Trungpa, *Lion's Roar*, 2003, p. 280). In Tantra Buddhism, this must also involve the yoga deity. "In order to attain the definite goodness of the highest achievement, Buddhahood, deity yoga is needed. Also, in order to attain the

common achievements, the eight feats and so forth, one must view one's body clearly as a divine body and train in the pride of being a deity. Without deity yoga the Mantra path is impossible; deity yoga is the essence of Mantra" (Hopkins, 1977, p. 68). Two terms I will attempt briefly to clarify here are 'Mantra' and 'Deity Yoga'. The word 'Mantra' means "mind protection" (Hopkins, 1977, p. 47) and is an essential part of being able to achieve merit toward enlightenment. Mantra is considered to be a kind of *Mahayana Vehicle*, the other being the *Perfection Vehicle*. The difference between the two is in their method. "The difference in speed between the two Mahayanas is due to a faster accumulation of merit in the Mantra Vehicle (if one is capable of practicing it), resulting from the cultivation of deity yoga" (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p.213). Practicing 'Mantra' involves having pride in 'Deity Yoga', which is essential to more quickly attain Buddhahood and is a definitive feature of Tantra Buddhism from other types of Buddhism" (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 212).

The pride of being a deity, deity yoga being one of many deities, is something that is essential to having a most vibrant and fulfilling experience in Buddhism. Though it is mysterious how it works, Tantra Buddhists declare it cannot be denied as to its effect:

Meditating on oneself as having a divine body seems to be childish play, like telling a story to a child to stimulate his imagination. However, in conjunction with the view of emptiness, altruistic motivation and knowledge of its purpose, it is a very important psychological training—viewing one's body in the form of a deity, generating the pride of being a deity, temporarily performing the activities of pacification and so forth, and ultimately achieving Buddhahood. There is a difference in force between merely repeating a mantra and repeating that mantra within the context of deity yoga; there may in time be a scientific explanation of this difference. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 68,69)

There is a verse in the first chapter of the *Vajradaka Tantra*, a Highest Yoga Tantra scripture, that speaks to the power of uniting with a deity:

Oneself is all Buddhas

And all the heroes. Through  
 Union with one's own deity  
 Its nature is thoroughly achieved.

Through this all Buddhas,  
 And all the Heroes,  
 And all Vajradharas  
 Are achieved in this very life.

Vajraakas, Vajrasattvas,  
 Tathagatas, and glorious  
 Blessed Ones having superior bliss

In union with all Sky Goers say this. (trans. 1977 Jeffrey Hopkins, *Vajradaka Tantra*)

The writings of a Tantra Buddhist Rinpoche, Chogyam Trungpa, were introduced to me by Daniel Vokey. During his life, Trungpa attempted to introduce Tantra Buddhism to western society. Trungpa describes pride as being of two natures; that being of Vajra and of Rudra. As I showed in the introduction, Trungpa describes Vajra as having to do with being authentic and confident in oneself, whereas Rudra has to do with conquering and consequences. Rudra is described as being “the personification of the destructive principle of ultimate ego” (Trungpa, 2001, p. 228). Rudra is described to be of an exclusive nature from Vajra. Trungpa tells the traditional story of Rudra to illuminate the way of Rudra:

There is the story of Rudra, one of the first persons to go to Vajra hell. He and a fellow student, a dharma brother, were studying with the same master. They had a disagreement about how to interpret the master's instructions. They were taking opposite extremes in carrying out their practice, and each of them was sure that he was right. They decided to go to the teacher and ask for his comment. When the teacher told Rudra that he was wrong, Rudra became so angry that he drew his sword and killed his teacher on the spot. Then he ended up in Vajra hell. It is that kind of alienation. Whereas Vajra involves being true to

the self and taking pride in the self as it is. In Vajra pride there is no need to “defend” any territory because external events do not affect its authenticity. In other words, with Vajra, one’s honor and dignity is not dependent on things that happen to the self. (2003, p. 201)

Being of Rudra is not something Trungpa encourages. Rudra is associated with moving away from attaining the Tanta Buddhist goal of enlightenment. Trungpa (2001) describes an example of how pride acts as a transmitter for spiritual power in Tantra Buddhism. To visualize this dynamic he says the following:

At all levels of tantra, you need a transmitter to transmit this spiritual power. This power can be turned into something good or bad, powerful or destructive. An analogy that developed in Tibet is that entering tantric discipline is like putting a poisonous snake in a bamboo pipe. The snake might go either up or down. Once one has begun to relate with tantra, there is no compromise, no happy medium; there’s no *Madhyamaka*, no middle way. There’s no happy system of compromise anymore at all. Once you get into tantric discipline, you either go up or you go down. Either you become Buddha or you become Rudra, a cosmic monster. (p. 118)

Trungpa (2003) says Rudra is, “the personification of the destructive principle of ultimate ego.” and describes it as, “turning yourself into a demon” (Trungpa, p. 201).

Ultimately the best *yana*, or “way”, to have pride is with *vajrayana*, or the god way. Trungpa says the vajrayana is accepting of the self as it is. “In the vajrayana approach, you are what you are. If you’re passionate, that’s beautiful. If you’re aggressive, that’s beautiful. If you’re ignorant, that’s beautiful. And all the materials and manifestations in you are regarded as in the vajra realm, rather than your being condemned as a failure. The whole thing is really highly workable... what goes on in your life is not rejected or selected” (2003, p. 286). Being as true to the self as much as possible is the goal.

*Student:* What is the difference between Vajra pride and the pride of Rudra?

*Trungpa Rinpoche:* That seems to be quite basic. The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were

a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 269)

Trungpa describes Vajra pride as being a positive aspect of the Buddhist faith. “Vajra pride in Tibetan is *Iha yi ngagyal*. *Lha* means “god,” *ngagyal* means “pride.” The idea is to develop the pride of being a buddha” (2003, p. 266). He also explains how enlightenment is closely associated with Vajra. Trungpa says of his path toward enlightenment,

We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery” (2003, p. 173).

*Bodhissatva* is a term that refers to those who are dedicated to the way of the *Mahayana*--which is the highest way. (Geshe Tashi, *The Bodhisattva Vow: A Practical Guide to Helping Others*, 1995, p. 1)

Trungpa also describes how Vajra pride helps to provide holistic benefit to a Tantric practitioner's “fundamental sanity”. He describes beholding Vajra pride as a vital aspect of healthy self-affirmation.

The Tantric practitioner has been able to relate with himself or herself to the extent that his or her basic being is no longer regarded as a nuisance. One's basic being is experienced as highly workable and full of all kinds of potentialities. On the tantric level, this sense of potential is called vajra, which means, ‘adamantine,’ or ‘diamond,’ or ‘indestructible.’ A sense of indestructibility and a strong continuous basic body has developed” (2003, p. 176).

Being a tantric practitioner is not a simple task and it is not appropriate for everyone to practice. There are different levels of practicing Buddhism. Hopkins explains the way Tantra Buddhism is helpful to those who can utilize the power of desire:

The tantras were mainly expounded for those of the enlightenment by way of using desire realm and specifically for those seeking enlightenment by way of using desire in the path. The sets of tantras are differentiated by way of four modes of practice and four types of trainees whose abilities correspond to these four types of practice. These are four ways of using desire in the path based on differing capacities for generating the emptiness of deity yogas. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 75)

The way in which a person might go about utilizing desire is not recommended as being made public or to be proclaimed at large. This is because it is part of what is called, “*secret mantra*”. Trungpa warns that secret mantra can put you into Vajra hell, which is a place of cognitive and spiritual torment as a result of not being able or ready to learn the secret mantra. Hopkins describes the secrecy as a protective measure against those who would misuse or not know how to use it properly:

The topics of Secret Mantra are not to be displayed like merchandise but practiced secretly. If they are not, instead of helping, there is a danger of harming many people due to generating misunderstanding. For instance, some who are unable to practice the four tantras in general and Highest Yoga Tantra in particular merely wish to play with Mantra. Some, although they have faith, do not accurately know the Buddhist presentations of view, meditation, and behavior. Others know these topics accurately but do not have an ability to maintain vows, sustain faith, and be strong of mind. Without this knowledge and this ability, practice of the Mantra path is impossible. (1977, p. 15, 16)

Hopkins also says:

If one’s mental continuum has not been ripened by the practices common to both Sutra and Tantra Mahayana—realisation of suffering, impermanence, refuge, love, compassion, altruistic mind generation, and emptiness of inherent existence—practice of the Mantra Vehicle can be ruinous through one’s assuming an advanced practice inappropriate to one’s capacity. Therefore, its open dissemination is prohibited; practitioners must maintain secrecy from those who are not vessels of this path. (1977, p. 47)

Though the specifics of Secret Mantra will not be recounted here, there are some words of wisdom worth contemplating about its philosophy with regard to desire, “If one knows how to use their afflictions for the welfare of others, they can serve as aids in amassing the accumulations of merit, and in this sense desire is not one-pointedly to be avoided although, from the viewpoint of the entities of the afflictions, they are indeed to be abandoned” (Hopkins,

1977, p. 58). The way in which merit might be accumulated from utilizing affliction is illuminated with a famous Buddhist passage:

Just as the filth of city-dwellers  
 Helps the field of a sugar-cane grower,  
 So the manure of a Bodhisattva's afflictions  
 Assists in growing the qualities of a Buddha. (*Kashyapa Chapter Sutra*)

This passage is self-affirming in that even a person's afflictions are not to be dismissed or cleansed, but rather, they can be used as a part of the process to achieving Buddhahood.

If Vajra pride is rooted in this philosophy, then it is logical to connect how it can be indestructible -- If one can utilize, to their benefit toward Buddhahood, even the things that might afflict them, then it becomes an unstoppable force as one is immune to being afflicted or being put off balance. This puts great value in the self and its potential as Hopkins indicates: "Buddha nature is present in all sentient beings providing the substantial cause for the attainment of Buddhahood... Buddhahood exists primordially in oneself... we presently have all the substances for achieving Buddhahood, and we should not seek for Buddhahood elsewhere" (Hopkins, 1977, p. 45). If all that one needs to achieve Buddhahood is to be found within oneself, for Buddhists, that indicates great value to oneself. Essentially it means there is nothing that merits greater value than oneself. "There are two factors in mantra training, pride in oneself as a deity and vivid appearance of that deity. Divine pride protects one from the pride of being ordinary, and divine vivid appearance protects one from ordinary appearances" (Hopkins, 1977, p.47). For Buddhists, there may be no greater virtue than to have pride in the self. Vajra, then, would be a sort of mean in the Aristotelian sense, since it is the best way for oneself to be. Mahayana Buddhism, the highest way, would then be the effective practice of that mean.



### CHAPTER 3: PERSPECTIVES

Now that I have highlighted the perspectives of Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism, I will summarize what I have found in each of them about pride. For each perspective I have written a short account using showing how pride is defined and describing its relation to a virtuous mean. My intention is to succinctly show the virtuous mean of pride for each perspective. This may be helpful to highlight for the reader the distinct concepts of pride I will be using for analysis. That being said, it is also important to remember I am not attempting to define the appropriate use of the word pride. This is a crucial aspect to understand about my analysis as I hope to avoid showing any perspective as being more or less authoritative or accurate about pride than others. Each perspective has developed its own understanding in its own right and to argue against an understanding would be to argue against the perspective itself, which is not what I intend to do. Each perspective's understanding of pride is held as its own. Whether or not my attempt to understand it may seem to be controvertible, that may reflect the limitations of my attempt and not the perspective itself that is found lacking. It is my attempt to convey to the reader, as clearly as possible, the meaning of pride for each perspective. There will undoubtedly be discrepancies amongst the three perspectives, and even the reader's, as I am not attempting to redefine pride, or come to one universal definition of pride. Instead I am attempting to expose the meaning of pride for each perspective, in as much of a way that is grounded in the literature as I am able. From there I hope to perhaps reveal something consistent, perhaps similar or resonant, amongst the perspectives. If this can be found, it may be grounds from which the perspectives can continue to have dialog and overcome incommensurability on this moral issue of pride.

### *Aristotelianism*

For Aristotle, pride is understood to be the crown of the virtues in that it effectively benefits all the other virtues (*NE*, 1124a). This is shown to be true as it becomes a kind of virtuous purpose; Aristotle uses an example; the eye is designed to see. Therefore the virtue of the eye is to see well. Similarly the virtue of living is to live well (*NE*, pg 29). Pride is a representative balance of a person in tune with what he or she merits and the virtuous pursuits of those merits. “The proud man, then, is an extreme in respect of the greatness of his claims, but a mean in respect of the rightness of them; for he claims what is accordance with his merits, while the others go to excess or fall short” (*NE*, 1123b). Therefore, to achieve pride is to hit the mean of virtue. “Therefore the truly proud man must be good. And greatness in every virtue would seem to be characteristic of a proud man” (*NE*,1123b).

To gain merit for pride one must be concerned with honor. To have honor is to validate pride in the self:

If, then, he deserves and claims great things, and above all the great things, he will be concerned with one thing in particular. Desert is relative to external goods; and the greatest of these, we should say, is that which we render to the gods, and which people of position most aim at, and which is the prize appointed for the noblest deeds; and this is honour; that is surely the greatest of external goods. (*NE*,1123b)

The proud person is both proud, and in pursuit of honor (Aristotle 1123b, 68). To be proud without merit is hubris and foolish. To not be proud with merit falls short of greatness.

And even apart from argument it is with honour that proud men appear to be concerned; for it is honour that they chiefly claim, but in accordance with their deserts. The unduly humble man falls short both in comparison with his own merits and in comparison with the proud man's claims. The vain man goes to excess in comparison with his own merits, but does not exceed the proud man's claims. (*NE*,1123b)

Pride seems to be virtuous in that it does not conflict with other virtues, and indeed describe it as the greatest virtue because of its inclusion of all the virtues at once. “Pride, then, seems to be a sort of crown of the virtues; for it makes them greater, and it is not found without them.

Therefore it is hard to be truly proud; for it is impossible without nobility and goodness of character” (*NE*,1124a). The proud person for Aristotle is a virtuous person in the extreme; virtue as determined by goods for living well.

### *Christianity:*

In the history and belief system of Christianity, pride is understood to be sinful because it has been believed that it honors the self before God:

... uplifting which pride covets inordinately, is not essentially most incompatible with the good of virtue. But on the part of the aversion, pride has extreme gravity, because in other sins man turns away from God, either through ignorance or through weakness, or through desire for any other good whatever; whereas pride denotes aversion from God simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule. (*Summa Theologica* II q.162 ad.1)

In this way a prideful person fails to be righteous by not putting God first and therefore does not act faithfully. It is considered a worldly and unrighteous action:

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; <sup>16</sup> for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever. (1 John 2:15-17, NRSV)

A lack of humility seems to be the most apparent failing of pride:

“But he gives all the more grace; therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’” (James 4:6, NRSV)

“All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:12, NRSV)

“In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’” (1 Peter 5:5, NRSV)

“Pride is directly opposed to the virtue of humility, which, in a way, is concerned about the same matter as magnanimity, as stated above (II-II:161:1 ad 3).” (*Summa Theologica*, 162:1 ad 3)

Pride is not a virtue for Christians and is in fact considered to be one of the most insidious sins. It is also considered to be a compounding factor for other sin according to Aquinas:

Opposition between a vice and a virtue is inferred from the object, which is considered on the part of conversion. On this way pride has no claim to be the greatest of sins, as neither has humility to be the greatest of virtues. But it is the greatest on the part of aversion, since it brings greatness upon other sins. For unbelief, by the very fact of its arising out of proud contempt, is rendered more grievous than if it be the outcome of ignorance or weakness. The same applies to despair and the like. (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162 ad.1)

The desire of the self being put before the desire of God is understood to be an act of pride. Pride is considered to be something that can spoil all other virtues:

A sin may destroy a virtue in two ways. On one way by direct contrariety to a virtue, and thus pride does not corrupt every virtue, but only humility; even as every special sin destroys the special virtue opposed to it, by acting counter thereto. On another way a sin destroys a virtue, by making ill use of that virtue: and thus pride destroys every virtue, in so far as it finds an occasion of pride in every virtue, just as in everything else pertaining to excellence. (*Summa Theologica* II q.162:2 ad.3)

Pride is opposed to virtue, therefore it would seem that to have an extreme of it, either depreciative or increasingly, is to exacerbate a lack of virtue.

Reason has the direction of those things for which man has a natural appetite; so that if the appetite wander from the rule of reason, whether by excess or by default, it will be sinful, as is the case with the appetite for food which man desires naturally. Now pride is the appetite for excellence in excess of right reason. (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162:1 ad.2)

The opposition to virtue is also described as being an opposition to humility, which is a virtue,

“Pride is directly opposed to the virtue of humility, which, in a way, is concerned about the same matter as magnanimity, as stated above (II-II:161:1 ad 3)” (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162:1 ad.3).

I was not able to find any argument for pride having a helpful or supportive role in faithfulness or righteousness except, perhaps, for the explanation by Aquinas about pride, or as he denotes, *superbia*, having two forms; one with regard to reason being sinful, and the other with regard to super-abundant goodness being glorifying to God, “Pride [*superbia*] may be understood in two ways. First, as overpassing [*supergreditur*] the rule of reason, and in this sense we say that it is a sin. Secondly, it may simply denominate ‘super-abundance’; in which sense any super-abundant thing may be called pride” (*Summa Theologica*, II q.162 ad.1).

Unfortunately I have not found any credible sources to further clarify how pride may be of super-abundant goodness in the Christian perspective. On the whole, pride is understood to be sinful in Christianity and thus, it is not understood to be a virtue, but rather, the opposite. Sin is evil and that which separates people from God. Therefore, sin is not good and cannot be virtuous.

### *Buddhism*

Buddhism begins with pride as pride is an essential aspect for achieving enlightenment.

Trungpa states that pride is a foundational aspect of Tantra Buddhism:

We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery. (Trungpa, 2001, pg 36)

Hopkins describes the pride of being a deity as being an essential part of a quick way to achieving Buddhahood, “The complete method capable of bestowing Buddhahood quickly is the cultivation of a path of deity yoga in which the pride of being the deity of the effect state is established” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 61). Cultivating a path of deity yoga is a practice within

Mahayana Buddhism, the Highest Way toward achieving enlightenment. Hopkins describes its mysteriously powerful effect:

Meditating on oneself as having a divine body seems to be childish play, like telling a story to a child to stimulate his imagination. However, in conjunction with the view of emptiness, altruistic motivation, and knowledge of its purpose, it is a very important psychological training—viewing one’s body in the form of a deity, generating the pride of being a deity, temporarily performing the activities of pacification and so forth, and ultimately achieving Buddhahood. There is a difference in force between merely repeating a mantra and repeating that mantra within the context of deity yoga; there may in time be a scientific explanation of this difference. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 68, 69)

The achieving of merit in Mahayana Buddhism is greatly benefited by deity yoga. “The difference in speed between the two Mahayanas is due to a faster accumulation of merit in the Mantra Vehicle (if one is capable of practicing it), resulting from the cultivation of a deity yoga” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 213). To this point, Hopkins also says, “According to the Perfection Vehicle, in general a Form Body is achieved through the amassing of merit” (1977, p. 67). The *Form Body* refers to that of the Buddha.

According to the Perfection Vehicle, in general a Form Body is achieved through the amassing of merit. In particular, when a Bodhisattva arrives on the eighth among the ten grounds, he newly achieves a mental body that has similitudes of a Buddha’s major and minor marks and arises in dependence on the stage of latent predispositions of ignorance [the motivation of wishing to assume a mental body] and non-contaminated action [the mental factor of intention which is the subtle exertion involved in the motivation of wishing to assume a mental body]. This body gradually improves and eventually turns into the Form Body of a Buddha. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 67)

Tsongkhapa also says, “Those of the Perfection Vehicle assert that the causes of the entity of a Form Body are the superior collections of merit” (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 135). In this way, the more pride for oneself will encourage the person to act virtuously by helping all sentient beings and achieving enlightenment. The more a person is able to practice the Mahayana, the more they live a virtuous life (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 213). They are not affected by desires that might distract them from Mahayana because they are not afflicted by them and in fact use them to keep

them in the Mahayana (Hopkins, 1977, p. 58). If a person has achieved a superior amount of merit in Mahayana, he will be a person who is virtuous in the extreme.

There are those whose capacity of the Mahayana lineage is not meagre, whose minds are strongly moved by great compassion through having trained in the common path sustained by a spiritual guide, an excellent protector. They are in great haste to free from cyclic existence the kind mothers wandering there. They should enter the short path, the profound Vajra Vehicle that quickly bestows the state of a Blessed Buddha, the sole refuge of all sentient beings. (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 84)

Once one begins analyzing the great aims of oneself and others, there is no satisfaction with merely the system revealed by the elders of the world—the achievement of happiness and avoidance of suffering as long as one lives. The entrance for those seeking the higher features of future lives and above [liberation from cyclic existence and the attainment of omniscience] is only the teaching of the Blessed Buddha whose banner flies over the three realms. He is the great base of the welfare of all beings; the mere movement of his breath in and out is a great means providing medicine for sentient beings. For he attained his supreme glorious state through having practised the aspiration to highest enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings and through the great waves of the deeds of Buddha Sons that are induced by this altruistic mind of enlightenment. The mind of enlightenment is a cherishing of others more than oneself—a source of talk that accords not at all with the world since most other persons find it difficult even to take delight in it from the depths of their heart. (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 85)

Matrcheta [Ashvaghosha] and Dignaga's *Interwoven Praise (Mishrakastotra)* says:

I dwell in an ocean of cyclic  
Existence of depth without limit.  
The frightful sea monsters of desire  
And so forth are eating my body.  
Where will I go for refuge now?

If one has intelligence,  
One would take refuge in him,  
The one who has  
Not any defects  
Who in every way has all  
Auspicious attributes.

It would be right to praise and respect  
Him and to abide in his teaching. (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 86)

Pride is understood as being representative of a way of being. Trungpa says how there is Vajra pride, but there is also pride of Rudra:

“*Student:* What is the difference between Vajra pride and the pride of Rudra?”

*Trungpa Rinpoche:* That seems to be quite basic. The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (2003, p. 269)

There may also be other kinds of pride mentioned within Tantra Buddhism and its Sutra, but from what I found pride always has referred directly to an auspicious condition of being oneself. Of the practice of Tantra Buddhism, Tsongkhapa says:

Abhayakara explains the method in accordance with Ratnakarashanti in the eighteenth cluster of *Clusters of Quintessential Instructions (Amnayamanjari)* and quotes as a source the fourteenth chapter of the *Vajrapanjara*:

To overcome pride of ordinariness  
This meditation is known to be perfect.

Also: ‘For the sake of purifying the unclean body one should meditate on a Buddha Body.’ (1977, p. 130)

It seems that Tantra Buddhism is best understood in terms of Vajra, which is the best way for oneself, and that best way is specific for each person depending on their capabilities. “‘Vajra’ means the indivisible and the great unbreakable. That is the Mahayana; this Mahayana is the Vajra vehicle” (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p. 107). Mahayana is the most complete established practice of Vajra. Vajra pride then is to selflessly have pride in oneself for the



benefit of oneself and others. Similarly, one who has pride in Mahayana is both auspicious and caring for others in the extreme. Ultimately, that which is true in Buddhism is that which finds its purpose in what Buddhist philosophy is based upon, “Practitioners of the four tantras have the same intention in that they all are seeking others’ welfare. The object of attainment—the Buddhahood which is the extinguishment of all faults and fulfilment of all auspicious attributes—is the same for all” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 74).

Now, what can be said for how each of the three perspectives relate to one another? What are the congruencies and incongruencies? The following is my analysis of the three by way of considering their balance of Aristotelian virtue.

All three perspectives appear to aim for virtue or recognize a virtuous pursuit required to merit goods. That which is virtuous pursuit is defined differently by each perspective which has distinct implications for pride. Aristotelianism aims for virtue by striking a balance between too much and too little. The best way about things is to find the mean and to do anything more or less than that is to fail virtue. As I understand it, this is a process to seek out and discover the mean by ways of *phronesis*, *episteme* and *techne*. In contrast, Christian virtue seems to be righteousness which is dependent on truth as determined by God. To reveal righteousness is to discover God’s way. God’s way (God’s method, practice, truth, etc.) is always the right way. Any way outside of God’s way is to fail righteousness.

In contrast, virtue in Tantra Buddhist terms is to find the way that is best for oneself. There is a most complete way in Tantra Buddhism, the Mahayana, but it is not a way determined by God and it is not necessarily the best way for everyone as not everyone is capable of practicing Mahayana. It seems to be Vajra, which is something that is manifested upon

understanding, knowing, and being true to oneself. Therefore, virtue in Tantra Buddhist terms depends on Vajra, which is the best means by which one may know how to be.

Determining virtue in Aristotelianism seems to be subject to a person's ability and situational knowledge. The more a person knows and the more a person is able to understand, the more that person is able to see the best way about things -- to see the mean. It is an extremely high-minded philosophy. This is, in a way, similar to Tantra Buddhism in that it depends on the ability of oneself to determine what is best for oneself. The higher-minded a person is, the more virtuous that person will choose to be. Christianity differs from this where a person's ability to know virtue is subject to a person's faith in God. The more faithful a Christian is, the more that person will recognize what is right and then choose to be righteous. It is a way of life that trusts God always represents what is best and, whether it is intuitive or apparent or not, encourages you to live accordingly.

As I have shown, goods, and merit of those goods, are distinctive within the three perspectives. Aristotle saw goods as being supportive of living virtuously, "... human good turns out to be activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete" (*NE*, 1098a). and merit of those goods depending heavily on honor. "... men seem to pursue honour in order that they may be assured of their goodness; at least it is by men of practical wisdom that they seek to be honoured, and among those who know them, and on the ground of their virtue; clearly, then, according to them, at any rate, virtue is better" (*NE*, 1095b). Together, goods and merit are understood to help produce a life of virtue which results in happiness, "the happy man lives well and does well; for we have practically defined happiness as a sort of good life and good action" (*NE*, 1098b). However, much of Aristotle's concern for honor and the acquisition of goods may be futile in the Tantra

Buddhist view where goods can only be found within the oneself and helping others. “A Bodhisattva generates a wish to attain Buddhahood for the good of others; therefore, the purpose of actualizing the Truth Body is the welfare of others” (Hopkins, 1977, p.26). Tantra Buddhism does not seek to honor or enrich oneself by anything the world can offer it. Oneself is already as great as it needs to be -- it only needs to be realized. “... it is said that Buddhahood exists primordially in oneself... therefore, we presently have all the substances for achieving Buddhahood, and we should not seek for Buddhahood elsewhere” (Hopkins, 1977, p.45). This may somewhat parallel a Christian perspective in that ‘worldly’ concerns are irrelevant to what is actually important in life. “<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; <sup>16</sup> for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever” (1 John 2:15-17, NRSV). Christian goods are things such as described in Galatians 5:22, (NRSV) “<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” Taking pride in goods is important for Aristotelianism, whereas those same goods may be a deterrent from enlightenment for Tantra Buddhists and considered sinful for Christians. This again relates to what MacIntyre talks about regarding goods across distinct perspectives, “In a society where there is no longer a shared conception of the community's good as specified by the good for man,<sup>5</sup> there can no longer either be any very substantial concept of what it is to contribute more or less to the achievement of that good” (MacIntyre, 2007/1981, p. 232). So ultimately, what is good for one perspective is not necessarily good for another.

Regarding Truth, all three perspectives interpret it differently. For Aristotle, truth may be something to be discovered as part of finding the mean of virtue. In this way a person finds truth, or at least something about truth, when the mean is determined. Pride then, as a virtue, is something that is realized in ‘hitting the mark’ or finding its mean. This differs from Christianity where truth is already determined by God; to discover truth, is to reveal that which is true of God “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6, NRSV). Notably, pride is not considered to be something that is part of any truth worthy of seeking in Christianity. Tantra Buddhism accepts there may be many truths as determined by what is true for oneself. In this way pride is at the center of truth as truth must come from within oneself; to understand truth is to understand oneself.

Regarding balance and virtue, Aristotelianism sees pride as both the purpose and means of virtue. “Pride, then, seems to be a sort of crown of the virtues; for it makes them greater, and it is not found without them” (*NE*, 1124a). Pride provides motivation for a person to act well and make good choices. Whether it be for any of the virtues, for the self to act virtuously, pride must be considered at some level. “Again, if the virtues are concerned with actions and passions, and every passion and every action is accompanied by pleasure and pain, for this reason also virtue will be concerned with pleasures and pains” (*NE*, 1104b). The more virtuous the act, the more honor to the self. So, one acts virtuously for pride and one also acts with pride for virtue. The mean of virtue is then ultimately a balance appropriated by pride as it is pride that seeks to act well for the self and it is by a person’s quality of pride that a mean can be realized.

Christianity finds a virtuous balance in righteousness. The more faith a Christian has, the more righteous they will be.

<sup>21</sup> But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, <sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup> they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup> it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:21-26, NRSV)

To have faith in Jesus Christ is righteousness in God. Jesus’s sacrifice is the atonement for sin for all who have faith in Jesus. Christianity believes all have ‘missed the mark’ of perfection because of their sin and therefore must rely on God’s grace to bring salvation for them. To have balance in this regard is to completely depend on God through faith.

Virtue and balance in Tantra Buddhism may be found in the authenticity of the self. “Tantra permits different aspects of you to shine through, rather than your having to be channeled into one basic set of characteristics. It allows your basic nature to come through” (Trungpa, 2001, p. 167). The more a Tantra Buddhist has pride in oneself, the more virtue will be attained. The spiritual power can only be good or bad. You are always either moving toward or away from Vajrayana, such as is described with the snake in the pipe (Trungpa, 2001, p. 118). To be virtuous is to be in the Vajrayana. It is the only way to take toward enlightenment, as anything other than Vajrayana leads to Rudrahood (Trungpa, 2001, p. 118). Similarly, the more virtuous a Tantra Buddhist is, the more authentic oneself will be.

Basically, psychologically, vajrayana permits the openness to work on all kinds of elements that you have in you. You don’t have to tune yourself in to one particular basic thing. You can take pride in what you are, what you have, your basic nature. If your nature is made up of too much of the passionate element of Padma, and too much of the efficiency of karma, those things are not regarded as hangups as such. Those things are regarded as basic qualities that you have. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 282)

That being said, there are many ways, or methods, in Tantra Buddhism. The Highest Mantra is the Mahayana and should be revered as such by those within the Buddhahood:

If one who has the ability to practice Mahayana does not practice it, and instead assumes Hinayana practices, this action will interrupt his progress to Buddhahood. It is not said that with respect to all people generation of a Hinayana attitude is an obstacle to Buddhahood. It is so only for those capable of practicing the Bodhisattva path. It depends on the individual. Nevertheless, Hinayana is not part of Mahayana. Hinayana paths are subsidiaries of the path to Buddhahood but not actual Mahayana paths. Mahayana has the complete paths for the attainment of Buddhahood: thus, there is a difference of incompleteness and completeness, and hence inferiority and superiority, between Hinayana and Mahayana. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 44)

Though there is difference in method, all the ways of tantra are of the Buddhahood and ascribe to the same foundational tenets. Though not everyone is the same, nor tries to be the same or practices the same method, they do share the goal of enlightenment by seeking the welfare of others and the fulfillment of all auspicious attributes for oneself:

In Sanskrit 'paramita' literally means 'having reached the other shore.' It also means 'transcendence,' or 'perfection.' If we exist on the shore of suffering, reaching the other shore would mean leaving suffering behind and becoming enlightened. Hence, transcendence means to become free from mental afflictions, (the causes of suffering) and from suffering itself. The true practice of the paramitas is to be free from self-attachment and selfcherishing. Based on this definition, the Four Noble Truths and the ThirtySeven Aids to Enlightenment can also be considered paramitas, because they accord with the teachings of non-attachment and no self-cherishing. All Buddhist practices can thus be viewed as paramitas as long as they accord with the above principles. From the Mahayana standpoint, practicing the paramitas is to practice in accordance with selflessness and non-attachment, and for the dual benefit of self and others. Practicing for one's own benefit is not truly paramita practice. Therefore, when we do not practice to benefit others, whether we practice Hinayana or Mahayana, we are not truly practicing the paramitas. (Shen Yen, 2001, p. 7)

Similarly, Trungpa (2001) says of the inclusiveness of Tantra Buddhism regarding enlightenment:

One of the important implications of this is that in tantra, everybody does not have to be uniform as in the bodhisattva's approach, where everything has to be kept cool and skillful, steady all the time. There, all the paramitas are good as long as you keep up with a certain central logic: You realize that you have Buddha nature in you, so you can be generous, patient, and so forth. But tantra does not have this kind of one-track mind that we find in the bodhisattva's approach. In tantra, there are all kinds of variations you can get into... (p. 109)

So the balance in Tantra Buddhism is not necessarily of one method unless you ascribe to the Mahayana way, which involves taking the bodhisattva vows. Again, this does not indicate a difference in Buddhist foundational philosophy, rather, only a difference in its practice. The many good practices of Buddhism all rest on the one central idea of selflessness for the benefit of oneself and others. Vajra and Mahayana are related by virtuous practice. The balance of this virtuous practice is determined by what is best for oneself. “‘Vajra’ means the indivisible and the great unbreakable. That is the Mahayana; this Mahayana is the Vajra vehicle” (Tsongkapa, 1977, p. 107). Virtue in Tantra Buddhism, then, is best understood in terms of Vajra, which is the best way for oneself, and that best way is specific for each person depending on their capabilities. Mahayana is the most complete established practice of Vajra. Vajra pride then is to selflessly have pride in oneself for the benefit of oneself and others.

## CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS

Inquiry about the topic of pride may be an excellent way to practice philosophy and analysis of oneself. Personally, I have found that within the context of honesty, inquiry about pride can easily open the gateway to highly philosophical topics about self-identity, values, deductive and inductive reasoning, critical thinking, ethics and humanity. However, it is helpful to have a method through which an introspective analysis can easily occur. Hare and Portelli (1998) describe one method as being helpful in this regard is through the analysis of a case study. The case study serves as a philosophical example of how to critically analyze a potentially ambiguous topic in a way that is both enlightening and introspective. Hare and Portelli agree in *What to do? Case studies for teachers* that case studies have proved to be valuable in a variety of philosophical fields of inquiry such as medicine, psychology, and business administration (1998, preface V). Extending this inquiry to citizenship education may find relevance in discourses about pride in relation to topics about policy and administration, school sports, or classroom pedagogy. It is my hope to establish a meaningful and unambiguous knowledge about pride through a critical analysis of the case study so that a personal and practical application that is helpful for teachers and students may be revealed.

The case study is effective in providing a platform to display the elements of pride within it. I intend to thoroughly explore these elements with contextual analysis aided by the perspectives I have researched and through my own personal inquiry on my interpretations. It is my intention that through this method I may be able to demonstrate how to effectively inquire about pride in a way that might be practical for others. Subsequently, I intend to reveal why it may be an effective pedagogical framework for the classroom to engage students and broaden the scope of their learning.



Next I will attempt to look at pride more practically by analyzing the subtle differences that may be apparent within it. First I will present the case and then analyze two potentially crucial moments that may have to do with pride in Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism. After that I will provide supplementary commentary on the case and then again analyze the case via the three studied perspectives, Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism in light of the commentary. The case I am using is of a real event that happened over two decades ago. Primary sources comprise personal written narratives about the event. The identities of places, things and character have been modified only to protect anonymity.

Some potential limitations for my research may be important to consider:

- Every person in the world is original in their experiences and by this fact alone there may be crucial underlying oppression that I do not share and may not recognize or be sensitive to, let alone those who are not Christian and male, such as I am. This has potential to skew my understanding as it relates to values, particularly those I may not share or hold in as high of esteem. Also, in attempting to analyze Chelsea's perspective, I may not be able to adequately grasp her female experience. I may also hold a bias I am not aware of with regard to Chelsea or any of the characters in the case.
- I may have had inadequate time to research and understand each tradition for the purposes of this research. Each of the traditions I researched have been studied for centuries by many scholars. My research has only revealed a tiny glimpse into the vast philosophical and theological depths of Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism. It is possible that I may have needed more research into these respective traditional depths to appropriately honor their perspectives. Even if this is the case, (and it

likely is) my hope is that the reader will at least have gained a more helpful understanding of these traditions to provide assistance with their own inquiry.

- Context may be lost in translation. I do not speak Greek nor even if I could I did not live in the time when Nicomachean Ethics was written. Therefore, some context of what Aristotle intended to say may be lost in Ross's translation from Greek to English. This I have already mentioned about using the term "pride" for "megalopsychia". Some, such as (name names), do not believe pride is an adequate translation for what Aristotle intended to describe. Again, it is my hope that at least the reader will be inspired to continue their own research about pride and the three traditions.
- A lack of expertise in effectively understanding how to explain and or speak from each tradition. I am not an expert in Aristotelianism, nor am I Buddhist, nor do I have the authority to speak ecumenically for all Christianity. I am only able to speak with my own voice with my own limitations about what I have found in the research and I have done so to the best of my ability. That being said, I acknowledge this may not be adequate to satisfy those who are experts or have authority in Aristotelianism, Tantra Buddhism and Christianity. I would encourage them to contribute to any discourse surrounding my research.
- A lack of ability to choose the best explanations or examples from the case study may be a limiting factor to the efficacy of my research. It was my intention to identify the best examples within the case to analyze about pride. However, it is possible that my effort was inadequate which could result in a lost opportunity to effectively convey an important aspect about pride within the case. I may have committed crucial oversights within each tradition and the case necessary to understanding pride.

*Case Study:*

On this particular evening at Bordwell school, a weekly community event being held is a boys and girls club with organized games to participate in. These clubs have been formed within schools throughout the city as a positive means for socialization, recreation and community involvement. The main organizing committee also holds a yearly competition between all the schools and their communities in the city, allowing them to demonstrate to one another how successful each community is with the program. This serves as a major driving force that each community places upon itself in order to achieve excellence in the organized games that will be played annually within the greater community. As a result, anyone participating in a weekly session of organized games quickly learns of the expectations, and at the very least, the sense of urgency and importance placed on winning.

A regular organizer of the games night at Bordwell, Mr. Spiner, is resilient in his efforts to constantly manage the boys and girls attitudes and participation. Mr. Spiner has been particularly vigilant lately in his duties as of late because the annual city wide competition was only a month away. His voice and whistle can be heard booming throughout the gymnasium on a regular basis, starting and stopping events, giving out instructions and correcting behavior. This evening included running events which took place around a circle. Most of the races and relays involved four teams in colors blue, red, green and yellow, each on their respective side of the circle facing the center. When Mr. Spiner blows the whistle to start a race the children begin running laps and finish at the pin designated point on their team's side of the circle. To ensure there is no question of who finishes the laps first, once the runners complete their laps they must then run into the center and retrieve the center pin. So the runner who first picks up the center pin after completing the laps is the winner.

The events are segregated between boys and girls according to age. When the race is on there is a lot of cheering and celebration. Once a runner wins, his or her team cheers more loudly while the rest offer more reserved congratulations for their teammate. Mr. Spiner is careful to make sure that the runners from each team are as fairly matched as possible so as to make the races fair. However, some of the runners are simply faster than others which makes Mr. Spiner's job more difficult. "Keeping your ego in check is just as important as winning." Is something Spiner is well known for saying.

On the circle this evening, one of the ten year old boys, Gavin, is the fastest for his age group and is getting ready to represent his blue team in the big race. Mr. Spiner quickly checks the runner's and their form to ensure they are ready to go. Upon greeting the blue team he hears Gavin's voice saying, "I'm looking forward to winning this one!" Mr. Spiner stops and stares at him. His eyes fix on Gavin. He crosses his arms and says, "Oh? Is that right, Gavin?" The adults and children around them quiet down to hear the conversation more clearly. Then with a slightly louder voice to aid those who may not have heard, Mr. Spiner continues, "So, you think you can beat anyone else in here? No one else is faster than you?" As he said it he looked around, as if to coax an unidentified challenger to reveal himself. There is a moment of pause while all the boys look around at one another considering the question. However, none of the boys step forward. Rather, they begin to nod their heads in agreement that Gavin is the fastest among them. Gavin also appears to share the sentiment. A frown comes over Mr. Spiner's face and he declares, "Fine! Then we're just going to have to find someone else to race against you. You are going to race Chelsea." With this Mr. Spiner walks over to the girls circle and brings a girl named Chelsea over to sub out the green team runner in the boys' circle. As this was happening people start making comments from all over the gymnasium while they move to watch. One person

says, “Chelsea doesn’t even have to try to win this one.” and another, “I can’t wait to see how many times she laps him.”

It is extremely unorthodox to have girls and boys race together. It is also unorthodox for different age groups to race together. Chelsea is four years older, significantly bigger and an accomplished runner. Within the citywide program, she has won multiple citywide racing events over the years. She has well established her place as the fastest girl and Mr. Spiner is well aware of that fact. Though it is unorthodox, it is also very interesting as Mr. Spiner turns this running event into more than just a race; it is now a battle of the sexes as well as a case of underdog against the likely favorite.

Gavin looks to be frustrated and confused. His face is red, though it is not clear whether from embarrassment, anger or both. Mr. Spiner quickly goes around the circle again to make sure each runner is in his and her proper place to begin. Apparently overwhelmed, Gavin tries to explain something to his father but Mr. Spiner gives him a short reply, “You had better get on the start line if you are going to stand a chance of showing everyone you are the fastest.” Chelsea and Gavin are starting on opposite sides of the circle. This is an unconventional start because usually Mr. Spiner makes sure the two fastest runners are not on opposite sides so as to lower the chance of a head on collision for the center pin at the end of the race. However, this time the guideline is not observed. It is unclear whether this is an intentional decision by Mr. Spiner or not. He may be thinking it does not matter where the racers line up because he, as well as almost everyone else in the gym, believes that Chelsea is going to win handily.

As the race begins people excitedly raise their voices with calls of encouragement. Chelsea runs at her usual blazing pace and Gavin manages to match her speed remaining directly

opposite of the circle for the first few laps. The two other boys running for the red and yellow teams are being lapped consistently by Chelsea and Gavin. So much so they simply become an afterthought.

With only a couple of laps left Chelsea slows and Gavin begins to gain ground on her. This causes people in the gym to raise their voices even louder, some in support of Chelsea and others for Gavin. By the time Gavin finishes his final lap and moves toward the center pin he is at least a quarter of a circle ahead of Chelsea, giving him ample time to pick up the coveted center pin first. However, he suddenly slows to a walk and then positions himself directly over the pin, legs apart. He stares angrily at his father and Mr. Spiner stares just as angrily right back. Suddenly Chelsea finishes her final lap and sprints toward the center. Gavin calmly stands and watches as she blitzes toward him and lunges for the pin at his feet. At the moment she dives for the pin, Gavin quickly reaches down and pulls the pin out of her grasp holding it victoriously in the air as she slides between his legs. The cheering from the observers is ecstatic, it is doubtful that even an overbearing Mr. Spiner would have been able to contain them if he tried. Mr. Spiner's face is now red and furious as he looks on from the side of the gym.

Observers of the event continue to congratulate Gavin for many months afterward. His typical response is a meager shrug and, "Thanks." Mr. Spiner appears to forget about the incident and also shrugged it off whenever asked about it. However, it is clear he does learn from the incident as he no longer calls people out to challenges anymore, nor does he ever allow girls and boys to race together again, even when encouraged to do so.

*End.*

Before starting the main part of the analysis via Aristotelian, Christian and Tantra Buddhist perspectives, I wanted to show an example of what an educated modern perspective might be on this case. A sports ethicist might be a most qualified choice to analyze what transpired in the dynamic of the athletic event involving Gavin, Mr. Spiner and Chelsea. To this end I found the writings of Mike McNamee to be used as an appropriate example.

One of the elements in the story is the spirit of competition. McNamee is a well published researcher in the field of sports ethics and has published works of direct relevance to what I am researching for my thesis. The philosophical component of his published works includes works on pride, values and self-identity. He also references Aristotle significantly whom I also have found to be an excellent source of inquiry on the topic of pride.

There are many parts to this case that have to do with pride. I have chosen one part in particular as an example of how critical reflection and dialog may be inspired through the case study. When Mr. Spiner challenges Gavin's claim about being the fastest, he appears to be doing so in an attempt to address hubris. This is evident in his questioning of Gavin's rationale for his statement:

*... "Oh? Is that right, Gavin?" The adults and children around them quiet down to hear the conversation more clearly. Then with a slightly louder voice to aid those who may not have heard, Mr. Spiner continues, "So, you think you can beat anyone else in here? No one else is faster than you?"*

McNamee describes hubris as "a presumption of power in excess of one's capabilities" (2008, p. 142). It seems plausible, given the context, that Gavin may believe he deserves to receive honor regardless of others believing he has earned it. However, we cannot be certain that Gavin's statement about being the fastest was hubristic. He may simply have been aware of the fact that

he is the fastest and was not afraid to admit it, which might indicate arrogance, or perhaps something else.

The arrogant know their power, but they fail to situate it properly in the contexts that give rise to their overweening pride. A crucial component then of both humiliation and hubris is the idea of thinking rather too much of oneself. It is the direct opposite of humility, which requires an understated though reasonable estimation of one's powers and status. It need not entail the failure to give others their due in an active sense. It is too self-centered, too egoistic. One may be dismissive of others without claiming the greatness of oneself. So, though a dismissive attitude often accompanies hubris, it is not logically tied to it. (2008, p. 142)

McNamee might suspect Gavin of humiliation or hubris as Gavin's expectations for himself are high. This is apparent when he says, "*I'm looking forward to winning this one!*"

While it cannot be ignored that Gavin may have spoken out of hubris, (or perhaps humiliation such as a joke or speaking facetiously) and judging by Mr. Spiner's reaction it seemed to have been interpreted as alarming, there is a possibility Mr. Spiner's alarm was misplaced. According to McNamee, "In modern professional sport no less than in great sagas, self-knowledge and self-understanding are part and parcel of the good life" (2008, p. 142). In this regard, Gavin being aware he is exceptionally fast is not a fallible quality; it is self-awareness. Failing to acknowledge this self-awareness would be ignorance or self-depreciation.

To investigate the validity of McNamee's perspective, the question about where he learned or developed his understanding of ethics must be asked. What reasons support his suspicion for Gavin experiencing hubris or humiliation? We might just assume McNamee is a learned person who knows best, but for those who care about truth, that explanation would not be adequate. It is important to know why a person might think something so that we can decide if we agree with it or not. Without doing that we do not think for ourselves. The same kind of question might be asked of a teacher in a classroom that declares pride comes before a fall, or



that it is good to take pride in one's school. Why does the teacher say that? Do expectations of students include direct assimilation of a teacher's statement, or do expectations of students include respecting the boundaries of students and their personal values? To answer the question of validity for McNamee's ethics, we must consider where his ethics have come from. This calls for philosophical inquiry. In the case of McNamee, he references Aristotle in much of his work, as well as Alasdair MacIntyre, and MacIntyre in turn references Christian ethics. These are just a couple examples of influences on McNamee's work and it would be impossible to list them all but it shows the significance of tradition in ethical works. For this reason I have chosen well established ethical perspectives to analyze the case. In this way any question about ethical rational may be traced back toward a plethora of resources and literary discourse. While this may also be done with McNamee, in terms of establishment, the works of McNamee cannot provide the extent of foundational perspective I am looking for.

With this in mind I intend to show how pride may be more clearly revealed by looking at the case through three different well-established world perspectives that have influenced countless works and personal ethics. Those perspectives are Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhist. Now that we have a background of knowledge about these perspectives, we may be able to proceed with effective analysis of the case study with them in mind. While there are potentially many moments within this case that have to do with pride, the two moments I will focus on are at the beginning when Gavin says, "*I'm looking forward to winning this one!*" and at the end when Gavin wins the race. I will begin with Gavin's actions and then move to Mr. Spiner's, first for one point in the case, then another.

Aristotle would acknowledge Gavin's merit for being the fastest as a virtue, "for we praise the just or brave man and in general both the good man and virtue itself because of the

actions and functions involved, and we praise the strong man, the good runner, and so on, because he is of a certain kind and is related in a certain way to something good and important.” (NE, 1101b) And also, “everything that has superiority in something good is held in greater honour” (NE, 1124a). Aristotle would also see Gavin as being virtuous for being aware of his ability to run fast. “The proud man, then, is an extreme in respect of the greatness of his claims, but a mean in respect of the rightness of them; for he claims what is in accordance with his merits, while the others go to excess or fall short” (NE, 1123b). To ignore or devalue his ability would be a failure of reason for pride, “For the unduly humble man, being worthy of good things, robs himself of what he deserves, and to have something bad about him from the fact that he does not think himself worthy of good things, and seems also not to know himself; else he would have desired the things he was worthy of, since these were good” (NE, 1125a). However, Gavin should also be aware of his place and the context of himself amongst his peers. Though his peers seemed to acknowledge his superior ability, it is not honorable to glorify oneself, “for he will speak neither about himself nor about another, since he cares not to be praised nor for others to be blamed” (NE, 1125a). For Gavin to be proud in Aristotelian terms, it is important for him to be truthful when speaking, “He must also be open in his hate and in his love (for to conceal one's feelings, i.e. to care less for truth than for what people will think, is a coward's part), and must speak and act openly; for he is free of speech because he is contemptuous, and he is given to telling the truth” (NE, 1124b). However, given what is stated in the case, it appears Gavin did not need to say, “*I'm looking forward to winning this one!*” as, again, the proud Aristotelian is not given to self-praise, “for he will speak neither about himself nor about another, since he cares not to be praised nor for others to be blamed” (NE, 1125a). This indicates Gavin's action was gratuitous and outside the mean of virtue for pride.

A Christian view of pride with respect to what Gavin said, “*I’m looking forward to winning this one!*” is sensitive to Gavin’s true intention in his statement. While we cannot be certain about all the reasons for why Gavin said what he said, and nor can Christianity, “The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9, NRSV) we can attempt to assess the Christian merit of Gavin’s actions. Jesus says in Matthew 23:12 (NRSV), “All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.” Gavin stating an assumption of winning the race could be seen as exaltation. This kind of action is not in keeping with wisdom in the book of Proverbs, “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth—a stranger, and not your own lips” (Proverbs 27:2, NRSV). Nor is it consistent with the words of the prophet Jeremiah, “Thus says the Lord: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth” (Jeremiah 9:23, NRSV). If Gavin was attempting to honor himself with praise for being the fastest, then he may be demonstrating a love for winning races, which could be an act that is not in the spirit of God that is opposed to loving things of this world. <sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; <sup>16</sup> for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever” (1 John 2:15-17, NRSV). Unfortunately, given all that is described in the case we cannot be sure about Gavin’s true reason for saying what he said. As stated earlier, what Jesus says in Matthew 23:12 indicates Christianity does not view self-glorification as a righteous act and of this it would appear Gavin may be morally culpable.

A Tantra Buddhist view of pride with respect to Gavin's statement, "*I'm looking forward to winning this one!*" is chiefly concerned with Gavin's understanding of himself and the way he might view others around him:

Basically, psychologically, vajrayana permits the openness to work on all kinds of elements that you have in you. You don't have to tune yourself in to one particular basic thing. You can take pride in what you are, what you have, your basic nature. If your nature is made up of too much of the passionate element of Padma, and too much of the efficiency of karma, those things are not regarded as hangups as such. Those things are regarded as basic qualities that you have. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 282)

To this point, Trungpa also says, "Tantra permits different aspects of you to shine through, rather than your having to be channeled into one basic set of characteristics. It allows your basic nature to come through" (2003, p. 282). It is also helpful to remember what Tsongkhapa says about the purpose of Buddhism here, "Practitioners of the four tantras have the same intention in that they all are seeking others' welfare. The object of attainment—the Buddhahood which is the extinguishment of all faults and fulfilment of all auspicious attributes—is the same for all" (1977, p. 74). If Gavin is proud and happy about who he is, this is a good thing from the Tantra Buddhist perspective:

We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 173)

However, if he is trying to intimidate others, or perhaps trying to convince himself of what he said, then he may be experiencing the affliction of cyclic existence. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 29)

Finding a refuge or peace is necessary for Gavin to be on the path to enlightenment. He will only be able to find peace within himself. Hopkins says, "In the Nyingma school of the earlier translations, it is said that Buddhahood exists primordially in oneself." Hopkins also explains that within ourselves, "we presently have all the substances for achieving Buddhahood, and we

should not seek for Buddhahood elsewhere” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 45). Gavin’s apparent anger surrounding the race may be demonstrative of him caring too much for things beyond himself.

Given what the case describes Gavin may be speaking with a need for affirmation, and perhaps a spirit of egoism which is not in keeping with the path to enlightenment, but rather, becoming a cosmic monster:

The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 269)

Also, Trungpa warns, “Once you get into tantric discipline, you either go up or you go down. Either you become Buddha or you become Rudra, a cosmic monster” (2001, p. 118). He also says Rudra is, “the personification of the destructive principle of ultimate ego” (Trungpa, 2003, p. 228) and describes Rudra as, “turning yourself into a demon.” (Trungpa, 2003, p. 201).

Although Gavin may or may not be personifying the destructive principal of an ultimate ego, it is difficult to know for certain the extent of his ego in this regard. However, in reference to practicing Mahayana it is notable to consider that one of the vows of a bodhisattva is to not praise oneself. In describing the criterion for breaking a root vow of the bodhisattva, Geshe Tashi, a Tibetan Buddhist teacher, explains:

“1. The Four Factors Needed to Break a Vow

*i. not being mindful of the disadvantages*

For sixteen of the eighteen root downfalls there are four factors needed for it to be a complete downfall. The first one, not being mindful of the disadvantages, means having committed one of the downfalls and with no sense that it has been an unwholesome action. Say, for instance, that after we have praised ourselves – the first downfall – we realise that it was an unwholesome thing to do. That is not a complete downfall. But if we do not see that, then, with the other three factors, it is complete.

So the first factor is not recognising the disadvantages of committing the action.

*ii. having no desire to stop the action*

The second factor also translates as not reversing the desire to indulge in the infraction. This occurs when we are committing or have just committed a root downfall, such as praising ourselves, but there is nothing in our mind that wants us to stop it.

*iii. indulging in the act with great pleasure and delight*

The English translation of the third one is indulging in the act with great pleasure and delight. The Tibetan translates more as happiness and satisfaction, so maybe I would say that while we are committing the action there is a sense of pleasure and satisfaction. If it feels good when we are doing it, then the third factor is there.

*iv. lacking any shame or conscience*

The last factor is the lack of shame at having committed the action. In Tibetan we have the two terms that I have discussed earlier *ngo-tsa me-pa*, shamelessness, and *khrel me-pa*, lack of consideration for others. This refers to both.” (Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

Mr. Spiner’s reaction to Gavin’s statement might be considered irrational by Aristotle. “Nor is he mindful of wrongs; for it is not the part of a proud man to have a long memory, especially for wrongs, but rather to overlook them” (*NE*, 1125a). Gavin is a child and Mr. Spiner should not be overly concerned with the musings of a child. “With regard to necessary or small matters he is least of all me given to lamentation or the asking of favours; for it is the part of one who takes such matters seriously to behave so with respect to them” (*NE*, 1125a). Though Gavin’s statement may also have been interpreted as haughtiness. “Nor is he a gossip; for he will speak neither about himself nor about another, since he cares not to be praised nor for others to be blamed; nor again is he given to praise; and for the same reason he is not an evil-speaker, even about his enemies, except from haughtiness” (*NE*, 1125a). This may warrant an attitude of disdain from Mr. Spiner, but the question of moderated action must be asked of Mr. Spiner if he merits disdain.

In the first place, then, as has been said, the proud man is concerned with honours; yet he will also bear himself with moderation towards wealth and power and all good or evil fortune, whatever may befall him, and will be neither over-joyed by good fortune nor over-pained by evil. For not even towards honour does he bear himself as if it were a very great thing. Power and wealth are desirable for the sake of honour (at least those who have them wish to get honour by means of them); and for him to whom even honour is a little thing the others must be so too. Hence proud men are thought to be disdainful. (*NE*, 1124b)

However, what makes this complicated for Mr. Spiner is that Gavin is his son. “He must be unable to make his life revolve around another, unless it be a friend; for this is slavish, and for this reason all flatterers are servile and people lacking in self-respect are flatterers” (*NE*, 1124b-1125a). Mr. Spiner is making decisions and acting in direct response to Gavin’s statement, which may indicate he is making his life revolve around Gavin. However, Gavin is also family, which is more than a friend. The shared identity involved with family potentially subjects Mr. Spiner’s honor to the integrity of Gavin’s actions. Being concerned with honor is what a proud man must do. “Honours and dishonours, therefore, are the objects with respect to which the proud man is as he should be” (*NE*, 1124a). That being said, it is curious that Mr. Spiner’s honor may have been in jeopardy given Gavin’s statement. In a setting such as this it is understandable that children, like Gavin, are in a consistent process of learning social etiquette. This would not appear to be a matter of honor to be overly concerned with. Mr. Spiner’s response to Gavin’s statement may have merit as being of pride if there is potentially more context than is apparent which would make the situation a matter of great honor or great dishonor. “Again, it is characteristic of the proud man not to aim at the things commonly held in honour, or the things in which others excel; to be sluggish and to hold back except where great honour or a great work is at stake, and to be a man of few deeds, but of great and notable ones” (*NE*, 1124b). If Mr. Spiner sees Gavin as being one of his few great and notable deeds, then this could be a matter of great honor if Gavin is behaving in a way that might dishonor him. However, Aristotle also says, “He must also be open in his hate and in his love (for to conceal

one's feelings, i.e. to care less for truth than for what people will think, is a coward's part), and must speak and act openly; for he is free of speech because he is contemptuous, and he is given to telling the truth, except when he speaks in irony to the vulgar” (NE, 1124b). We do not see any evidence of Mr. Spiner speaking openly about his feelings in the case. Without more context related to the case we cannot say Mr. Spiner reacted to Gavin’s statement with Aristotelian pride.

From a Christian perspective, Mr. Spiner’s concern for Gavin may have been righteous as Philippians 2:4 (NRSV) says, “Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.” Also, James 5:20 (NRSV) says, “you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner’s soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” 1 Timothy 5:20 (NRSV) suggests that even his public challenge of Gavin might be considered righteous, “As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear.” However, Colossians 4:6 (NRSV) indicates that Gavin should also be afforded grace for whatever his attitude might be. “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.”

We do not know what Gavin might have said in the case just before Mr. Spiner started the race with Chelsea and Gavin,

*...Gavin tries to explain something to his father but Mr. Spiner gives him a short reply,  
“You had better get on the start line if you are going to stand a chance of showing  
everyone you are the fastest.*

However, if it is something at all to do with being sorry and asking for forgiveness, Mr. Spiner should listen. Luke 17:3-4 says, “Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive.” Moreover, it is not good to provoke children; “Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart” (Colossians 3:20,



NRSV); “And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4, NRSV).

It is not clear whether Mr. Spiner purposely intended to provoke Gavin, to anger, but it is clear that Gavin was flustered and troubled by what was happening.

*Gavin looks to be frustrated and confused. His face is red, though it is not clear whether from embarrassment, anger or both.*

The situation seems to escalate most notably when Mr. Spiner is not able to humble Gavin for saying what he said:

*Upon greeting the blue team he hears Gavin’s voice saying, “I’m looking forward to winning this one!” Mr. Spiner stops and stares at him. His eyes fix on Gavin. He crosses his arms and says, “Oh? Is that right, Gavin?” The adults and children around them quiet down to hear the conversation more clearly. Then with a slightly louder voice to aid those who may not have heard, Mr. Spiner continues, “So, you think you can beat anyone else in here? No one else is faster than you?” As he said it he looked around, as if to coax an unidentified challenger to reveal himself. There is a moment of pause while all the boys look around at one another considering the question. However, none of the boys step forward. Rather, they begin to nod their heads in agreement that Gavin is the fastest among them. Gavin also appears to share the sentiment. A frown comes over Mr. Spiner’s face and he declares, “Fine! Then we’re just going to have to find someone else to race against you. You are going to race Chelsea.*

Rather than escalating the situation upon questioning Gavin about being the fastest, he should have shown humility and grace to Gavin and those around him. “Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive” (Colossians 3:13, NRSV). Mr. Spiner appears to have been quick to anger as his *arms crossed* and frown came over his face, which is concerning. “Do not be quick to anger, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools” (Ecclesiastes 7:9, NRSV). If he was foolish, his reaction may have been a result of pride. “The talk of fools is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise preserve them (Proverbs 14:3, NRSV). In this way Mr. Spiner did not make a righteous act, even if he intended to with his challenge to Gavin. C.S. Lewis says, “As long as you are proud

you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down you cannot see something that is above you” (*Mere Christianity*, 1952, p. 67).

A Tantra Buddhist perspective here, particularly a Mahayana Buddhist, might be concerned with Mr. Spiner’s reaction as it does not appear to support those around him. “A Bodhisattva generates a wish to attain Buddhahood for the good of others; therefore, the purpose of actualizing the Truth Body is the welfare of others” (Hopkins, 1977, p.26). He does not appear to be at peace with himself or have delight such as what Trungpa (2003) refers to:

We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery. (*The Lion’s Roar*, p. 36)

Though to weigh Mr. Spiner’s actions on the scale of what it might take to be a Bodhisattva might not be fair as he may not be able or prepared to practice the way of the Mahayana. “

If one’s mental continuum has not been ripened by the practices common to both Sutra and Tantra Mahayana—realisation of suffering, impermanence, refuge, love, compassion, altruistic mind generation, and emptiness of inherent existence—practice of the Mantra Vehicle can be ruinous through one’s assuming an advanced practice inappropriate to one’s capacity. Therefore, its open dissemination is prohibited; practitioners must maintain secrecy from those who are not vessels of this path. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 47)

Furthermore, when Mr. Spiner adapts his actions in response to Gavin’s statement about being the fastest, he is adversarial:

*Oh? Is that right, Gavin?” The adults and children around them quiet down to hear the conversation more clearly. Then with a slightly louder voice to aid those who may not have heard, Mr. Spiner continues, “So, you think you can beat anyone else in here? No one else is faster than you?... Fine! Then we’re just going to have to find someone else to race against you. You are going to race Chelsea... . You had better get on the start line if you are going to stand a chance of showing everyone you are the fastest.*

Speaking in this way may be more like pride of Rudra than Vajra pride. Trungpa (2003)

explains:

The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (*Lion's Roar*, p. 269)

This may also be something related to what Tsongkhapa talks about regarding the black eight worldly dharmas. "Liking comfort and disliking discomfort; wishing for a good reputation, disliking a bad one or none at all; wanting praise; disliking criticism; wanting to receive material things. An action done out of these worldly concerns is one of the black eight worldly dharmas" (*How to Practice Dharma: Teachings on the Eight Worldly Dharmas*, Llama Zopa Rinpoche, 2012, p. 100);

That by which the world is bound,

By the same things it is released from bondage.

But the world is deluded and does not understand this truth,

And one who does not possess this truth cannot attain perfection. (trans. 1977, Hopkins, *Hevajra-tantra*, bk. 1, ch. 9, v. 19)

Also, John Powers (2007) says:

According to Buddhism, the root cause of all the sufferings of cyclic existence is ignorance, which causes us mistakenly to imagine that transitory things like money, sex, power, possessions or relationships will bring enduring joy and fulfillment... The problem with seeking contentment in such things, according to Buddhist thinkers, is that they are transitory, impermanent, and subject to change, and so they cannot be a source of lasting happiness. (*Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 295)

Toward the end of the case, Gavin appears to attempt to humiliate Chelsea by taunting her with the pin at the end of the race.

*...he suddenly slows to a walk and then positions himself directly over the pin, legs apart.*

He appears to be very concerned with the victory celebration and

*He stares angrily at his father...*

This may indicate he was angry and offended. The actions of a proud man, as Aristotle understood, would have been different:

He must be unable to make his life revolve round another, unless it be a friend; for this is slavish, and for this reason all flatterers are servile and people lacking in self-respect are flatterers. Nor is he given to admiration; for nothing to him is great. Nor is he mindful of wrongs; for it is not the part of a proud man to have a long memory, especially for wrongs, but rather to overlook them. (*NE*, 1124b-1125a)

Gavin appeared to carry out his antics at the end apparently with directed anger toward his father. This kind of action may be part of what Aristotle was referring to about how a proud man does not “make his life revolve round another” (*NE*, 1124b-1125a). If Mr. Spiner were not there, would he have acted the same way? Also, Gavin appeared to be angry over what transpired which is also not consistent with the man Aristotle describes. “Nor is he mindful of wrongs; for it is not the part of a proud man to have a long memory, especially for wrongs, but rather to overlook them” (*NE*, 1125a). However, we may be unaware of Gavin’s motivation for his actions. It is possible that the context in which this event took place involved a great honor or dishonor to Gavin, which means it is worthy of concern for him. “... hold back except where great honour or a great work is at stake, and to be a man of few deeds, but of great and notable ones” (*NE*, 1124b). Gavin did not appear to care much about the incident afterward.

*Observers of the event continue to congratulate Gavin for many months afterward. His typical response is a meager shrug and, “Thanks.”*

This is notable considering how excited he appeared to be at the end of the race. He may have a valid reason to be angry or to feel dishonored. Nevertheless, the way in which he acted does not

align with the proud man described in Nicomachean Ethics. "... the proud man is concerned with honours; yet he will also bear himself with moderation towards wealth and power and all good or evil fortune, whatever may befall him, and will be neither over-joyed by good fortune nor over-pained by evil. For not even towards honour does he bear himself as if it were a very great thing" (*NE*, 1124b).

Gavin did not show any of the virtues of righteousness in the end of the race. <sup>22</sup> By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things" (Galatians 5:22, 23, NRSV). He appeared to be obstinate to his father and perhaps try to dishonor him by staring him down in front of everyone. This is concerning as Ephesians 6:2 and 3 (NRSV) says, <sup>2</sup> 'Honor your father and mother'—this is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup> 'so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth'" (Ephesians 6:2,3, NRSV).

Gavin appeared to care very much about the outcome of the race rather than others around him. If the narrative interpretation is accurate, this may be evident by the way he glorified himself,

*At the moment she dives for the pin, Gavin quickly reaches down and pulls the pin out of her grasp holding it victoriously in the air as she slides between his legs.*

In acting this way he neglects to show compassion or love for Chelsea, or anyone around him. Hopkins says, "The basic path for achieving a Buddha's Form Body is method—the altruistic mind of enlightenment induced by love and compassion" (1977, p. 57). Also, Hopkins explains that, "Trainees of Sutra and Mantra wish for highest enlightenment for the sake of others and take cognizance of the same fruit, a Buddhahood that is an extinguishment of all faults and an endowment with all auspicious qualities" (1977, p. 55).

Another point of consideration is that Mr. Spiner appeared to be angry,

*Mr. Spiner's face is now red and furious as he looks on from the side of the gym.*

but other than that there is little we can be certain about with his character handling of Gavin making a display. He does not stop Gavin from doing it and there is no mention of consoling Chelsea or any more attempts to discipline Gavin for his actions. In the very end Mr. Spiner is described as having changed his approach as a result of the incident,

*Mr. Spiner appears to forget about the incident and also shrugged it off whenever asked about it. However, it is clear he does learn from the incident as he no longer calls people out to challenges anymore, nor does he ever allow girls and boys to race together again, even when encouraged to do so.*

If Mr. Spiner did in fact forget about the incident this would be action consistent with Aristotelian pride. “Nor is he mindful of wrongs; for it is not the part of a proud man to have a long memory, especially for wrongs, but rather to overlook them” (*NE*,1125a).

It is unclear why Mr. Spiner was unconventional in having Chelsea run the race against the boys. It may have been for giving Gavin a greater challenge, or perhaps for both him and Chelsea. From a patriarchal sense, which Aristotle is well established in, giving Gavin a greater challenge to accomplish in beating Chelsea could be an honorable thing to do as it allows her to defend her honor by running against the boys and gives Gavin a chance to seek more excellence: “Now the proud man, since he deserves most, must be good in the highest degree; for the better man always deserves more, and the best man most” (*NE*, 1123b). If Gavin were to lose, he was expected to lose and therefore no honor is lost. If he were to win, then he has accomplished something admirable in beating someone older and bigger than him. Therefore much honor is to be gained. For Chelsea, if she wins, she was expected to win so no honor is lost and some honor maintained from running against the boys. If she is to lose then it is unfortunate for her but she is

a girl and girls are not supposed to run against the boys in the first place. In this way she loses honor but may not lose much.

With a Christian perspective in mind it appears Mr. Spiner may have attempted to humble Gavin: First by questioning his reasoning about being the fastest and then by having him run against Chelsea. However, he also appears to have done this without much forethought or consideration: “<sup>2</sup> Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few. <sup>3</sup> For dreams come with many cares, and a fool’s voice with many words” (Ecclesiastes 5:2,3, NRSV); “... and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32, NRSV); “You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger” (James 1:19, NRSV). He ignored Gavin trying to talk to him and did not appear to ask Chelsea if she even wanted to run against Gavin and the boys. To make such an assumption was foolish and perhaps prideful in his belief that he knew best. C.S. Lewis says, “For pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense” (*Mere Christianity*, 1952, p. 69).

It is difficult to know whether Mr. Spiner is looking out for the welfare of Gavin or not. This is important to know from a Tantra Buddhist perspective as it is a central tenet for Buddhahood. “Practitioners of the four tantras have the same intention in that they all are seeking others’ welfare. The object of attainment—the Buddhahood which is the extinguishment of all faults and fulfilment of all auspicious attributes—is the same for all” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 74). He may be concerned for Gavin since he may have sounded like he was praising himself which is one of the 18 downfalls for a Bodhisattva. (Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

However, according to Trungpa, (2001) the Vajrayana allows for different expressions of the self, including some characteristics that might be obtuse, “In the vajrayana approach, you are what you are. If you’re passionate, that’s beautiful. If you’re aggressive, that’s beautiful. If you’re ignorant, that’s beautiful. And all the materials and manifestations in you are regarded as in the vajra realm, rather than your being condemned as a failure. The whole thing is really highly workable... what goes on in your life is not rejected or selected” (*The Lion’s Roar*, p. 113). Trungpa also says:

Basically, psychologically, vajrayana permits the openness to work on all kinds of elements that you have in you. You don’t have to tune yourself in to one particular basic thing. You can take pride in what you are, what you have, your basic nature. If your nature is made up of too much of the passionate element of Padma, and too much of the efficiency of karma, those things are not regarded as hangups as such. Those things are regarded as basic qualities that you have. (2003, p. 282)

In fact, Mr. Spiner may be showing an attempt to fulfill *Karma*, which is one of the five principles of Buddha nature. “*Karma*, literally means ‘action’ or ‘activity.’ Karma in this case is the action of fulfillment. Situations have to be fulfilled, so everything around you has to be efficient, speedy, functional all the time. If anything does not fit your scheme, you destroy it. So everything has to become pragmatic, functional, efficient” (Trungpa, 1992, p. 109). He also may be attempting to be true to Vajra:

Then you have the vajra buddha family, which is extremely sharp, intellectual, analytical. You can see relate with things precisely, and you can also see the disadvantages of various involvements. You can see the holes in things or the challenges that might occur. Precisely open and clear, analytically cool, cold, possibly unfriendly, but always on the dot. Seeing all the highlights of things as they are. Very precise, very direct, very sharp. Reactivity is very high. You are ready to jump, ready to pursue and criticize. You are ready to analyze what’s wrong with situations and what’s wrong with ideas. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 280)

So depending on how authentically Mr. Spiner is expressing himself, being self-aware of Gavin’s needs as well as Chelsea’s, being self-aware of what is best for the situation, being self-



aware of what is best for himself, these might be all part of the Buddhist principles. However, his actions may not meet with the standard of the Bodhisattva,

*17. laying down harmful regulations and passing false judgement*

As with the previous downfall, this one poses a greater risk for someone in authority at a Dharma centre or monastery. If the fifth vow is stealing and the last one misusing property, this one is to do with misusing the rules an organisation has. Here we bend the rules or pass a false judgement to get our own way because we have the power to do so.

The Tibetan term for this has the sense of making bad rules, bad in terms of stopping opportunities for other people to have Dharma teachings or harming them in some way. It does not just have to apply to a large organisation. This can also apply in a shared house, where we have to live with others. Especially if someone, like the person whose name is on the lease, has some power and then starts to abuse it. We always have to be so careful with power. If we have some sort of authority or have followers, we are in danger. That power can so easily blind our wisdom and then it becomes so difficult to make the right decision.

For example, if a Dharma centre is setting up a teaching programme, someone in authority might vote against a particular teacher coming just because they have a personal grudge against them or because they personally dislike their teaching style, not because they think the teacher is inappropriate for the centre.

It is so important to go beyond self-interest where Dharma is concerned. Because of the power of the object the negativity is so much greater if we do not. (Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

So, ultimately it seems that Mr. Spiner and Gavin did not meet the requirements for pride for Aristoteliansim or Tantra Buddhism. However, there may be evidence to suggest they were acting in pride as Christianity understands it, being selfish and lacking concern for the effects of their actions on others. Unfortunately, as it stands there is no conclusive evidence to be certain about Gavin or Mr. Spiner's motivation with regard to pride as pride is something that takes place within oneself, and up to this point we only have a third person narrative to make determinations. Therefore it may be helpful to consider some personal accounts about what happened. The next chapter will explore this further.

## CHAPTER 5: CHARACTER ACCOUNTS

From what I have found thus far, virtue for Aristotle is mainly concerned with finding balance, which is what he calls the mean. Virtue for Christianity is concerned with righteousness according to God, which can be best known by having faith. Tantra Buddhism's concern with virtue has to do with being authentic and true to oneself which is shown with Vajra pride. This is helpful to gain potential insight into the behavior shown in the case, but can this understanding also help to explain what Gavin and Mr. Spiner were actually thinking? The case only provides an explanation of what happened, not why or how. Barring hypotheticals and unfounded assumptions it certainly cannot provide explicit diagnosis given the data found in the case. However, if we were given more personal data, perhaps personal accounts of what happened, we may be able to inquire further about Gavin and Mr. Spiner's behavior. Gavin has provided a personal narrative and Mr. Spiner has provided a personal commentary about the case in the form of a journal entry. With this in mind I will now attempt to further analyze the points of view from Gavin and Mr. Spiner regarding what takes place in the case

*Gavin's Account:*

I was about 10 years old and had discovered I was blessed with an ability to run fast. Having played this game before, and having run against all the runners before, I knew I was heavily favored to win. Before the race began I approached my dad and told him to get ready to celebrate when I win. I thought, "My dad will be proud of me when I win the game he's officiating. I think he will like that." However, to my surprise he took exception to my statement and said I was being cocky. I didn't know what that meant at the time and he quickly explained I was overconfident and full of pride. I took exception to this and became offended. My father saw

my reaction and said he was going to teach me some humility. He asked me in front of everyone there, “So Gavin, you think you can beat anyone here?” He looked around hoping to inspire some incredulity but to his dismay everyone looked to be in agreement. Apparently I wasn’t the only one who knew that I was the fastest. Then in an attempt to justify himself my father said, “Alright, you are going to race against Chelsea then. We’ll see who is the fastest.” Chelsea was an older girl who was beyond my age group and was often touted as the fastest in the club and in any club. I was shocked, embarrassed, angry and hurt that my father seemed to be assuring my demise. I wanted to tell him I did not mean to be so cocky but it was too late, the race was set to start and my pride was on the line.

People from all over the gymnasium gathered around to watch Chelsea outrun the three younger boys. I heard them say things like, “Chelsea doesn’t even have to run to win this one.” And “I can’t wait to see how many times she laps them.” It was obvious to me that the club considered Chelsea to be the favorite and was glad to watch a demonstration that glorified their expectations of her. I had seen her run for us against other clubs and cheered for her when she won, I too felt their pride and understood it, which is why I also understood what they were feeling now. But this circumstance was different, it was unnecessary. Chelsea’s glory today was not going to be set upon her success in fair competition; it was simply to satisfy my father’s desire to teach me a lesson at the expense of my embarrassment.

I was enraged at being embarrassed by my father. I again tried to talk to him but instead he warned me, “You had better get on the start line if you are going to stand a chance of showing everyone you are the fastest.” His words of condescension sparked an attitude of defiance within me; “it does not matter what he thinks. I need to prove that I’m right, I am the fastest.” Chelsea and I were set on opposite sides of the circle. Typically this was contraindicated with the two

fastest runners so as to avoid any potential head on collision for the center pin at the end of the race. To this day I do not know the reasoning my father had for this; perhaps he wanted to intimidate me because she was bigger than me, or perhaps he thought it didn't matter where she started because she would beat me by a large enough margin that we would not meet in the center. Regardless, this is how we started.

As the race began I tried to make sure that I always kept Chelsea directly across the circle from me. That way I knew she was not beating me. I ran with great purpose and focus. I was determined to prove my dad wrong and show him why he should have believed in me. Chelsea was fast but she began to slow down and by the last lap I was ahead of her by a quarter of a circle. As I finished my last lap and was the first to enter the circle I had ample time to pick up the pin. I looked at my dad and he had a look of disappointment on his face, it made me even angrier that he still would not let go of his resolve to "teach me a lesson." So I began to walk toward the center pin and I heard the cheers and celebration that I was going to beat Chelsea. I positioned myself directly over the pin and I didn't know what to do. I was so angry I wanted to do something to get back at my dad for trying to embarrass me, but I was at a loss as to what I should do. Simply picking up the pin would not feel good enough, dancing around the pin before picking it up would be ridiculous, I needed to do something with purpose but was unable to figure out what I could do to satisfy my victory. I was out of time to think about it but what happened next turned out to be greater than I imagined. When Chelsea finished her last lap and sprinted toward the center I admired her and even thought to let her win, but that would be pathetic. She was a true competitor; she never gave up and did her best to get the pin before me right to the end, but I could not let her win. She dove for the pin at great speed but just before she grabbed it I picked it up out of her reach and she slid between my legs.

I held the pin high in the air and stared down my dad. The feeling was glorious for me. The very person my father tried to embarrass me with was embarrassed and through that I showed I was right and my father wrong. Though I feel badly about what happened to Chelsea, I do not feel responsible for it. I feel that it was my father's fault for staging the whole situation. Granted I could have handled it with more class than I did, but my honor and pride were in jeopardy and I had no reason to dismiss my compulsion to defend my character the way I did. I was a ten year old boy who had just learned the meaning of cocky.

*End*

The first moment when Gavin mentions pride is early in the case when he says how he believes his dad will be proud of him.

*Before the race began I approached my dad and told him to get ready to celebrate when I win. I thought, "My dad will be proud of me when I win the game he's officiating. I think he will like that."*

While there are other places in Gavin's recollection of the events where pride may be apparent, I will take this moment as a main point to consider from the three perspectives for the reason that this point is just before Gavin encounters conflict and opposition to his pride. In this way we might gain have insight into how Gavin approached the situation, before it escalated—keeping in mind that Gavin's account is described completely after the events in the case transpired.

In Aristotle's view, Gavin is deserving of honor for his ability to run fast, "For men who are well-born are thought worthy of honour, and so are those who enjoy power or wealth; for they are in a superior position, and everything that has a superiority in something good is held in greater honour. Hence even such things make men prouder; for they are honoured by some for having them" (*NE*, 1124a) though it may have been unwise to assume he would win before the

race even had begun. This assumption was unwarranted confidence in the result, which had not happened yet. It demonstrates that Gavin is not showing pride because he is presuming more than he actually knows. He was right to have confidence in his ability, but he was overconfident to assume he already knew the result. So while he may have had merit to believe he was the fastest, his presumption of knowing the future before it happened was not honorable. Despite the fact he did win end up winning, it was not in the way he imagined or could have predicted. Also, Chelsea might have won. He seemed to show fear and uncertainty that she could win once he learned he would race her.

He also became desperate to convince everyone he was the fastest whereas a proud man would not be bothered by other people thinking one way or another. Aristotle says, “Again, it is characteristic of the proud man not to aim at the things commonly held in honour, or the things in which others excel; to be sluggish and to hold back except where great honour or a great work is at stake, and to be a man of few deeds, but of great and notable ones” (*NE*, 1124b); “... he cares not to be praised nor for others to be blamed; nor again is he given to praise...” (*NE*, 11125a);

In the first place, then, as has been said, the proud man is concerned with honours; yet he will also bear himself with moderation towards wealth and power and all good or evil fortune, whatever may befall him, and will be neither over-joyed by good fortune nor over-pained by evil. For not even towards honour does he bear himself as if it were a very great thing. (*NE*, 1124b)

Therefore, given what we know of Gavin’s explanation of what happened, he was not within the mean of virtue in his actions. He was not acting as a proud man in the Aristotelian sense.

From a Christian perspective, Gavin showed a lack of humility in that he was confident in his ability while being inconsiderate of others. “Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4, NRSV). In considering the race he was prideful by

thinking firstly of gaining honor for himself and did not consider the feelings of others in his boastful statement about looking forward to winning:

For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart,  
those greedy for gain curse and renounce the Lord. (Psalm 10:3, NRSV)

Do you see persons wise in their own eyes?  
There is more hope for fools than for them. (Proverbs 26:12, NRSV)

Later he does not show grace to others, especially Chelsea and his father. He shows a lack of righteousness and seems to be acting only for wanting to have vengeance on his father for being embarrassed. Philippians warns, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus...” (Philippians 2:3-4, NRSV). Gavin was not righteous and may be acting out of pride as he showed no care for anyone but his own desires.

In the Tantra Buddhist view of this incident, Gavin shows an awareness of self in that he was aware of his ability to win and sought to use the best strengths of himself to do so. However, he did so at the expense of others hurt feelings. He was acting for himself but only in the way of the Rudra, not the Vajra. He was fiercely protective about winning a race:

The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 269)

Also, his need to win may be an example of an affliction. The race is has no real importance for enlightenment. “Liking comfort and disliking discomfort; wishing for a good reputation, disliking a bad one or none at all; wanting praise; disliking criticism; wanting to receive material things. An action done out of these worldly concerns is one of the black eight

worldly dharmas” (Llama Zopa Rinpoche, 2012, p. 100). He was offended and seemed to show hurt feelings which is not demonstrative of Vajra pride as Vajra is strong enough to keep oneself from being shaken and deterred from peace and joy with oneself: “... in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride...” (Trungpa, 2003, p. 173). Gavin seemed to show himself in turmoil and distress.

*I was enraged at being embarrassed by my father.*

Geshe Tashi, a Buddhist teacher, explains about the danger of praising oneself:

*(32) praising oneself and belittling others because of pride and anger:*

- This downfall is also very similar to the first of the eighteen root downfalls. Here, the difference is whether the four factors are needed or not. For the root downfall they are, otherwise it is this secondary downfall.
- There is some disagreement between scholars, but Lama Tsong Khapa's conclusion is that it is a root downfall if all four conditions are present. To repeat the four: not seeing what you are doing as a negative action, no willingness to stop, a sense of great joy and no sense of shame or embarrassment. If one of these four factors is missing then it will become a secondary downfall. (Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

Gavin's actions may meet all four criteria for a bodhisattva making the first downfall. He does not see his actions as negative,

*The very person my father tried to embarrass me with was embarrassed and through that I showed I was right and my father wrong.*

He does not appear to want to stop or change this view,

*... I do not feel responsible for it. I feel that it was my father's fault for staging the whole situation. Granted I could have handled it with more class than I did, but my honor and pride were in jeopardy and I had no reason to dismiss my compulsion to defend my character the way I did.*

He describes a sense of joy with little to no shame about it,



*The feeling was glorious for me. Though I feel badly about doing that to Chelsea I do not feel responsible for it.*

At the very least, it may qualify as a secondary downfall.

While the three of these perspectives may not be in agreement about what the word “pride” means, they do seem to have some agreement about Gavin’s prideful actions being out of balance with virtue. Mr. Spiner also gave an account for what happened that evening. The next part looks at what results come from his account using the same kind of analysis used for Gavin’s account.

*Mr. Spiner Account:*

Gavin is my son. I love him dearly, but he still has a lot to learn. Today he seemed to have become swept up in the glory of winning. It all started when I tried to get him to be more of a humble leader. His peers look up to him and admire his ability to run fast and win competitions, but I want him to be able to see beyond that. He needs to be able to handle that stuff with grace. When I was younger there were bullies that made me feel small whenever I played or competed with them. I never had their ability, but that doesn’t give them the right to embarrass me. That kind of attitude can ruin a person’s reputation. I want everyone to love my son and respect him. So I don’t want him to have that kind of attitude or else guys like me won’t love or respect him. I’m very proud of how successful he is. It’s fascinating to see people admire him. Any kind of praise about my son feels a bit like praise for me as well. But it’s also true that any kind of disdain for my son is felt by me, which is why I really don’t want him to be like those bullies from my youth.

Today, when Gavin said, “I’m looking forward to winning this one.” He sounded so confident, too confident in fact. I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with

how his words may sound to others. I tried to give him the chance to correct himself and show him that he still has a long way to go before he truly is the fastest. I mean, he may be the fastest in his age group at the moment, but there are many others who are faster because they are older and bigger. I don't want him thinking that he has established himself as the fastest because he can still get much faster. Anyway, he didn't seem to get what I was trying to explain to him so I got Chelsea to race him and it was a big mistake. I honestly thought Chelsea would beat him, but he ended up winning and making an even bigger scene than I expected. He seemed to be frustrated with me, and understandably so as I was not very clear about what I was doing. It all happened so fast. One minute I was simply questioning his logic, the next I had him racing against a girl in front of the whole gym.

He surprised me by beating Chelsea, but more than that, it was a reminder that I just can't seem to beat that attitude. That cavalier and boastful attitude has always been against me since I can't partake in it nor beat it. Now Gavin seems to have it too. But I watched him, as he lifted that pin in the air basking in the praise of everyone around him, I couldn't help but feel a little bit proud. He is my son and even though he was being defiant to me, he was a winner. I watched him afterward and he did not lord his prowess over the others. He wasn't really like those bullies I knew growing up. He is and always will be a part of who I am, which is so much more than a bully, or an arrogant jerk. Ultimately I can't control his choices in life, or the attitudes he chooses to take on, but I can be a good example for him to follow, something he can admire and look up to. Rather than trying to suppress what I don't want him to be, I should probably focus on leading him forward to the good person he can grow into.

*End*

In the Aristotelian view, Mr. Spiner appears afraid of Gavin being haughty,

*He sounded so confident, too confident in fact. I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with how his words may sound to others.*

Mr. Spiner is concerned that Gavin may sound vain which might bring dishonor to Gavin. "... he who thinks himself worthy of great things, being unworthy of them, is vain" (*NE*, 1123b). Vanity is not something to be proud of as pride is something that is superior. "The vain man goes to excess in comparison with his own merits, but does not exceed the proud man's claims" (*NE*, 1123b).

*His peers look up to him and admire his ability to run fast and win competitions, but I want him to be able to see beyond that. He needs to be able to handle that stuff with grace.*

Mr. Spiner wants Gavin to value virtue and Aristotle would agree that he needs to be able to handle his good fortune well, "For without virtue it is not easy to bear gracefully the goods of fortune; and, being unable to bear them, and thinking themselves superior to others, they despise others and themselves do what they please" (*NE*, 1124a-1124b).

It is good for Mr. Spiner to want Gavin to handle his fortune with grace and it is also good he is concerned about Gavin being vain:

Vain people, on the other hand, are fools and ignorant of themselves, and that manifestly; for, not being worthy of them, they attempt honourable undertakings, and then are found out; and to adorn themselves with clothing and outward show and such things, and wish their strokes of good fortune to be made public, and speak about them as if they would be honoured for them. (*NE*, 1125a)

Mr. Spiner will not be able to be proud of Gavin if he is not virtuous or not proud. "Now the proud man, since he deserves most, must be good in the highest degree; for the better man always deserves more, and the best man most. Therefore the truly proud man must be good. And

greatness in every virtue would seem to be characteristic of a proud man” (NE, 1123b). Though it is important to remember that Gavin is not yet a man and has much to learn yet.

Mr. Spiner appears to not be proud of himself and as a result is fearful of what Gavin might become.

*Rather than trying to suppress what I don't want him to be, I should probably focus on leading him forward into the good person he will grow into... When I was younger there were bullies that made me feel small whenever I played or competed with them. I never had their ability, but that doesn't give them the right to embarrass me.*

In Aristotle's view, Mr. Spiner would do better to not care about praise for him or his son.

He must be unable to make his life revolve round another, unless it be a friend; for this is slavish, and for this reason all flatterers are servile and people lacking in self-respect are flatterers. Nor is he given to admiration; for nothing to him is great. Nor is he mindful of wrongs; for it is not the part of a proud man to have a long memory, especially for wrongs, but rather to overlook them. Nor is he a gossip; for he will speak neither about himself nor about another, since he cares not to be praised nor for others to be blamed; nor again is he given to praise; and for the same reason he is not an evil-speaker, even about his enemies, except from haughtiness. (NE, 1124b-1125a)

Mr. Spiner seems to be clear about what virtue is and he also seems to desire pride.

*I'm very proud of how successful he is. It's fascinating to see people admire him. Any kind of praise about my son feels a bit like praise for me as well.*

However, his actions are not within the mean of virtue regarding his desire and therefore does not merit due consideration as a proud man according to Aristotelian measure.

From a Christian view, Mr. Spiner values humility in wanting Gavin to sound more humble than he did.

*He sounded so confident, too confident in fact. I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with how his words may sound to others.*

This may be a righteous desire for a parent.

- <sup>4</sup>The reward for humility and fear of the Lord  
is riches and honor and life.
- <sup>5</sup>Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse;  
the cautious will keep far from them.
- <sup>6</sup>Train children in the right way,  
and when old, they will not stray. (Proverbs 22:4, NRSV);

My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup>All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. <sup>5</sup>For all must carry their own loads. (Galatians 6:1-5, NRSV);

“He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all” (Mark 9:35, NRSV).

However, he does not show love, joy, peace, patience, kindness or grace in trying to force Gavin to be the way he wants. “<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things” (Galatians 5:22,23, NRSV). He is not clear on why he chose to have Chelsea run against Gavin.

*Anyway, he didn't seem to get what I was trying to explain to him so I got Chelsea to race him and it was a big mistake. I honestly thought Chelsea would beat him, but he ended up winning and making an even bigger scene than I expected. He seemed to be frustrated with me, and understandably so as I was not very clear about what I was doing. It all happened so fast. One minute I was simply questioning his logic, the next I had him racing against a girl in front of the whole gym.*

He does not specify his motivation for having Gavin run against “*a girl in front of the whole gym*”, but does admit that Gavin had merit to be frustrated with him because of it.

*He seemed to be frustrated with me, and understandably so as I was not very clear about what I was doing.*

Whatever he was trying to do it did not have the desired effect. “Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart.” (Colossians 3:20, NRSV) From what he describes, Mr. Spinner

may have righteous intentions with his actions but seems to carry it out with an inappropriate method as it does not have a good result. In this way Mr. Spiner does not act righteously.

From a Tantra Buddhist view, Mr. Spiner is not proud as he is in turmoil about himself. He cannot act well because he is only acting to protect himself. “We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery” (Trungpa, 2003, p. 173). This may be egoism and despair rather than pride. He tries to change a situation because of what Gavin says, which may constitute an affliction within Mr. Spiner.

However, as stated before, to hold Mr. Spiner accountable to the standard of a Bodhisattva is not fair. For him perhaps he may require a different method and standard to best hold himself to. “The *Kalachakra Tantra*, after setting forth the various systems of Buddhist and non-Buddhist tenets and inferiority, says, ‘It is not suitable to despise another system.’ The reason given is that often non-Buddhist systems have been taught through the empowering blessings of Buddhas. It is not suitable to despise another system” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 34, 35).

However, through our own experience we can confirm Buddha’s teachings on more important topics such as emptiness, the altruistic mind of enlightenment, love, and compassion, for no matter who analyses—Buddhist or non-Buddhist—or how much one analyses, if the person is not biased through desire or hatred, these teachings can bear analysis and serve as powerful sources of thought. (Hopkins, 1977, p. 32)

But for the sake of verifying a Tantra Buddhist perspective, this is relevant to consider.

The Tantra Buddhist perspective illuminates Mr. Spiner’s affliction. He appears to be potentially afflicted at the end as well when he was visibly angry.

*Mr. Spiner's face is now red and furious as he looks on from the side of the gym.*

But what does he have to be angry about? Hopkins describes the suffering of affliction imposed by cyclic existence, “Day and night, night and day we spend our lives in the company of the afflictions, generating desire for the pleasant and anger at the unpleasant, and continue thus even when dreaming, unable to remain relaxed, our minds completely and utterly mixed with thoughts of desire and hatred without interruption” (Hopkins, 1977, p. 55). Mr. Spiner appears to not be at peace with himself or his actions. This is not in keeping with the auspicious aspects of Vajra pride:

The pride of Rudra consists in trying to overpower the other. Vajra pride is identified with the pride of self rather than being worried about the consequences of the pride. There's no sense of conquest involved. Just being yourself is pride. In the case of Rudra, there is territory involved, as if you were a jealous king trying to conquer your territory. Whereas if you are a universal monarch already, you don't have to conquer your territory. Being yourself is being king, and you take pride in that. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 269)

Mr. Spiner may not have shown Vajra pride with his actions but he may have shown Buddha nature in being concerned for Gavin.

*I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with how his words may sound to others. I tried to give him the chance to correct himself and show him that he still has a long way to go before he truly is the fastest.*

Mr. Spiner may have been concerned about Gavin having a delusion or false understanding about himself being the fastest in the gym. Mr. Spiner appeared to believe that Chelsea was actually faster than Gavin,

*I honestly thought Chelsea would beat him, but he ended up winning and making an even bigger scene than I expected.*

This concern for Gavin may be similar to what Geshe Tashi describes as necessary action for a bodhisattva, which is an effective practitioner of Vajra pride:

(16) *not correcting others who are motivated by delusions*

When we see somebody is making a mistake, we must talk to them with the right motivation and try to help them correct that mistake. If we help other people not to make a mistake again, that is very helpful for that other person but it will also indirectly help us as well. (<<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

Therefore, it was good for Mr. Spiner to be concerned for Gavin having a delusion, but his method in approaching the situation was not becoming of Vajra pride.

Now if you have not noticed by now, there is still one main part of the case that is missing. Chelsea might seem to be an afterthought in the descriptions of Gavin and Mr. Spiner, yet she was just as much a part of the whole incident as they were. Therefore it is necessary to include an account from her version of what happened. I will employ the same method of analysis for her account as I did for Gavin and Mr. Spiner's. One thing that is immediately apparent is her sex may be problematic in the sense of the patriarchal views of Aristotle, which may also be applicable to the long history of patriarchy within Christianity and Buddhism as well. Nevertheless, I will attempt to apply the same method of analysis with keeping concern for patriarchy in mind.

*Chelsea Account:*

Games night tonight was awful!! I'm so embarrassed! Mr. Spiner made me run against his son and then he humiliated me!! I was just about to run my own race against the girls and then Mr. Spiner came over and said he needed me to run on the boy's side of the gym. All year Mr. Spiner has been telling me how good of a runner I am and he thinks I'm faster than the boys, so I thought this was time to show everyone that I was. I wanted to ask what we were doing but it was so noisy and he seemed to be in a hurry so I just followed him. It was weird. He got me to run on the green team and Gavin was on the other side of the circle on the blue team. He is a lot younger than me, so I wasn't sure if I should run my hardest. Mr. Spiner wouldn't want me to



embarrass his son would he? So when the race started I didn't go my hardest. The other two boys, on yellow and red team, were slow and I passed each of them at least once during the four laps. It was about the third lap I saw Mr. Spiner really yelling for me to run fast. Then I saw Gavin was ahead of me! I went as fast as I could, but it wasn't going to be enough, Gavin was just about to finish his laps and get the pin. I thought if Mr. Spiner asks why I was slow, I will tell him I wasn't trying, which is true. Once I finished my laps I turned to go into the circled and saw Gavin was standing over the pin looking strange. I didn't know what to think but thought, "He hasn't picked it up yet! I can still get it!" So I sprinted and dove for the pin thinking I could snatch it by surprise. But, just as I dove, as if he was waiting for me to go for it, Gavin stooped down and got the pin before me. As soon as he did he let out a big cheer and people were laughing cheering him on. It was so mean. I never did anything to him! Why would he do that to me? Boys don't care about feelings, they just want to win.

*End*

The first mention of events having to do with Chelsea's pride is when she says,

*Mr. Spiner made me run against his son and then he humiliated me!*

In Aristotle's view, Chelsea was not proud in her actions or thoughts. She was dishonored by the events that transpired by being ordered to race and then made to look small and futile by Gavin's showboating in the end. However, she did not try her best and should be accountable for that, or rather, her lack of effort may excuse her dishonor for it. "... but among humble people it is as vulgar as a display of strength against the weak. Again, it is characteristic of the proud man not to aim at the things commonly held in honour, or the things in which others excel; to be sluggish

and to hold back except where great honour or a great work is at stake..." (NE, 1124b). She did not try her best for sympathetic reasons -- She did not want to dishonor Gavin and Mr. Spiner.

*He is a lot younger than me which was kind of weird, so I wasn't sure if I should run my hardest. Mr. Spiner wouldn't want me to embarrass his son would he? So when the race started I didn't go my hardest.*

This may be a virtuous action in holding back. However, her sympathy may also have been misplaced as she was unaware of the real reason she was told to run the race. She was more concerned with potentially hurting others feelings than she was with honoring herself.

*I thought if Mr. Spiner asks why I was slow, I will tell him I wasn't trying, which is true.*

This was not wise and ultimately resulted in her being taken advantage of and become humiliated. She chose to be small when the situation called for her to be proud:

The man who thinks himself worthy of worthy of less than he is really worthy of is unduly humble, whether his deserts be great or moderate, or his deserts be small but his claims yet smaller. And the man whose deserts are great would seem most unduly humble; for what would he have done if they had been less? The proud man, then, is an extreme in respect of the greatness of his claims, but a mean in respect of the rightness of them; for he claims what is accordance with his merits, while the others go to excess or fall short. (NE, 1123b)

These are not actions within the mean of pride. It was good that she was generous by showing sluggishness, and she is right to feel offended about being dishonored. "Honours and dishonours, therefore, are the objects with respect to which the proud man is as he should be" (NE, 1124a).

However, she was not honoring herself in being unduly humble about her speed in the race. "The unduly humble man falls short both in comparison with his own merits and in comparison with the proud man's claims" (NE, 1125a). In running slowly she deprived herself of

the honor of being the fastest and gave merit to Gavin's speed. She thought this was not a serious race, but it actually was.

*He is a lot younger than me which was kind of weird, so I wasn't sure if I should run my hardest. Mr. Spiner wouldn't want me to embarrass his son would he?*

In this way she unnecessarily lowered herself from being faster than Gavin:

For the unduly humble man, being worthy of good things, robs himself of what he deserves, and to have something bad about him from the fact that he does not think himself worthy of good things, and seems also not to know himself; else he would have desired the things he was worthy of, since these were good. Yet such people are not thought to be fools, but rather unduly retiring. Such a reputation, however, seems actually to make them worse; for each class of people aims at what corresponds to its worth, and these people stand back even from noble actions and undertakings, deeming themselves unworthy, and from external goods no less. (NE, 1125a)

That being said, Chelsea does not stand much of a chance for being proud in Aristotle's eyes as being female would likely undermine her merit.

From a Christian view, Chelsea was treated unjustly. She was obedient and did not deserve to be treated the way she was. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup>Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment" (Romans 13:1, 2, NRSV). She tried to put Gavin and Mr. Spiner's feelings before her own which was humble for her part.

*Mr. Spiner wouldn't want me to embarrass his son would he? So when the race started I didn't go my hardest.*

This is a righteous concern as described in Philippians 2:4, (NRSV), "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others."

Chelsea was treated unfairly and by her account she appeared to be angry and bitter about it. However, there is hope she can forgive Mr. Spiner and Gavin for what they did to her so she can have peace about it:

<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:12-15, NRSV)

"It is better to be of a lowly spirit among the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud"

(Proverbs 16:19, NRSV). She may not have merit to boast about running the fastest, but she does have merit to boast about acting well through obedience to Mr. Spiner and respect to Gavin.

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. (Romans 5:1-5, NRSV)

Is Chelsea proud? Perhaps, depending on what her apparent resentment in the end indicates,

*Why would he do that to me? Boys don't care about feelings, they just want to win.*

Regardless of how she was treated, it is better for her to remain righteous: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21, NRSV);

<sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. <sup>16</sup> For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace. (James 3:13-18, NRSV)

Also, it is important to remember that suffering for goodness sake is considered righteous:

<sup>13</sup> Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; <sup>16</sup> yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. (1 Peter 3:13-17, NRSV)

In the Tantra Buddhist view, Chelsea can hopefully feel proud for acting true to herself and not worry about the result or outcome of the race. She has been hurt by Mr. Spiner and Gavin through their actions: Gavin by praising himself over her:

#### The Eighteen Root Downfalls

1. praising oneself and belittling others (Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

and Mr. Spiner by not stepping in to stop Gavin:

*(45) not acting with whatever means are necessary according to the circumstances to stop someone who is doing harmful action*

The last two downfalls are saying that, although we must not do anything to harm sentient beings, there are circumstances where we might have to act quite forcefully to stop them harming themselves.

When a person or a group is causing themselves or others pain and difficulties, really unlawfully or immorally treating great numbers of sentient beings badly, we should not just accept that, saying we are Buddhists and therefore passive people. We should oppose them skilfully.

(Geshe Tashi, <<http://www.bodhicitta.net/BODHISATTVAVOWS.htm>>)

There is hope that she might be able to somehow harness the power of yoga to protect herself from trauma or injury, and perhaps even use the difficulties brought about by Mr. Spiner and Gavin to the betterment of herself toward enlightenment:

Just as the filth of city-dwellers

Helps the field of a sugar-cane grower,

So the manure of a Bodhisattva's afflictions

Assists in growing the qualities of a Buddha.

(trans. 1977, Hopkins, *Kashyapa Chapter Sutra*)

However, at the moment she appears to be afflicted by the events of the race as she is embarrassed and perhaps resentful.

*Games night tonight was awful!! I'm so embarrassed! Mr. Spinner made me run against his son and then he humiliated me!! ... It was so mean. I never did anything to him! Why would he do that to me? Boys don't care about feelings, they just want to win.*

This is not in keeping with Vajra pride:

We have an enormous sense of delight. There are wonderful things taking place in us. That is the sense of the bodhisattva path. That is also connected with tantra, because in tantra, the whole thing is based on pride, vajra pride, as we call it, indestructible pride, adamant pride. An enormous sense of delight begins to take place. There is no room, absolutely none whatsoever, for misery. (Trungpa, 2003, p. 173)

Despite all the apparent shortcomings of Chelsea in this matter, it is worth noting that her female perspective may involve virtuous characteristics and attributes that Aristotelianism, Christianity and Buddhism do not sufficiently explore. All three traditions are steeped in patriarchal understandings that may discount or overlook a potentially nuanced female point of view about Chelsea and her pride. Marnina Gonick (2004) talks about how female identity is a complex issue that does not fit any standard or generalized criteria,

It is my argument that girls live the effects of neoliberal discourses of individuality in particularly complicated ways. This is due to the traditional oppositional construction of femininity and masculinity, which creates a series of exclusionary relations between discourses of girlhood and adolescence [Hudson, 1984], womanhood and personhood [Johnson, 1993] and femininity and rationality [Walkerdine, 2001]. ... The rise of neoliberalism has shifted the conditions of possibility of modern subjectivity, demanding that the ideal person embrace both emotional openness or flexibility and ambitions for autonomy. (*Old Plots and New Identities*, p. 191)

So Chelsea may not find the mean of virtue, or meet the standard of righteousness, or show authenticity in her actions, but further inquiry is needed to appropriately augment her experience as a girl, especially given the patriarchal perspectives provided in the analysis.

While the meaning of pride may be different for each perspective, it is helpful to see the virtue, or lack thereof, for each traditional perspective. Though not all three may agree that Gavin or any of the three acted with pride, all three do seem to recognize the place for, and absence of, Aristotelian virtue, or Christian righteousness or Tantra Buddhist authenticity. These qualities were found to be both present and lacking in all three of the main people from the case.

The analysis clearly shows how Gavin, Mr. Spiner and Chelsea do not meet up to the standards for each of the three perspectives. However, from a Christian and Tantra Buddhist perspective, Chelsea may have some righteousness and authenticity of herself by considering Mr. Spiner and Gavin's feelings before her own as a humble and caring act. Though, she does not appear to fulfill the character of righteousness with her actions and does not appear to be at peace with herself about what happened. The Christian perspective also agrees with Mr. Spiner's valuing of humility, but like the other two perspectives, disagrees with his choice of trying to impose it on Gavin through embarrassment. The Aristotelian view would seem to agree with Gavin and Chelsea for having an awareness of their athletic ability, but again, would disagree with how they go about acting on that ability. Gavin is presumptuous and Chelsea lowers herself. Also, the Tantra Buddhist view might see Gavin as being true to himself by being proud of who he is and what he did. However, this understanding falls short of what is required for Mahayana Buddhism, which is the highest form of Buddhism and closest to achieving the goal of Buddhism, that being enlightenment.

## CHAPTER 6: A MATTER OF JUSTICE

Though Mr. Spiner, Gavin and Chelsea do not appear to meet the auspicious attributes of Aristotelian and Mahayana pride, and may perhaps reflect a detrimental worldly pride that Christianity describes, does their lack of virtue then indicate a lack of character? In other words, judging by what we understand here, does this mean they are not good people? As it stands they do not meet the good criteria of Aristotelianism, Christianity or Mahayana Buddhism so it might seem to be so. However, to explore this answer I look again to the three perspectives (Aristotelianism, Christianity, Tantra Buddhism) and consider some more in-depth concepts about qualifying character.

Aristotle may offer some helpful insight to the question of character. Since pride would seem to indicate the whole of a person's virtue, as Aristotle says, "Pride, then, seems to be a sort of crown of the virtues; for it makes them greater, and it is not found without them. Therefore it is hard to be truly proud; for it is impossible without nobility and goodness of character" (*NE*, 1124a). A lack of pride, then, would seem to indicate a lack of nobility and goodness of character. An examination of how this may or may not be true is warranted.

Let us consider the virtue of justice. Aristotle describes justice as being distinct from other virtues:

Justice is a kind of mean, but not in the same way as the other virtues, but because it relates to an intermediate amount, while injustice relates to the extremes. And justice is that in virtue of which the just man is said to be a doer, by choice, of that which is just, and one who will distribute either between himself and another or between two others not so as to give more of what is desirable to himself and less to his neighbour (and conversely with what is harmful), but so as to give what is equal in accordance with proportion; and similarly in distributing between two other persons. (*NE*, 1133b-1134a)



In the case we see Mr. Spiner, though perhaps intending to be just, did not act justly. He intended to create a denigrating social display to embarrass Gavin. He was unjust to Chelsea in that he was harmful to her by not considering how compromising a situation it might be for her to be in an unconventional race against Gavin. Does this mean he is an unjust person? For this we might consider the intermediate amount Aristotle describes as being the relating factor about the mean of virtue. Since we are talking about pride in this case, the intermediate amount may be honor. “It is chiefly with honours and dishonours, then, that the proud man is concerned” (*NE*, 1124a). If pride is actually being tested here with respect to justice, then honor and dishonor may be the means by which we can determine justice. Mr. Spiner dishonored Gavin by trying to embarrass him with setting up the race against Chelsea.

*I was shocked, embarrassed, angry and hurt that my father seemed to be assuring my demise... Chelsea's glory today was not going to be set upon her success in fair competition; it was simply to satisfy my father's desire to teach me a lesson at the expense of my embarrassment. (Gavin account)*

‘Embarrassment’ is defined as, “A feeling of self-consciousness, shame, or awkwardness” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2017). While self-consciousness may or may not be compatible with honor, shame and awkwardness are not. Embarrassment, then, may be a potential indicator for when honor is jeopardized. Chelsea was embarrassed.

*Games night tonight was awful! I'm so embarrassed! Mr. Spiner made me run against his son and then he humiliated me! (Chelsea journal entry)*

This indicates she was dishonored as a result of unjust action.

It may be that Gavin responded to Mr. Spiner according to the degree in which he felt justified correcting the injustice he felt as a result of being embarrassed:

*I was so angry I wanted to do something to get back at my dad for trying to embarrass me, but I was at a loss as to what I should do. Simply picking up the pin would not feel good*

*enough; dancing around the pin before picking it up would be ridiculous. I needed to do something with purpose but was unable to figure out what I could do to satisfy my victory. I was out of time to think about it but what happened next turned out to be greater than I imagined.” (Gavin memory)*

Gavin describes that it turned out to be greater than he imagined; that he may have unintentionally acted in a way that overcompensated for his embarrassment. This indicates reference to a kind of proportion, or degree in appropriation for his actions. As a matter of proportion, Gavin may have gained honor at the expense of Chelsea’s dishonor. Aristotle states how justice is a matter of proportion:

*This, then, is what the just is—the proportional; the unjust is what violates the proportion. Hence one term becomes too great, the other too small, as indeed happens in practice; for the man who acts unjustly has too much, and the man who is unjustly treated too little, of what is good. In the case of evil the reverse is true; for the lesser evil is reckoned a good in comparison with the greater evil, since the lesser evil is rather to be chosen than the greater, and what is worthy of choice is good, and what is worthier of choice a greater good. This, then, is one species of the just. (NE, 1131b)*

Gavin appeared to gain great honor at Chelsea’s dishonor, barring the potential sympathizers for Chelsea. Mr. Spiner was both honored and dishonored in that he knew Gavin acted in a way to dishonor him, but Gavin’s great honor also was honoring to Mr. Spiner because Gavin’s achievements make Mr. Spiner proud to be his father.

*But I watched him, as he lifted that pin in the air basking in the praise of everyone around him, I couldn’t help but feel a little bit proud. He is my son and even though he was being defiant to me, he was a winner.(Spiner account)*

Chelsea’s dishonor came at the expense of both Gavin and Mr. Spiner’s honor. The fallout from Mr. Spiner and Gavin attempting to dishonor each other largely fell upon Chelsea. Her reaction is to express anger, as stated in her journal entry, as well as judgment and perhaps resentment toward the male gender, which may be a final attempt to try to understand why this happened.

*It was so mean. I never did anything to him! Why would he do that to me? Boys don’t care about feelings, they just want to win. (Chelsea account)*

Why did Mr. Spiner act unjustly? Was his action simply a result of unjust character? Again, looking to Mr. Spiner's journal entry it would appear this may not be the case. It may have been because what Gavin said about being the fastest caused Mr. Spiner to feel injustice.

*I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with how his words may sound to others. (Spiner account)*

Though his response to the feeling of embarrassment for Gavin is unjust, it indicates he may have acted with the good intention of trying to help Gavin, thereby somewhat redeeming Mr. Spiner's character. This is not an excuse for his poor choice of action, but rather a reason for why it happened. It helps to understand why he did it which may aid consideration for how to appropriately make amends for the injustice, which is the aim of justice. Aristotle describes the virtue of justice as follows:

And therefore justice is often thought to be the greatest of virtues, and 'neither evening nor morning star' is so wonderful; and proverbially 'in justice is every virtue comprehended'. And it is complete virtue in its fullest sense, because it is the actual exercise of complete virtue. It is complete because he who possesses it can exercise his virtue not only in himself but towards his neighbour also; for many men can exercise virtue in their own affairs, but not in their relations to their neighbour. This is why the saying of Bias is thought to be true, that 'rule will show the man'; for a ruler is necessarily in relation to other men and a member of a society. For this same reason justice, alone of the virtues, is thought to be 'another's good', because it is related to our neighbour; for it does what is advantageous to another, either a ruler or a copartner. Now the worst man is he who exercises his wickedness both towards himself and towards his friends, and the best man is not he who exercises his virtue towards himself but he who exercises it towards another; for this is a difficult task. Justice in this sense, then, is not part of virtue but virtue entire, nor is the contrary injustice a part of vice but vice entire. What the difference is between virtue and justice in this sense is plain from what we have said; they are the same but their essence is not the same; what, as a relation to one's neighbour, is justice is, as a certain kind of state without qualification, virtue. (*NE*, 1129b-1130a)

If justice, as Aristotle says, is virtue entire, then the aim of justice is to fulfill or validate virtue.

In the case with Mr. Spiner, though he aimed for justice in relation to his neighbor, Gavin, he did not carry it out effectively and in this way he was unjust, but this does not necessarily disqualify the virtue of his character as being unjust. Again, Aristotle notes the essence of justice is not the

same as virtue, "... they are the same but their essence is not the same; what, as a relation to one's neighbour, is justice is, as a certain kind of state without qualification, virtue" (*NE*, 1130a).

A more apt explanation by Aristotle for how a person acting unjustly can still be a person of just character may be found earlier in book V of *Nicomachean Ethics*:

But if a man harms another by choice, he acts unjustly; and these are the acts of injustice which imply that the doer is an unjust man, provided that the act violates proportion or equality. Similarly, a man is just when he acts justly by choice; but he acts justly if he merely acts voluntarily. Of involuntary acts some are excusable, others not. For the mistakes which men make not only in ignorance but also from ignorance are excusable, while those which men do not from ignorance but (though they do them in ignorance) owing to a passion which is neither natural nor such as man is liable to, are not excusable. (*NE*, 1136a)

Mr. Spiner may have acted like a bully, but this does not necessarily mean he espouses the character of a bully as this may be an incidental matter. Mr. Spiner did not appear to act involuntarily as he did seem to make a conscious choice when he intended to embarrass Gavin with the race, which is not honorable. However, after seeing his account for the incident in his journal, it appears he may have acted in ignorance. This is not to say he did not know what he was doing, but rather, he did not intend to feel the passion he felt owing to his fear born out of a childhood bullying experience. Nor did he know how to appropriately respond to that passion as he obviously is still not at reconciled with his fear. This shows Mr. Spiner to be more of a vulnerable man than a bully. At the moment he decided to act unjustly, if he were not ignorant of this internal passion or how to respond to his fear relating to bullying, he may have chosen to act better than he did.

*I don't want him thinking that he has established himself as the fastest because he can still get much faster. Anyway, he didn't seem to get what I was trying to explain to him so I got Chelsea to race him and it was a big mistake. I honestly thought Chelsea would beat him, but he ended up winning and making an even bigger scene than I expected. He seemed to be frustrated with me, and understandably so as I was not very clear about what I was*

*doing. It all happened so fast. One minute I was simply questioning his logic, the next I had him racing against a girl in front of the whole gym. (Spiner account)*

Had he acted the same way knowing his passion of fear and being aware of a more appropriate response but choosing to do so anyway, this would suggest a devious character. Or perhaps if he refused to reflect on or reconsider his choice of actions for what happened, then perhaps his character would be spiteful, or perhaps careless if he were apathetic about it. These are not virtuous characteristics. However, Mr. Spiner appears to regret his actions, wishing he had acted in a better way. Though he does not specify exactly how to do so, at the end of his entry he offers an altruistic desire to be a better father in this regard.

*Ultimately I can't control his choices in life, or the attitudes he chooses to take on, but I can be a good example for him to follow, something he can admire and look up to. Rather than trying to suppress what I don't want him to be, I should probably focus on leading him forward to the good person he can grow into. (Spiner account)*

Mr. Spiner seems to be a loving father and wishes the best for his son. His love for his son and his desire be a better person are both suggest nobility and goodness of character. This indicates Mr. Spiner may not be an unjust person, despite his unjust action. Aristotle confirms this logic.

Since acting unjustly does not necessarily imply being unjust, we must ask what sort of unjust acts imply that the doer is unjust with respect to each type of injustice, e.g. a thief, an adulterer, or a brigand. Surely the answer does not turn on the difference between these types. For a man might even lie with a woman knowing who she was, but the origin of his might be not deliberate choice but passion. He acts unjustly, then, but is not unjust; e.g. a man is not a thief, yet he stole, nor an adulterer, yet he committed adultery; and similarly in all other cases. (*NE*, 1134a)

Despite the redemption of character for those committing unjust acts, there is still the matter of rectification for character. Chelsea was essentially collateral damage as a result of the battle of dishonor between Gavin and Mr. Spiner. How might she now find redemption for her honor, or how might she gain honor to appropriately compensate for that which was unjustly done to her? Aristotle may offer an uncompassionate explanation relating to being concerned with honor.

In the first place, then, as has been said, the proud man is concerned with honours; yet he will also bear himself with moderation towards wealth and power and all good or evil fortune, whatever may befall him, and will be neither over-joyed by good fortune nor over-pained by evil. For not even towards honour does he bear himself as if it were a very great thing. (*NE*, 1124b)

If Chelsea is proud in the way Aristotle believes, then she will not be overly concerned about the incident, and therefore, she would not have much pain or concern from it. However, this is clearly not the case as her journal entry clearly indicates she is upset and embarrassed about what happened to her. Is there no recompense for her in this regard? Time cannot be reversed to stop it from happening, nor can steps be taken to purge her memory of it. How might the intermediate amount relating to honor as Aristotle suggests, be attained in this case? Aristotle notes that with his model of balancing via an intermediate amount, not all things can be commensurable, “Now in truth it is impossible that things differing so much should become commensurate, but with reference to demand they may become so sufficiently” (*NE*, 1133b). Sometimes things cannot be rectified, such as in this case, so the act of reciprocity is employed as compensation. Though it can never be enough to effectively replace what was unjustly done, it is a just act that may help or benefit whomever was unjustly treated. In this case, Chelsea was dishonored in a way that does not appear to be redeemable. However, Aristotle suggests that perhaps “with reference to demand” (*NE*, 1133b) such as with necessity or perhaps with agreed virtuous purpose, the situation may be able to become commensurate. Mr. Spiner may show evidence of this when he indicates realization of how he might be a better father because of what happened. In this way, he is able to learn from what happened, and rather than be stuck in resentment or revenge, he is able to transcend the situation and commence with being Gavin’s father, potentially for the better. Hopefully he might offer a similar realization for Chelsea, if he were able to be aware of her circumstance. Similarly, Chelsea would hopefully find the means to gain from the situation rather than lose from it.

The sort of flexibility Aristotle affords justice may not be shared in Christianity's absolute terms of God's law and righteousness. However, Christian righteousness is fundamentally supported by God's grace which grants forgiveness for shortcomings of righteousness. <sup>8</sup>“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not the result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life” (Ephesians 2:8-10, NRSV). In this way, having identity with Christ is fulfilling of becoming what one is supposed to be. Christians believe people are created in Christ Jesus for good works and therefore demonstrate good living when being true to those aspects. It is important to recognize the grace aspect of this verse. Everything that is good in us is by God's grace. God's grace is something that happens in redemption as well, such as when Christians confess their sins, “If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, NRSV). God's grace includes sending Jesus to save people from sin. That is, to save them from being separated from God. God desires reconciliation with everyone, even those who have sinned against him.

<sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. <sup>21</sup>And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup>he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him... (Colossians 1:19-22, NRSV)

In this way God makes it possible for Christians to become righteous despite having been unrighteous. This may be applicable to Chelsea's situation in that she was treated unjustly and it would be good for her to find redemption from that unjustness. Again, though the unjust action cannot be erased or effectively rectified, there may be opportunity for something good to take the place of that which is unjust. God's grace in this case, if she might be able to accept it, could take

the place of the unjustness. What the grace might look like I do not know. It may be an opportunity for Mr. Spiner to apologize and begin a more enriching friendship between them. It may compel Chelsea to think deeper about her pain which would help her to empathize and understand others who also experience pain. There are many potential good things that could arise from this if she were to believe in their possibility and pursue them. For example, if she were to forgive Mr. Spiner and Gavin for their unjust actions, she may be able to move on from it by not holding resentment about it. That way she would be able to pursue having a good relationship with Mr. Spiner and Gavin. This does not mean she would forget about the incident and its pain, but if she were to forgive them, then her desire to have a better relationship with them would not be occluded by her resentment and pain, but rather, her wisdom and love--her pursuit of righteousness, would prevail.

The central focus of Buddhism extols selflessness and encourages helping others, “The mind of enlightenment is a cherishing of others more than oneself” (Tsongkhapa, 1977, p.86). This directly relates to justice in that for justice to be realized, for oneself and for others, acting selflessly is necessary. This may seem to do little to assuage the pain for those afflicted by unjust actions, such as the way in which Chelsea was unjustly treated by Mr. Spiner and Gavin. However, for her, and others who experience unjustness, it may be part of the process for learning to find refuge in Buddhism. Hopkins (1977) describes cyclic existence as a burdensome existence of affliction that many experience:

Our mental and physical aggregates are impelled by former contaminated actions and afflictions and serve as a basis for present suffering as well as inducing future suffering. While such cyclic existence lasts, we have various thoughts of pleasure and displeasure: ‘If I do this, what will people think? If I do not do this, I will be too late; I won’t make any profit.’ When we see something pleasant we think, ‘Oh, if I could only have that!’ We see that others are prosperous, and we generate jealousy, unable to bear their prosperity. We see an attractive man or woman, and we want a relationship. We are not satisfied with a



passing relationship but want it to last forever. And then, once staying together with that person, we desire someone else. When we see someone we do not like, we become angry and quarrel after a single word; we feel we cannot remain even for an hour near this hated person but must leave immediately. Day and night, night and day we spend our lives in the company of the afflictions, generating desire for the pleasant and anger at the unpleasant, and continue thus even when dreaming, unable to remain relaxed, our minds completely and utterly mixed with thoughts of desire and hate without interruption. To what refuge should we go? A source of refuge must have completely overcome all defects forever; it must be free of all faults. It must also have all the attributes of altruism—those attainments which are necessary for achieving others' welfare. (1977, p. 29)

Chelsea appears to experience great affliction after being embarrassed in the race. From a Buddhist perspective she is in great need of refuge. The refuge she must seek can only be found in a Buddha. "Only a Buddha has extinguished all faults and gained all attainments. Therefore, one should mentally go for refuge to a Buddha" (Hopkins, 1977, p. 30). Where might she go to find a Buddha? She may find scriptures and Buddhist writings are helpful or she may need to seek out those who effectively practice Buddhism to be of aid. The goal of helping others, perhaps seeking justice, offers some potential comfort to those afflicted by unjust actions in that those who effectively practice this tenet of Buddhism will not only do what they can, but they will also seek to aid those in need. Indeed, if Mr. Spiner and Gavin were to practice this, they would undoubtedly seek to find a way to help Chelsea find refuge from the afflictions they caused her.

It seems that one act of injustice does not define character in the Aristotelian sense, as is shown in the case with Mr. Spiner. Nor is he beyond forgiveness in the Christian sense. Nor is he unable to continue a path toward enlightenment in the Tantra Buddhist sense. In the case with Mr. Spiner, his actions may speak to his character, but not absolutely. This incident does not adequately define the character of Mr. Spiner as his character is not shown completely without his backstory and his reasoning. Though he acted unjustly, his journal seems to suggest his intent was virtuous. Therefore, this one act of injustice does not define his character, but it does partly

reflect what he is--a man fearfully resistant to bullies and their ways; a man struggling to be virtuous in reaction to the pain from his childhood.

In this sense we see that pride may be present or absent irrespective of Mr. Spiner's character, and perhaps Gavin or Chelsea's as well. This may suggest pride and character are not directly correlated with respect to moral qualification. In other words, good character is not strictly bound to good acts--nor are good acts strictly bound to good character. To appropriately explore the relationship between pride and character, inquiry is necessary as is shown with the knowledge gained from analysis of Mr. Spiner's journal.

While considering the merit of inquiry, and before moving forward from the implications of the case, it may be worthwhile to consider a modern work of inquiry on pride from within a Western Societal perspective, to show the relevance of an analysis of pride from a modern perspective. In *The Oxford Series on the seven deadly sins*, Michael Eric Dyson determines that pride can be qualified as either proper or, presumably, improper; the improper being sinful and the proper as virtuous, "Pride can be a sin, especially when it's wielded by unprincipled forces and immoral people. Pride is also a vice when it traffics in accomplishments that have little to do with genuine moral achievement but instead rest on the exercise of power or wealth" (Dyson, 2006, p.26). He explains further, "Proper pride is a boon, a stroke of moral genius against those who would withhold its virtue in the false belief that they might increase their own" (Dyson, 2006, p. 26). Dyson highlights a moral emphasis with regard to pride. It also indicates the malleability of pride as a virtue or vice. He does not offer one resolute definition of pride, such as a dictionary might attempt to do, but rather interprets it by revealing its circumstantial agency. The most prevalent circumstance he refers to is racism. "If Aristotle's "proper pride" is a virtue to blacks whose self-respect has been battered, then white pride is often the vice that makes

black pride necessary” (Dyson, 2006, p.45). In this way, Dyson explains that pride is a morality driven force. The necessity for proper pride is born out of oppression and antagonism; a virtue in response to vice. Whereas improper pride is an unnecessary expression directly correlated to oppression and abuse. “White pride, which exists only to thwart nonwhites, was openly embraced in a segregated past that decried the alleged perversities of black or native identities” (Dyson, 2006, p.46).

Dyson attempts to reconcile how pride may be both vice and virtue. He shows how the virtue of pride may be subject to each situation as a necessary tool to resist oppression. This seems to suggest that the virtue of pride may not be available for those who do not need it (those who are not oppressed) This brings into question the dynamic of what makes pride a virtue – can a virtue be dependent on necessity, or must it be able to also stand on its own? Similarly, Aristotle’s apparent neglect to mention humility as a virtue may be a result of humility not being required for the proud person who sees himself in the right way. Humility may only be necessary as a means to combat hubris, similar to how Dyson shows that pride may only be necessary as a means to combat oppression.

Looking at the case study with Dyson’s perspective in mind shows how pride may be recognized in the incident between Mr. Spiner and Gavin. Where Gavin expresses confidence about winning the race, Mr. Spiner, takes exception to this statement and is concerned Gavin is speaking with excess.

*Today, when Gavin said, “I’m looking forward to winning this one.” He sounded so confident, too confident in fact. I was embarrassed for him because he needs to be careful with how his words may sound to others. (Spiner account)*

Even though this is not a case of racism between Gavin and Mr. Spiner, Dyson’s explanation of pride reminds us that vice has less to do with moral achievement and more to do with exercising

power or wealth. (Dyson, 2006, p. 26) If Mr. Spiner were to interpret Gavin's statement in this way, then whom might he view as the oppressor and oppressed?

Conversely, Gavin's reaction to Mr. Spiner would seem to suggest he is feeling oppressed by Mr. Spiner. Gavin's recounting of the event supports the idea of feeling oppressed.

*Before the race began I approached my dad and told him to get ready to celebrate when I win. I thought, "My dad will be proud of me when I win the game he's officiating. I think he will like that." However, to my surprise my father took exception to my statement and said I was cocky. I didn't know what that meant at the time and he quickly explained I was overconfident and full of pride. I immediately took exception to his statement and became offended. My father saw my reaction and said he was going to teach me some humility.* (Gavin account)

Gavin's explanation of the story gives a clear indication of the oppressor and oppressed. Gavin expressed feeling judged as *cocky* before he could even defend or explain himself. Gavin didn't seem to grasp the meaning of *cocky* so he asked for clarification which revealed him to be *overconfident* and *full of pride*. Gavin did not believe that he was overconfident about his ability so to accept such an accusation by his father would be to defy his understanding of what he believed to be true.

Dyson attempts to assuage concerns about pride being an ambiguous term. For Dyson, where there is oppression, pride is required for the oppressed. However, without oppression, pride is not required and may be foolish, or even oppressive, to have pride. Pride being a virtue only when necessary is similar to Aristotle's mean in that each situation requires an appropriate response. Aristotle makes a similar argument for courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. When bravery is required, it is courageous to be brave. However, if bravery is not required, it may be foolish to be brave. In this way, to describe someone as being 'brave' or a 'courageous person' refers to virtue and is honoring to their character. Whereas it is difficult to imagine the same kind of virtue would be implied according to the way Dyson describes, as it would also imply a notion

of pity, if the person is oppressed, or a notion of disdain, if the person is the oppressor. From a Christian perspective, support for the humble and oppressed is a righteous act, so greater awareness of oppression as a result of thinking about pride in this way might be helpful. Though traditional Christian theologians might disagree with pride, no matter how 'proper', ever being virtuous, they might agree that it is a failing in semantics more than a failing in theology. Also helping all sentient beings, whether oppressed or not, is inherently valued and would be congruent with the teachings of Tantra Buddhism.

Where Dyson's explanation about the meaning of pride might be inadequate is the understanding of the totality of pride within humanity. What I have found in my research of the three perspectives of Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism is that pride is understood to be something so deeply connected to selfhood that it may directly represent the virtue, or lack thereof, of self. It is understood as being representative of identity and perhaps the impetus for all our actions. If that is the case, then it would not appear to be something that may be turned off or on by choice when considering oppression. It may be that which provides a relational understanding to oppression. It may not be something that can be escaped or avoided; rather, it may only be encouraged or discouraged as per expression of self.

## CHAPTER 7: IMPLICATIONS

Clearly there appears to be a need for clarification about terms regarding pride and virtue. The problem may be where the concept of pride happens to be something that means different things to different people, such as is shown in the differences between the Aristotelian, Christian and Tantra Buddhist perspectives about pride. For this reason, it may benefit educators to speak in terms, as much as possible, that are not weighted with moral inference. To speak in such terms inherently attempts to impose an understanding upon others that may be misunderstood, or perhaps, may not be understood. Elisabeth Anscombe explains her reasoning about the danger of accepting moral terms where morality is not the main concern:

In this argument “wrong” of course is explained as meaning “morally wrong,” and all the atmosphere of the term is retained while its substance is guaranteed quite null. Now let us remember that “morally wrong” is the heir of the notion “illicit,” or “what there is an obligation *not* to do”; which belongs in a divine law theory or ethics. Here it really does add something to the description “unjust” to say there is an obligation not to do it; for what obliges is the divine law-as rules oblige in a game. So if the divine law obliges not to commit injustice by forbidding injustice, it really does add something to the description “unjust” to say there is an obligation not to do it. And it is because “morally wrong” is the heir of this concept, but an heir that is cut off from the family of concepts from which it sprang, that “morally wrong” *both goes* beyond the mere factual description “unjust” *and* seems to have no discernible content except a certain compelling force, which I should call purely psychological. (*Modern Moral Philosophy*, 1958, p. 15)

This psychological force Anscombe refers to deeply intrigues me. Though it presents as an almost ineffable concept, it seems to be at the very heart of that which makes culture and social dynamic palpable. Upon reading this I was reminded of the account Sam Toperoff gave about the boxing match of Roberto Duran conceding a loss to the showboating of Ray Leonard. Duran appeared to have no reason to give up except for social reasons. Practically speaking, the taunting and ridiculous antics of Leonard have no place in a boxing ring where one is expected to present only the best of efforts as understood to be boxing. Strictly

speaking in physical terms, showboating and frivolous antics are a waste of energy since the point of boxing is to land punches and tire the opponent out. Both fighters spent years studying and preparing to fight each other. However, when Leonard acted the way he did, it may have inferred, or psychologically imposed, upon Duran a sense of inadequacy since he had no prerequisite understanding of what he was experiencing. He had no reason to think the fight would be this way, with Leonard acting so ridiculously. He did not understand it. Duran may have felt bullied by Leonard and derided by the fans, which he was with their laughter, and thus was not prepared to respond, so he conceded. In this way, his response was logical, though in retrospect, and to many who were present at the fight, this may seem to be an incredible and absurd response. If Duran had known to expect the antics and taunting of Leonard, he likely would have been able to mentally prepare for it and it may not have impressed anything psychologically significant upon Duran. Leonard effectively used Duran's lack of psychological understanding about the showboating as a means to bully and ultimately defeat him.

Similarly, the case with Gavin, Mr. Spiner and Chelsea, though very different in narrative, may also have this psychological phenomenon at work. There may have been a lack of psychological understanding in a number of instances: When the whole group of people within earshot seemed to agree with Gavin's statement that he was the fastest, did Mr. Spiner experience this phenomenon for how to respond to what he perceived as Gavin's haughtiness? When Mr. Spiner refused to hear Gavin out just before the race against Chelsea, did Gavin experience this phenomenon for how to respond to what he perceived to be Mr. Spiner's tyranny? When Chelsea leapt to the floor of the gymnasium in hopes of retrieving the

pin just as Gavin pulled it out of her reach, did Chelsea experience this phenomenon for how to respond to Gavin's taunting and subsequent showboating?

Ray Leonard used antics resembling pride, albeit in ridiculous ways, cocky and obtuse haughtiness, which had an especially powerful effect on Duran. One must wonder if a similar effect could have occurred in using antics of shame and self-deprecation. Would the same psychological effect have bullied Duran into concession? Indeed more research into this psychological phenomenon is needed.

In light of this, it may be important for educators to ask themselves what kind of similar psychological impressions manifest within the classroom and curricula. Many forms of cultural bias and understandings may take on similar inconspicuous modes within all social settings, such as patriarchy, racism, bullying, sexism, just to name a few. This emphasizes the importance of critical reflection about the morality of behaviors educators may encounter, both by students and of themselves. Just because something may feel or appear to be good behavior, without the ability to justify the morality of that behavior, effective understanding of its value may be subject to ambiguity or ignorance. For the same reasons, confusion about bad behavior may also arise. Alastair MacIntyre says, "The choice between the ethical and the aesthetic is not the choice between good and evil, it is the choice whether or not to choose in terms of good and evil" (2007/1981, p. 40). This is not to say we should then attempt to remove or abstain from such phenomena, for that would be impossible as it is the basis of our understanding. However, it may be possible to enquire and become more ethically aware of behavior so that we might be able to explore new options that more appropriately fit with modern values expected within the classroom.



I expect that, for many education settings, even attempting to clarify what constitutes respective modern values may be a difficult task. However, exploring pride may inherently compel engagement with the kinds of necessary questions to answer about values, and subsequently inconspicuous psychological modes such as patriarchy, racism, bullying, sexism, etc. Inquiry about pride in light of virtue as I have shown may provide the means for necessary dialog and critical reflection about ethical issues. Effective inquiry about pride must consider values, morals and an expression of tradition and culture. This kind of inquiry may help to provide a familiar basis of understanding from which effective dialog can be achieved.

It may be difficult for educators and students to recognize that which may be inherently understood by one another. Again, looking to Anscombe's example of the limitations we may put on our language:

In consequence of the dominance of Christianity for many centuries, the concepts of being bound, permitted, or excused became deeply embedded in our language and thought. The Greek word "αμαρτία," the aptest to be turned to that use, acquired the sense "sin," from having meant "mistake," "missing the mark," "going wrong." (MMP, 1958, p. 5)

Aristotle did not know what "sin" is because he did not have a Christian understanding of God. In some circumstances, sin and Aristotle's understanding of "αμαρτία" may find similar meaning, depending on the context of their potential usage. However, as is shown by Anscombe, to assume direct translation would be a fallacy. Given this understanding it may be logical to re-consider Aristotle's understanding of pride; or rather, our interpretation of his understanding of pride. The way in which Aristotle might translate *megalopsychia* in modern terms is not possible. We cannot say for certain what he might interpret for us about it as his unique perspective and the culture he lived in is held in the past. We only have echoes of him and his culture today through writings and tradition. Aristotle did not know Christianity, let

alone its influence on modern perspectives. He did not have the word “sin” in his vocabulary because he was unaware of its Christian concept. For this reason, we might also presume his understanding of *megalopsychia* may not be congruent with any literal one word translation we can come up with using our modern vocabulary. This limitation of semantics may be at the center of the issue with pride. It certainly seems to fit as a logical reason for the discrepancy of the meaning of pride across traditions, such as I have shown with Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism. However, my concern has less to do with this limitation as it does with the fact that this problem remains so blatantly obvious seemingly without any concern by educators and scholars.

Perhaps it is so complex an issue that we cannot properly understand it? I recognize that I have at times felt a lack of efficacy for understanding that which I have researched here, but I do not believe it is beyond any sentient being to at least grasp the concept of inquiry. If something is out of place, it is logical to feel inclined to fix it. Pride having contradicting meanings seems to be an obvious invitation for clarification. There are three reasons I can think of that may be why we generally do not: 1) People may be unable to properly understand what pride is. This is akin to this concept being too difficult to understand. My own personal experience with researching pride suggests it is not too difficult, but I cannot speak for everyone. 2) People do not prioritize it within their lives. Indeed we live in a very busy society filled with action and distraction. There are many things to become preoccupied with and understanding what pride is may not be a high priority. This low priority could also be a result of an apprehension stemming from fear or apathy. 3) People do not recognize there is an issue with the word pride or they do not have the prerequisite knowledge to effectively discuss it. This would imply that people, like what MacIntyre suggests in *After*

*Virtue* (2007/1981), lack the prescribed familiarity about the traditions surrounding the question to be able to even recognize the caveat of inconsistencies. It would be difficult to talk in terms of pride when there are no appropriately known terms for pride to be described.

For educators, this may lead back to the importance of virtue. A great deal of education involves learning how to make choices. Aristotle's description of virtue speaks directly to the matter of making good choices:

Virtue, then, is a state involving rational choice, consisting in a mean relative to us and determined by reason - the reason, that is, by reference to which the practically wise person would determine it. It is a mean between two vices, one of excess, the other of deficiency. It is a mean also in that some vices fall short of what is right in feelings and actions, and others exceed it, while virtue both attains and chooses the mean. So, in respect of its essence and the definition of its substance, virtue is a mean, while with regard to what is best and good it is an extreme. (*NE*, 1107a)

If virtue is a balanced pursuit of good and what is best in the extreme, then a perspective based on virtue may be beneficial. Curricula and even educational language might be strengthened with a foundation in virtue. Anscombe talks about the benefit of speaking in terms of virtue, even when referring to that which is not virtuous. An example might be being unjust or uncourageous, rather than evil or cowardly (1958, p. 8, 9). These terms are damning of character and do not emphasize the virtue which may be lacking. In this way, to call the action of a student wrong only highlights the inadequacy of the student. However, to call the action of a student as being unjust or unfriendly, may be better as it highlights the appropriate action that is absent.

Anscombe's contention for speaking in terms of virtue finds validity in the case for my analysis as well. In consideration of the character of Mr. Spiner it was difficult to attempt to speak in moral terms without suggesting or passing judgment based on assumptions. Mr. Spiner was not 'moral' in his actions as I showed with analysis from Aristotelian, Christian

and Buddhist perspectives. With only these actions to provide narrative for Mr. Spiner, we are compelled by the story to try to understand him, yet, we can only attempt to do so by making assumptions that may or may not be true. We might be inclined to think of his behavior as being an example of bad parenting, or bad leadership, which it was. However, without supporting narrative about him we might assume this example of bad parenting to be representative of his character, which I would argue is not as was shown with the introduction of his own account for what happened. This is not to excuse his behavior but rather, to provide a more clear understanding about it with which we might be able to effectively proceed.

Hypothetically, if I were an administrator and a teacher behaved in the same way that Mr. Spiner had with Gavin and Chelsea, on that information alone I may feel inclined to react as severely toward him as he did toward Gavin. However, if I were to learn about why he behaved unjustly, that being what he did, his regret, and that he wishes he had acted differently, I may then recognize the specific areas in which he needs advice and guidance to behave justly. I would not need to stop him in his tracks for fear of him being a ‘bad teacher’, but rather, I would understand more about how this unjust behavior came to happen and with the help of his virtuous desire to be better, I would be able to guide and encourage him how to make appropriate changes. If I were to simply react toward him in terms of being a ‘bad teacher’, then I would not have good reason to be confident he would benefit from any suggestion I may offer since a bad teacher is going to be bad regardless of what I tell him. Even if I do not fully ascribe to the idea of him being a ‘bad teacher’, if someone were to hear me talk in those terms about Mr. Spiner, without knowing the full narrative, they may have little reason to think I meant otherwise.

Granted it does not appear to be possible to have perfect dialog and understanding within any social setting. However, Anscombe's (1958) concern for the limitations that deontological terms of morality have on our literacy appears to be valid. Therefore to incorporate terms of virtue ethics as a means of speaking may serve to remove, or at least extend, those limitations of moral literacy.

With Anscombe's concern for limitations of language and understanding, it may be logical to consider how defining pride in a modern context may also be limited. Indeed, before I began my research I was in search of clarity for how to reconcile the morally disparate definitions of pride. MacIntyre notes the problem of attempting to conclude contemporary moral argument:

Contemporary moral argument is rationally interminable because all moral, indeed all evaluative, argument is and always must be rationally interminable. Contemporary moral disagreements of a certain kind cannot be resolved, because no moral disagreements of that kind in any age, past, present or future, can be resolved. What you present as a contingent feature of our culture, standing in need of some special, perhaps historical explanation, is a necessary feature of all cultures which possess evaluative discourse. This is a challenge which cannot be avoided at an early stage in this argument. Can it be defeated? (2007/1981, p. 29)

If MacIntyre is correct, I may have been trying to understand pride in terms that are irreconcilable. What appears to be needed in light of this a comprehensive understanding of relevant perspectives per situation. This may not be possible as cultural understanding pertain directly to knowledge gained as a result of specific cultural experiences. However, it may be possible, through rigorous discourse involving effective dialog and critical reflection, to gain an understanding of what constitutes the foundation of a perspective, such as the philosophical principles a perspective necessarily depends upon in order to be distinct.

If this is the case then my efforts to define pride in terms of virtue rather than in terms of good or bad, right or wrong, have shown to be worthwhile. Though I may not be able to define pride in the way I originally sought to, I now may have the ability to at least find reconciliation with the incommensurable issue of pride's disparate definitions. This has been a result of gaining greater prerequisite knowledge about pride from my research and the augmentation of that knowledge to my perspective. It has become a point of reference from which my perspective may navigate experiences. Ultimately it has changed me and I continue to be changed as I volitionally and passively revisit that which I have learned.

The praxis of this kind of perspective, framing understanding with reference to virtue through language and actions, is what may clarify the virtuous expectations of the classroom and allow for students with differing values to have a more accessible understanding for how to apply their values to fit within expectations. If students and educators have shared understanding of virtue, they can both continually be reminded of what is expected to be pursued through their language and actions. Without common ground on virtue, rules may seem arbitrary as they lack moral or ethical coherence. With enough effort by students and teachers, a shared understanding of virtue may be achievable. This is not an advocacy for assimilation. Rather, it is a hope for transcendence from a limited deontological perspective to a greater shared virtue based perspective within education settings.

Pride may be a praxis for virtue in that it both pursues and is appropriated by virtue. One consistency that is apparent from my analysis about pride across Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism is that it is shown to be the agency of self-values. Whether those self-values are based in honor and merit, as with Aristotle, or in sin, as with Christianity, or in knowing oneself, as with Tantra Buddhism, self-values appear to be a vital

aspect of understanding pride. With respect to this, if virtue might be that which is understood to be the pursuit of goodness, then it may be virtuous to appropriate self-values according to the good ways in which learning and experiencing life is virtuous. 'Virtue' may have different meaning depending on one's values as I have also shown with Christian 'righteousness' and Tantra Buddhist 'authenticity' which may best be fulfilled in terms of Vajra. Christianity looks to Christ and defines goodness according to the truth of Christ. Buddhism looks to oneself and defines goodness according to the truth of oneself. Aristotelianism is not a religion, but it does speak to a recognizable truth as per Aristotle's writings. Truth may not be relatable in the same way for each of the perspectives, but the intent of virtue is the same in that it is a pursuit of what is understood to be good and true. If virtue, consisting of self-values can be augmented by pride, which is also consisting of self-values, then this praxis may be an obvious means by which to understand self-values. If this notion might be extractable to other perspectives, such as within a pluralistic society or an education setting, then dialog and critical reflection about self-values in perspectives may benefit all who participate.

Within a diverse collection of perspectives involving discussion about said perspectives, there may be barriers to the commensurability of dialog about virtue in the form of conflicting interest. If there is a conflict of interest about what is virtuous, a discussion may commence in search of finding common ground about virtue. I do not intend to get into the delicate intricacies of effective conflict resolution here, but I want to emphasize that for people to be in agreement, they must have shared values. Even between enemies, the shared value of withholding attack can be beneficial to both. The more shared value between two parties, the more respect and cooperation might be achieved. With virtue in mind it is important to see conflict about virtue as an opportunity to find common ground. For

educators, it might be defined as a learning opportunity. The greatest challenge here may be to have character virtuous enough to courageously persevere in pursuit of common ground until it is achieved. It is potentially our greatest challenge as educators, to be proud in a way that motivates us to care for students even when they do not care to learn or, perhaps, when they might disrespect us. For educators, one's pride may be necessary to maintain the value of knowing one's place as a teacher, despite what might distract from it. Understandably in some cases this may not be possible to achieve even within a person's lifetime. However, I believe it to be a worthy cause nevertheless. To attempt to practice pride in a way that neglects virtue, such as not doing the best we can do at education, may be an injustice to pride as it may be detrimental to ourselves. This would indicate pride as being not good for oneself and therefore, since it has been suggested pride may hold self-values, is not good to practice.

Another barrier to commensurability about virtue within a pluralistic setting might be ignorance. Ignorance about virtue is something I began with before I began my research, and it most certainly continues as part of who I am in ways I do not recognize. Indeed everyone brings varying measures of ignorance to all aspects of life. However, this does not mean we are not able to effectively adapt and learn in ways that are virtuous. What I have achieved within my limited means with analysis of the case study via the three perspectives, is to model the type of inquiry necessary to help cognize virtue from other perspectives. I took Aristotle's understanding of virtue and weighed it against Christianity and Tantra Buddhism to find their versions of it. What I found was, respectively, the concepts of righteousness and Vajra. With that basis of understanding I was able to analyze the case with respect to each and illuminate the various differences between each. Though this does not definitively reconcile the differences between the perspectives, it may offer a kind of shared experience via the case,



from which one can relate. I showed this through comparison and contrasting similarities with respect to virtue, righteousness and Vajra. In this way, with effective inquiry, a person may gain the prerequisite understanding of each perspective to commence forward in learning about what pride means in the context of all three perspectives. My hope is educators might be able to recognize the value of this inquiry of pride and perhaps replicate it in some degree within their own classrooms and curricula to combat ignorance with regard to perspectives, diversity and virtue. Whether or not it may be effective has yet to be seen.

Anscombe's argument that deontological ethics may be inadequate (*Modern Moral Philosophy*, 1958) may have merit. She emphasizes the necessity for virtue being at the center of ethical discussion. "It would be most reasonable to drop it. It has no reasonable sense outside a law conception of ethics; they are not going to maintain such a conception; and you can do ethics without it, as is shown by the example of Aristotle. It would be great improvement if, instead of 'morally wrong,' one always named a genus such as 'untruthful', 'unchaste', 'unjust' " (p. 8–9). Each of the perspectives I have analyzed, Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism, have cultured an ethical language that ultimately speaks to a center of Truth from which all its related moral language stems from. For Aristotle it may be *eudaimonia*, the good life and living well which includes the merit of honor. Christians understanding of God and truth directly relates to righteousness and faithful living. Tantra Buddhists have respective understandings of truth such as is able to be manifested in oneself. Each of these understandings of truth are also the foundation of what is good according to its perspective. Therefore, since virtue is concerned with that which is best and good, understanding conversation with respect to virtue illuminates the moral perspective. In this way, appropriate language may offer support for effective dialog

and, ultimately, learning. In light of this it may be necessary for educators to value more appropriate dialog and critical reflection about perspectives, respectfully.

In the context of an education setting, if our understanding is limited by our experiences, then it may be virtuous to gain experience. This may be accomplished through acts such as dialog, critical reflection and praxis of behavior. Therefore, to speak effectively in modern terms about matters of ethics within a pluralistic context may be inadequate without a reconciling of virtue. In a pluralistic society, with many traditions, some meanings contradict or fail to find common ground by which they can commence. As we converse with those who might have different perspective and understanding than we do, we fail to effectively communicate if we do not address these terms of incommensurability. An established virtuous perspective may provide a sufficient foundation from which learning and communication may proceed. Without sharing an inherent understanding about that which is unsaid, or implied, learning and communication may not succeed. Christianity and Buddhism may attempt to establish a unified perspective through the practice of religion. It is an attempt to practice beliefs and values in the midst of learning said beliefs and values. Extrapolating the virtue of these efforts has yielded a curious question for me. Given this type of attempt, the seeking to establish a unified perspective within a collective, I wonder a potential scenario -- with enough shared values and experiences within any given collective, might reconcilable virtuous understandings emerge within said collective?

In considering the three perspectives and how they relate to each other with respect to virtue, I found it surprising how much congruency they have. Though they may not recognize virtue in exactly the same way or with the same language, (whence the distinct terms 'righteousness' and 'vajra') they do often find common ground on similar actions. For instance, while it is not agreed whether Gavin acted with pride, it is agreed he did not act well, as he did

not fulfill the requirements for Aristotelian virtue, or Christian righteousness or Mahayana Buddhist authenticity. This may speak to a common ground of moral discourse, perhaps something like what Daniel Vokey refers to in practicing the *ethics of transcendent virtue*, (2010, p. 36-38) where despite disparate views and traditions in dealing with a common problem, shared intrinsic values can be found to help inform moral decisions. In this way, inquiry about pride with respect to those shared values and traditions could act as means by which people have commensurable dialog. In the case I have just analyzed, pride is shown to be indicative of virtue -- through the revealing analysis of self-behavior and self-understandings as shared by Gavin, Mr. Spiner and Chelsea, we revealed some of their values with respect to the three traditions. In this way, Aristotelianism, Christianity and Tantra Buddhism share a relational understanding, not in definitive absolute terms, but in the virtue of seeking to reconcile understandings about pride. This kind of reconciling coincides with what MacIntyre says about what it means to share an understanding, “My ability to understand what you are doing and my ability to act intelligibly [both to myself and to others] are one and the same ability” (*Epistemological Crises, Dramatic Narrative and the Philosophy of Science*, 1977, p. 453-454). If this is true, given a shared understanding about virtue, observed and performed actions may be understood intelligibly as a result of an epistemological framework shaped by virtue – the same virtue as for the purpose of inquiry about pride.

Some of the more notably important aspects that I believe are evident as a result of inquiry about pride would be dialog, critical reflection, deliberation and self-awareness. While these things are strengthened by inquiry about pride, they are also necessary components of the inquiry. This may be an apt example of how praxis may be applied to improve oneself. In order to get better at dialog, we must participate in dialog and thus, we attempt to improve upon that

which we already know. To be able to effectively carry out praxis, one must apply critical reflection upon actions, such as dialog, in order to better understand and learn. This virtuous pursuit of learning more is in the spirit of healthy deliberation. These may be concepts that permeate throughout many (perhaps all) virtuous facets of the human condition. Moreover, these may be aspects directly connected to self-hood, both affecting and being affected by it.

If pride is something that always relates to the self, as Hume says, then this concept is absolutely necessary for schools to clearly understand if they want to help students as best they can. Doug Stewart (2000) attempts to clarify understanding about what personhood in education really means:

At the core of the conception of “personhood” is mind (intellect) understood as consciousness or awareness [Peters, 1966]. The journey of humanization is [in part] necessarily mind-centered, aimed at the development of differentiated consciousness or awareness. This does not imply that the role of schools is to hone young people for a life of the mind, or that schools should be institutions of intellectual elitism [see Entwistle, 1997]. What the journey implies [rather] is the metaphysical claim that mind is basic or fundamental to personhood in all its dimensions – cognitive, emotional, social, moral and spiritual – and that if schools are to be institutions of humanization and take this role seriously, their concerted attention is earnestly required in heightening the consciousness or awareness of each individual. To empower individuals with greater meaning and sense of the world, and of who they are, a progressive initiation into the achievements of the human mind and spirit is required.” (Paideusis, p. 11)

Doug Stewart also talks about the spirit of education regarding ‘humanness’, describing the benefit of its cultivation in school curricula and the danger of its neglect:

... the capacities to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding, including self-knowledge and self-respect; the capacities to think clearly and critically, to exercise an independence or autonomy of judgment, to frame purposes, goals, and plans; the capacities to develop moral virtues [e.g., concern, compassion, self-discipline] and grow in moral awareness, conduct and feeling; the capacities to imagine and empathize; to experience and refine emotion including the feelings of “wonder” at the contingencies of the natural world and of “attachment” to nature as our dwelling place [White, 1995]; to be creative and to appreciate goodness and beauty; to form congenial attachments to social groups, to care about and participate in community, and to communicate effectively. Put simply, the more one develops these qualities and the will or resolve necessary to exercise them as well as

possible, the more fully a person one becomes, or the more fully in touch one is with one's humanness and the human condition. (p.11);

On failing at transcendence: "Another dimension to this barrier is what seems to be the official neglect by ministries of education of "understanding" [as a central objective of humanization]. "knowledge", "skills" and "attitudes" are easily the most frequently –cited objectives, while "understanding" is seldom granted the light of day. The omission is critical. It suggests to teachers and others [or at least to those who take such materials at face value] that traditions of human thought and understanding, the objectives of coming to see aspects of the world in all their relatedness, of realizing new meanings and new ways of thinking and feeling, of making relevant distinctions, and so on, can be more or less shelved in the schooling of children. And it suggests that this can be done with the tacit blessing of ministries and without concern for the loss it would mean to the individual cultivation of humanness. (p. 15)

If what Doug Stewart says is correct of spirituality, then to ask students to 'take pride' in their work, or to 'show pride for their school', is not only a request of action, it is essentially a request of spirit as the request is contracted to engage and compel their students to be motivated about that which is determined to be virtuous, in this case, their work or school. In other words, to ask students to 'take pride' in their work is to ask them to spiritually comply with what you believe to be virtuous. It is a spiritual request. Therefore, neglecting to have conversations relating to such matters would be neglectful of students and their personhood. Essentially the request must take on the form of a demand for those who do not share in the virtue or pride of their work and school. I recognize this may be an especially difficult area to wade into for teachers and administrators, especially with politics in mind. With the pluralistic society we live in, various moral perspectives and lack of awareness for how to commence through conversations about such things, to invite such a kind of inquiry about personhood might seem (and perhaps may in fact be) dangerous. However, in light of ever increasing cultural angst and division, such risks may be worth taking if it means the issues and resentments that divide a community, can be assuaged. This is obviously not a pleasant or easy task, and no doubt would require people to examine their pride, asking who they really are and who their neighbor really

is. This sort of inquiry can be unsettling and even controversial. Nevertheless, I firmly believe this kind of deliberation is a worthy task as it may compel us to learn about each other and support progress in the form of empathy and mindfulness.

As was seen in the case, some dialog and critical reflection between Gavin and Mr. Spiner was warranted. This conflict may have easily been avoided had Mr. Spiner been mindful enough to ask, “What do you mean by that? That sounds to me like you are boasting.” Or if Gavin had addressed how his words might have been misinterpreted. Mr. Spiner appeared to assume Gavin was boasting, while Gavin appeared to assume there was nothing wrong with the statement. Instead Mr. Spiner sets a stage for them in front of the whole gymnasium, apparently in an effort to make an example of Gavin and try to force some humility, or perhaps shame, upon him, which backfired and potentially made Chelsea collateral damage. These kinds of issues seem to highlight an obvious need for spiritual education.

If pride is a part of being human, then it must also be considered in the spirit of education. If the spirit of education is necessary for a holistic education, then pride must also be a part of education as well. As I mentioned before, David Hume describes how pride and self may be correlated by means of values and self-identity, “The object of pride is the self. Any other considerations are always in relation to the self. And when the self does not enter into consideration, there can be no pride” (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739-40, 2.1.3.2). To neglect the understanding of pride may also fail to respect the humanness of persons. If what Stewart is saying is true of the apparent neglectful practices in schools, this would indeed fail students. To be fair many of these failings are apparently the result of traditional practice which is very difficult to break as it can be inherent within our understanding of what education is supposed to be. To break free of this limiting practice of education, regular dialog about pride may be the

answer. It is correlated with self, it speaks to values and virtue, it may, as I have shown, be potentially useful for inquiry as a means to reach common ground where incommensurable issues are concerned. More research about the potentiality of pride as a means for benefiting holistic education and its pedagogical practice is needed.

As I mentioned before, Freire says, “One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people” (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, p. 95). This is relevant to the case given that both Mr. Spiner and Gavin needed to share a mutual understanding in order to communicate effectively. Rather than acting on assumptions they have about one another, both would have been served well to conduct some philosophical inquiry about the matter, involving probing questions and critical analysis. In this way they may share a more positive experience. I found a poignant quote by Freire that both mentions pride and speaks to this point:

Pride and self-sufficiency make us old; only in humility can I be open to the life experience where I both help and am helped. I cannot make myself alone, nor can I do things alone. I make myself with others, and with others, I can do things. The more youth educators possess, the more possible it will be for them to communicate with youth. The young can help educators maintain their youth while educators can help the young not lose theirs. (*Pedagogy of the Heart*, 1997, p. 73)

Though it may be debatable about Freire’s translation to English regarding pride here is appropriate, it is an example of how important inquiry into context is. He does not appear to be speaking about pride in the virtuous sense as he directly relates it with self-sufficiency while extolling the benefit of being with others, “... I cannot make myself alone, nor can I do things alone. I make myself with others, and with others, I can do things...” (1997, p. 73) However, his main point implies a concern for the welfare of others, “...only in humility can I be open to the life experience where I both help and am helped...” (1997, p. 73) which is a virtue both Aristotle

and Buddhism agree with. As I mentioned before, Aristotle calls virtue of justice, denoting concern for others, the greatest virtue, and Buddhism's central tenet states the need to care for all sentient beings. This is not to suggest Aristotelian and Buddhist extolling of pride to be suggesting an ethical fallacy. Nor do Aristotelian or Buddhist ethics support the meaning of pride Freire uses here, "...Pride and self-sufficiency make us old; only in humility can I be open to the life experience where I both help and am helped..." (1997, p. 73). What is most evident here is that Freire, Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy are not speaking in the same terms about pride even though they may use the same English word referring to it. Yet the confusion is understandable as is also shown in this quote where Freire refers to values that Aristotle and Buddhism each share and agree with regarding pride, such as with being concerned for the welfare of others and gaining more understanding of others. This shows that to achieve more reliable dialog, it is crucially important to know the perspective of the person as well as your own.

Freire (1970) also notes that "People will be truly critical if they live in the plentitude of the praxis. That is, if their action encompasses a critical reflection which increasingly organizes their thinking and thus leads them to move from a purely naive knowledge of reality to a higher level, one which enables them to perceive the causes of reality" (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 131). Critical reflection is an important part of the aims of education and, as reasoned here, a necessary tool in order to properly perceive the subjective nature of the material being taught. Now, because of the misunderstanding, between Mr. Spiner and Gavin, they have a meaningful topic to explore and questions to resolve. Though it may be uncomfortable or difficult, they now have an opportunity and reason to learn from each other, so long as they are willing to embrace the necessity and challenge of learning each other's values.



Amy Gutman (1987) speaks to the importance of ‘deliberation’, “Deliberative citizens are committed, at least partly through the inculcation of habit, to living up to the routine demands of democratic life, at the same time as they are committed to questioning those demands whenever they appear to threaten the foundational ideals” (*Aims of Education*, p. 52). Actively looking to understand others, empathize and question problems or issues is essential to learning and understanding. To do the opposite and remain complacent in ignorance would be foolish -- foolish because of a missed opportunity to learn and understand, essentially failing to deliberate. How might Gavin or Mr. Spiner’s reactions been different had they more effectively deliberated about their misunderstandings?

While Gavin’s situation is a specific case, there are essential elements to it that are transferable to many other situations that take place in education settings for teachers with their students. It can be difficult for teachers to relate to students, which is understandable because each person has distinct perspectives on life and teachers are no exception. They may not share the same values, vocabulary, or humor, among other things. So it is acceptable that communication can at times be a barrier to overcome when teachers try to teach, and conversely, when students try to learn. Paulo Friere stresses the importance of sharing a common understanding in order to effectively communicate. This comes from shared experiences. He suggests looking at pictures and discussing what they mean. However, this discussion can also occur with any kind of shared experience. If the student and teacher both explore and learn something together, they ultimately share an experience together as well. Similar to discussing pictures, something like discussing and sharing views about a story or a case study would be a good avenue to do this. This may be especially helpful when inquiring about what is important to

the other person and why. In this way, like Freire says, both learn to understand each other's values and from there, can begin to understand how to relate and communicate effectively.

Within social settings there are hurdles to overcome in order to achieve any kind of progress. Those hurdles may be moral, or educational, or physical, etc. And with those hurdles there may be pain and difficulties as a result of attempting to clear those hurdles. But if all were to find reconciliation by helping each other and healing, a new perspective may emerge. When all the difficulty that has been brought together and deliberated, a kind of collective reconciliation may take place, where all now share in a new experiential understanding that brings them together and allows them to commence, rather than remain as a divisive group of factions. Similarly, the same may be true of a person who has been exposed to a plural society of cultures and values. Such a person may have within oneself many voices of culture and values that may be difficult to have a clear understanding of one's personhood. However, if those voices might be reconciled through inquiry involving dialog, critical reflection and deliberation, a collective reconciliation may allow for commencement of personhood to occur. Again, this is not an easy or simple task, and may take a lifetime to achieve, but I believe the potential for overcoming incommensurable issues with learning and, or, reconciliation makes it a worthwhile pursuit for everyone.

The act of overcoming incommensurable issues must involve some kind of exchange or interaction, such as with dialog. Engaging in dialog is a critical part of being able to define pride. Discussing what pride means forces one to critically reflect and formulate meaningful ways to describe and express its meaning. According to Topping and Trickey (2007), one expands his or her meaning from critically reflecting on what others express about pride and what it means to them (*Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry for Schoolchildren*, p. 794). This is part of the process

of philosophical inquiry; though the ambiguity of pride may be problematic in language, attempting to discuss or define it is an excellent point to begin with for philosophical inquiry as it creates a challenge and need for critical, well-formed thoughts.

Topping and Trickey show in their research the more that dialog about these topics is neglected, the less we critically reflect (2007, p. 790), which ultimately causes us to have less opportunity to form our own thoughts and perspectives about the world we experience. The values we hold that give pride meaning are essential aspects of what helps us recognize the difference between right and wrong, good and bad, true and false. This may indicate the importance of defining and discussing pride as a necessary part of exploring and discovering the thoughts, perspectives and world experience that are the makeup of who a person is.

Ultimately, ambiguity may offer a great opportunity for teachers and students to make important connections to find common ground and begin to understand one another better. This may greatly help in communication. For that purpose, pride may be an especially good topic to explore because of its direct link to values, virtue and identity. In exploring pride one must consider themselves, who they are, in that exploration. Unfortunately, for many teachers and students this opportunity is not necessarily a natural thing to recognize in the middle of teaching a lesson. For many the classroom dynamic may be a didactic one, where the teacher is expected to impart instruction while and students are expected to obediently comply accordingly. To engage in a discussion about the ambiguity of pride does not fit this kind of didactic environment. In this kind of classroom environment, ambiguity may not be seen as an opportunity to learn and understand, but rather, it may be understood as being a hiccup or speed bump to get over so that the class can quickly get back to the intended flow of teacher instructed classroom as determined by the teacher. Therefore, the environment must be changed to provide

opportunity to explore what pride is. Pride is specific to each person and their values. Therefore, for all classroom participants to effectively learn about pride, equally valued voices must be respectfully heard from concerning all participants in the classroom.

Engaging in dialog is a critical part of being able to define pride. Discussing what pride means forces one to critically reflect and formulate meaningful ways to describe and express its meaning. According to Topping and Trickey (2007), one expands his or her meaning from critically reflecting on what others express about pride and what it means to them (Topping, Trickey, p. 794). This is part of the process of philosophical inquiry; though the ambiguity of pride may be problematic in language, attempting to discuss or define it is an excellent point to begin with for philosophical inquiry as it creates a challenge and need for critical, well-formed thoughts. Praxis is helpful to keep in mind as the more this is practiced the more comfortable and effective it may become as part of the natural flow of the classroom dynamic. And it is invaluable to do so in order to learn how to effectively teach students better, and conversely, for the students to effectively learn better from the teacher.

That being said, it is important to remember this is only a very short and small study from which ideas may be extracted from. There are many more traditions yet to consider beyond what I have analyzed, and potentially an infinite number of perspectives to consider in light of this. An example may be in what I showed about the Christian perspective regarding the story of Nebuchadnezzar. This story is part of the Christian Bible but it is originally a Hebrew scripture and is still considered to be an integral part of Jewish tradition today. Therefore the same story about pride is part of the scriptural canon for two different religions, Christianity and Judaism. It may be worthwhile to consider how these two perspectives may each distinctly influence the meaning of the concept of pride despite the story presenting it in the same way, such as is

consistent with the story of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4. How might Judaism provide a different perspective on the pride of Nebuchadnezzar than Christianity does? Or how might it be the same? Religious traditions are important to consider as they provide value systems through which perspectives might be shaped. It would also be interesting to consider Aristotle's perspective about Nebuchadnezzar and his pride. Aristotelianism is not a religion but it is a perspective in its own right with an established value system and philosophy. Or perhaps consideration of what understanding an Islamic, or Aboriginal, or many other kinds of perspectives would render about pride and virtue would be helpful. Until such inquiry is done, further understanding about the concept of pride and virtue may remain inconspicuous, subject to conjecture and vulnerable to the imposition of ignorant interpretation.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Before I knew about Aristotelianism and Tantra Buddhism, (and before my knowledge of Christian perspective was expanded as a result of my research) I was limited in my ability to understand what pride is. I was stuck in an incommensurable state about understanding what pride actually is. I believed it was wrong because I was told it was wrong. I had no other reason to think about it differently except that, perhaps, it ultimately felt inadequate, which inspired me to write this. I recognized the meaning of pride in society seemed to have an inconsistency with Christian righteousness. From there I found Aristotelianism and Tantra Buddhism had inconsistent understandings about pride with respect to its general use in the modern context. Inquiry about these inconsistencies is what ultimately led me here. Now I have learned to inquire about what it truly is, for me, and also for others. Currently I am still limited, and I expect to always be so in some respect, but I have gained so much more than I had before regarding understanding pride.

When I set out on this inquiry I was not sure that I would come to a conclusive and definitive explanation in the end. I sincerely hoped I might somehow find one to satisfy my inquiry and questions, but instead I seem to have found something greater. Through my inquiry and analysis my understanding has expanded, or perhaps transcended, so that I am no longer asking the same questions as I was before. I still do not have any universally absolute answers to the questions I had before, such as, “What exactly is pride?”, or, “Is pride good or bad?” and so on. However, everything I have learned seems to have advanced my perspective so that I do not feel that absolute answers to those questions are necessary, nor could they even be satisfactory now given what I have learned regarding what pride may mean to Aristotelians, Christians and Tantra Buddhists.

I am now more convinced than ever before about the necessity for inquiry and dialog about issues that directly relate to the self, such as this one. This may be where the effective practice of virtue, righteousness and authenticity may speak to the need for more inquiry and dialog in our world, especially within our education systems where people learn how to think as well as how to socialize and learn from one another. It would be a detriment to our virtuous pursuits if we neglect education about effective means to engage in dialog and inquiry. The general idea of virtue and its pursuit seems to be a value that all three traditions may hold in common. Another thing that may also be shared relates to what David Hume said of pride being directly correlated to the self, “The object of pride is the self. Any other considerations are always in relation to the self. And when the self does not enter into consideration, there can be no pride” (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739-40, 2.1.3.2) I thoroughly enjoyed exploring how this may be true with respect to Gavin, Mr. Spiner and Chelsea and their accounts for what happened in the case.

What I have learned is that pride appears to be something that is vital to personhood, even if personhood involves holding disparate values garnered from a pluralistic society. Those values may be in conflict and cause incommensurable conditions to arise, as well as perhaps confusion or indecisiveness. Yet this is still a condition of being human and I believe we are capable of rising to the task of finding reconciliation for that which is challenging. This may be the situation for a classroom where a teacher may not know how to appropriately teach content or use a method that pertains to incommensurable issues within the classroom. That classroom may find it difficult to be united and commence with learning in a way that is positive for everyone. The answer to this may be with regard to efforts for reconciling virtue and the continuance of this discourse about pride. Just as a person has a collection of experiences from

which one finds identity, so may a group, or a class. In this way a classroom has the opportunity to gain from their diverse perspectives and share in the new understandings that may emerge from commencement about those perspectives. Again, with respect to Aristotle, given enough demand for reconciling incommensurable issues, a way to find reconciliation may be sufficiently achieved (*NE*, 1133b). It may be found through the appropriate means of reciprocation, grace and forgiveness, or refuge such as may be described in Aristotelianism, Christianity or Tantra Buddhism respectively, or perhaps another perspective I did not analyze, or an original way that may be realized by the whole classroom in their own right, but ultimately a way may be possible and the opportunity it affords must not be neglected.

Is pride as ambiguous to me now? Do the various definitions and examples of it in my life still pose contradiction as it did before? I do not believe so. Though pride would seem to have usage within contradicting values, good and bad pride, I feel more secure in the ambiguity now than I did before. Largely I owe this confidence to what I have learned through the three perspectives of Aristotelian, Christian and Tantra Buddhist pride. One point I take refuge in that seems to link all three perspectives is their similar core value of valuing others. It is philosophically central and crucial to all three perspectives.

The comparison of the three perspectives was fruitful to demonstrate the nuance of each perspective about pride and their foundation of what each perspective is about. My analysis may also show how our modern understanding of each perspective may be incomplete or limited to inadequate translation. My understanding of Christianity's perspective about pride is one of being condemned as a selfish attitude unworthy of righteousness. It does not put God before the self and therefore it cannot be worthy of God. However, this does not appear to be the same attitude that Aristotle and Mahayana Buddhists ascribe to as being so wonderful. If it were, their



valuing of putting others first, such as Aristotle describes about his most championed virtue, justice, or the central tenet of Buddhism, would be contrary to what they claim to value. I suppose it is possible for such an obvious contradiction to exist and perhaps I do not fully understand the nuance of such a contradiction. However, my analysis appears to indicate this to more likely be a case of inadequate translation and, or, a lack of prerequisite understanding of perspectives. For it seems that pride, as Christianity sees it, fails to be virtuous in the Aristotelian sense as well as failing to be Vajra in the Mahayana Buddhist sense. This suggests Aristotelian and Buddhist pride to be something beyond the scope of what I have previously learned pride to be. For Aristotle to see pride as a virtue, he would also need to see it as meeting the requirements of justice, since pride is the crown of the virtues for him, and justice is the greatest virtue. For pride to meet the requirements of justice, it would also need to be highly concerned with one's neighbor. Similarly Mahayana Buddhists must care for all sentient beings and this is very similar to what Jesus said about the greatest commandment. For this to be true, pride must be so much more than what traditionally Christian understandings might think it to be. That or perhaps the term "pride" is insufficient for what Aristotle and Buddhism know it to be.

That being said I am thankful for this discrepancy as it has inspired me to research and understand the topic. If my modern western understanding were sufficient to define the term and its nuances, I may not have felt any reason to learn more than what I already knew. This act of research is an act of virtue and I am proud to have done it. I hope others will see this as a virtuous thing worthy of their time to read and hopefully inspire them to continue on with inquiry about pride and how it commands a veritable presence in every part of our lives. It is interesting to consider the potential reasons for which the word pride has evolved throughout history and why many scholars have chosen it to represent what Aristotle and Buddhists mean despite the

lack of virtue in its connotation. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of my analysis here but I hope it is a worthy project for future consideration.

Ultimately, what does pride mean to me now? To that question I would say, “It means a lot.” I do not intend to be dismissive with that answer, but rather, inviting toward a larger discussion about how my values, and who I am, directly relates to the concept of pride. At times throughout the course of my thesis, Dr. Forrest would ask me how I might define pride, and it is interesting to see how it has evolved. Some examples are: Pride is a belief in oneself; Pride is the affirmation of the self; Pride is the valuing of oneself; Pride is an appropriated understanding of oneself according to one’s values and beliefs; Pride is honoring a belief in the virtue of identity, Pride is the virtue of harboring identity. Originally I had hoped to find a universal definition for pride that could reconcile all my questions and concerns about it. However, now after my research, seeing how pride has changed throughout history and how people’s understandings also change, I realize that to find one universal definition is likely an impossible task. Furthermore, I realize it is far more enriching and beneficial to deliberately inquire of others and their understanding of pride than to attempt to reducibly define it in universal terms for everyone to adhere to. This type of inquiry suggests an affording of intellectual virtue to the interminable process of seeking to understand rather than to the limited process of arrival at certainty. Even if people were forced to understand from one perspective and one definition, language and perspective, people’s evolution and individuality would inherently affect any future definition of pride. Therefore, I do not have any best definition for pride since the concept of pride must depend on the context of whom I am speaking with and the circumstances of who I am at the time. This is a deliberative process involving taking into account for perspectives and

understandings and values. It is a challenging and virtuous undertaking, and for effective understanding about pride, I believe it is also a necessary one.

What have I personally learned from this research? As an athlete, I must be virtuous to deliberately inquire of my coaches and teammates who speak with pride, or about pride. The more we are on the same page about pride, or the more common ground we share, the more success we may have in communicating, training and winning together. My Yugoslavian soccer coach, Jovo Radovic, (who I mentioned in the introduction) tried to get us to play better by saying in his thick Eastern European accent, “You must play hard! You must play like... this is MY Sarajevo! But for you, is Saskatoon.” was desperately trying to communicate a passion and a feeling of pride that we could share in. It was something he believed could give us reason to play hard and ultimately better. This pride was something he understood for himself and something he wanted to share with us so that we might all be stronger within it together. As a result, we took his words to heart and rallied together, shrugged off the shame of our first half performance and played a strong second half. We were not able to win that game, but Jovo was proud of our virtuous performance and so were we.

As a teacher, I have learned the more I deliberately engage in dialog with my students about pride, the more I may be able to understand their values and they in turn may be able to better understand mine. The more I am clear about what my students mean when they speak with pride, or about pride, the more I may be able to understand them. Conversely, the more I speak with pride, or about pride, the more they may be able to understand me. Sometimes it may be difficult to open up about pride. However, if I do not speak with pride, can they really get to know me? For those who may not wish to have their students know them this may be a comfort, but then it may be a huge limitation for effective teaching if students reciprocally respond. How

can teachers respectfully ask students to open up and be motivated to share who they are and take on promoted values if their teachers are not willing to do the same? To this point I have included an epilogue that may serve as my own attempt to share what pride means to me and how it personally affects who I am.

As an academic I believe my analysis has shown this challenge of virtuous inquiry about pride to be a significant topic of worth for future research considerations and discussion in education and philosophy. Throughout this process it has at times felt like I have been overwhelmed by huge waves of understanding and I felt helpless to swim amongst them. However, now it feels almost as though I have only barely dipped my toe into an ocean of inquiry. There are many perspectives and understandings of pride that I have yet to encounter and my hope is that I will continue to learn and understand more about the concept of pride for myself and others as well as the opportunity to share it. Learning about the concept pride has enriched my life and expanded who I am. Therefore, inquiring about the concept of pride may always be a virtuous and worthwhile pursuit.

## EPILOGUE

Looking again to the evolution of my selected definitions for pride I see their value and also their limitations with reference to the perspective from where I am now. In a way they are almost a gateway, or a window into what I was learning about at the time. They seem to speak more about my understanding at the time I conceived them than they do about any absolute reductionist understanding about pride. In this way I have discovered how inquiry about pride can be an exploration of perspective, character and essentially personhood as personhood may be something that is continually being shaped in response to experiences and choices.

During the course of my process with this thesis I was blessed with a son. Unfortunately he was born with life-threatening health complications so my wife and I had to spend about half a year in the hospital, as well as bring medical treatments home with us. For the first year of his life we essentially were just trying to keep him alive. I believe this was a defining experience in our lives. Some things we gained from the experience were good about it, such as a far greater sense of empathy for others who experience pain in their lives. Other things have not been good, such as greater overall anxiety about life and not feeling able to connect with friends the same way anymore. It changed us, and I also believe it changed our pride. I will share a journal entry from a time when we were in the intensive care unit at the hospital with my son:

This experience really has put my values into a new perspective. I used to live expecting I could control the direction of my life. I could make it better or worse by the choices I make. But now I know the only control I have in my life is making choices. Their result and everything else is beyond me. I don't know how he is going to turn out as he grows. Will he learn? Will he be healthy? Will he make friends? I can't control that so there is no point in worrying about him being smart enough or strong enough or good looking enough. But I can control how I choose to love him and how I choose to be an example to him in living my life. That's how I want to be moving forward.

April 1, 2016

I do not ever wish to go back to experiencing anything like that again. However, in remembering what I was like during that time, my character, being completely devoted to supporting my family and learning about myself and life, I cannot deny that I wish I were like that all the time.

I am terrified of the experience, but I miss the person I was through that experience. My values and priorities were perfectly clear. I did not worry about things I don't need to worry about. I did not care what others thought of me, if I were funny enough or even happy enough. I was not content or satisfied with how things were going, but I like the good person I was in that time. I was wholly concerned to be in the moment caring for my family.

April 11, 2016

I feel extremely proud of my son. I felt particularly proud the other day when he was able to safely breathe on his own without any oxygen supplement. It was interesting to me because if he never had any breathing issues to be concerned about I don't think I would feel the same kind of pride for him as I do now. I know that I certainly would feel some pride just because he is my son. However, he has overcome great adversity with his breathing and it is by this accomplishment that I feel great pride about how strong and well his body has become despite the adversity. Had I never appreciated the esteem of his breathing, I would not feel the same kind of pride for him as I do now.

The pride I feel is not a bloated confidence, but rather more like a resilient humble hope. I always wish the best for him. I am often fearful of challenges for him, but in seeing him improve, it allows me to respect the possibility that he could get better. He might be strong enough to overcome the adversity he faces.

One of the biggest changes in the meaning of pride for me after all this research and life experience has been about pride's relation to hope. Before I began this thesis, I do not believe I would have associated hope with pride. It would have felt like it missed the mark of what pride is as hope, to me, does not bring glory to oneself, or extol the kind of greatness I correlated with pride. I suppose it has been the change in my perspective of greatness that has brought this about. Today I understand 'greatness' in this sense as having far less to do with domination and esteem, and far more to do with virtue and character.

For me, in light of this change, pride does not imply a presumption of greatness anymore, nor does it exclude that which is not great. Rather, pride has become a term indicative of that which connects with and moves toward virtue. Despite the hardship, despite that which is benign, despite what which is glorious--regardless of circumstance, when I experience pride I experience a connection to virtue; I experience a valued relation to that which I recognize as good. Goodness for me is determined by my beliefs and understanding of the world. In this way, I expect it is distinctive to me. However, I recognize that others who share in my beliefs and experiences may, to some degree, also share in my pride. My wife, for example, has shared many definitive experiences with me, especially throughout our time in the hospital. It has allowed us to share an understanding about our son and our life that no one else can understand to the same degree. When I speak to her about being proud of our son, I feel like she understands because of the way she responds and respects what I say. Contrastingly, when I speak to others about my son, that same understanding and respect I share with my wife does not appear to be realized in them. However, in sharing my experiences, such as I am now, I offer the opportunity of creating a new experience through sharing that may be a bridge of understanding toward what I understand about pride. It may not be the same unique understanding I share with my wife about my son, nor may it necessarily be convincing, but if it is coherent enough it may be sufficient to at least convey a sense of understanding about my perspective of pride.

During my research on justice, what Aristotle says with regard to reciprocation seemed to be especially significant for me. “Now in truth it is impossible that things differing so much should become commensurate, but with reference to demand they may become so sufficiently” (*NE*, 1133b). In this quote, the ‘impossible’ Aristotle is referring to is about different understandings of justice; specifically rectification. Some things cannot be rectified, such as in

the case I described of Chelsea being dishonored, which means they cannot effectively commensurate. However, 'with reference to demand' as Aristotle says, commensuration may be realized. In other words, if enough need is present for commensuration, a way to do so may be made possible. Aristotle describes reciprocation to be a means by which commensuration may occur. Though justice cannot be served in equitable terms of things lost, it may be served in terms of reciprocity; ultimately by sharing the burden of what was lost together. In this way, loss may be sufficiently redeemed by what is gained through a new relationship via reciprocal efforts. What this might involve with regard to the case could be a process of empathetic dialog and critical reflection for Chelsea to find reciprocation with Mr. Spiner and Gavin. With enough sensitivity to the demand for commensuration, they might find justice for Chelsea.

If reciprocity is able to help overcome incommensurable issues in justice, it may also be able to aid in the reconciliation of pluralism with regard to virtue and pride. Coming to a mutual shared understanding of virtue or pride, with regard to each person's original perspective, may be similar way to the way of commensuration Aristotle suggests. I am angry and saddened by what happened to my son. I do not believe he deserved to be born with a heart defect and breathing issues. I believe he deserves much more than that. However, I also believe I am more proud of his health today because of the way he battles through the adversity. Despite the challenges he faces, his body is virtuous in pursuing to be as healthy as possible. I feel that I need to be proud of my son as he is a part of me and I see myself in him. I am proud of him in many ways but was at a loss for how to be proud of his health problems as I do not share them. It seemed to be an incommensurable issue for me to be proud of something in him that lacks virtue. There is nothing good in a heart defect. However, upon reflection I have been able to commensurate the issue by realizing his body has found a way to survive against great adversity. He is a 'survivor'.



It is an honorable and virtuous characteristic. In that way I am more proud of him than I would be without his health problems. It is a new understanding I can take refuge in. I have always known him to be beautiful, but never before have I known him so definitively as being a survivor. It is not his only virtuous characteristic and it does not completely define him, but it is one that allows me to feel commensurable peace despite the incommensurable pain I feel from concern about his health. In this way I am able to be proud of him, entirely.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Michelle Forrest made this point to me during consultation about writing my thesis.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to remember that Aristotle used patriarchal language which is why I must use it in reference to what he said. This use of language is a deviation from today's standard for gender-neutral language that may refer to gender-diverse individuals or groups. This kind of language is also shown in subsequent quotes by C.S. Lewis and Alastair MacIntyre.

<sup>3</sup> C.S. Lewis may use patriarchal language and it is important to note that his usage of terms such as "men" or "man" are intended to refer to all humanity and not exclusively to the gender of men.

<sup>4</sup> Alastair MacIntyre may use patriarchal language and it is important to note his usage of terms such as "men" or "man" is intended to refer to all humanity and not exclusively to the gender of men.

<sup>5</sup> Alastair MacIntyre may use patriarchal language and it is important to note his usage of terms such as "men" or "man" is intended to refer to all humanity and not exclusively to the gender of men.