

Arsht Research on Ethics and Community Grant

The Philosophy and Psychology of Eudaimonia and Virtue Conference

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a broad revival of interest in Aristotle's (1999) ethics among philosophers as well as a wellspring of interest among psychologists. This renewed interest has been extremely fruitful, as Aristotle's ethics has been reinterpreted once again for contemporary concerns and sensibilities. Aristotle's central ethical concept is *eudaimonia* or human flourishing and its relationship with virtue. Broadly stated, he saw the epitome of practical ethical life in terms of flourishing, which means living a fully realized human life. Virtues or character strengths are the necessary personal characteristics for a flourishing life. We propose to organize an interdisciplinary conference that will address two interrelated problems with the current scholarship on eudaimonia. First, there are many competing theoretical and empirical interpretations of eudaimonia, and the primary scholars in this area have not yet been brought together to discuss this central concept in a sustained way. Second, scholarship in philosophy and psychology has been pursued in parallel, with very little interchange, despite the fact that philosophers and psychologists have a great deal to learn from one another. This proposal seeks funding for a landmark conference to bring the primary scholars of eudaimonia from philosophy and psychology together to discuss this central ethical concept. The conference will be open to the University of Miami and local communities as well as to interested scholars and students throughout the country. The papers and discussions will also be edited and assembled into two special issues, one in a philosophy journal and one in a psychology journal. The conference and the journal issues will greatly advance the development of eudaimonic theory and promote its applications in psychology, public philosophy, public policy, and education.

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