

Reading Questions for February 3

These questions cover some excerpts from Aristotle's book *Nicomachean Ethics*. The answers do not have to be turned in and you only have to read enough of the text to answer the questions. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

This week we are surveying some key theories in normative ethics. Today we are looking at a theory called "Aristotelian Ethics". The readings for this week are by the people who originally came up with the theories. They wrote a long time ago and understanding them will at times be somewhat difficult.

*Questions:*

1. On pages 111-112, Aristotle discusses the way in which excellence of character is acquired. He seems to argue that excellence of character is mostly the result of habituation as opposed to either teaching or nature. What does he mean by this and is he right?
2. On page 117, Aristotle says that excellence is a kind of intermediacy. What does he mean by this? Is this statement helpful for figuring out what we ought morally to do?