

Research Library Monthly Reading List August 2026

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Human Flourishing – Part II

All items in this Reading List were sourced from the Globethics Repository Human Flourishing Collection. This collection was developed in support of the Global Ethics Forum 2026 (GEF 2026).

French translations produced with the assistance of Microsoft Copilot, August 2026.

Books

Brassington, Iain. 2013. *Bioscience and the Good Life*. Bloomsbury Academic. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321326>

Abstract: The field of biotechnology has provided us with radical revisions and reappraisals of the nature and possibilities of our biological existence. Yet beyond its immediate utility, does a life that is healthier, longer, or freer from disease make us 'better' or more moral people? Bioscience and the Good Life explores the complex relationship between modern biosciences and human flourishing, their sympathies and schisms, and the instances of their reconciliation. Here cognitive enhancement, longevity, and the spectacle of excellence in sports, are examined within the context of what constitutes a life well lived. Framing biotechnological innovation in the discourse of duty and ethics, Brassington advances an insightful and involved response to the existing debates between bioscientific optimists and pessimists, one which mediates their differences, and expands the traditional scope of their arguments.

Donaldson, Brianne, ed. 2025. *Knowing Life: The Ethics of Multispecies Epistemologies*. Routledge. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321338>

Abstract: This volume seeks multispecies answers to long-standing questions in Western philosophy: Who or what counts as a knower, what kinds of knowing are valid, and is knowledge a product of mind, body, or something else? Historically, these epistemic questions have been answered in ways that neutralize the knowing and knowledge contribution of and for more-than-human beings, as well as those on the margins of society considered less than "human." Consequently, these epistemic assumptions often support the destruction of ecological habitats, industrialization of food, animals, use of insect and plant toxins, water and air pollution, climate extinctions, ecological militarism, and living beings used for entertainment, research, and economic resources. Cross-cultural and multidisciplinary contributors challenge and expand these classical concepts through diverse modes of embodied engagement on multispecies knowing toward open futures of planetary co-flourishing.

Eze, Chielozona. 2021. *Justice and Human Rights in the African Imagination: We, Too, Are Humans*. Routledge. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321336>

Abstract: Justice and Human Rights in the African Imagination is an interdisciplinary reading of justice in literary texts and memoirs, films, and social anthropological texts in postcolonial Africa. Inspired by Nelson Mandela and South Africa's robust achievements in human rights, this book argues that the notion of restorative justice is integral to the proper functioning of participatory democracy and belongs to the moral architecture of any decent society. Focusing on the efforts by African writers, scholars, artists, and activists to build flourishing communities, the author discusses various quests for justice such as environmental justice, social justice, intimate justice, and restorative justice. It discusses in particular ecological violence, human rights abuses such as witchcraft accusations, the plight of people affected by disability, homophobia, misogyny, and sex trafficking, and forgiveness.

Haaz, Ignace. 2019. *The Value of Critical Knowledge, Ethics and Education : Philosophical History Bringing Epistemic and Critical Values to Values*. Globethics.net. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/170621>

Abstract: This book aims at six important conceptual tools developed by philosophers to address the meaning of ethics. The author develops each particular view in a chapter, hoping to constitute at the end a concise, interesting and easily readable whole. These concepts are: 1. Ethics and realism: elucidation of the distinction between understanding and explanation – the lighthouse type of normativity. 2. Leadership, antirealism and moral psychology – the lightning rod type of normativity. 3. Bright light on self-identity and positive reciprocity – the reciprocity type of normativity. 4. The virtue of generosity and its importance for inclusive education – the divine will type of normativity. 5. Ethical education as normative philosophical perspective. The normativity of self-transformation in education. 6. Aesthetics as expression of human freedom and concern for the whole world in which we live, and which lives in us. We share an artistic presence in communities of practice, and across wider human circles, and finally seek to unite in the celebration of friendship and humanity across boundaries in a philosophical garden.

Hughes, Conrad. 2025. *Changing Assessment: How to Design Curriculum for Human Flourishing*. BRILL. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321316>

Abstract: In this book, Conrad Hughes gives an overview of the assessment problem affecting schools and creates a path to take to broaden assessment and potentially reposition the whole purpose of schooling. It is a treatise that anyone interested in education and assessment should read.

Larsen, Mads, and Nina Witoszek. 2024. *Evolutionary Perspectives on Enhancing Quality of Life*. Cambridge University Press. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321329>

Abstract: Positive psychology is a thriving field with increasing political influence, yet there are few evolutionary studies that have had a tangible impact on rethinking mechanisms of well-being. This Element reviews existing literature and proposes synthesizing insights into human flourishing under an umbrella of multilevel selection (MLS). Conceptualizing quality of life as 'Happiness + Meaning = Well-being' draws attention to how people navigate between individual and group needs, and how they reconcile selfish pursuits with altruism and cooperation. We define happiness as the cluster of affects that reward individuals for solving adaptive challenges. We approach meaning as a reward that individuals experience when contributing to their community. By way of examples, we critically examine the Nordic well-being societies whose ethos and education advance prosocial values and practices and strike a balance between individualist and communitarian ideals.

Roessler, Beate, and Valerie Steeves, eds. 2025. *Being Human in the Digital World: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321325>

Abstract: This volume explores the different ways in which digital technologies might change the idea of being human. It investigates how our digitized society could transform the conditions that enable humans to direct their own lives, enjoy flourishing relationships, and be 'worthy of respect' in a networked world.

Shepherd, Dean A., Vinit Parida, and Joakim Wincent. 2022. *Entrepreneurial Responses to Chronic Adversity: The Bright, the Dark, and the in Between*. Palgrave Macmillan Cham. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321328>

Abstract: This open access book extends recent work on entrepreneurship in response to adverse events to explore entrepreneurial responses by people who face chronic adversity more deeply. Instead of focusing on the sort of responses intended to destroy the institutions that create and sustain chronic adversity, the authors are interested in how individuals use entrepreneurial action to find a way within these adverse constraints to improve their lives. They explore the positive outcomes arising from these entrepreneurial actions for the entrepreneurial actor and their family members as well as the negative consequences of these entrepreneurial responses to chronic adversity—outcomes that diminish others' well-being. The book relies on the lived experiences of those facing chronic adversity to provide insights into the bright—and dark—sides of entrepreneurship and the complexity of these relationships. It will serve as a valuable resource to scholars seeking to understand how entrepreneurial action is conceived and implemented by those facing challenging resource-poor environments.

Spowart, Sara, ed. 2025. *Advances in the Psychology of Well-Being. Vol. 33, edited by Usha Iyer-Raniga. Sustainable Development: Health and Wellbeing Series*. United Kingdom: IntechOpen. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321322>

Abstract: Advances in the Psychology of Well-Being explores the cutting edge of psychological science in a world increasingly in need of hope, resilience, and meaning. This academic volume brings together leading research on how to measure well-being more effectively, examines populations where happiness and flourishing are especially vital, and redefines what it means to live a psychologically healthy life. As global mental health challenges rise, the science of well-being offers not just solutions but a new direction.

Ten Have, Henk. 2025. *Color, Healthcare and Bioethics*. Open Book Publishers. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321394>

Abstract: This book explores the role of color in healthcare and bioethics, arguing that color is far more than a visual or aesthetic element. Traditionally regarded as secondary to objective medical observations or rational ethical debates, color has been marginalized in these fields. However, this book reveals that color is critical in diagnostic and therapeutic practices and subconsciously influences moral interpretations in bioethics. Through examples like the "blue hour," readers are invited to consider color as a medium rich with emotional and metaphorical meaning. From "feeling blue" to seeing the world in "black and white," color conveys complex messages that inform perceptions of health, morality, and identity. By bridging the gap between science, emotion, and ethics, this book illuminates how colors impact worldviews and influence understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Vorster, J.M. 2023. *Finding a Moral Compass for South Africa: Where Are We? Where Could We Go?* AOSIS Books. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321331>

Abstract: The research question of this book reads: Can South Africans, amidst all the contemporary distrust in political leadership and moral decay, find a moral compass that could lead them to a humane society of mutual trust, respect for each other, a flourishing life and a bright future for future generations? This book presents new perspectives on the psychopathology created by colonisation, the failures of the post-1994 dispensation regarding reconciliation, transformation, justice, distorted family life, violence, unity in diversity, as well as moral leadership and agency and indifference to a future of hope. It proposes a new moral compass that can lead South Africa out of the abyss.

Journal Articles

VanderWeele, Tyler J., Byron R. Johnson, Piotr T. Bialowolski, et al. 2025. "[The Global Flourishing Study: Study Profile and Initial Results on Flourishing](#)." *Nature Mental Health* 3 (6): 636–53. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321347>

Abstract: The Global Flourishing Study is a longitudinal panel study of over 200,000 participants in 22 geographically and culturally diverse countries, spanning all six populated continents, with nationally representative sampling and intended annual survey data collection for 5 years to assess numerous aspects of flourishing and its possible determinants. The study is intended to expand our knowledge of the distribution and determinants of flourishing around the world. Relations between a composite flourishing index and numerous demographic characteristics are reported. Participants were also surveyed about their childhood experiences, which were analyzed to determine their associations with subsequent adult flourishing. Analyses are presented both across and within countries, and discussion is given as to how the demographic and childhood relationships vary by country and which patterns appear to be universal versus culturally specific. Brief comment is also given on the results of a whole series of papers in the Global Flourishing Study Special Collection, employing similar analyses, but with more-specific aspects of well-being. The Global Flourishing Study expands our knowledge of the distribution and determinants of well-being and provides foundational knowledge for the promotion of societal flourishing.

Reports

Gallup. 2025. "[The Global Flourishing Study: What Contributes to a Life Well-Lived?: Highlights from the Inaugural Wave of Data Collection](#)." Accessed August 23, 2026. Gallup Inc. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321315>

Abstract: The Global Flourishing Study (GFS) is a collaboration among researchers at the Human Flourishing Program at Harvard, Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion and Gallup to address limitations in current research on human flourishing. The study is a groundbreaking research initiative that aims to deepen our understanding of one of humanity's enduring questions: What contributes to a life well-lived? At the core of this study is the concept of flourishing — "the relative attainment of a state in which all aspects of a person's life are good, including the contexts in which that person lives." (VanderWeele, T. J. (2017). To capture the complexity of this dynamic, the GFS measures flourishing across six core domains: happiness and life satisfaction, mental and physical health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, close social relationships, and financial and material stability. The initial wave of data collection included over 207,000 participants from 22 countries and Hong Kong (S.A.R. of China), representing a broad range of geographic regions, cultural backgrounds and economic development levels.

Video Resources

"Can We Engineer a Perfect World?: Steven Pinker & Tyler VanderWeele Discuss Human Flourishing at MIT : Video." 2023. Veritas Forum, March 2, 2023. Accessed August 23, 2026. URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321319>

Abstract: Epidemiologist Tyler VanderWeele (Harvard) and Social Psychologist Steven Pinker (Harvard) join in a video discussion moderated by Rosalind Picard (MIT) about human flourishing, religion, and methods of measuring progress in society. Hosted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on 3/2/23. Speakers: Tyler VanderWeele - John L. Loeb and Frances Lehman Loeb Professor of Epidemiology at Harvard University. Steven Pinker - Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University. Moderator: Rosalind Picard - Director of Affective Computing Research, MIT and Faculty Chair, MIT Mind+Hand+Heart.

YADEMA-Globethics. 2026. *"Human Flourishing through Storytelling : YADEMA-Globethics in Collaboration with National Geographic Indonesia : Pre-Event to Global Ethics Forum 2026 : Video."* YADEMA-Globethics, July 4, 2026. Accessed August 23, 2026. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4321393>

Abstract: This international online pre-event session, hosted by YADEMA-Globethics in collaboration with National Geographic Indonesia, was hosted on Saturday July 4, 2026. It brought together scholars, practitioners, storytellers, and members of the global network to explore how stories and visual narratives can deepen our understanding of human flourishing across cultures and communities. There were two sessions featuring expert speakers who explored insights from the Global Flourishing Study, perspectives on human flourishing in Indonesia, and the role of visual storytelling in making flourishing visible. Session 1- Expert Talks (English, video duration 0:00 - 1:46:57): Unlocking the Concept. Leading experts discussed the ongoing Global Flourishing Study and what it means to lead a good life: Distinguished Professor Dr. Byron Johnson, Director of the Institute for Global Human Flourishing at Baylor University. Associate Professor Dr. Dicky Sofjan, Founder and Board Member of YADEMA, Vice President of Globethics, and Lecturer in Interreligious Studies at Universitas Gadjah Mada. Elis Zuliati Anis, Ph.D., Lecturer in the Communication Science Studies Programme at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan. Irzha Ayu Mandira (Moderator). Session 2 Editorial Masterclass: The Story Lab (video duration 2:53:27 - 5:00:30). Participants were invited to go behind the scenes with the Managing Editor of National Geographic Indonesia Mahandis Yoanata, and learn how to turn ideas into compelling , prize winning photo essays. Session moderator: Mahandis Yoanata.