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# Integrity and Dialogue

Simon Robinson

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This paper explores the relationship of dialogue to integrity. It sets out a traditional philosophical view of integrity, noting that these are predominantly assertive, holding certain principles or values against others, and therefore they do not involve dialogue. Based on more recent views on integrity, which stress agency, the paper then develops a view of integrity based on a three-fold view of responsibility. This view is based on dialogue, and with that a greater engagement with plural values and a complex social environment. The paper looks at the nature of that dialogue, and then goes on to examine implications for the practice and theory of dialogue itself. The paper uses illustrations from the Mid Staffs Hospital Trust case and from fiction, with the example of Shakespeare's Henry V.

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## The Importance of Integrity

There is a consensus amongst academics and practitioners on the importance of integrity. A survey by the Council for Industry and Higher Education (Archer and Davidson 2008), for instance, suggests that the third most important quality that employers want in new employees, behind team work and communication skills, is integrity. This theme is taken up by the Institute of Chartered Accountancy in England and Wales (ICAEW) in *Reporting with Integrity* (2009), which aims to establish the utility of integrity. Integrity, it is argued, provides the basis for the establishment of trust, both in leadership and in the wider profession. This is true at both the individual and institutional levels (cf. Solomon 2007) and is embodied in corporation or individual practice, or in the commitment of the wider profession. Hence, the engineering professions (Armstrong et al 1999), for instance, can write of the need to maintain the integrity of the profession. By extension, it is argued, this leads to the reliability of information and judgement, upon which the future of markets, financial systems and even financial policies depend. The absence of this was exemplified in the credit crisis (Lanchester 2010).

## Defining Integrity

Pinning down the actual meaning of the term integrity is less easy. The ICAEW report acknowledges that promoting integrity is difficult, not least because it seems to be a relative concept. Hence, four different major philosophical approaches to integrity are reviewed: self-integration; identity; moral purpose; and commitment.

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### **Self-integration**

This account of integrity suggests that it is about the integration of what Frankfurt refers to as higher order and lower order volitions (Frankfurt 1961). Higher order volitions are about long term desires, and lower order volitions immediate desires. He distinguishes the high order volition of the drug addict to be a drug free person, and the lower order volition to take drugs. Integrity, and with that free will, argues Frankfurt, is achieved when the lower order volitions cohere with the higher order volitions, bringing together volition and action. This can also be seen in terms of developing a holistic integration of the self that brings together the cognitive, affective and physical aspects of the person (Solomon 2007).

### **Identity**

Williams (1973) argues for a view of integrity that is based on the identity of the person. This is part of his argument against a simple, utilitarian approach. One example that he offers is of the dignitary who is the guest of a foreign nation. He is taken to a town square, where 20 people are about to be killed in reprisal for recent armed protests. As a significant guest, the man is offered the opportunity to kill one of the 20, allowing the other 19 to live. The utilitarian response would be straight forward, that by killing the one man he saves 19, and therefore he should do it. Williams, however, argues that this is more than a simple calculation. It involves going against the moral identity of the person, going against the core moral beliefs that make up the identity of the person.

Whilst this is an important part of integrity, one that demands careful reflection on what the basic values are, it is not clear that it is sufficient. Like self-integration, it suffers from the problem that the morality at the base of identity may itself be flawed or questionable. The recent film *In Bruges* (2009) is a good example of this. The leader of a criminal gang has strong belief on the wrongness of killing children. To allow one of his 'hit-men' to live after he has killed a child, albeit by mistake, would go against this belief, which he takes to be part of his identity. However, the moral context of the practice is itself questionable, because his very business is based on killing. This is ultimately tested for him when he believes that he too has killed a child and, without further thought, he kills himself. Hence, he remains a man of integrity but only within a flawed moral boundary.

### **Moral Purpose**

In the light of this, writers like Rawls (1972) and Halfon (1989) argue that integrity must include an acceptable moral purpose at its basis. For Rawls, this would involve some clear conception of justice, defined in terms of fairness. Halfon is more circumspect and careful. He argues that integrity involves the person setting out

an ethical perspective that is conceptually clear, logically consistent, appraised or relevant empirical evidence, and careful about acknowledging, as well as weighing the relevant moral considerations. In effect, Halfon argues that the person of integrity will give a clear account of their moral purpose as part of following a rigorous moral decision making process.

Such arguments provide a view of integrity that is descriptive, but not a normative view, and hence they are still not sufficient. Tested by the example of the SS guard, the guard may well be able to give an account of moral purpose which he claims is coherent, based on a world view which was quasi-religious. The SS guard lacks two things, and both are needed for any account of integrity. The first involves openness to the critical questioning of different perspectives, including competing values, raising the possibility that the leadership and the core values of the group can be challenged. The second demands a normative stance, recognising that some things are wrong in themselves. Underlying the Williams case is precisely the normative view that it is wrong to kill another person, whatever the consequences. Underlying the self-justification of the SS guard is the lack of a normative stance, such as respect for human dignity<sup>1</sup>.

### **Commitment**

Calhoun (1995) argues for a sense of commitment which is about 'standing for something'. He argues that this involves more than simply standing for an individual moral purpose but, rather, standing for a purpose that is recognised by the community. Hence, the basis for integrity is recognised. Here, integrity is associated explicitly with something for which it is worth striving, and it assumes a degree of courage and perseverance that will enable the person and the group to stand up against internal and societal pressures that impose obstacles to the purpose. However, much like the other arguments this has limitations, not least because it may involve standing up for something that means much to one group or community, but which is actually seen as problematic by communities outside. The point about normativity, above, is that it looks to a moral view which is not determined by the group but, rather, that transcends it (Mason 2001).

None of these approaches, then, are sufficient in themselves. Hence, the ICAEW report suggests that these partial approaches contain elements that can come together in a more coherent description of integrity, with five core aspects:

- *Moral values*. This demands clear thinking about what they are.

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1 Despite this, Cohen (2001) notes the lengths to which some Nazi officials went to articulate a perverted view of respect for the dignity of their victims, e.g., that children should not be shot, whilst holding them by their hair.

- *Motives*. These demand an awareness of motives and the capacity to test them in the self and others.
- *Commitments*. This involves sustaining commitment to others, and to values, over a long period.
- *Qualities*. These involve the virtues necessary to maintain integrity.
- *Achievements*. The need to integrate moral purpose with practice, walking the walk.

In turn, they argue that these elements lead to the key behavioural characteristics of integrity. Being honest and truthful are behaviours that emerge from moral values. Fairness and compliance with the law are behaviours that emerge from motives. Commitment involves the promotion of community interests. Qualities include being open and adaptable, and the capacity to take corrective action. The behaviour of consistency arises from achievements.

## Integrity, Identity and Dialogue

The attempt to develop a comprehensive view of integrity begins to deal with some of the issues, but it leaves other tensions unresolved. Integrating different aspects of the self, for instance, pays little attention to how the person, and their underlying view of the self, deals with difference. Even the idea of the self that is largely implicit in Williams' account (1973), is hard to pin down. Polonius's advice to his son to be true to the self, for instance, presumes a settled self to which one can relate in a consistent way (Hamlet 1, 3).<sup>2</sup> In turn, this presumes that one can know the self. However, research on ethics and pedagogy (Robinson and Dowson 2011) suggests that it is hard for people to determine if one has integrity, precisely because such a judgement cannot be made purely by the self. There are many aspects of the self that one does not know, and which can only be discovered through relating to others, and by hearing their views (Luft 1969). Fawkes (2014), in examining professional ethics in Jungian terms, argues that it is important for professions to develop reflexivity which takes in the 'shadow side'. This is not necessarily a malign aspect of the self, or of the identity of the organisation, but simply of aspects of the self which are not examined and which require the help of others to see them.

This thinking suggests that integrity is less an individual and more of a social virtue, to do with how individuals and organisations view their identity and present their identity. Mason (2001) suggests that this begins to focus on the development of critical reflexivity (Giddens 1991, Bauman 1989) and thus on moral agency. This removes us from the idea that integrity is somehow quantifiable, or about a claim to some sort of moral perfection, and moves us to a dynamic, relational and

2 Shakespeare, of course, sees Polonius's comment as a sententious maxim.

developmental view of integrity.

Integrity, in traditional views, is very much about the assertion of a moral perspective over/against another, often leading to a moral perspective which is itself adversarial. Pattison and Edgar (2011) argue that an extreme example of this is whistle-blowing, and that the identity of the whistle-blower often precisely avoids the complexity of an institutional situation, and seeks to polarise relations. There is little here about dialogue with different narratives. Often, for instance, the narrative of institutional sustainability is seen as either being value neutral, or against moral values, something that is reinforced by MacIntyre's view of institutional values as being secondary to the core values of the community of practice (MacIntyre 1981). However, without both it is hard to see how the core values and their community or practice can be sustained (Robinson and Smith 2014).

This moves integrity beyond individual reflexivity and responsiveness, towards a more social view, and thus demands a more complex view that is focused on the practice of dialogue, which engages all the value narratives in the social environment, both individual and social. Critically engaging different value narratives in dialogue does not necessarily lead to the loss of moral meaning, but rather to a more complex view of responsibility than simply agency, one that involves ongoing multiple dialogues, and dialogues that engage both affective and cognitive meaning.

## **Responsibility**

I have suggested (2009) three interrelated modes of responsibility, the first two of which originate in Aristotle's thinking: imputability, accountability and liability.

### ***Imputability***

This is about moral agency, being able to attribute ideas, values and actions to a person or group. The strongest version of this suggests a rational decision making process. Taylor (1989) argues that this decision-making constitutes a strong valuation that connects action to deep decision making. This owning of the thoughts, and the related decision making, is what constitutes the moral agency of the person or group. Hence, this process of decision making becomes key to the development of a sense of identity. In effect, this involves part of the constitution of the self (Korsgaard 2009).

Closely connected to this is the concept of moral or retrospective responsibility that focuses on blame for actions. This seeks to identify the person or persons who are responsible for actions. Key to this are either intentionality or role. The first determines whether an action was intended, and thus who was responsible. The second, role responsibility, suggests that certain roles are focused in purpose

(notably leadership, professional, or family roles), and thus may apportion blame, even if consequences were not intended. A medical practitioner, for instance, may be deemed to be responsible for a patient's death, even if he did not intend it.

Key to the development of this agency is the development of responsibility for ideas, values, worth and practice, all of which take moral agency into a relational and holistic context:

- *Ideas*. This demands clarity about the concepts that are used, and the capacity to justify them rationally. We can hardly be said to be responsible for our thoughts if we cannot provide some account of, and justification for, them. Core to this is an understanding of purpose. Any account and justification of thoughts and actions also demands openness to critical intellectual challenge. In the 2008 credit crisis, this was illustrated by the use of CDOs (collateralised debt obligations) involving the repackaging of mortgage debts and selling them on. As Lanchester (2010) notes, those who pursued this policy based it on a mathematical formula that none of them understood. Their focus was purely on the profits that this action would make. This, in turn, was based on values which radically affected how they saw the world
- *Values*. This demands the capacity to appreciate values underlying thoughts and action. It is not just that they are coherent, it is also that they have distinct meaning and value, such that one prefers one practice to others. Even at this stage, responsibility involves a comparison with other practices and their values (Taylor 1989). Hence, deciding upon one's own values, or the values of the organisation, does not take place in social isolation, or apart from the core relationships to the social and physical environment.
- *Worth*. Underlying any idea of values is the idea of worth. The worth of a professional organisation, for instance, is expressed centrally in what Airaksinen (1994) refers to as the pre-moral values, such as health (medical profession), justice (legal profession) or learning (education profession). These are all values which can be connected back to a vision of what it means to be human, and thus to any idea of human flourishing. By definition, this takes such organisations beyond the narrow interests of their group and sets the value of the profession, and their members, in shared values, and in the ways they relate to wider social and physical environments.

Critically, this strong sense of worth is central to identity and is directly focused on feelings and emotions. Hence, taking responsibility for the

affective aspects of the self is also key to agency. In terms of the affective self, Rowan Williams (1989) makes the distinction between emotions and feeling. Emotion involves feeling, which intrudes and controls the person. Anxiety or shame, for instance, can be felt so intensely that the person responds to them without understanding their genesis or how they are influencing her. Inevitably, with such emotion, the boundaries of the self are felt as being indistinct and insecure. This is contrasted with dispassionate feeling, which involves an engagement with feelings which allows an exposure of the self, 'freed from all compulsions to keep itself safe or keep itself under control' (Williams 1989, 11). It involves learning about those feelings and accepting them, hence, as Williams puts it, learning a positive form of detachment. This links both to personal and professional integrity.

Narrow views of self-worth, focused on closed groups, tend to be dominated by emotion and by the impulse to distinguish the worth of the groups from that of those outside the group (Cohen 2001), losing any sense of service to the wider society. Energies are thus focused on location (demonstrating one's place), rather than on engagement with the wider world (Markham 2003). This affective aspect of agency is central to identity and thus to any view of integrity. Hence, greater focus is required on the psychological aspects of integrity than was previously seen in philosophy. This provides ways to examine integrity in relation to self and other deception, intentional or unconscious, and to mechanisms of denial (Cohen 2001). It also suggests that any descriptive view of integrity requires the capacity not simply to challenge values, but also the wider and deeper personal and organisational visions of relationships to society. This applies as much to those who perceive themselves to be morally upright as to those who argue for a more instrumental identity (Pattison and Edgar 2011). It also suggests that the perspectives of the wider society will be affected by the individual or group sense of worth, partly because of the danger of polarised thinking.

- *Practice*: At the heart of this focus is the awareness of one's actions and the effects of those actions on the social and environmental context. In business, for instance, if you are a board member, do you fully understand the practice of an organisation and the effect that this might have on the wider social and physical environment? None of this prescribes a particular response. What it does demand is an awareness of what one is doing; how that fits into the purpose of the organisation, and how that effects the internal and external environments. The physicality of practice is also value laden, not least because, as David Ford notes,



all action involves communication (Ford 1999). Somatic awareness is found at the base of the earliest stages of human development (Stern 1985, 129).

This first mode of responsibility, which is basically moral agency, sounds very simple but in practice it is difficult and complex. The ongoing dialogue applies to the individual and the organisation. The self, suggests Taylor (1989, see also Cooper-White 2007), is neither uniform nor singular, but is made up of plural narratives, focused on different relationships over time: familial, cultural, educational, and so on. Often these narratives control the perspective and practice of the individual precisely because no practice of internal dialogue has been developed, and with that, there is little self-awareness.

In this view of integrity, the nature of dialogue does not involve an 'easy fit' of values. On the contrary, as I suggest, it demands critical reflection, the engagement of complexity, and the awareness of, and the capacity to respond to, the relationships which constitute our social and environmental context and worth. This is messy and about ongoing dialogue, focused on mutual support and challenge. This ongoing dialogue cannot simply be contained in 'internal dialogue', precisely because the plural person is focused on relationships that are developed over time, and that therefore require dialogue beyond the person and the organisation. This leads into the explicit dialogue of accountability.

### **Accountability**

In one sense, accountability is the public face of agency. A lot of the stress in moral agency is about making sense to oneself. Accountability is about making sense to others. Focused on answerability and judgement, the term is often seen as being narrow and pressed into frameworks of power. Hence, many debates either want to focus accountability on the immediate context of management, or to rail against it as a means to control individuals (Sternberg 2000). Typically, however, there are different kinds of accountability which relate to the different strands of the social and physical environment. In the work place there is accountability to superiors, customers, colleagues, which is focused on value narratives, which include competency but also human rights at work. This suggests that accountability is key to how we operate in the world and respond to the demands of the social and physical environments. It also suggests that, at this point, integrity is focused on multiple accountability, and how that is fulfilled. Perhaps the best example of this is the professional 'model' of accountability (cf. Armstrong et al), which is minimally based on accountability to clients, the profession (including foundational pre-moral goods, such as health and well-being), related professions (critical to the on-going

work of one's profession, such as nursing to medicine), the particular institution/organisation in which one is based, wider society (in relation to provision which is focused on service, such as the law or medicine), and future generations (who may use the bridge you have built). In many cases this will also include the government.

Giving such an account inevitably involves engagement in ongoing plural, critical and mutual dialogue. The very fact that a profession may be accountable to many different stakeholders sets up this dynamic of mutuality. Hence, architects and engineers, doctors and nurses, are all mutually accountable, and in different ways, to clients (who may be complex), regulatory bodies, and so on. Often, integrity, and with that any trust, is seen as being based on transparency, defined largely in terms of reporting mechanisms. However, as O'Neill (2000) argues, such transparency is not sufficient to enable trust. Rather critical dialogue is demanded precisely to test the veracity of the reporting and to guard against intentional or unintentional deception. Without that, the reporting involves a presentation of self and organisational identity which lacks rigour and which negatively affects practice. Critical and mutual dialogue is precisely what was missing in the great crises of governance and leadership over the past two decades.

The Mid Staffs Hospital Case (Robinson and Smith 2014) showed governance that was focused on a narrow view of accountability, focused on targets and, ultimately, on a narrative and associated sense of worth and identity that focused on hierarchy, eventually with accountability to the government. The result was an inability to see multiple accountabilities, even to the extent of affecting how the professions saw their work relationships, obscuring the particular needs of patients, and leading to the unnecessary deaths of over two hundred. Professional relationships were strongly hierarchical and dominated by a culture of fear, which caused a lack of focus on core social values, a lack of awareness of the surrounding needs, and a limited sense of self-worth, which amounted to worth based on the capacity to fulfil targets. There was a virtual absence of critical dialogue between the professions and the clients, and between the professions and the managerial hierarchy. The dynamic of fear precisely meant that the different groups could not be genuinely held to account through openness to critical dialogue, leading to an absence of integrity. Nonetheless, a narrow view of accountability was claimed by many players in terms of their achieving targets for better financial status, and reporting related to that.

An inability to critically engage with all the different narratives of care led to practice in nursing, for example, which was antithetical to their core professional identity as carers, something about which the nurses were shocked. In effect, by focusing on giving an account of targets, this led to a lack of accountability, both to the profession and to the patient. Hence, the Chief Nurse of the UK felt obliged to explicitly revisit the narratives of care and compassion (see Robinson and

Smith 2014, 279 ff.). Accountability focused on dialogue, then, is also key to the development of identity and, with that, to integrity. The same problems were there in the so called regulatory bodies, who were unable to account for why they did not make their suspicions about the Mid Staffs Hospital clearer (Robinson and Smith 2014). They saw the problems but had no sense of mutual accountability.

Accountability, then, is essentially focused on ongoing dialogue and communication. This is partly because relationships and related purpose focus on action, which itself acts as a means of integration, and partly because critical dialogue enables better, more responsive, integrated thinking and action. Where accountability is focused primarily on representation, with little reference to critical dialogue, internal or external, or on narrow relationships, we run the danger of unthinking report, and of the inability to actually perceive the wider social and environmental context.

### ***Liability for***

Moral liability (as distinct from legal liability) goes beyond accountability, into the idea of wider responsibility *for* projects, people or place. Each person or group has to work these out in context, without necessarily an explicit contract. Working that out demands awareness of the limitations of the person or organisation, avoiding taking on too much responsibility, and a capacity to work together with others and to negotiate and share responsibility. Most relationships involve a mixture of accountability and liability. A good example is a doctor, who is both accountable for and to the patient. Once again this can have a strictly legal sense, or a wider moral one, encompassing the broadest possible view of stakeholders, from those directly affected by any business or project to the social and natural environment in which these operate. Like accountability, this often involves multiple responsibilities, which have to be held together.

This is the most difficult of all the modes of responsibility, partly because of the difficulty in determining just what we are responsible for. At one extreme of this responsibility lies the constant denier, always finding ways to avoid responsibility. At the other extreme sits the person or organisation who tries to take responsibility for everything. Aristotle's stress on the mean suggests that disaster lies in both those extremes. In the middle lies a view of liability where responsibility is negotiated. The negotiation of responsibility itself is also key to the articulation and development of identity, as Finch and Mason (1994) found in researching the negotiation of responsibility in families. They noted that the single parent families they worked with did not determine their ethical identity through reference to values or principles, but through negotiating how responsibility could be shared.

This moves to the idea of shared responsibility for people, project and planet, focusing

on shared creativity and responsiveness. This acts as a basis for integrative thinking and action, which once more acts as a means of account. Like accountability, it has to link to moral agency if it is to make sense - in this case, shared sense. Once again, this aspect of responsibility does not allow us to sit back uncritically. There will always be healthy questions about how responsibility might have been better fulfilled (as distinct from neurotic questions that allow no rest). Some of the great post-Holocaust thinkers, such as Arendt, Levinas, Bauman, and Ricoeur, argue from this for a sense of universal responsibility - shared responsibility for everything. Jonas (1984) takes this further, arguing for a sense of ultimate accountability to, and responsibility for, future generations and the environment, a secular analogue of the ultimate accountability to God and for His creation. The idea of universal responsibility does not involve literal individual moral responsibility for everyone and every act, but its power is in engaging the moral imagination, focusing back on our ideas, actions and values, with questions on how these might best be fulfilled. For instance, do we take full responsibility for what we say? One Turkish thinker, Fethullah Gülen (see Yavuz 2013), argues that whatever is said individually, or in the role of leader or board, may have unintended consequences, if not immediately, then over time. It may influence the tone of a corporation, or the aspirations of a community, either negatively or positively. Gülen's point is that the sense of wider responsibility forces us back to the immediate responsibility for the way in which we perceive the world and communicate the associated values and ideas. Integrity, in the light of this mode of responsibility, is critically about always going the extra mile. If the mode of accountability involves responsibility which is 'both/and', accountable in different ways to different relationships, the idea of universal responsibility takes on an inclusive sense of responsibility. In Judaeo-Christian terms, this is *agape*, a view of care which includes even the enemy (Author 2001). Mason (2001) argues that such inclusive respect for the dignity of the person is implicit in such responsibility.

## **Complex Integrity and Dialogue**

These interconnected modes of responsibility provide a far more complex view of integrity, one which holds together: agency; relational awareness and responsiveness; plural narratives, and the values and awareness of a good which transcends narrow boundaries. Consistency associated with integrity is found in the consistent practice of reflexivity, accountability and creative practice, and in engagement with the holistic aspects of the different relationships. The interconnectivity of the three modes is vital, not least because if any of the modes is used exclusively it can lead to polarisation. The Mid Staffs case exemplifies how a focus on accountability, without consideration of the core values, worth and purpose, or of wider responsibility, leads to reporting which is focused on narrow value narratives and which involves a

lack of awareness of the wider social environment.<sup>3</sup> Dialogue is central to this view of responsibility and thus to any view of integrity. The nature of dialogue focused on complex integrity, has, however, implications for dialogue theory in general, and I will outline these now.

First, this suggests that dialogue does not simply involve different parties sharing their particular views with each other. Rather, integrity involves the capacity to reflect, to evaluate practice, to be able to cope with criticism and to maintain, develop or alter practice appropriately. Hence, integrity is best viewed in terms of a continual learning process (Author 2011) with the person discovering more about the different aspects of the self and others and how these connect. This links closely to Jung's idea of the shadow side (Fawkes 2014). Integrity involves reflection on that shadow side, and thus providing space and time for that. Dialogue, in this light, involves hearing different voices, and through engaging those different narratives, finding one's own voice (cf. Oakshott 1989, Freire 1996). Far from dialogue that simply involves finding common perspectives or values (so often stressed in interfaith dialogue), this view stresses the importance of hearing and interrogating difference, thus enabling mutual challenge and development. As Bauman (1989) argues, in this context, learning requires external perspectives, something that applies to the development of agency in the individual and the organisation. Agency, in this sense, thrives on difference and dissonance. Lederach (2005), in the context of peace building, argues for the systematic scepticism of the other and of possible projects, precisely to enable difference to emerge and so the reality of the particular other. Acceptance of the other, and an awareness of how the other connects to the wider social web, is, of course, equally important in enabling the other to emerge. However, acceptance of the other does not *a priori* demand that all values are held in common.

Second, such learning is therefore distinct from the Habermasian (1992) or Kantian dialogue project, which seek to come to agreement on values and ideas. Rather, integrity demands a more complex dynamic, involving: holding different values together, often linking values associated with core purpose, such as pre-moral values; and an awareness of key moral values which transcend project or profession, and which need to be prioritised. In the first of these, the value of care, for instance, has to be held in tension with organisational sustainability, amongst many other factors. This was exemplified in the Mid Staffs case. We cannot afford to lose either justice or organisational sustainability. In the second, values and principles

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3 This is often referred to as 'instrumental rationality' (Bauman 1989), a focus on the management of ends rather than core values. Elsewhere, I argue that, in fact, there is still not an absence of value involved, but rather a narrow value base, unaware of the many different values in the situation (Author 2013).

are focused on views of humanity and, ultimately, are founded in respect for the dignity of the person (Mason 2001). Integrity, in this case, demands that anything which goes against such dignity demands that the person or organisation stand out against it. A good example of the absence of this is the Abu Ghraib case, where several army doctors worked with torturers to examine victims and pass them fit for further interrogation (Author 2011).<sup>4</sup>

Third, integrity focuses on holistic engagement. This leads to holistic thinking that takes account of how the feelings, thoughts and physicality affect each other, enabling thinking that is affective and feeling that is cognitive, both of which can be challenged, and are challenged by exposure to the diverse social environment, and the different narratives of that environment. None of this is holism in the sense of smooth integration or wholeness. On the contrary, it involves continued struggle, not least because, as Pianalto (2012 cf. Cottingham 2010) argues, different value narratives are held in place by affect, sometimes providing strong motivation to avoid even critical reflection on the different narratives. This moves away from Habermas's (1992) stress on rationality in dialogue. The framework of holism rather suggests that rationality cannot be viewed or developed apart from engagement with the affect. Solomon (2007) argues that this is not simply about controlling the affect, but also about understanding feelings, such as anger, so that they can be appropriately articulated.

A good example of this is found in dialogue in Shakespeare's *Henry V*. Henry begins his dialogue with the Lord Chief Justice (Henry IV pt. 2, 5.2) aware that the Chief Justice is afraid of what the new king will do to the man who took Falstaff and Henry, as Prince of Wales, to task. Instead, Henry addresses the anxiety and does it in such a way that he demonstrates his respect for the Justice and the need for good governance, but also establishes core boundaries of governance. 'My voice', says Henry, 'shall sound as you do prompt my ear / And I will stoop and humble my intents / To your well-practiced wise decision' (5.2.4). All of this skillfully links into previous narratives, disputes and dialogues by using the term 'father' in reference to the Lord Chief Justice: 'You will be as a father to my youth'. At once, this links to Henry's final dialogue with his father. That dialogue had begun to resolve a relationship between father and son that had been made difficult by the additional power relationship of king and heir (Henry IV pt. 2). It could only focus on the succession by first focusing on the effect of the crown upon Henry's father. The resolution of that relationship was focused both on empathy (expressed by the prince for his father) and on the practice of kingship. Such a resolution now

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4 One UK medical practitioner was later struck off the medical register by the UK General Medical Council for lack of moral courage in not reporting abuse in this context (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-20809692>).

enables the new king to establish another fatherly relationship, and to put away the associations with Falstaff (who is himself seen by some as a negative father figure).

Fourth, the issue of holism leads to a focus on virtues in dialogue. The practice of open and critical dialogue precisely leads to the development of responsibility. It enables the development of agency, demanding the articulation of ideas, values and practice, which clarifies both what we think and do. Articulation, and the development of narrative, becomes essential for reflection and learning, involving ongoing hermeneutics. It also enables a fuller awareness of the social environment, and better appreciation of the worth in relation to the self and others. Dialogue also demands the development of commitment to the self and the other. It is not possible to pursue dialogue without giving space and time for it to develop, and this, in turn, demands a non-judgmental attitude. Commitment to the self and others is also essential if the potential critique of values and practice is to emerge from articulation and reflection. Dialogue itself also sets up a continued accountability with those involved. This is partly because it sets up a contract, formal or informal, that establishes expectations that are, in turn, continually tested by that dialogue. It also involves being open to plural voices and how they relate to core meaning.

The practice of such responsibility also involves the practice of virtues, intellectual and moral. Reflection on ideas, values, worth and practice, for instance, involves a deepening of the intellectual virtue of *phronesis*, practical wisdom that focuses on how the good can be embodied, but also on what the good actually is in relation to the social context. Listening to the different narratives, in the self and others, and working through worth, as well as values, demands the exercise of empathy. Developing creative responsibility demands several different virtues, from patience, to enable dialogue with different groups and persons; to care, enabling commitment to people and projects over time. Creative response also demands the practice of the virtue of hope. Hope, as a virtue, involves the capacity to envision the future in a positive and creative way. Snyder (2000) suggests that this involves the development of pathways (in practice involving negotiation of shared resource), achievable targets, and agency. Agency, of course, links us back to responsibility. It provides hope in the sense of both people and organisations owning their own ideas and values, and also in the sense that it connects to creative action; the agent gets things done. Such hope is not based simply on what can be done, but on the unconditional worth of the person or organisation. Respect for agency says that you are not hopeless (i.e. worthless).

The practice of such virtues through dialogue then precisely enables the development of responsibility, both individual and shared. This also suggests a more complex view of dialogue, focusing not simply on the development of ideas, values or principles but on the practice of virtue and the development of character.

Consistent character is key to evidence of integrity. The development of such virtues requires the development of a community of dialogue which enables their practise (MacIntyre 1981); also important in providing evidence of integrity.

The focus on virtues once more moves dialogue beyond Habermas's principle-centred approach. It is the development of character which enables individuals and organisations to handle the ambiguity of social environments, and to hold together the different relationships.

Fifth, this also suggests dialogue that is ongoing and linking plural dialogues. Even the core community has internal differences, and dialogue occurs beyond the core community. In turn, this suggests that dialogue may occur, *pace* Habermas, beyond ordered frameworks of dialogue, or according to rules. Once more, the example of Henry V serves to illustrate this. In the evening before the battle of Agincourt (Henry V, 4), Henry (in disguise) locks into dialogue which has been developing amongst the troops, dialogue focused on their relationship with the king, and suggesting that it was not clear whether the king could be trusted not to give himself to ransom, thereby not respecting the sacrifice of the troops in previous battles. Henry continues the dialogue in his Crispin's Day speech, this time in role (Henry V, 4.3). He focuses on developing a sense of value, worth and mutuality to prepare the troops for the battle against the odds, and then continues the dialogue, but now with the French herald, beyond the community. Whilst this dialogue is ostensibly about the key practical matter at hand, it also links to the dialogue about trust with his troops. He refuses the call for ransom from the herald, with his troops as audience and thus still part of that dialogue, thereby reinforcing his commitment to them. This suggests that Henry's continuing accountability is located in ongoing dialogue that engages different narratives, and which is focused on vision and worth. For Shakespeare, the back drop is a continuing set of dialogues, into which the Crispin's Day speech drops, on honour. Honour is precisely connected to worth, and *Henry V*, and the *Henriad* as a whole, focus on and create dialogue around different views of the basis of honour - from Hotspur (honour as personal reputation), Falstaff (honour as being without worth to the ordinary man), and Henry V (honour as focused on shared worth and purpose). The last of these is precisely what emerges in the Crispin's Day speech, and is key to the motivation of the troops. The dialogue comes to a head in practice and in decision making, in this case in battle. However, this is not the result of a systematic framework of dialogue, but of leadership which is firstly aware of the different dialogues and, secondly, that enables the engagement of the different stakeholders in shared dialogues and, thirdly, that enables the different dialogues to focus on practice. This requires dynamic and responsive leadership and, in Henry's case, directly addresses purpose, competence (in this case in battle), values and worth



(honour), relationships (between the leader and his troops), and the significance of the practice in which they are involved.

This also suggests that dialogue is always with many voices, and that a key part of the practice is identifying those voices. Such dialogue is also not simply a tool of communication, separate from the identity, meaning and relationships. Sidorkin (1999), building on Bakhtin (1981), argues that it is ontological, focused in the very being of the person and relationships, enabling the plural identity of the person and the organisation to be held together. Moving beyond Levinas (1998), this suggests that all dialogue is polyphonic (many voiced), even that with the self. This also goes beyond Buber (1942), who argued for the primacy of being present in dialogue rather than for rational articulation. It suggests that the articulation of rational concepts and arguments, including specific reference to meaning and value, are as important to dialogue as any affective understanding. Epley (2014) refers to recent research which supports this view, arguing that knowledge of the other requires holistic dialogue.

Buber (cf. Anderson 1997), in his critique of Carl Rogers and dialogue in therapy, argues that, because there is power imbalance in the therapeutic relationship, this cannot lead to a dialogue which is mutual. However, the argument thus far suggests that most, if not all relationships, involve an imbalance of power, perceived or actual, and that this is a function of difference. Critical dialogue focused on agency, accountability and shared liability precisely works through these aspects of power, because its holistic engagement has to critically address the power of ideas (intellectual power), the power of feeling (affective power), and the power of culture<sup>5</sup>. Again, this is exemplified in Shakespeare's view of Henry V. The St Crispin's Day speech focuses on mutuality, and re-engagement with core culture,<sup>6</sup> in the context of the huge difference in power and status. This was all in the context of responding to plural narratives in relation to the nation, to community, the enemy, the future, the family, and so on. *Pace* Buber, power is addressed precisely in dialogue.

The means of addressing that power, and of enabling the development of mutuality, are both by good dialogue being modelled and also by the development of formal and informal contract. The first of these is focused, for Rogers, on the modelling of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard, and this would apply equally to the leaders of institutions or organisations. The second involves the

5 All of which can be abused.

6 Central to this, for Henry, was God-centred kingship, something that left him uncertain, given that his father took the throne from Richard II. Hence, dialogues include one with God.

development of community, which gives permission to question and develop dialogue. For Henry V, this involves informal contracts where the king gives permission to characters to articulate advice or to challenge, and even to give critical input.<sup>7</sup> His dialogue with the Lord Chief Justice sets this out, as does his treatment of Williams (Henry V. 4.4, and 4.8), where he rewards the earlier challenge of the soldier with money. As I have suggested elsewhere (Author 2001) in the context of teaching and therapy, contract, in the sense of setting out aims, objectives, expectations and procedures, is a key aspect of dialogue. This is empowering because it enables the person to explicitly articulate and test his or her voice. It provides a framework of meaning and behaviour which allows mutual challenge. This, in turn, enables the development of critical agency, taking responsibility for how the person views their life and worth, and how this life might be developed. The other then emerges through the development of their agency, and thus leads to learning in all the different levels of responsibility. In this light the development of agency is precisely empowerment.

This also enables the development of shared responsibility, not simply the recognition of shared interests or shared values, *pace* Porter and Kramer (2011). The working through of responsibility is also in itself a development of power, focused on creative action and hence on the embodiment of responsibility. Far from a continual journey towards the other (as in Levinas), this suggests a shared journey on which the other is discovered through intentional action. It is the imperative of action that moves dialogue forward. The stress on action and dialogue once more takes this beyond Levinas and Buber, addressing the embodiment of the different relationships through creative practice. The parallels with Habermas and his rules of dialogue that are focused in action are, at this stage, close, the major difference being once more his focus on rationality, a lack of systematic focus on holistic dynamics, and a lack of focus on multiple and ongoing dialogue. There are also questions about the nature of the learning experience in the Habermas framework, and how the development of virtues relates to this.

## Conclusion

Solomon (1992) suggests that integrity is not one virtue but a collection of several virtues, which come together to help form a coherent character and identity. This paper argues that integrity is, rather, focused in the practice of responsibility and its three interrelated modes. This requires relating to a complex environment, finding the means of relating to different values, but is also focused on a wider sense of

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7 Such contracts can also be formal and also can involve the establishment of boundaries. Hence, Henry newly crowned in Henry IV part 2, firmly places Falstaff's outside the boundary of dialogue (reflecting Falstaff's nihilistic perspective).

common good, expressed through shared action. Integrity relates to the different virtues precisely through the practice of the virtues, enabling the development of the three modes of responsibility. Central to this is dialogue, focused on four elements of holism and relating to the plural narratives of the social environment over time and in relation to practice and identity. I argue that this provides the basis for a view of dialogue which deepens and develops the theories of Habermas and others.

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