**From a baby smiling: Reflections on virtues in development**

Robert Emde

In this essay I reflect on developmental studies carried out over the past 50 years, indicating that there are foundational givens in early moral development, ones that we rely on and contribute to what we value as virtues.  These include inborn universal social processes of reciprocity, empathy and valuation as well as underlying dynamic aspects of regulation that are intrinsic to the developmental process.  As positive adaptive influences, these features also have their dark sides and challenges across development, raising important questions for research, nurturing and society.