Overcoming what divides us: Global Civic Friendship and 'Full Development of the Human Personality'

Superar lo que nos divide: la Amistad Cívica Global y «El pleno desarrollo de la Personalidad Humana»

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Abstract:

This paper defends the ideals of education for human flourishing and global friendship announced in Article 26, § 2 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It argues that character education is an essential component of education for human flourishing and global friendship, and that character education must do more than teach general principles and cultivate virtues of character. It must also confront the mistrust, resentments, and myths that divide societies by facilitating the formation of school communities and friendships that bridge the chasms of 'us' and 'them' group identities. The paper outlines the role of just school communities in character education, the importance of civic friendship, the psychological research on intergroup contact, and the fostering of global civic friendship. It concludes that character education adequate to today's challenges can only succeed through a whole-school approach that is need supportive, just, and promotes friendly intergroup contact in the interest of global civic friendship.

Keywords: character education, flourishing, civic friendship, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, basic psychological needs, just school communities, intergroup contact.

Resumen:

Este trabajo defiende los ideales de la educación para el florecimiento humano y la amistad cívica global enunciados en el Artículo 26 §2 de la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos de 1948. Sostiene que

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la educación del carácter es un componente esencial de la educación para el florecimiento y la amistad global, y que la educación del carácter tiene que hacer más que enseñar principios generales y cultivar las virtudes del carácter. También debe combatir las desconfianzas, los resentimientos y los mitos que dividen las sociedades por medio de la formación de comunidades y amistades escolares que hacen puente sobre los abismos de las identidades de grupo de 'nosotros' y 'ellos'. El trabajo perfila el papel de las comunidades escolares justas en la educación del carácter, la importancia de la amistad cívica, la investigación psicológica sobre los contactos intergrupales y la promoción de la amistad cívica global. Concluye que una educación del carácter a la altura de los retos de hoy en día solo puede tener éxito por medio de un planteamiento que abarque todo el colegio y que apoye las necesidades, respete la justicia y promocione los contactos de amistad intergrupales en aras a fomentar la amistad cívica global.

Descriptores: educación del carácter, educación para el florecimiento, amistad cívica, la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos, necesidades psicológicas básicas, comunidades escolares justas, contacto intergrupal.

1. Introduction

Article 26, § 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds that:

> Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (United Nations, 1948)

As we approach the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948, we should consider what it would mean for education to fully honor the terms of this provision. What would it mean for education to be 'directed to the full development of the human personality'? How should it endeavor to strengthen 'respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'? How should it promote peace and 'understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups'?

The wording of this provision implies nothing less than education for human *flourishing* and making education for *global civic friendship* and justice a centerpiece of education for human flourishing. It implies that a rights-respecting and globally focused form *of character education* is part of what every person needs, has a right to, and owes one another.

Section 1 of Article 29 articulates this relationship between *needs*, *rights*, and *duties*: 'Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and

full development of his personality is possible'. This presupposes as self-evident that:

1. 'Free and full development of [one's human] personality' is what all human beings would choose for themselves. It signifies free and full development of a person's *potential*, or, in other words, thriving, flourishing, living well, or living a flourishing life.

2. It is not possible for human beings to flourish — to experience the free and full development of their personality — except as members of a community that provides what they need to live well. A community that does this by securing fundamental interests or basic needs is implicitly equated with one that respects the human rights enumerated in the Declaration and is to that extent *just*.

3. The function of human rights and a just world is to secure the fundamental interests or basic needs that are foundational to living well.

4. The benefits of justice inevitably entail corresponding duties — a correlativity of *rights* and *duties*, in the service of securing fundamental interests or basic *needs*.

These are cornerstones of the idea of a just world in which people can live well.

Yet, today human rights and democracy are in retreat as authoritarian nationalism reasserts itself (Müller, 2016; Ignatieff, 2017; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; Sadurski, 2022), as global education policy — led by the OECD, World Bank, and PISA — is distracted from educating the whole person and citizen by promises of continuous economic growth (Blum, 2023; Tamir, 2023), and as the heat, drought, and fires of a growing climate emergency fuel wars and mass migration (Hammer, 2013). UNESCO has recently reaffirmed the spirit of the 1948 affirmation of education for the 'full development of the human personality' in reports on flourishing as an aim of education (e.g., de Ruyter et al., 2020), but flourishing remains a contested idea. This is primarily because critics often see it as culturally specific in a way that disqualifies it as a public or shared educational ideal or makes 'imposing' it on students a violation of their autonomy (e.g., Siegel, 2015; Hand, in press). Character education is contested on these grounds and others too numerous to mention.

My purpose in what follows is to outline a conception of how to fulfill the vision of education announced in Article 26, § 2 of the Declaration. In doing this I will address an urgent concern that is often overlooked by character educators: the dangerous polarization of public life in countries, such as

the United States, where authoritarian nationalist and radical right populist movements are threats to human rights and democracy. These movements exploit the erosion of civic friendship — the domestic and global civic friendship to which the Declaration is committed — and directly attack what is left of it, in the interest of consolidating authoritarian power (Müller, 2016; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; Curren, 2019; Sadurski, 2022). My central thesis is that in these circumstances, it is not enough for character educators to teach general principles and cultivate virtues of character. It must also confront the mistrust, resentments, and myths that divide us (Cramer, 2016; Hochschild, 2016; Wuthnow, 2018; Kruglanski, 2021; Curren, 2023c, in press). An essential aspect of this is facilitating the formation of school communities and friendships that bridge the chasms of 'us' and 'them' group identities.

I will begin by addressing education for flourishing and why character education is an essential aspect of it. I will then outline the role of just school communities in character education, the importance of civic friendship, the psychological research on intergroup contact, and the fostering of global civic friendship.

2. The role of character education in education for flourishing

The Declaration's reference to facilitating the 'full development of the human personality' evokes the idea, familiar to educators, of helping young people fulfill their potential. There are different ways to think about the kinds of fulfillment of potential that would benefit people or be good for them, but in the context of the Declaration the phrase 'full development of the human personality' implies fulfilling all of the relevant forms of human potential in ways that are good both for the individual and for society. The educational development of potential must be sufficiently well-rounded, good for the individual — including subjectively or from an experiential perspective — and admirable. When educators speak of helping students fulfill their potential, they take for granted that this fulfillment would be 'positive' or make some contribution to a flourishing society. They also take for granted that it would be personally rewarding or good for the students. So it is understood that fulfillment of potential, the activities in which this fulfillment occurs, and the resulting life, should all be good in the two-fold sense of being both good for the individual and good for the society. This is implicit not only in the Declaration's provisions concerning education, but also in the conception of liberal education descending from Aristotle (Curren, 2023a).

A question that has not been easy to answer is what forms or aspects of a person's potential must be fulfilled well in order for the fulfillment to be sufficiently well-rounded or constitute '*full* development of the human personality'. Must every child become skilled or

knowledgeable in a sport, music, practical arts, writing, and science, to experience adequate development of their potential?

My answer to this question relies on well-established findings in the science of well-being, specifically in Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), a key explanatory component of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2017: Ryan, in press).[1] Grounded in many hundreds of studies across the world, BPNT posits the existence of three universal psychological needs: for *autonomy* (experiencing self-directedness congruent with personal values and sense of self), *relatedness* (experiencing a supportive social climate and affirming relationships), and *competence* (experiencing oneself as capable). The satisfaction and frustration of these needs is linked to fulfillment of potential, and the related forms of potential can be categorized as *intellectual* or *agentive* (the potential for rational self-determination), *social*, and *productive* (the potential to create and do things) (Ryan et al., 2013; Curren, 2023a, 2023b [in press]). A key cross-culturally replicated finding is that the satisfaction of all three of these basic psychological needs through fulfillment of related potentials is essential to and predictive of happiness and other aspects of personal well-being.

An implication of this is that we can define a baseline of adequately 'full development of the human personality' in terms of education that allows all children to fulfill their intellectual, social, and productive potential in ways that enable them to meet their needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. The satisfaction of those needs is predictive of happiness and gives children a foundation of experience in making progress in their lives on which they can build. This rests on cross-culturally replicated science and is compatible with cultural pluralism and personal self-determination in how the relevant forms of potential are fulfilled and needs satisfied.

There is, thus, no basis for the criticism that education for flourishing is *inherently* incompatible with diversity and personal autonomy. Harvey Siegel's version of the criticism is predicated on a defense of children's autonomy that many defenders of cultural self-determination in education would reject, but the basic response to both is the same. Siegel (2015) argues that making flourishing an aim of education would violate students' autonomy by imposing on them an aim they may not have for themselves — a 'presupposed understanding of well-being' that may not 'correctly characterize[e] *their* well-being' or be 'worth having' from their perspective (Siegel, 2015, p. 121). My response to this is that many possible conceptions of education for flourishing would be vulnerable to this criticism, but this one is not. Siegel seems to assume that nothing of educational significance could be objectively known to be essential to

students having good lives, except that they need to develop autonomous critical rationality 'enabling them both to envision possibilities and to evaluate their desirability intelligently' (122). We know far more than this, however. To be able to envision desirable possibilities *for themselves* and have any chance of achieving them, children need to experience gratifying progress in their own lives by becoming capable, positively connected, and self-determining. They need opportunities to discover what they can be good at, enjoy, and find meaningful, since neither they nor the adults in their world will know in advance what is best for them. Insisting that educators be more focused on enabling children to experience such progress in psychologically need supportive settings is not an imposition on them; it is foundational to meaningful autonomy.

The next step in seeing what this picture of adequate fulfillment of potential requires of education is to realize that fulfilling intellectual, social, and productive potential requires education that enables students to *understand* many aspects of their world, cultivates moral, intellectual, and other *virtues*, and builds the *capabilities* needed to regularly experience competence. Psychologists refer to 'social competence' as what is needed to experience 'positive' relatedness to members of one's communities, but from a philosophical perspective what is essential is *valuing* one's fellow human beings or being virtuously motivated (Curren & Ryan, 2020). Relating to others in positive ways involves affirming their value. Reliably satisfying any of the three basic psychological needs also requires competence in making decisions, so an adequate education in virtues would also recognize the complexity of the contexts and decisions that people must make, hence the importance of education in the forms of understanding and thinking essential to good judgment (i.e., *phronesis* or practical wisdom) (Curren, 2014). An adequately well-rounded education must therefore include character education in moral and intellectual virtues.

Valuing human beings involves valuing what is important to their well-being, hence their fundamental interests, basic needs, or human rights. An education in valuing one's fellow human beings should thus include strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This could involve requiring students to study the Declaration and engaging them in discussions of the rights it enumerates. Meaningful discussions of the basis and implications of these human rights are not easy to lead, but children are quite capable of engaging with enthusiasm in the kind of inquiry involved.[2] And educators surely *owe* students the opportunity to have a strong practical understanding of the rights they have as children and will have as adults. Indeed, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) *requires* educational authorities to ensure that all children receive comprehensive and systematic education concerning their own rights (United

Nations, 1989).[3] Teaching for deep understanding of the rights and freedoms enumerated in the UDHR would be an important aspect of strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, but it is surely not sufficient.

3. Just school communities

Character education has not only curricular and pedagogical aspects, of course. It takes place within a social setting that may be more or less suitable in how it functions as a community. One key aspect of this is how *need supportive* the setting is, meaning the extent to which it provides students with acceptable ways to regularly meet their basic psychological needs. These needs play key roles not only in well-being but in learning, through the regulation of students' motivation and their internalization and integration of values and goals. In a need supportive environment, students are likely to accept the good values modeled and explained for them as their own, and the substantive compatibility of these values with the satisfaction of their basic psychological needs makes it possible for them to fully integrate those values into their identities. Values and goals that are not compatible with the satisfaction of one or more of the three basic psychological needs may be impossible to fully integrate into a motivationally coherent identity or self.

A central aspect of having good character is being appropriately moved by what is ethically significant in the world one encounters, and fully integrated valuing of this kind is an equally central aspect of good character education. Spontaneity of appropriate valuing is something very different from being controlled by external rewards and punishments or by related forms of 'introjected' motivation, such as fear of failing or being rejected (Curren & Ryan, 2020). Being valued for ourselves is something we all want and need (Demir et al., 2011), so it is quite natural that we would value personal attributes that embody such valuing as virtues or elements of good character (Walker et al., 2016). Less obvious, but well established in SDT research, is that our valuing of others is essential to our own well-being (Martela & Ryan, 2019; Prentice et al., 2019; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010).

A need supportive school community should also function as a *just school community* in ways that are related to the Declaration's Article 29.1 provision that, "Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible". Lawrence Kohlberg's original model of just school communities envisioned giving students direct democratic control of their schools — and thereby responsibility for how well their schools function — so they could experience justice in ways that would encourage its internalization (Power, 1988). Kohlberg's developmental theory did not offer an account of the motivational dynamics of such

identification, but within a few years the just school community model was modified to rely on Basic Psychological Need Theory and give less emphasis to students playing roles in school governance (Power & Hart, 2005). In my own work on the just school community model I have emphasized the role of need support, the importance of students having opportunities to use and develop their capacities of rational self-governance, and the importance of schools operating not only on just principles in their internal affairs but with respect to students' opportunities to make progress in living good lives beyond the school (Curren, 2020).

The development of capacities of rational self-governance are a fundamental aspect of moral development and character education, yet it is not unusual for schools to adopt the mindset of criminal justice systems designed for mature adults when they should instead adopt a developmental and educative mindset in how they respond to behavioral problems in schools. A problem-solving approach to student failures to meet behavioral expectations can strengthen students' capacities of self-regulation and good decision-making, while building the positive relationships within schools that students and teachers both need (Greene, 2018; Curren, 2020). A great merit of the Just School Community model is that it adopts a whole school approach to character education, giving students roles in disciplinary practices that greatly enhance the educational value of those practices. Adding a developmental perspective on self-governance and a problem-solving approach to the Just School Community model adds even more value for character education.

My further update to the Kohlberg model has been to argue that it is not enough for the internal affairs of schools to operate on just principles that allow children to directly experience the inherent correlativity of rights and duties. Kohlberg seems to have regarded a just school community as a child-sized version of a just society, but there is a difference. Adults live and must find their way in the society, but children live and must find their way both in their school *and* in the society. A school should thus be both internally just *and* just in the way it enables students to make their way in living good lives beyond the school. From an educational perspective, students need to experience progress in their lives both within and beyond the school.

From a civic perspective, it is helpful, whenever possible, for students to be educated in just school communities in which they can encounter and befriend peers who are as diverse as the wider civic communities to which they belong. From the standpoint of the Declaration, this would mean having opportunities to make friendly connections to peers as diverse as the peoples of the global human community to which we all belong. Schools can only approximate this by degrees, but it is the most powerful way in which education can facilitate

intergroup friendship and valuing of all human beings.

4. Civic Friendship

The personal and civic benefits of educating diverse students together can be substantial, if they interact as equals, in cooperative, non-competitive, and rewarding ways, and persist in this long enough to form friendships. Friendships that bridge the chasms of trust and cooperation in polarized societies can sustain the hard conversations that are essential to changing minds. The ideal, described by Elizabeth Anderson, sees the integration of different groups within societies as occurring in four stages (Anderson, 2010, p. 116):

1. *Formal desegregation* (the abolition of legal separation).

2. *Spatial integration*, or "common use on terms of equality of facilities and public spaces by substantial numbers of all [groups]".

3. *Formal social integration*, involving cooperation in accordance with ground rules that require equal treatment.

4. *Informal social integration*, involving substantial intergroup friendships, trust, and cooperation that go beyond what the ground rules of formal integration require.

The hope in establishing formal social integration in schools, colleges, and elsewhere, is that the intergroup contact it requires will enable members to learn that they like and can trust, rely on, and be at ease with members of other groups. It will be helpful to consider an example of the power of civic friendships among college students before addressing some key aspects of the theory and research on intergroup friendship.

4.1. The Derek Black Story[4]

Derek Black is the son of Don Black, the founder of *Stormfront* (a leading online platform of the white nationalist (WN) movement in the United States) and a former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). His godfather is his father's best friend, David Duke, who is also a former KKK Grand Wizard, Neo-Nazi, and leader of the WN movement in the United States. Derek grew up in the WN movement and had never dated anyone who had not grown up within it. He was the de facto leader of the movement by the time he began college in 2010, having invented as a teenager the preposterous but passionately held WN doctrine that 'white' people in the United States are victims of racial 'genocide' perpetrated by a global Jewish conspiracy. He promoted that Latinx and Jewish people are not 'white' and advocated the forcible expulsion of all 'non-white' people from the United States. During his first year of college he secretly broadcast his WN radio show from the New College campus, in Florida, while also coming to know, respect, and like a Peruvian immigrant, Juan, and an orthodox Jewish

classmate, Matthew. He dated a Jewish classmate, Rose.

In the spring of his first year of college, Derek was exposed by a classmate as a leader in the WN movement, triggering both outrage and soul searching on the New College online student forum. Should Derek be ostracized? Could friendly engagement with him change his beliefs? Should solidarity with the victims of white nationalist hate crimes be prioritized? Would those who remained friends with him be suspected of sympathizing with his views and be called out for it? Would it be unethical to treat him as a friend in the interest of trying to change him? Many of Derek's classmates at New College did shun and ostracized him, but Matthew invited Derek to his weekly Shabbat dinners where their friendship deepened, and others learned to trust Derek enough to befriend him and sustain conversations that changed his mind. A growing friendship with another friend, Allison, helped convince him that his advocacy of WN ideas caused harm for which he should make amends. The strength of their friendship also gave him the acceptance and courage he needed to face the profound rupture of his pre-college relationships that would likely occur if he renounced his WN ideology.

Derek did eventually renounce his WN ideology and did so very publicly in an effort to apologize and make amends for the harm he caused to countless people. Even some of his most vocal critics at New College acknowledged his integrity and courage in doing this, and the Southern Poverty Law Center removed him from its list of extremists who promote ideas that inspire racially motivated murders and other hate crimes. As he anticipated, his family and WN friends were outraged by this renunciation of the WN cause to which they had devoted much of their lives. All but his father lost all trust in him and cut him off.

Derek's transformation led an online publication, the *Daily Beast,* to write a story about him. The author speculated that Derek 'thought his way out of WN by reading studies and books' (Saslow, 2018, p. 225). Derek thought the story was mostly fair but wrote to the author, explaining that:

> People who disagreed with me were critical in this process. Especially those who were my friends [regardless of my views], but who let me know when we talked about it that they thought my beliefs were wrong and took time to provide evidence and civil arguments. I didn't always agree with their ideas, but I listened to them and they listened to me.
>
> Furthermore, a critical juncture was when I'd realize that a friend was considered an outsider by the philosophy I supported. It's a huge contradiction to share your summer plans with someone whom you completely respect, only to then realize that your ideology doesn't consider them a full member of society. I couldn't resolve that (Saslow, 2018, p. 225).

This story, and others like them, are rich in lessons about moral develop-

ment and transformation, and the ways in which belief, trust, and valuing are deeply entangled. Beliefs about people and their worthiness of respect and trust are propagated through networks of *epistemic* dependence and trust that are also to some extent networks of *social* dependence and trust (Nguyen, 2020). Liking and being liked by different kinds of people alter these networks and what we can know. A friendship can present us with evidence that a kind of person we were not predisposed to like, respect, or trust — a Peruvian immigrant, perhaps, or someone who is only beginning to escape an echo chamber of racist mythology and conspiracy theories — actually is someone we can like, respect, and trust. This not only changes what we know, it alters what we *can* know by altering the network of trusted sources and evidence on which we rely. The resulting alterations of belief can have a profound impact on the kinds of people we understand, respect, and will cooperate with in friendship and peace. In Derek's case, there was an obvious sense in which the kinds of people he understood, respected, and would cooperate with could have been changed by reading the kinds of research studies and books that his friend Alison shared with him; but without friends like Alison, Juan, Matthew, and Rose whom he liked, respected, and trusted, he might never have taken those kinds of studies and books seriously.

4.2. The idea of civic friendship

I have written at some length previously on Aristotle's much discussed conception of civic friendship (*politikê philia*) (Curren, 2000, 2019, 2021, 2023c [in press], 2023d [in press]; Curren & Dorn, 2018; Curren & Elenbaas, 2020), and will limit my explanation of it to a couple key points. Aristotle conceived of civic friendship as a social condition of mutually recognized mutual goodwill that is foundational to a society functioning as a partnership in living well. The language of article 26, § 2 and article 29, § 1 of the Declaration is fairly remarkable in the extent to which it echoes this idea of a community that exhibits friendship and cooperation in sustaining conditions in which everyone can live well. Aristotle's understanding of the basis of such a community is that it is made possible by justice and by intergroup contact facilitated by institutions that bring diverse citizens together.

Despite some scholarly puzzlement over the relationships between justice and friendship in Aristotle's works, I believe his view is compatible with Liz Anderson's account of the four stages of integration — specifically, the transition from *formal* social integration to *informal* social integration. The ground rules of the former require equal treatment, as justice does, and the hope is that the experience of interacting in accordance with these ground rules will provide a kind of habituation favorable to the formation of substantial intergroup friendships, trust, and cooperation that go beyond what the rules require and become self-sustaining. These substantial and self-sustaining intergroup friendships would

involve mutual liking or appreciation of the goodness in one another, and this liking or appreciation would enhance or transform the friends' understanding of and goodwill toward other members of the groups represented by their friends. Having diverse friends would in other words put friendly faces on kinds of people who might otherwise seem alien, strange, and threatening. Dispositions of goodwill would potentially reach across the whole society, not by moving outward through geographically concentric circles but through networks of overlapping group membership (Curren, 2021). Aristotle regarded this kind of transmission of goodwill as predictable, based on common observations about human nature.

From a contemporary standpoint, the conditions that lead to civic polarization typically involve patterns of physical separation that align across many spheres and thereby inhibit different kinds of people from interacting with each other (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). These include residential, geographic, occupational, educational, religious, recreational, cultural, and other spheres. Schools, colleges, and universities that recruit diverse student bodies and provide homes for them over a span of years may offer some of the best opportunities for cultivating civic friendship that can reduce polarization, if the observations on which Aristotle relied were accurate. Because it is through networks rather than concentric circles that goodwill and trust can spread, children's earliest friendships can be significant for the development of global civic friendship (Curren, 2021).

5. Intergroup contact and global civic friendship

Aristotle's assumptions about the formation and transmission of civic friendship have been substantially vindicated, as research in Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) has advanced our understanding of these matters, especially with regard to intimate or close relationships and indirect or extended forms of intergroup contact, in which people do not have personal interactions with members of other groups.

Bringing people from different social groups together can facilitate the formation of intergroup friendships when these factors are present:

- Participants are treated as equals.
- Contact is interpersonal: i.e., repeated and characterized by reciprocal self-disclosure and building of trust.
- Contact is pleasant or rewarding.
- The authorities and norms of the relevant groups favor intergroup contact.
- Those involved have cooperative goals for the contact (Amir, 1969; see also Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Turner & Feddes, 2011; Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015; Turner & Cameron, 2016; Dovidio et al., 2017; Paolini et al., 2021).

Intergroup friendships protect against the development of prejudice by reducing anxiety about cross-group interactions, increasing empathy across group lines, and promoting respectful behavior. Intergroup friendships and forms of indirect intergroup contact, such as seeing interracial couples, are also helpful in overcoming existing prejudice (Cameron et al., 2011; Dovidio, Eller, & Hewstone, 2011; Dhont, Van Hiel, & Hewstone, 2014; Marinucci et al., 2020; White et al., 2021).

Marco Marinuci and colleagues (2020) summarize some key findings, as follows:

> Intimate relations [cross-group friendships, being roommates, romantic relationships, etc.] have been found to improve explicit and implicit attitudes, attitude strength and accessibility, perceived outgroup variability, empathy, trust, perspective-taking, comfort interacting with the out-group, intended behavior, and the perceived value of intergroup contact, and they reduce blatant and subtle prejudice, perceived outgroup threat, intergroup anxiety, and endorsement of outgroup discrimination in behavior and government policy (Marinuci et al., 2020, p. 66).

Research has also vindicated the idea I attribute to Aristotle, that having a friend unlike oneself puts a friendly face on the outgroup to which the friend belongs. That is, it induces the projection of positive perceptions of the friend onto the entire group. This is known as 'group salience' (Paolini et al., 2014). Further, there is evidence that positive effects of direct contact with a member of one outgroup can transfer to other outgroups and their members (the so-called 'secondary transfer effect'; Boin et al., 2021). From the standpoint of character education, this implies that friendships with one or two people from groups (e.g., countries, religions, or races) different from one's own can be valuable in yielding wider goodwill and respect for human rights.

Creating educational communities that are welcoming, collaborative, and fair to all students can provide settings in which intergroup contact can facilitate civic friendship that is beneficial for the tenor of public life. There are many possible strategies available to residential college communities, including encouragement of cooperative learning experiences, incentives for student organizations to engage in collaborative projects, pairing of students from different groups as roommates, heterogenous pairings of advisors and advisees, global study experiences, and exchange programs (Berryman-Fink, 2006).[5] The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has advocated a global problem-solving focus for collegiate education that connects students across the world (Hovland, 2006), and my historian co-author Charles Dorn and I have defended this approach as valuable in facilitating global civic friendship (Curren & Dorn, 2018). This could connect students across the globe through mostly remote learning, creating networks of friendly

cooperation, and nurturing multi-disciplinary, cross-regional engagement with problems of common concern. Problem-focused learning of this kind can be a vehicle not only for global cooperative learning but for practice in the demanding art of making properly informed, real-world decisions. To the extent that these decisions are made collectively in trying to address global problems, they may be steps toward a more just global community. Making good on the Declaration's call for education that promotes friendship among all nations would require sustained investment along these or similar lines.[6]

6. Conclusion

This paper has defended the vision of education for human flourishing, respect for human rights, and global civic friendship and cooperation announced in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. When the Declaration was adopted in 1948, fascism had just been defeated in an enormously costly world war. Today we face the reality that authoritarian nationalist ideas are once again a threat to human rights, tolerance, civic friendship, and peace. Fascism and other forms of authoritarian nationalism are politics of 'us' and 'them' that deny the humanity and equal rights of 'them' (Stanley, 2018). They are an affront to the universal basic respect for all persons on which common morality insists and that character education must defend.

Character education is a vital ingredient in a comprehensive approach to overcoming what divides so many societies today — a comprehensive approach that understands and addresses unmet needs and legitimate grievances, distinguishing truths from myths. The 1948 Declaration signaled such an approach, and this paper reflects this fact in locating character education within the larger enterprise of enabling everyone to live well. It has argued that character education adequate to the challenges we face can only succeed through a whole-school approach that is need supportive, just, and promotes friendly intergroup contact in the interest of global civic friendship.

Notes

[1] SDT has developed over the past 50 years into an empirically grounded systematic theory of psychological needs, motivation, well-being, and development, with 100,000 publications and 1.5 million citations (Ryan, in press, xi).

[2] Teachers and school leaders would need a basic introduction to ideas about the nature, basis, and applications of human rights and would need to *model* honest ethical inquiry. Facilitating collective inquiry is more productive for nurturing civic discourse and more powerful for nurturing children's moral seriousness and self-determination than teaching with the idea that one already knows all the answers to complex ethical questions. For an overview of the philosophical debates concerning human rights, see Cruft et al. (2015). On children's interest and ability in ethical inquiry, see Matthews, 1980, 1984; Lipman, 2003; Lipman et al., 1980; Pritchard, 1985, 1996.

[3] The United States is the only country in the world that has not signed the CRC. While there are parts of the United States, such as Vermont and Chicago, in which it is used as a standard of good practice relating to children, the general pattern in recent years has been a weakening of child protection law associated with a

doctrine of unlimited parental rights. On efforts to advance children's rights in the United States, see http://www.responsiblehomeschooling.org; Other countries, including Canada, have made progress toward honoring the CRC. See https://childrenfirstcanada.org/.

[4] This account is based on Saslow (2018), a book about Derek Black written with his cooperation and that of his father and several friends.

[5] The practices of *Colegios Mayores* (residential college communities) also warrant serious consideration in this context, not least because they have existed across Europe for nearly a millennium. See Dabdoub et al., 2022; Suárez, 1966.

[6] For related works, see Nussbaum (2010); Kitcher (2022, 2023).

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