

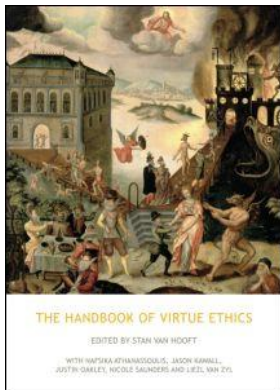
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The ends of courage

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The ends of courage

Patrick Shade

Courage enjoys seemingly unlimited relevance to diverse contexts in human life. Existence is precarious, and achieving our goals frequently requires dealing with fear to take necessary risks. Even pacifists can find something admirable in the way soldiers withstand the temptation to flee from battle, with the possible loss of life and limb, for the protection of the homeland. We regularly commend the bravery of firefighters who risk their lives to rescue civilians from burning buildings. Similarly, we acknowledge that activists pursuing civil rights must possess the mettle to stand up for a just cause in the face of bigotry that may escalate into violence. We laud the courage of those who tell the truth, as when someone comes out as gay despite the risk of ostracism or physical harm. Additional examples may include cancer patients undertaking dangerous surgery, business persons pursuing ventures to develop a fledgling business and children tackling new tasks or dealing with bullies in school.

Given this broad relevance, it is no surprise that courage is among those admired traits we identify as virtues. The ancient Greeks, as well as St Thomas Aquinas, identified it as one of the cardinal virtues. Nevertheless, celebrating courage is not without its challenges. First, Aristotle identifies bravery on the battlefield as the paradigm of courage. What, then, are we to make of apparent instances that occur neither in battle nor in the face of death? Aristotle's restriction might indicate that courage is an outdated notion suited to societies prizing force more than negotiation or cooperation in resolving conflicts. Second, while virtues typically promote well-being, courage requires confronting, and sometimes ends in, death. In what sense, then, can it be part of a life plan that aims to produce moral and physical health as well as harmony among people? Finally, courage seems to be a resource for realizing not only good but also bad ends. The courageous villain manages fear to successfully rob or murder another.¹ A contemporary variant is the possibility of employing courage for terrorist ends. While we might readily admire the bravery the passengers on United Flight 93 showed in fighting to retake their plane from al-Qaeda terrorists on 11 September 2001, what about their captors? Did they not require bravery to carry out their plan?

Because of these considerations – from the seeming plurality of its manifestations to its sometimes dubious moral status – courage continues to be a topic of considerable philosophical interest.² In the following, I explore and critique contemporary discussions of courage, particularly those that characterize it as an executive virtue, in an attempt to clarify the range and limits of courage. In particular, I articulate a position that enables us to recognize courage in contexts beyond the battlefield and yet also avoid, or at least thoughtfully deal with, the prospect that it serves bad ends.

TRADITIONAL ACCOUNTS OF COURAGE

Considering traditional views of courage enables us to appreciate what is, and what is not, distinctive in contemporary treatments of the topic. Plato demonstrates ongoing interest in courage, giving it special attention in the *Laches*, the *Protagoras* and the *Republic*. At the heart of his reflections is the concern that humans possess *thumos* (usually translated as “spirit”) which seems capable of propelling us to do good and bad things alike. Protagoras, in the dialogue of the same name, distinguishes courage from other virtues by noting that it is often accompanied by vice: “you will find many people who are extremely unjust, impious, intemperate, and ignorant, and yet exceptionally courageous” (Plato 1997: 779/349d).³ Plato does not restrict his reflections to battlefield courage; Socrates, for example, asks Laches to provide an account of courage as it is displayed not only in war, but also in perils at sea, in public affairs, and in matters of desire and pleasure (*ibid.*: 676/191d). In the *Republic*, Plato develops a response to these concerns by casting courage, when properly guided by reason, as the virtuous expression of *thumos* (*ibid.*: 1061–1062, 1073/429b–430c, 442b). On this account, courage is allied with reason, being the power to preserve – and never abandon – belief about what reason determines should be feared.

Aristotle provides a detailed analysis of the proper context and dynamics of courage that aims to show that the mean is central to the exercise or expression of the moral virtues. Courage is one of his chief examples of moral virtue; he refers to it frequently and places it first in his treatment of specific virtues. As a moral virtue, courage has a medial structure, that is, is a disposition that accords with the mean between excess and deficiency with respect to feelings and actions, in this case those concerning fear and confidence (*NE* 1115a6). Too much of the former renders one a coward; too much of the latter results in recklessness. As we shall see, attention to the mediality of acts *and* feelings enables Aristotle to distinguish a range of possible responses to fear. The most praiseworthy response requires enduring terrible things for the sake of what is noble. Death is the most terrible and frightening thing, but the death that most requires remaining steadfast is the noble death incurred on the battlefield in defence of one’s polis. Aristotle sharpens his account by considering acts that are similar to courage but lacking in some notable feature. For instance, those who stand their ground because their experience in war enables them to recognize an alarm as false are not courageous. They demonstrate not the ability to endure in the face of real harm but the capacity to distinguish false from real alarms. Should the alarm prove legitimate, they will likely flee and so not demonstrate courage. Similarly, those who respond to adversity in a spirited manner may overcome fear to perform daring acts through desire (e.g. satisfying the craving for retaliation), but the courageous will do so for the sake of the noble. Aristotle thus proves unwilling to deem

courageous those acts whose end is insufficiently worthy. Like all virtues, courage must be chosen not merely for its instrumental efficacy but also for its own sake (*NE* 1105a32).

Driven partly by his endeavour to synthesize Aristotelian philosophy with religious traditions, Aquinas revises his predecessor's account to expand the field in which courage is required and displayed. Arguing that the character of each cardinal virtue is found in every virtue, Aquinas identifies steadfastness as courage's unique contribution. He argues that courage is "a certain firmness of mind, and in this sense it is a general virtue, or rather a condition of every virtue, since ... it is requisite for every virtue to act firmly and immovably" (*Summa Theologica* II–II, Q. 123, Art. 2). By invoking the unity of the virtues, Aquinas forestalls the possibility that courage will be exercised on behalf of unjust acts that result in murder or secure more than one's fair share of the distribution of goods. Unlike Aristotle, Aquinas distinguishes the general virtue of courage from the more specific form focused on grave dangers in battle. He also moves beyond Aristotle by acknowledging that we exercise the specific form of courage in a broad range of contexts. Because Aquinas interprets the battlefield in both physical and spiritual terms, he allows that the specific virtue may be manifested outside the traditional military arena.

By the time of modernity, when traditional virtue theory is in general decline, we find thinkers like Immanuel Kant again emphasizing courage's potentially dubious aspects. In a manner reminiscent of Plato's character Protagoras, Kant argues that while "undoubtedly good and desirable for many purposes", courage can also be "extremely evil and harmful" when not accompanied by a good will (1997: 7). Demonstrating courage does not itself warrant moral merit; more central is the motive of acting from duty. Kant even reinterprets virtue itself as the strength of the (human) will to perform one's duty (1996: 164). Virtue enables us to overcome the distorting influence passions introduce to our motivations, thereby preserving our autonomy against the threat of heteronomy.⁴ Kantian virtue is our moral capacity to constrain ourselves, a view akin to Aquinas's general virtue of courage in so far as it represents our ability to remain steadfast in our endeavour to act morally.

This brief sketch illustrates that the variety of ends courage serves has been a matter of ongoing debate. While Aristotle would restrict courage in its true form to battlefield bravery employed for a good cause, Kant finds it capable of expression in a range of activities, including those of dubious moral value. Consequently, the concerns noted in our introduction recur throughout the history of ethics. Indeed, contemporary philosophical treatments of courage in many ways reenact the historical debates, particularly to the extent that Aristotle's account is deemed insightful and of continuing relevance.

COURAGE AS AN EXECUTIVE VIRTUE

In discussions since the 1960s, courage has been classified as an executive virtue, that is, a virtue whose primary function is to enable us to overcome obstacles. The argument for this position arises from an appreciation of the many challenges we face as purposive beings acting in an often precarious world. Obstacles thwart the realization of ends we rightly or wrongly choose to pursue; they may even impede our development or exercise of the virtues. While obstacles are potentially numerous and can take diverse forms, each generates some measure of fear or discouragement. Courage is vital in providing the means for managing fear, thus enabling us to master ourselves to better achieve our goals. This

interpretation of courage accounts for both its centrality and pervasiveness, but it also raises two central concerns. The first is whether courage so understood is best considered a virtue or an executive skill. The second is that this interpretation deems acts courageous even when employed in pursuit of bad ends. We will return to these concerns below.

Gabriele Taylor and Sybil Wolfram provide an early account of courage as an executive virtue. Especially for thinkers concentrating on moral norms concerning our relations to others, courage seems problematically focused on the individual. It is thus categorized, along with temperance and prudence, as a self-regarding virtue. Taylor and Wolfram object that these virtues are not focused on the self, since courage, for instance, can be enacted on behalf of others' welfare as well as one's own. Instead, what is distinctive about them is that "each of them is concerned with overcoming some specific passion (fear, lust and so on)" (1968: 244) that would interfere with realizing our purposes. Taylor and Wolfram grant that one might possess these virtues and yet not have a good character, since character is determined by ends selected in relation to the other-regarding virtues, such as generosity, honesty and justice. Consequently, the relevant distinction we should draw is not between virtues focused on the self and those focused on others, but between virtues that constitute what Taylor and Wolfram call "strength of character" on the one hand, and those that generate "good intentions or perhaps moral goodness" on the other (*ibid.*: 247).

So interpreted, courage is a species of self-control required to manage feelings such as fear that threaten to distort reason and thwart us from pursuing desired ends.⁵ The resulting difficulty this account faces, though, is demonstrating that courage so interpreted is a virtue and not merely a skill prized for its effectiveness. While Taylor and Wolfram contend that courage enables us to overcome passions, this can be accomplished in diverse ways, some of which are more meritorious than others. Aristotle, for instance, argues that while self-controlled and virtuous persons both perform correct actions, they differ in that the former *wants* to do the wrong thing. By contrast, the virtuous person does the right thing for the right reason *with the right feelings*.⁶ If reason and feeling can be harmoniously integrated, as I argue below, we rightly reserve the designation of courage for the more praiseworthy combination of medial feeling and act. In that case, treating courage as a form of self-control renders it less commendable than a virtue.

James D. Wallace provides a fuller defence of courage as an executive virtue.⁷ Wallace argues that, quite unlike acts displaying the virtue of generosity, "Every courageous act must have some aim or end that the agent has reason to regard as important or worthwhile. Simply the fact that an act is a brave act, however, provides no clue as to the aim of the act or to the agent's motive" (1978: 76). While the performance of generous acts may be motivated by a desire to be generous, brave deeds are not similarly prompted by a desire to be brave. Instead, the relevant motive is to secure some other end, with courage being required to overcome obstacles to it. Wallace concludes that rather than promoting its own special ends, courage performs the preservative role of preventing fear from corrupting practical reason (*ibid.*: 81).⁸ A complementary point to his argument is that if someone simply desires to be brave, she risks being rash, since her motive will warrant seeking risky or dangerous situations. This demonstrates not an appropriate respect for the lessons of fear and confidence but an impulse to bravado.

If courage does not involve any particular motive for a specific end, Wallace contends that "one can act from motives that are morally reprehensible and still show courage" (*ibid.*: 77). Courage can serve a range of different, sometimes morally dubious, aims. While

Wallace offers a reason for acknowledging an additional end in the exercise of courage, to the extent that his account denies courage a characteristic motive, it too leaves unclear the reason why courage is a virtue and not an executive skill. As critics like Angela Hobbs and Daniel McInerney argue, some further feature is needed if we are to deem courage a virtue. Hobbs, for instance, notes that although Socrates and Laches disagree on how best to define courage, both agree that it is something noble. As she argues,

[n]o matter how conceived, the very term *andreia* connotes an ideal of male character and behavior which cannot be value-neutral. Different city-states, generations and individual thinkers may have drawn different boundaries between blameworthy recklessness or ruthlessness and *andreia* proper, but the word itself suggests that the boundaries exist. (2000: 89)

The element of nobility in courage provides a ground for distinguishing it from a mere skill. McInerney similarly objects that proponents of the executive virtues fail to provide an account of eudaimonia that explains “*why* it is appropriate to correct the passions in [a given] instance, or to commit oneself to the pursuit of a given end” (2006: 76). While skills might serve bad ends, on McInerney’s account virtues cannot.

David Pears argues that we find implicit in Aristotle’s own account details that further justify interpreting courage as an executive virtue. Pears agrees with Taylor, Wolfram and Wallace that courage enables us to overcome obstacles like fear, but he argues that this is because the very structure of courage requires a complex set of goals. The first is the internal goal, by which Pears means that a courageous act is chosen for its own sake. This echoes Aristotle’s stipulation that we must choose virtues for themselves and not merely for their instrumentality in securing other ends. Acknowledging the internal goal demonstrates that courage meets a fundamental requirement of the virtues. Additional considerations may also be needed; we will return to this point below.

Pears further argues that courage involves two additional, opposing goals. He agrees with Wallace in arguing that “courage can be practiced partly for its own sake, but it must also be harnessed to some such further goal as victory in battle or keeping a secret” (1978: 273). Pears (2004: 3) recognizes that “acting nobly” or “acting bravely” might be the motives of someone who behaves courageously, but in themselves, he finds these motives too general and indeterminate to provide sufficient guidance for acting. Some external goal – “external” because it can be achieved by means other than, and so external to, the courageous act – is needed that enables us to identify the relevant factors in the situation and determine the specific action we should take. In the case of courage, this goal is usually victory or health. Since courage arises in contexts of fear, it also possesses a countergoal, the “object of aversion involved in fear” (Pears 1980: 174), such as physical impairment or death. We can assess the value and probability of the external goal and the countergoal in a variety of ways. When we act courageously, we are able to register but then “discount” (2004: 9) fear because of our assessment of the former’s superior value over that of the latter goal. Every courageous act requires an external goal, for without it, there would be no good relative to which we could render our motive to act more determinate and counteract the countergoal.

The fact that courage requires this complex set of goals is, Pears argues, a consequence of its unique structure. Together, these goals enable us to explain why courage is both executive (it enables us to overcome obstacles to the external goal) and also a virtue (it

possesses the distinctive internal goal). While he devotes considerable attention to the relation between external and countergoals, Pears only briefly discusses the internal goal. He notes that it indicates that the virtue is practised both for its own sake (1978: 273) and for its nobility (1980: 171, 185). His terminology, of course, suggests that the internal goal concerns the goodness of the act apart from any additional, external considerations. Such suggestions, however, do not take us very far in clarifying the relation between the internal and external goals.

RELATING THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL GOALS OF COURAGE

To see this problem more fully, let us return to the challenge posed by an act of courageous villainy. Such an act elicits a mixed assessment. On the one hand, identifying it as courageous reflects appreciation that some good can be demonstrated even in an act whose end is bad but whose realization requires exercising reason in relation to feeling. On the other hand, our resistance to offering unqualified praise of the act demonstrates our reluctance to sever means from ends, to consider them in isolation from one another. Our full assessment of the act – captured by the phrase “an act of courageous villainy” – reflects our recognition that it can be no more assessed in isolation from its consequences than from its originating conditions. Even an act prized for its own sake can be assessed in relation to other factors, including its consequences for others and the agent. When we express reservation in praising the courage of villains or terrorists, our apprehension signifies recognition that acts are embedded in a larger context that is relevant to their evaluation.

How might this acknowledgement factor into the relation between internal and external goals? Pears could respond that there is little that we can or need to say, since the external goal is, as the name suggests, external to the act of courage and so to the internal goal; it is something that is not necessitated by the act and that might be achieved via different means. For example, victory in war might be secured by poisoning the enemy’s food supply, an act that does not generate fear of harm or death in the agent in the same way that face-to-face combat does (Garver 2006: 31 offers this example). Nevertheless, we can generate a fuller account of the relations involved if we consider more carefully what it means to choose virtues for their own sake.

Pears rightly notes that Aristotle links choosing an act for its own sake and choosing it for its nobility, but he says little about what the noble (*to kalon*) signifies. His most illuminating comment is that its meaning is enmeshed in the specific practices we use to morally educate the young (2004: 3–4): the noble is what one comes to recognize only after a proper education. The difficulty with this response is that it ties virtues to the norms of a specific society without giving us a fuller appreciation of why they are legitimate. A member of the Athenian noble class might readily recognize courage on the battlefield as bearing the mark of nobility, but those living in different societies will be unlikely to do the same. A more productive approach, suggested by Kelly Rogers and Richard Kraut, explicates nobility in relation to the structure of virtue. Rogers argues that nobility is a constitutive feature of virtue. Calling attention to Aristotle’s frequent association of nobility with what is fitting or appropriate, she argues that “noble action accords with the mean. For totally appropriate action is equilibrating, and the mean is, precisely, a condition of equilibrium ([*Nicomachean*

Ethics] 1106b36–1107a2)” (1994: 308). Kraut makes a similar move, invoking virtue’s other characteristics to argue that choosing a virtue for its own sake means choosing it because of the “intrinsic and unalterable features of the virtuous life” (1976: 238). Included among these features is the fact that virtue accords with reason, has its unique pleasure and is a principal or constitutive component of a happy life. While it might seem that desiring a virtue as an ingredient in happiness conflicts with the requirement that we choose it for its own sake, this conflict is only apparent. Aristotle’s requirement is not that we choose virtues *only* for their own sake, but that we choose them *qua* virtues or *qua* their intrinsic features. And *qua* virtues, they are the principal components of a happy life.

Understanding the noble in this way enables us to articulate a more substantial link between the internal and external goals. Drawing on Rogers, we see that the internal goal requires that the external and countergoals be governed by the mean. It is true that the external and internal goals are independent of one another. The goodness of the internal goal does not derive from that of the external goal, and the external goal could be realized by means of different acts. Nevertheless, summoning courage as the means to victory brings the external and countergoals into the domain of the internal goal where they must at least be compatible with the mean. Attending to Kraut’s argument allows us to add that the internal goal implicates the various characteristics of the virtues – not only the mean but also concepts like eudaimonia relative to which the other goals may be evaluated. Since criminal acts, and a criminal character, are not constitutive of eudaimonia, we have grounds for rejecting criminal goals in light of the internal goal and so for requiring that courage’s ends be good.⁹

We can make a comparable point by attending to the distinction between desired and desirable goods. Every good is something desired, but that does not entail that it is, all things considered, desirable. It may require means that are too costly, or bring with it negative consequences we do not desire. The external goal must be desired as a good if it is to function as a motivator, especially one that will counterbalance the impetus of the countergoal, but the further question is how desirable it is. Pears resolves this issue by determining the value and probability of the external and countergoals in relation to one another; indeed, the criminal must deem the goal of his act sufficiently desirable to counteract the risk he takes in the process. Yet the villain does not go far enough. A fuller evaluation is both needed and possible if we consider the goods implicated by the internal goal. The internal goal provides the relevant context – bringing with it criteria for assessing goodness such as being medial, pleasant and constitutive of eudaimonia – relative to which we can evaluate fully the desirability of the external goal.¹⁰ This is precisely the kind of assessment required to deem the act a virtuous one.

Understanding the relation of internal and external goals in this way provides us reasons for restricting the ends to which courage is a means. We can nevertheless expand the range of actions that can be legitimately described as courageous beyond, as Aristotle thought, battlefield courage. Grounds for such an extension are suggested by Aquinas and illuminated by Jonathan J. Sanford’s reminder that we use terms like “life”, “death” and “battle” in a variety of senses, each appropriate to a different sphere in which life is led. Sanford argues that “[t]here are times when it is right, that is to say virtuous, to sacrifice your life as lived in any one of these spheres, such as family, work, friendships, and physical well-being” (2010: 443). For example, when a person comes out as gay, bravery is needed because she is risking her life in two possible ways. First, in an immediate context, she

risks her familial life, for some families not only reject a person for being gay but banish them from the home. Second, to the extent that homophobia is pervasive in a society, self-identifying as gay can increase the likelihood of physical harm and death. In the case of the civil rights activist, courage is required to confront threats of social ostracism as well as physical harm and death. Young children face the daunting task of developing basic physical and intellectual skills without which their actions are clumsy and awkward and which thus, given their limited experience and the restricted scope of their world, can at least appear to threaten their social lives. By recognizing the significant but also diverse forms of life that frame our acts, Sanford offers us a way of expanding the contexts and range of goals that reasonably require the virtue of courage.

COURAGE AND FEELING

In this last section, we consider the role of feelings especially as they function to distinguish the virtue of courage from courage as a form of self-control. Surely, there is much to admire in both, especially since each involves acting according to the mean. What, then, distinguishes them from one another? The standard Aristotelian reply is that for one to possess a virtue, not only her acts *but also* her feelings must be medial. While the person with self-control may *act* according to the mean, her *feelings* are not governed by it. Consequently, what is at issue in the distinction between virtue and self-control is one's overall character. A related point becomes apparent if we focus on the exercise of courage in the context of a single event. If one's feelings are not medial, they may thwart or negatively affect the pursuit of the relevant external goal. One needs courage not merely to initiate action on behalf of the chosen goal but also to maintain focus in meeting related challenges along the way. This will certainly be true of courage exercised on the battlefield but it will also be relevant for completing complex, arduous tasks that carry significant risks to some form of life. Hence, having the proper feeling provides additional insurance that one acts rightly. Finally, harmoniously relating reason and feeling represents a significant achievement that warrants the label *virtue*. While it is possible to do something because reason recommends it even while truly not wanting to do so, it is also possible to mould reason and feeling into a mutual alliance in which the two harmonize.

It might be objected that harmonization is not possible because reason and feeling are fundamentally distinct and antithetical. The proper reply is that such an objection misconstrues the nature and function of each.¹¹ The suggested opposition results from deficient, although perhaps common, manifestations of reason and feeling that are essential to neither. Reason, or intelligence, is our capacity to reflect on and direct our actions by attending to their conditions and consequences, critically assessing and adjusting means and ends in relation to one another.¹² Feelings are expressions of desires, which in turn express energy that is not antithetical to intelligence but rather amenable to its direction. When intelligence and desire are opposed, it is not because of their inherent natures but because the latter are expressed in a habitual manner that merely repeats past responses to stimuli and so resists the revisionary direction that intelligent reflection could promote. Desire *can* become ossified through repetition and so be expressed and responded to in static routine habits, but it can also be shaped by intelligent habits. While the former are distinguished by their repeated assertion regardless of context, the latter retain enough

of the original plasticity required in their formation to be sensitive to changing circumstances.¹³ Importantly, intelligence can redirect desire to serve new, more appropriate ends. Instead of conceiving of fear as a fixed kind that we either follow (in fleeing danger) or discount, we can recognize it as a malleable resource that informs us of our environment and allows us to act with sensitivity to context. The harmony of intelligence and desire is an achievement, one whose presence in virtuous acts strengthens their claim to the honorific title. The courageous person's act is infused with the intelligent appraisal of goods so that she takes risks only for the sake of securing the most desirable goods.¹⁴ She cultivates the ability to face and transform fear by defining its proper employment in an intelligent manner, thereby developing a wholehearted allegiance to appraised goods.¹⁵ Those who exercise self-control have not yet accomplished this.

Our analysis demonstrates the value of distinguishing the ways diverse goals and feelings function to differentiate courage from its close cousins. It enables us to acknowledge the complex arrangements of factors required for a truly excellent act, thereby increasing our appreciation for gradations or approximations in different kinds of acts. The self-controlled are more advanced than cowards and courageous villains, for they prize virtue for its own sake even if they have yet to perfect its role in their lives. Self-control is surely a significant response to fear, and its achievement may be a considerable achievement for the weak-willed and for children learning to act. It still leaves room for the challenge of coordinating intelligence and desire which is an even higher achievement. If we accept Sanford's position, we will recognize the value of facing death in its diverse forms and so the array of opportunities we have for developing courage. Exercising courage in more varied contexts renders us less likely to abandon worthy goals when faced with the prospect of physical death. While we should not generate distinctions that offer no guidance for acting in the face of immediate threats, we do well to remain attentive to the varieties of action that prepare us to meet life-threatening challenges and express meritorious achievements of character.

NOTES

1. See Walton (1986: 52–55) and von Wright (1963: 153) for this example. Speaking of the “courageous villain” is potentially ambiguous in that it could refer to an act of courage employed for villainous ends, or to a person who typically engages in villainous behaviour but occasionally acts courageously for good ends, e.g. helping friends. Given its relevance to a broader range of cases, I employ the term in the first sense.
2. Lengthy treatments can be found in Walton (1986), Yearley (1990), Hobbs (2000) and Scarre (2010).
3. Socrates replies by distinguishing confidence from courage, the former arising from skill while the latter does not (Plato 1997: 781/351a). For a fuller discussion of Plato's treatment of courage, see Hobbs (2000).
4. For a detailed discussion of Kant's moral psychology, see Julian Wuerth's “Moving Beyond Kant's Account of Agency in the *Grounding*” (Jost & Wuerth 2011: 147–63).
5. Roberts explicitly treats courage as a form of self-control (1989: 299; see also 1984: 228–33).
6. Dent argues that “just to the extent that courage is taken only to be a useful form of self-control, it loses its title to be regarded as without exception an excellent state and hence a virtue. For a man can as well show such self-control in his pursuit of evil ends; and, as employed to those purposes, courage itself is not to be admired” (1984: 13–14). Geach (1977: 160) similarly denies that courage can be demonstrated in the pursuit of evil ends.
7. See B. Williams (1981c: 49; 1985: 9) for a related view.
8. For a related view, see Foot (1978: 8–18).
9. We can also fault the external goal of the courageous terrorist to the extent that it involves killing innocent

victims in a context in which the immediate threat they pose, and so the degree of fear elicited, are relatively low and so at odds with the requirement that courage exhibit the mean.

10. Garver makes a related point when he argues the internal goods of practices arise from and develop as restrictions on external goods. External goods are thus not ultimately “external”. See Garver’s critique of Pears (2006: 29–31).
11. This line of thought is suggested by Dewey’s discussion of desire and intelligence; see Dewey (1983), especially chapters 7 and 21.
12. This includes considering means not merely as instruments but also as constituents of ends.
13. See Dewey’s discussion of this distinction (1983: 121–6).
14. This is the effect Plato hoped to achieve by making *thumos* and *logos* allies.
15. Annas similarly argues that the virtuous person has a commitment to goodness (2011: 100–118). More can be said about the transformation of fear, especially the way that intelligence might redirect desire from fear of death to shame at the thought of failing to commit to a worthwhile end. Developing this view more fully is a project for another time.