The Self-Respecting Animal

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Introduction

It is no secret that respect is an important part of Immanuel Kant's moral theory. When people draw on Kantian ethics, they often draw in particular on Kant's claim that humanity is to be respected. Kant's conception of and emphasis on respect have also, however, often been the focal point of objections to his moral theory. One such criticism is that Kant's conception of self-respect implies that human beings should value their purely rational and moral selves—something far abstracted from the everyday existences of human beings—while denying the relevance or importance of their animal selves.[1] Commentators have often defended Kant from this charge by pointing to evidence in his texts that he considered harmony between morality and animality an important part of human virtue—emphasizing, for instance, his support for the cultivation of emotions that line up well with morality. [2]

There is something unsatisfying about this type of solution, however. There is plentiful evidence in Kant's texts that he considered the *dis*harmony between animality and morality an important component of the human relationship with morality. We can see this especially in

[1] To cite just two examples, Michael Neumann (2000) argues that Kant's theory of respect cannot really involve respecting persons as we think of them precisely because of its focus on the moral self, at the expense of any value for the animal self. As Neumann explains: "For [Kant], the object of respect is the noumenal [that is, the purely rational/moral] self, and the reason for respecting it is its rational nature. The empirical [or animal] self, on the other hand, has neither dignity nor intrinsic value. But virtually all our individuality and personality [in the everyday sense] are located in the empirical self" (294). Robin S. Dillon (1995) raises a similar concern, that on classical conceptions of self-respect like Kant's, the self referred to is a "thin" or "generic" version of the self, one composed only of rights, consciousness, or rationality—something "disembodied" (295-6). This kind of self-respect "is compatible with and even encourages self-alienation, for it allows that I can respect myself without paying attention to who I am, without taking me seriously" (296).

[2] See Anne Margaret Baxley (2010), Paul Formosa (2010), Sandra Fairbanks (2000), Paul Guyer (1993).

Kant's claim that human beings must stand in a relationship of respect (*Achtung*) with the moral law:

> The moral level on which a human being… stands is respect for the moral law. The disposition incumbent upon him to have in observing it is to do so from duty, not from voluntary liking or even from an endeavor he undertakes unbidden, gladly and of his own accord; and his proper moral condition, in which he can always be, is *virtue*, that is, moral disposition *in conflict*, and not *holiness* in the supposed *possession* of a complete *purity* of dispositions of the will. (5:84)

In this passage, Kant offers two different models for how a person might be oriented toward the moral law. We can call these, following Kant, the respectful and the holy model of morality. Persons who are respectful in relation to the moral law conform to it in conflict with themselves, with internal resistance. Persons who are holy in relation to the moral law, by contrast, do what is morally right in full harmony with themselves—they act well and "gladly." Kant insists that of these two models, human beings must operate on the respectful model.[3]

Kant's commitment to this claim shapes the very basic concepts he uses to discuss morality. One example is his use of the concept of "duty," which is pervasive.[4] Kant writes that "[t]he very *concept of duty* is already the concept of a *necessitation* (constraint) of free choice through the law," and that for this reason it applies not to all rational beings, but specifically to "*human beings*, rational *natural* beings, who are unholy enough that pleasure can induce them to

[3] Elsewhere, Kant writes that respect is "[t]he consciousness of a *free* submission of the will to the law, *yet as combined with an unavoidable constraint*" (5:80, emphasis mine). Again in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, he defines respect as "properly the representation of *a worth that infringes upon my self-love*" (4:401fn, emphasis mine).

[4] The fact that human beings must act morally under constraint is also the source of Kant's discussion of the moral law as an imperative. "Imperative" is, for Kant a technical term that means something like "command." Its use makes explicit reference to the fact that the agent subject to the command might not want to obey it. In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant brings in imperatives explicitly as the form that laws take when "reason solely by itself does not adequately determine the will [of the person to whom the law applies, i.e.] if [their] will is exposed also to subjective conditions (certain incentives) that are not always in accord with objective ones" (4:412). The moral law takes imperatival form for us specifically *because* we are not "holy" beings, but beings who are capable of being moved by a sensibility that does not necessarily track the moral law (see also 5:32). Kant makes this point again in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, when he explains that "for a being in whom reason quite alone is not the determining ground of the will, [the moral law] is an *imperative*, that is, a rule indicated by an 'ought'" (5:20).

break the moral law" (6:379). Such beings, he explains, obey the moral law "*reluctantly* (in the face of opposition from their inclinations)" (*ibid*).

The importance of disharmony to Kant's understanding of human morality is also evident in his claim that it is more appropriate for human beings to represent morality under the aesthetic of the sublime (in which we experience a pleasure that is conflicted) than under the aesthetic of the beautiful (which involves harmonious pleasure). As he explains, this is important because morality ought to call up "the feeling of respect… since human nature does not agree with the good of its own accord, but only through the dominion that reason exercises over sensibility" (5:271).

It is an integral component of Kant's theorizing, then, that human beings have a relationship of *respect* with the moral law, where this involves valuing the moral law specifically as something constraining and disharmonious with oneself. Kant has often been criticized for precisely this emphasis on disharmony. For example, Kant's contemporary, Friedrich Schiller (1793), raised the concern that Kant's emphasis on duty might give the impression that morality involves a constant war with one's nature. Schiller recommended instead that Kant should encourage his readers to aspire to what Schiller called "the beautiful soul" (151). [5] This model is

[5] My focus here is on Kant's view, not Schiller's, so I am not exploring in full how the best reading of Kant and the best reading of Schiller distinguish them from each other—it may turn out that on a sophisticated reading of both there is no very large difference, as Kant himself suggests in his reply to Schiller (6:23fn). As Anne Margaret Baxley (2010) points out, however, Kant's concession in this same reply is only that a happy exterior can sometimes serve as an indicator of a more full-fledged inner commitment to morality. This does not fully endorse Schiller's claim, which was that virtue is not complete without harmony between one's sensibility and moral obligations. Jeffrey Barnouw (1980) also argues that there remains an important distinction between Schiller's and Kant's approach, which is evident in their differing approaches to the aesthetic experiences of the sublime and the beautiful. Whereas Schiller generally aims to undermine distinctions between what might seem like different experiences or ways of being (the sublime and the beautiful; acting out of desire and acting out of duty), Kant is dedicated to preserving such distinctions in their opposition. Reed Winegar (2013) argues that Kant's more complete response to Schiller addresses the other philosopher's concern by insisting that the moral law can still be conceived of as something *constraining* without our perceiving this constraint as *oppressive*. This reply by Kant relies heavily, according to Winegar, on Kant's theory of the sublime as an aesthetic experience. Winegar's reading is further supported by some interesting differences between Schiller's description of the beautiful soul and Kant's description of the appropriately uplifted virtuous attitude. When Kant grants to Schiller that joy seems most appropriate to the

meant to achieve not just dignity, but also the "grace" mentioned in Schiller's title. The beautiful soul is a moral agent whose sensible desires have come to harmonize with their moral obligations so fully that the concept of duty is no longer really essential to their moral actions. They are still subject to moral duty, technically speaking, but able to fulfill their duty fully out of love, and happily. This model of moral action, I suggest, comes closer to the model we see in Kant's "holy" will, in which the agent acts morally well and enjoys doing so.

There is certainly something appealing about this model, and others have been sympathetic to the worry that Kant's theory associates morality with inner struggle and misery.[6] It seems to many philosophers that it is a deficiency in a moral theory if it fails to address the importance of bringing one's emotions in line with duty (or vice versa) and, in that sense, making moral behavior more natural to oneself. Kant also does not completely reject the value of the holy model of moral action. This is evident, for instance, in the passage right after he claims that human beings should aim for respect, not liking, for the moral law. There, Kant grants that "holiness of will is nevertheless a practical *idea*, which must necessarily serve as a *model* to which all finite rational beings can only approximate without end" (5:32-33).[7]

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aesthetic of virtue, the way he puts the point is that the "*aesthetic* constitution" or "*temperament*" of moral action would have to be "courageous and hence cheerful", not "weighed down by fear and dejected" (6:23fn). Schiller's description of the beautiful soul, by contrast, involves a "gentle heart," a complete lack of "tension," and a musical voice, none of which seem particularly to be a paradigmatic part of the courageous cheer to which Kant refers. With the association Kant also draws between courage and the sublime, these differences seem to further suggest Winegar's reading.

[6] Hegel accused Kant of "producing a view of morality as nothing but a bitter, unending, struggle against self-satisfaction" (84), for example. More recent scholars have also raised this worry. Susan Wolf (1982) argues that the saint of the Kantian moral ideal would, if we met such a person in real life, seem to us to suffer from "a pathological fear of damnation… or an extreme form of self-hatred that interferes with his ability to enjoy the enjoyable life" (424). (Wolf does not argue in favor of the beautiful soul in this paper, however. She sees *that* ideal of moral sainthood as problematic, too, although in a different way.) Julia Annas (1984) argues that the dedication to duty demanded by Kant's ethics leads to a life empty of meaning and destructive of relationships, and Rae Langton (1992) raises the challenge that Kant has underestimated the importance of inclination to living a valuable human life.

[7] The fact that he considers harmony between morality and sensibility valuable is also evident in his doctrine of the highest good. The highest good is the "object" of morality, according to Kant—the goal we reasonably strive for with our moral actions, and which we implicitly assume must be possible (5:107-110). Although the highest good requires moral perfection above all, Kant claims that the moral perfection of human beings is not enough on its own

The holy model of moral action and the harmony it embodies are not entirely absent from Kant's system, then. But their role is as ideal—something always in the distance, to be approached, instead of something we should ever consider fully realized in or applicable to everyday actions. It is important not to underplay Kant's continued emphasis on duty and disharmony in the here and now. In this paper, I will offer an account of self-respect that embraces the disharmony aspect of Kant's theory in full, and I will explain how such an account need not (and in fact cannot) encourage human beings to disown or disregard their animality. In the process, I also hope to offer (at least the beginning of) a more positive way of thinking about Kant's emphasis on disharmony itself.

Self-Respect and Constraint

Self-respect is often contrasted with self-degradation. This way of analyzing it brings out the fact that self-respect involves valuing, instead of failing to value, oneself. However, working with Kant's conception of respect, what stands out about self-respect is not just that it involves valuing, but also that it involves a specific *kind* of valuing. We have already seen that for Kant, our respect for the moral law combines awareness of its worth with a sense of limitation or infringement. We should expect that our respect for ourselves would involve a similar complexity.

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to constitute "the complete good" as conceived of by beings like us—"for this," he explains, "*happiness* is also required" (5:110). Hence, the complete ideal for which we ultimately strive in our moral actions, according to Kant, is "virtue and happiness together" (5:110) with each still being conceived of as distinct from the other (5:111-13). Kant's insistence on including the actual achievement of happiness harmonized with moral behavior in his conception of the highest good again indicates that he does not mean to spurn the value of harmonizing sensibility and morality entirely.

In fact, when Kant speaks of the attitude morality inspires toward ourselves purely in positive terms, he uses a different term for it. Consider the following passage:

> On the other hand, however, since [the constraint of the moral law] is exercised only by the lawgiving of his *own* reason, it also contains something *elevating*, and the subjective effect on feeling… can thus be called *self-approbation*…. (5:80-81)

Here Kant refers to the elevating attitude toward ourself that follows from our awareness of our moral obligations as "self-approbation" (*Selbstbilligung*) (5:81). Initially, this seems like a mere inconsistency in terminology on Kant's part. The claim that self-respect refers particularly to such elevation and approval of oneself *along with* awareness that the moral law constrains and does not necessarily harmonize with one's whole being, however, implies that it is actually a careful reference to only one aspect of the complex attitude that constitutes respect for oneself.

In order to get a hold of the specific kind of valuing involved in self-respect it is more helpful to contrast it (instead of with self-degradation) with a kind of self-valuing that is *not* constrained or disharmonious: self-love. For Kant, to love oneself is specifically to care for oneself as an animal with an interest in happiness.[8] When I say "happiness" here, I don't mean simply a bunch of nice feelings. According to Kant, the happiness of human animals like us encompasses and depends upon many complicated things, including relationships with other people. Because, according to Kant, we always desire happiness, self-love comes naturally to us. This way of valuing ourselves is no constraint on us.

Self-respect, on the other hand, is a way of valuing ourselves that parallels the way we value the moral law: self-respect requires that we come to terms with the fact that our own worth as moral beings does not always line up harmoniously with the happiness we also value. Respect

[8] Kant treats acting out of self-love and acting in pursuit of one's happiness as interchangeable, as is evident when he comments that all rules for action that are material "are, without exception, of one and the same kind and come under the general principle of self-love or one's own happiness" (5:22).

for the moral law involves acceptance of the fact that we must actively control ourselves, instead of simply being carried along by our natures, in order to get our actions to line up with that law. We must pursue our happiness carefully because the things that seem most likely to make us happy will not always be things that are permissible for us. In parallel, respect for *ourselves* involves acceptance of the fact that we must *love ourselves* carefully.

Instead of being able to take our wants and needs and translate them immediately into the actions that come most naturally as a result of them, self-respect requires us to take a step back. We have to take in the information our wants and needs provide us and actively make efforts to integrate that information with other aspects of ourselves—in particular our moral aspect, with which these things have no guaranteed harmony. If we were holy beings, this would not be necessary—but we are not. Hence, self-respect is a reverential, more careful way of valuing oneself—one that is necessary particularly because of our internal disharmony. Some philosophers have worried, however, that the rationale underlying Kant's commitment to holding oneself at arm's length involves an improperly negative or dismissive view of human animality. In what follows, I will argue that Kant's conception of self-respect does not have built into it the goal of becoming less animal and that his commitment to self-respect does not imply that being an animal is anything to be ashamed of.

Animality and Self-Respect

Some have argued that Kant, in his conception of what it means to respect oneself, relies upon the idea that there are two selves—the rational and the animal self. The key to self-respect would be to realize that the rational self is one's true self, and to somehow remove oneself from

or disown one's animality and prioritize one's purely rational self. This view would seem to imply that one's animal self is isolated from the value of one's moral self—an interfering thing to be discarded insofar as this is possible. There are commentators who read Kant as drawing a distinction between the real (moral-rational) and the less-real and ultimately not really consequential (animal) self.

The reading of Kant on which he holds that respecting oneself is a matter of associating increasingly with one's purely rational and not one's animal self is evident in the way commentators discuss the emergence of self-respect. Commentators tend to emphasize the connection between our self-respect and the pleasant awareness that we are rational and in some sense free from animality. For example, Owen Ware (2014) writes that our awareness "of our capacity to act independently of pathological incentives… [elicits] a kind of pleasure within us," this being "the pleasure of self-respect…." (16). Anne Margaret Baxley (2010) also attributes our self-respect to awareness of the rational-moral aspect of ourselves. For instance, she draws the following inference: "Given that the very law eliciting our respect is one that we legislate to ourselves, respect for the moral law entails respect for oneself, or self-esteem" (153).

Inferences of this type are misleading. It is true that our respect for ourselves depends upon our awareness that we are moral and rational. But the repeated drawing of this inference in the literature masks another equally true inference—that because the law we legislate is also one that *constrains* us, our self-esteem takes the form of self-*respect*. In other words, in order to respect ourselves, we must also be aware of our animality. By passing over this aspect of self-respect, commentators lend support to the view that Kant though human beings should think of themselves as more *truly* their rational than their animal selves. Baxley, for instance, does hold

that one important goal of Kantian moral behavior is to elevate ourselves over our sensibility and identify ourselves more closely with our rational self (122).

And Kant does sometimes seem to indicate that we should deny our animality. For example, in a list of sayings that Kant claims "more or less" represent the duty to respect oneself, Kant includes: "crying out in bodily pain… is unworthy of you" (6:436). Crying out in bodily pain seems to be a paradigmatically fitting animal reaction to bodily harm, one that simply affirms the reality that harm to one's body is harm to oneself. By claiming that this reaction is undignified, Kant seems to suggest that we ought to comport ourselves in a way that denies this obvious fact.

But it cannot be Kant's view that to respect oneself is to disown one's animality. It is apparent in Kant's moral writings that the fact that we are animals with bodies matters to our moral obligations. At the outset of his section on duties to oneself in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant explains that he will therein draw "a *subjective* division of a human being's duties to himself" tracking "whether the subject of the duty (the human being) views himself both as an **animal** (natural) and a moral being or **only as a moral** being" (6:420). The fact that duties to oneself viewed as animal are included at all in Kant's discussion speaks against *completely* ignoring one's animality in one's moral actions. Still, the distinction Kant draws here can give the impression that he is reinforcing the distinction between these two aspects of oneself as two "selves." The first set of duties, we might think, is directed to the animal self, insofar as that self is instrumentally necessary for purely moral purposes, and the second set is directed to the purely rational self alone.

Kant cannot mean the distinction in this way, however. The very first duty he includes in his section on duties *to oneself only as a moral being* is a duty that concerns, and even seems to

be owed *to*, one's animal self: this is the duty to oneself not to lie. [9] Here is how Kant explains the self-wrong involved in lying:

> The human being as a moral being… cannot use himself as a natural being… as a mere means (a speaking machine), as if his natural being were not bound to the inner end (of communicating thoughts)…. [The human being] is bound to the condition of using himself as a natural being in agreement with the declaration… of his moral being and is under obligation to himself to *truthfulness*. (6:430)

In this passage Kant describes the wrongness of lying in terms of the human being's use of himself *as a natural being* as a mere means. In other words, this violation is described by Kant in terms that make it seem like the violation is actually against what would usually be categorized as one's animal self, suggesting that violations *of* this self can count as violations of oneself purely as a moral being. In addition, Kant's analysis of this duty speaks directly against the idea that one ought to disown one's animality. The instrumentalization of the animal self is so far from what Kant is endorsing here that such instrumentalization is actually included by him as a reason the action is wrong. The liar disrespects himself *by* fracturing himself, acting as though two aspects of himself—his natural animality on the one hand, and his moral being on the other—were two separate beings, one of which (the animal) was merely at the disposal of the other to be used for whatever purposes it might have. He acts as though his animality were not *himself*, and not subject to the same rules to which he as a whole person is subject. He treats his body like a "speaking machine," an instrument separate from himself, which he can operate to make sounds that are not properly his.

[9] Kant mentions, in this passage, both internal and external lying. I believe, however, that he conceives of them as amounting to violations in similar ways. The passage I quote here comes right after a mention of internal lying, but it is not radically different than what he says about lying in general at the beginning of the section, when he seems to be thinking more of external lying. For example, earlier he cites the fact that lying makes one into "a mere deceptive appearance of a human being," and this seems similar to the comment he makes in the passage I have included here about using oneself as a speaking machine.

What, then, can we make of Kant's (subjective) distinction between duties to oneself as an animal and as a moral being? I propose that we read this distinction not as a distinction between two selves who can be the focus of our moral obligations, but as a distinction between two valid concerns that attach to the very same self, who is both moral and animal. Our duties to ourselves as a natural animal are those duties we have to our moral-animal selves which have to do specifically with the fact that we are animal, deriving from facts about what is natural to us. In other words, these duties encapsulate those duties we have to ourselves because we are perishable, finite, beings, who need things like food and rest in order to survive and continue to act. Our duties to ourselves as a moral being alone are still duties to our same, single, moral-animal selves, but they are duties to ourselves which have to do specifically with the fact that we are moral, deriving their specifics from facts about what it means to be a *moral* being in our (always animal) case.

Returning to the case of lying, this counts as a violation of one's duties to oneself as a moral being because lying involves using a moral animal being (oneself) as a mere means, stripping oneself (as animal) of moral importance. In a sense this is a violation "against" one's "animal self," but it is a violation particularly *because* our animal selves are *moral*. On my reading of Kant's distinction between duties to oneself as a natural and as a moral being, there is no conceptual trouble with this reference to oneself as animal, so long as this duty to one's animal self is one that is had *because* one's animal self is a *moral* self.

So far, I have focused on how Kant's discussion of duties to oneself as a moral being alone supports identification with one's animality as well as one's morality. It is perhaps more obvious how Kant's commitment to duties to oneself as animal reveals a commitment to the human being as a unified moral-and-animal being. These are duties we have specifically because

of the limits we incur from being natural animals. Considerations about these limits are important to our moral obligations because they are, in a morally relevant sense, limitations of *us*. It is part of our moral duty to treat ourselves as beings with such limitations not just because this is important for making sure we can do morally good things, when the opportunity arises, but because it is important for making sure we survive and thrive. There is an obligation not to commit suicide, according to Kant, because to kill one's animal self is to kill *oneself*—and hence to "dispose of a human being" (4:429). Kant uses similar reasoning to insist that it is not permissible to take drugs or engage in other behaviors which partially incapacitate one's animal body (6:427)—again, it is one's own body, and in limiting oneself as an animal, one limits oneself full-stop.

Some of Kant's analyses of duties to oneself in this section also reveal a concern for acting in "natural" ways—or ways in accordance with what nature (metaphorically) intended. This concern for naturalness is precisely a concern for acting in ways that are sensitive to the health and well-being of ourselves as animals. Some of the duties that Kant derives on this basis are extreme and, I think, objectionable. For my purposes here, however, the important thing to note is that these errors on Kant's part do not seem to stem from a hatred or rejection of animal things. Rather, they stem from a combination of a relatively strong commitment to the importance of looking after ourselves as animals and a rigid conception of what is required for and dangerous to animal health.[10] Kant's objection to masturbation, for instance, hinges on the claim that the impulse to sexual activity is naturally suited to reproduction (6:425). The way to correct Kant on his view, here, I suggest, would not have been to argue that there is nothing

[10] John H. Zammito's work on Kant's dabbling in the medical field provides further insight into Kant's views about health and how his views were at odds with even much of the medical knowledge in his own day. See, for example, "Kant and the Medical Faculty: *One* 'Conflict of the Faculties,'" forthcoming in *Epoche*.

morally wrong with pleasure without further purpose, but to explain that masturbation and other kinds of non-procreative sexual activities serve many naturally important functions (stress reduction, social bonding, etc.) and are in ordinary cases helpful and not harmful to health.

Kant's discussion of duties to oneself as an animal affirms the significance of identifying with and understanding one's animality—even if Kant himself sometimes seems to have failed on the second count. However, in keeping with the observation that one's animal wants and needs, although *real* and one's *own*, are not always and automatically morally good, what Kant does do throughout his whole section on duties to oneself is remind readers of the distinction between those things we must do for ourselves because we are moral animals and those things that we will likely or always want to do.

For example, at the beginning of the section in which he lays out the obligation not to use food or drink "excessively," we find the following disclaimer:

> Here the reason for considering this kind of excess a vice is not the harm or bodily pain (diseases) that a human being brings on himself by it; for then the principle by which it is to be counteracted would be one of well-being and comfort (and so of happiness), and such a principle can establish only a rule of prudence, never a duty—at least not a direct duty. (6:427)

Here, Kant does not suggest that considerations of happiness are not worth thinking about. He emphasizes, though, his commitment to the claim that to make oneself happy is *not* to make oneself good.

To make oneself good is also not (all on its own) to make oneself happy.[11] Because we are not purely moral beings, the fact that making oneself happy is not the same as making oneself moral does not speak against its importance altogether. The following passage is instructive:

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[11] See 5:126-7. Kant attributes to the Stoics the mistake of thinking that morality is sufficient for happiness and hence making the ideal virtuous agent "like a divinity in his consciousness of the excellence of his person, quite independent of nature (with respect to his own contentment), exposing himself to all the ills of life but not subjecting

> Certainly, our well-being and woe count for a *very great deal* in the appraisal of our practical reason and, as far as our nature as sensible beings is concerned, *all* that counts is our *happiness*… but happiness is not *the only thing* that counts. (5:61)

In this passage, Kant explains that "as far as our nature as sensible beings is concerned," that is, to the extent that we focus only on what we can derive from the fact that we are natural animal beings, our happiness is of supreme importance. The issue is that because we are natural beings who are also bound by morality, there is more to be derived, so to speak, and more that is of importance on top of this.

In respecting ourselves, we do not identify more fully with our moral-rational self while disowning our animality. Rather, we acknowledge the disharmony between two things that are equally a part of us: our animal and our moral aspects. To respect ourselves, we must both be aware that our moral importance can outstrip our self-love and come to terms with the fact that we are beings who cannot be made fully happy and satisfied simply by doing what is morally best.

To conclude my discussion of Kant on our tie to animality, I would like to note that this understanding of self-respect gives us at least one reason to think that it is important, for Kant, that respect be a *feeling*—something that involves us not only as moral-rational, but also as animal, beings. Commentators have disagreed about whether the truly effective part of our respect for the moral law is a feeling or a rational judgment of what the moral law calls for.[12] What we have seen here, though, is that the feeling aspect of respect is certainly central to

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him to them" (5:127). Tellingly, since this also has to do with the human's undivorceability from their body, he also cites his departure from the Stoics in his analysis of suicide (6:422).

[12] Some commentators see respect's categorization by Kant as a feeling to be essential to its ability to move human beings to action. See Ina Goy's (2007) and Stephen Darwall (2008), for example. Josephine Nauckhoff (2003) argues that respect as a feeling is necessary in order to combat weakness of will. Others, however, argue that it is the rational judgment that the moral law requires some action which does all of the moving of the agent in question, while the feeling accompanying this motion is something of a side-effect. See for example Paul Guyer (1993, ch.10); and Andrews Reath (2006).

making respect what it is. Our experience of respect is not really passive—it is an experience called up by intellectual contemplation of the moral law or of those things which are obligations for us. But there is something in the fact that this law and these obligations strike us *as obligations* that is involuntary. Our animality enters into our moral awareness not by helping to guide us to our moral obligations by means of a natural grace, but by reminding us that our animality is part of us and that it is *not* perfectly morally harmonious. As Kant explains, our "consciousness of *obligation* depends upon moral feeling to make us aware of the *constraint* present in the thought of duty" (6:399, emphasis mine). Animality has the hardly dispensable role, in our moral experience, of reminding us of who and what we *are*.

Self-Acceptance and Self-Respect

It might seem as though, given the characterization of self-respect outlined here, self-respect is not really a positive way of thinking about oneself at all. What is positive, we might ask, about acknowledging moral disharmony in oneself? Self-respect is positive in that it allows us to value ourselves while accepting ourselves as the morally limited types of beings we are. In much of our thinking about self-respect, we focus on how self-respect requires us to stand up for ourselves and for our own moral importance. In his well-known paper "Servility and Self-Respect," Thomas E. Hill Jr. (1991) lays out an account of the wrongness of servility as a failure of self-respect. According to Hill, the failure involved in servility is a failure "to acknowledge fully [one's] own moral status because [one] does not fully understand what [one's] rights are, how they can be waived, and when they can be forfeited" (9). The Kantian justification for the importance of this awareness, Hill explains, is that a failure to fully or properly value one's own

rights is indicative of a general failure to properly value all rights (including the rights of others), and hence morality itself (13-14).

Tommie Shelby (2012) also draws on the connection between self-respect and valuing oneself as a moral being, in his definition of self-respect as a pillar of virtue in the non-ideal circumstances of oppression:

> To possess self-respect, in the sense that concerns me here, means recognizing oneself as an object of respect. In particular, it means *viewing oneself as a moral agent and moral equal with all others and valuing oneself accordingly*. Self-respecting persons insist on receiving just treatment, for they firmly believe that in virtue of their moral status they are entitled to such treatment. They do not believe that they must earn this treatment through, say, meritorious action or good character. They know that their capacity for moral agency alone is sufficient to establish their right to equal justice, and this conviction functions for them as an unshakable basis of self-worth. (527-528)

The Kantian understanding of self-respect I have introduced here adds that it is an important component of properly valuing oneself as a moral being that one acknowledge how difficult doing this can be. Being an animal can be a wonderful experience, but it can also be a cruel one. We go on wanting and needing things even in conditions in which the only way we can acquire those things is by acting as we judge we ought not and shaking our commitment to our own moral value. We can be bombarded with desires we reject and stripped of desires we desperately need. Kant's conception of self-respect, with its emphasis on disharmony, allows us to say something that seems true especially in such situations—that to demand of oneself that one gracefully *like* what one morally *must* do is actually, in a sense, a failure of self-respect.

I think that Kant's theory stands in need of modification if it is to fully acknowledge human non-ideality. Kant does not recognize all the particular kinds of hardships we encounter. For example, he does not seem to seriously entertain the possibility that one would have to help oneself remember the draw of one's own happiness. I think the fact that we clearly *can* find

ourselves stripped of this drive implies that there is a category of duties to oneself as an animal that Kant never considers: one that has purely to do with looking out for one's drive for life in the first place. The fragility of the human drive for happiness might imply, for instance, that one's duties to oneself generate reasons to avoid experiences that are likely to strip the felt meaning from one's life, like the betrayal of all one's family and friends, even for some righteous cause.

This is just one example of how Kant's understanding of how natural animality works could lead to errors in his account of living up to self-respect without his ever undervaluing animality itself. Such errors need not indicate that we should give up on the way Kant approaches self-valuing more generally. In particular, I think we ought to consider it a valuable feature of Kant's moral theory that it faces up to the fact that moral action often does not come naturally to us. There is something disrespectful in failures to acknowledge that there are other things aside from morality that matter a great deal to human life, the forfeit of which, if morality requires it, is a genuine sacrifice or hardship. Perhaps, as Kant seems to grant, we ought to strive for a world in which this is no longer the case—in which the disharmony that makes our moral experience so uniquely human no longer arises. There is something non-ideal in the fact that our moral duty and our desire for happiness can come so apart from each other. But on Kant's view, self-respect is important precisely because this non-ideality is not something that compromises our moral worth. Self-respect, in short, might not be everything that we want for ourselves, aspirationally. But I think that Kant is right that it is sometimes what we need, and that this is nothing to be ashamed about. It is sometimes important, in the struggles of a human life, for the "graces," as Kant puts it once, to "maintain a respectful distance" (6:23fn).

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