

THE GOOD OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT

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"Kantian ethics...devalue[s] or depreciate[s] *the moral agent*...After all, Kantian ethics tells the moral agent that he or she must seek the well-being, the good, of other people, but that no such imperative exists in regard to his or her own well-being."¹

So Michael Slote argues. There is and can be no obligation to foster one's own wellbeing for Kantians, only an obligation to foster the wellbeing of others. And any distinctively Kantian position both denies that our own wellbeing is the source of our moral duties and denies that a concern for wellbeing can be a morally worthy motive. So not only is the agent's own good not foundational to morality; it is of no moral importance. Hence, Slote concludes, the devaluation of the moral agent.

Although I think Kantian ethics, more or less, holds all of above positions, I nevertheless think that Slote's conclusion is wrong. Even if Kantian ethics denies any direct obligation to pursue one's own wellbeing and so on, it does not follow that the agent's own good is of no moral importance, nor, what is supposed to follow from this, that the moral agent is devalued. Indeed, surprising as it may seem, any Kantian view can and ought to hold that the moral agent has a direct obligation to seek her own good. That, at any rate, is the view I defend in what follows.

Briefly, Kantian ethics tells us that our natural perfection is an obligatory end. Since natural perfection is a large part of an agent's good, the agent's good is of moral value on the Kantian view. Some of the details of this view are familiar: Moral concern is grounded in respect for humanity, which consists of reason, rational self-governance and various other capacities connected with this. Other details are less familiar, in particular, that respect for your own humanity requires developing your natural (or 'non-moral') human capacities.² The nature and extent of this requirement, I think, has not been widely appreciated. For instance, a Kantian need not deny that, other things equal, people enjoy the exercise of their realized capacities. Nor need she deny that the more realized and complex, the more enjoyment. Indeed, one prominent Kantian, John Rawls, has defended just these claims under the heading of the "Aristotelian Principle".³ If the principle is true, then self-development will be accompanied by a concomitant increase in enjoyment.⁴ To be sure, the fact that it will be so accompanied cannot be your motivation for engaging in self-development if it is to be of moral worth. Nor is this increase in enjoyment itself a perfection of your nature. Nevertheless, the Kantian obligation of self-development concerns an essential ingredient in your own good the achievement of which will normally tend to make your life happier.⁵

My main concern here will not be, however, defending the Aristotelian Principle nor self-development as a central aspect of a good human life. Neither are particularly controversial in the present context. I will also not deal directly the Kantian arguments

for the duty of self-development. My concern, rather, is with whether the position Kantian ethics defends in the end properly values the agent. For even given that the agent's own good includes the development of her human capacities, and that the Kantian view requires that she develop them, the Kantian view also places many restrictions on the extent of the obligation of self-development that may raise concerns that it does not after all value the agent's good. I aim to put such concerns to rest. So even though I think Slote is wrong, his criticism points to a gap in contemporary Kantian theories that the following will help to fill.

Some will no doubt be surprised that a Kantian should argue that we possess natural talents and capacities that we are obligated to develop as aspects of our own good. After all, the critical philosophy famously takes a dim view of teleological conceptions of human beings and the universe they inhabit.⁶ Others, noticing Kant's own appeals to the natural purposes of human capacities and sporadic hints that they have a divine origin, will simply conclude that he and Kantians such as myself who follow him have illicitly smuggled in these teleological notions.⁷ While I concede that such ideas are involved in Kant's own thinking, the arguments don't require the assumption that human capacities are gifts from God or Nature, nor that they have inherent purposes that determine the direction they should be developed. Perhaps predictably, it is reason, not God or Nature, which determines the direction capacities should be developed in a Kantian theory. Thus, the argument is from the CI, and the assumption that we have capacities that can be developed in some or other direction, to the conclusion that we owe it to ourselves to

develop these capacities in a direction that will serve a rational plan of life. Further, the Kantian position regarding such a duty need not take a stand on questions about how to justify shared standards of self-development in the context of diverse conceptions of the good.⁸ Our duty concerns only the development of our own capacities, not what we should do to foster those of others. No doubt, the fact that conceptions of the good, and hence what counts as a talent, have complex social and historical contexts complicates the issue. However, no *general* questions about what is or is not a human talent arise, since the Kantian position can be stated without being tied to any particular conception of what counts as such.

I

One way in which the Kantian view limits the value of developing natural capacities derives from the fact that self-development is an imperfect duty.⁹ The limitation this presents on concern for one's own natural development, however, while significant, seem easily justified. Consider the familiar features of imperfect duties: Imperfect duties require the adoption of ends, not the performance of particular actions or sets of actions. Thus, as Kant put this, "nothing about the kind and extent of actions themselves" can be required of us, since an imperfect duty "allows a latitude for free choice."¹⁰ Our obligation is therefore not to develop particular talents or abilities at particular times, but to pursue the end of developing ourselves. By contrast, perfect duties such as truth telling do forbid or require particular acts.

More importantly, we must be able to conceive of any maxim, whether of performing actions or pursuing ends, existing together with itself as a universal law of nature.¹¹ Perfect duties arise when our maxim is not conceivable as such. Typically, these are negative duties forbidding certain kinds of behavior without exception or latitude. By contrast, an imperfect duty enjoins the pursuit of certain ends and arises because, once having determined that we can conceive of our maxim as a universal law, we nevertheless cannot rationally *will* it as such because we must, insofar as we are rational, will something incompatible with this such as our own happiness or the development of our capacities.¹² Or so Kantians hold.

Thus, the mere fact that self-development is an imperfect duty imposes a significant restriction on its pursuit: one's initial consideration must be whether you can even conceive of your maxim as a universal law. If you cannot, then you obviously cannot will it as a universal law either. Thus, the duty of self-development cannot require violating perfect duties. And the significance of this is evident. Human self-development must give way to concerns, enshrined in perfect duties, about justice, human rights, and so on, even if ignoring these concerns would, for instance, produce great works of art.¹³ This limit is surely justified, or at least, absent further argument, this privilege which perfect duties have enjoys strong intuitive appeal. That Kantian morality does not value developing oneself by way of wronging others seems to be a strength.

Kantian morality also forbids wronging oneself in the pursuit of imperfect duties. Here, primarily, *preservation* of oneself as a rational agent, in both moral and natural respects, takes precedence over developing one's capacities or, indeed, helping others. But, again, *prima facie* that Kantian ethics puts a priority on preserving one's rational capacities over developing them is clearly no grounds for thinking that Kantian ethics devalues the agent's own good, given what must be preserved are the very capacities to be developed and enjoyed.

That imperfect duties must give way to perfect duties tells us of one sort of restriction on the pursuit of self-development. It does not, however, tell us what sort of restriction our other imperfect duties represent. For instance, it does not tell how far or when the happiness of others should restrict our pursuit of self-development. Indeed, there is an interesting parity that exists between these ends: Consider, for instance, two people both of whom adopt self-development and the happiness of others as their ends, but differ on which end they spend more time and energy. My intuitions tell me that lack of concern for the wellbeing of others is a worse fault than not developing oneself, and so that a person who spends more time on others than on himself is a better person. I suspect this is also most people's intuition. But, interestingly, Kantian moral theory gives no basis for a moral distinction between the two (as long as each has genuinely adopted both ends).

I confess that I don't know how best to accommodate this intuition, or even if Kantian ethics should accommodate it rather than counsel reform of ordinary morality. But I do not need to decide, for this shows that the Kantian view is not so far from Slote's own position in holding that the concern for others holds more or less equal status with self concern, in being equally ends we must adopt.¹⁴ Hence, this is in the present context an advantage for the Kantian view, not a drawback. Of course, this leaves to judgment how we are to balance these ends. But as long as we have both as our ends, then we have fulfilled our moral duty. This doesn't mean that the Kantian view gives no guidance at all, however: To adopt either end in any serious sense requires that you sometimes do something to pursue it given the (morally permissible) opportunity.

What is forbidden, as Kant describes this, is "devoting [one's] life to pleasure" rather than "enlarging and improving [one's] fortunate natural predispositions"—in other words, a maxim of self-indulgence.¹⁵ Thus, even if a latitude for free choice is allowed in imperfect duties, not any pursuit of a whim excuses the failure to develop oneself. This restriction, offhand, also seems plausible: The Kantian view rightly passes judgment on, for instance, the ne'er-do-well and the idle rich. On the other hand, failure to pursue self-development because of threats to one's own continued existence is clearly excusable on the grounds that the pursuit under such circumstances would require risking the violation of perfect duties either toward oneself (e.g., of preserving one's rational capacities) or to other who are under your care. The economically and socially oppressed who have no

meaningful opportunities for self-development are, as a consequence, not blameworthy on the Kantian view for lacking developed human capacities.¹⁶

II

Self-perfection has both a moral and a natural dimension. Thus, we have in effect two obligation under this heading. Moral perfection consists in making duty the sole sufficient motive for performing every duty. Our pursuit of natural self-development is, perhaps unsurprisingly, less important than, and to that extent limited by, the pursuit of moral perfection. The latter, unlike the former imperfect duty, is a "perfect one in terms of its quality" even if "imperfect in terms of its degree... because of the *frailty (fragilitas)* of human nature"¹⁷. It is categorized as imperfect, in other words, only because it is imperfect 'in degree', and this only because the capacity to reform human nature is limited and for self-knowledge even more so. Whether we have ever acted from duty is always uncertain, even if we ought to make duty for its own sake a decisive priority.¹⁸ It is perfect 'in quality' because it tells us we must *always* perform an action (viz., act from duty) that will not vary in kind or extent from individual to individual based their different ends. The content of the required maxim thus has no latitude in it, no playroom for inclinations, which is the hallmark of imperfect duties. However, the maxim of natural self-development contains just this latitude precisely because human ends, and so the natural capacities serving those ends, differ across persons, cultures, political,

economic and social settings. It thus must be left to judgment which capacities to develop and how far to develop them.

Although there is this priority of moral to natural self-development, the former cannot be said to represent a onerous restriction on the pursuit of the latter. Moral perfection consists simply in performing every duty from the motive of duty. This requires some intensive self-examination on Kant's own view, but this does not intrude in any meaningful way on natural self-development.

One last point about the imperfect nature of the duty of self-development. As I understand the Kantian view, the adoption and pursuit of obligatory ends does not require *maximizing* anything. Nevertheless, because perfection represents an ideal limit, there is also no stopping point for the development of talents. To decide to stop developing oneself is to give it up as one's end. Hence, even if this imperfect duty leaves it up to each person to decide for herself which talents to develop and how far, this doesn't allow one to give up, turn on the T.V., smoke pot and eat Oreos.

III

Kant's own example of the duty of self-development in the *Groundwork* refers to the capacities to be developed as "talents" and as "fortunate natural predispositions".¹⁹ This suggests that Kantians must limit valuable self-development to development of those abilities at which we are in some sense 'gifted'. So, for example, if I refuse ever to

develop gifts and instead focus on capacities at which I am clearly not gifted, my self-concern has no value. Restricting the moral value of my own good to my talents would surely make Kantian morality every bit as oppressive as we remember our parents being.

However, despite this reference to talents and gifts, the Kantian view does not hold that the failure to nurture one's special abilities is a moral failing. The bare fact that you are talented *alone* brings no obligation. Given certain moral assumptions, this might generate an obligation. For instance, gratitude might demand nurturing a gift (think of a pet or plant). So if a talent were a gift, say, from Nature, then gratitude would demand nurturing it. But, first, Kantians hold that self-development is owed to yourself, not to others such as gift-givers. Indeed, on the Kantian view no duties toward the two most likely candidates for a duty of gratitude, God and nature, are possible.²⁰ Second, the Kantian argument is a more or less direct consequence of the CI without any appeal to the relevant capacities being gifts.

Indeed, on the Kantian view, which capacities one chooses to develop and, as Kant puts this, "in what proportion one against the other it may be a human being's duty to himself to make these natural perfections his end" is left to each to decide, "in accordance with his own rational reflection about what sort of life he would like to lead and whether he has the powers necessary for it".²¹ Suppose, for instance, you have a student who is truly gifted at philosophy. There is no moral failing if she treats this as insignificant and pursues finance instead. She may like facts and figures, after all. Or,

even if she thinks her abilities significant, she may (alas perhaps rightly) conclude that she will not end up with a job that will allow her to a desirable life as she conceives of this.

Even if there is no failing in someone who ignores his gifts in favor of other capacities, the Kantian view nevertheless restricts his choice of capacities to develop to those which can survive, as Kant says, "rational reflection about what sort of life he would like to lead and whether he has the powers necessary for it".²² Foolishly lurching from one ability to another with no view to how they fit together in some coherent way of life will probably not be rationally defensible. Indeed, since sincerely willing an end requires following through to some minimal degree in a recognizably coherent direction, this would be an indication this agent does not genuinely have his own perfection as his end. A rational person gives some capacities some priority over others given their place in her plan of life. Most rational lives have a shape. For instance, a typical shape might be this: early on, a variety of wide range capacities are developed to some degree, but as time progresses and long range goals chosen, more and more time and energy is spent on few and fewer abilities. A reasonable person (or a person with the guidance of a reasonable person) will thus take into account facts about the status of her endowments when thinking about what sort of life, together with its course of self-development, to live.

Thus, although there is no restriction of self-development to natural gifts, if such there be, those who decide on pursuits at which they are naturally less well-endowed may be making a moral mistake. If you are all thumbs at literally everything, futility may be inevitable. But if it is obviously avoidable, you may well be letting yourself down by ignoring a talent. You may not blame yourself until the end of your life, but blame may come and focus on failure to take seriously one's talents.

The Kantian view restricts us to the development of capacities required for plans that are not immoral, impossible or quixotic. Professional ballet, I take it, is out for me, and not simply because I lack the gift for dance. Developing such abilities takes time and experience. If I were nevertheless now to set off to dance, I might well be failing in my duty to develop myself, since my duty is in part to take into account such facts. Note well: This does not rule out *risky* plans; my plan to become a ballet star isn't *risky*. It simply rules out betting against astronomical odds when there are alternatives.

That said, the Kantian view does not restrict self-development to the young. One can should periodically reassess how far one has developed one's abilities in light of one's plans, how much time and energy to spend on further developing capacities, the chances of succeeding in new plans, and so on. The duty to perfect oneself, as I understand it, says to each at whatever stage of life, to have self-perfection as an end. Each stage has its own projects, and the projects of any stage are revisable in light of past progress.

V

What we can and cannot do to develop ourselves is also circumscribed by the nature of the relevant human capacities we are to develop. In each case, however, I think that the Kantian view of this is reasonable and no cause to think it does not appropriately value the moral agent.

First, of course, the relevant capacities must be developed by our own efforts before they can be put to work.²³ Thus, as Kant puts this, natural perfection consists "in what can result from [our] deeds, not in mere *gifts* for which [we] must be indebted to nature".²⁴ We cannot rationally deliberate about whether to be gifted in some way. We can, however, assess how favored we are with regard various capacities make a judgment about which to develop and how far in the context of some plan of life.

Second, those capacities the development of which are morally valuable are those which are "means to all sorts of possible ends".²⁵ Naturally, if we know that there are capacities that must be developed in ourselves in order to achieve an end we have adopted, it would be irrational not to will their development.²⁶ However, our capacities are also means to the ends of others, and this is vital to their value insofar as we are suppose to develop them. The duty of self-development is a duty "to be a useful member of the world".²⁷ The idea is not the self-interested one, that self-development is required because it further our own interests. Indeed, as Kant himself points out, each person "could be satisfied with the innate scope of his capacities", as envisioned in Rousseau's

state of nature.²⁸ Nor is the idea the consequentialist one, that our developed capacities are of value to the extent that they promote the overall good. It is all too easy to imagine things going better overall if some of the less talented spend no time on their own capacities and instead give themselves over to serving the more talented. However useful they actually are, our natural capacities belong, Kantians hold, "to the worth of humanity in his own person, which he ought not to degrade."²⁹ It is thus respect for our own humanity that requires developing these capacities and abilities, not their instrumental value to ourselves nor to others. The value of our capacities has rather to do with the fact that appropriate respect for one's own humanity requires being able to see this as valuable to humanity generally and as some part of our collective task. Still, that natural capacities are valuable *means* does not exclude their being valued as ends as well.

Third, any project of self-development takes place in a culture and tradition.³⁰ Happily, I think, this fact was not lost on Kant himself:

Man is destined by his reason to live in a society of other people, and in this society he has to cultivate himself, civilize himself, and apply himself to a moral purpose by the arts and sciences.³¹

The Kantian view is that each must decide on capacities he should develop in the context of "the occupation for which he should cultivate" those talents.³² The decision of *which* to develop is left to each to decide for himself on the basis of his choice of pursuit

for which that capacity is useful (for instance, "trade, commerce, or a learned profession"³³). These pursuits require culture with a histories and traditions. Thus, developing any talent will require taking part in that history and tradition. Hence, the "ends set forth by reason" Kant dramatically refers to are in fact ends that exist in a historical and social setting substantial enough to support such trades, professions and so on.

The Kantian view, then, does not value the projects of a fool, someone who willfully pursues a policy of *only* developing capacities unconnected to human projects, traditions and culture. What is morally valuable, then, is the end of developing capacities that are useful, if only in a very broad sense, to yourself and the social setting in which you find yourself. Obviously, a person cannot be blamed for failure to develop herself when opposing oppressive social structures would require extreme sacrifice. Indeed, such conditions can make it difficult for agents to even see total self-development as even a farfetched option. This raises an important set of issues that unfortunately I cannot take up here, namely, the extent of the pressure the obligation of self-development puts on oppressive social conditions. I think it safe to say that it is vastly easier for some than others to develop themselves, and the barriers to self-development are often so great that it can be pursued only by violating more pressing duties to others or oneself. There is very persuasive that I can say here about the fact that these barriers are often themselves wrongs.

V

The limitations the Kantian view puts on the development of natural capacities, then, seem appropriate and are certainly not enough to 'devalue' the moral agent. I end, however, with a worry from the other direction, that the Kantian view puts too much value on self-development, in the sense that it does not, or cannot, limit the extent to which self-development might take over our lives. The problem is roughly this: the Kantian view conceives of humanity as a collection of rational and related capacities, at least some of which can conceivably be developed to perfection.³⁴ Yet, although no individual could even begin to develop *every* capacity *fully*, and few can approach anything like perfection, each can develop some capacities to some extent. Does the Kantian view then demand the impossible?

As I understand the view, it does not. In effect, our obligation is to take part in a collective project, the full development of all capacities by all of humanity. The natural perfection of humanity is thus a joint collective project, not a task each must or even could take on. My reason for construing the Kantian view in this way is perhaps obvious: a joint collect project is preferable to an impossible demand. But this is how Kant's own words are best understood I think. He writes, for instance, that "all other animals [are] left to themselves reach as individuals their full destiny [*Bestimmung*], but human beings reach their full destiny only as a species."³⁵ If "full destiny" includes full natural development, as I assume, then natural perfection is a goal of humanity in the fullness of time, a goal each does her part in achieving.³⁶

Kant himself does indeed claim, in the *Groundwork* argument for the duty of self-development, that a rational being necessarily wills that *all* of his talents be fully developed.³⁷ But whether this is at all plausible depends on how fine a gradation we rely on to individuate talents and what will count as developing one's own. So (forgoing important textual details for present purposes), the view that a rational being necessarily wills that all of his human capacities be fully developed is a collection of positions: (i) insofar as we are rational, we will to develop *some* of every *kind* of human capacity in ourselves (Kant, in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, divides natural perfection into a three categories of capacities: mental, physical, and spiritual), some more than others depending on our ends and circumstances, and also will that (ii) others develop the vast range of all other human capacities, present in potential form in each of us and necessary for each to succeed in our overall plans of life; (iii) at least some capacities can be refined and developed toward some 'perfected' state; (iv) the foreseeable result of each doing her duty is that every capacity would, in the fullness of time, be perfected, each one of which is in some sense a potential of the humanity in himself and in each other person; and (v) each person's own efforts will then represent a small part of this complete realization of human potential.

A brief explanation: It is easy enough to see why you rationally ought to will that some of each kind of capacity to be developed, given rational agents will the necessary and available means to their ends. Your project of mastering "Stairway to Heaven" is

rational only if you also will to play guitar. Further, any ability of this kind is higher-level, in the sense that it is composed of abilities of simpler kinds much like those in Kant's own categories. Each of these abilities, whether higher or lower level, will be something one can 'perfect' over time. However, limitations of time and energy will require 'broadening' ourselves rather than a focus on honing a particular capacity. One-dimensionality would thus be permissible only given other rational or moral constraints that require it. And even if learning to play guitar requires developing many simpler abilities, this would nevertheless leave you one-sided since those abilities would be underdeveloped if only developed to that degree.

For the same reason, it is easy to see why it is rational to will that others develop capacities which we have neither the time nor ability to develop, yet we to succeed at our own projects. Playing 'Stairway to Heaven' requires that Jimmy Page composed it, that someone invented and others built electric guitars, and so on. Each person's self-development requires that others have developed theirs. Indeed, to develop virtually any capacity in oneself requires as a necessary means that others have developed and are developing capacities in themselves. Hence, each, insofar as she is rational, must take advantage of the self-development of others.

Finally, the originality and diversity of human ends, makes it reasonable to suppose that, given that there is enough time and that nothing untoward happens to the human race, eventually anything a human being can have as an end he will have had as

an end. It also is reasonable to suppose that the breadth and depth of human capacities required to achieve these ends will eventually be fully mined. Hence, we should expect this will lead to every human capacity being developed as far as it can be developed.

In any case, I submit that this is the most plausible way of understanding the Kantian notion of 'complete human development'. Our duty to ourselves requires giving thought to more than one side of oneself, to one's overall development as a human being, but it does not require one to aim at the development of every possible element of one's humanity.

VI

The above describes the limitations that there are on the Kantian obligation to develop oneself. In each case, these limitations do not appear to be unjustified. Since Kantians hold there is this obligation, and, assuming development of one's human capacities is an essential ingredient in our good, it seems that the Kantian view to this extent puts a significant but appropriate emphasis on the agent's own good. It requires us to develop at least some of a virtually limitless collection of capacities toward perfection. Each person has freedom to decide on the basis of rational reflection how she will develop herself, taking into consideration her predispositions, her ends and the ends of those around her, her circumstances (for instance, available trades or professions, the cultural traditions and practices). One's obligation is thus to develop some capacities to some degree, based on rational reflection on one's circumstances broadly construed.

NOTES

¹ "Self-Regarding and Other-Regarding Virtues" in David Carr and Jan Steutel, eds., *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education*. New York: Routledge, 1999; pp. 95-105; p. 104. See also his *From Morality to Virtue*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 4-57.

*Thanks to Arnie Zweig, Thomas E. Hill jr., Valerie Tiberius, Jon Kvanvig and Peter Vallentyne for fruitful discussions on these topics.

² MM 6:444. Paginations refer to the volume and page numbers from the Prussian Academy edition of Kant's works. References to the first *Critique* are to the pages of the A and B editions. The following are the translations I use:

- A *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. V. L. Dowdell, tr.
H.H. Rudnick, rev. Carbondale & Edwardsville, IL: S. Illinois U.
P., 1978.
- G *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* A. Zweig, T. Hill, trs.,
Oxford University Press, 2003
- CPR *Critique of Pure Reason*. P. Guyer, A. Wood, trs., New York:
Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- CPrR *Critique of Practical Reason*, M. Gregor, tr. New York: Cambridge
University Press, 1996.
- MM *The Metaphysics of Morals*. M. Gregor, tr. New York: Cambridge
University Press, 1991
- R *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. A. Wood, G. Di
Giovanni, trs., New York: Cambridge University Press 1998.

³ *Theory of Justice*, Part III, *Goodness as Rationality*

⁴ *A Theory of Justice*, §65.

⁵ I say that Kantian ethics does indeed tell the agent to seek her own good because the obligatory end of self-development. But surely, someone might think, the agent is to seek this under the heading of duty, not under the heading of her own good. Thus, she will not in fact be seeking her own good, although she may in fact be achieving her own good. How will she be able to see her own good in its own right as an object of moral concern? The answer is that good things are those things sought by rational agents. Insofar as she sees her own good as being the object of rational seeking, she must see it as good.

⁶ Bruce Aune argues that the only plausible construal of Kant's arguments for this duty requires that nature contains purposes and teleological laws. See his *Kant's Theory of Morals*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 120-30, 178-79.

⁷ See, for instance, Kant's reference to the Parable of the Ten Talents (*Luke* 19:12-16) in *Religion* 6:51-2; also 6:6. He also says that *because* they are "given to him for all sorts of possible purposes" (G 4:423), insofar as he is fully rational, a person wills to develop all of his natural capacities. H. J. Paton, for one, emphasizes Kant's teleological views in general, and in particular regarding this duty. See *The Categorical Imperative*. New York, Harper & Row 1963; pp. 155

⁸ See Gutmann, Amy, "What's the Use of going to School?" in A. Sen and B. Williams, eds., *Utilitarianism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 261-277, for an excellent discussions of this issue.

⁹G 4:421-23; MM 6:445-46

¹⁰ MM 6:446

¹¹ G 4:426, 431, 436-37; MM 6:389

¹² G 4:423; see also MM 6:389-91

¹³ Some may react to this as overly moralistic, but Kant's interest is not in passing judgment on cultural history. It is in answering deliberative questions about what one may and may not do in the pursuit of certain ends, no matter how noble they may be. Cf. Bernard Williams, "Moral Luck", in *Moral Luck* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981; pp. 20-39.

¹⁴ Slote, p.

¹⁵ G 4:423

¹⁶ One may, of course, prefer to spend all of one's time developing one's capacities, but the Kantian standard cannot judge those with different preferences to be morally inferior. One has fulfilled one's duty so long as one has sincerely adopted self-development as one's end, and, given extreme needs of oneself or others are not at issue, this will reveal itself when one takes serious and deliberate steps to develop one's capacities when the opportunity presents itself. And although some have suggested otherwise, as I understand it, the Kantian view does not require maximizing, and so does

not imply that self-perfection and helping others must fill up all of the space left in our lives after we have observed our perfect duties. There is some controversy over how much Kant requires in the pursuit of obligatory ends. See, e.g., David Cummiskey, *Kantian Consequentialism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996; esp. pp. 111, 116; and Thomas E. Hill, jr., "Meeting Needs and Doing Favors" in his *Human Welfare and Moral Worth*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003; pp. 201-243.

¹⁷ MM 6:446-7; see also R 6:29

¹⁸MM 6:392; one must "strive with all one's might that the thought of duty for its own sake is the sufficient incentive of every action conforming to duty." (MM 6:393)

¹⁹ G 4:423

²⁰ MM

²¹ MM 6:445

²² *ibid.*

²³ As Aristotle was first to point out: *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a15-1103b25

²⁴ MM 6:386-7

²⁵ MM 6:

²⁶ G 4:414-17

²⁷ MM 6:446

²⁸ MM 6:444-5; also see A 7:326-30. However, in "Speculative Beginning of Human History" Kant seems to imply that we can't really be happy without developing ourselves. Thanks to Tom Hill for this reference.

²⁹ MM 6:446

³⁰ Indeed, Kant describes this duty as an obligation to "make ourselves worthy of humanity by culture in general" MM 6:392

³¹ A 7:324

³² MM 6:392

³³ MM 6:445

³⁴ Our capacities are "predispositions to greater perfection" G 4:430; also see MM 6:644

³⁵ A 7:324; *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Standpoint*. V. L. Dowdell, tr. Carbondale, IL: So. Illinois U. Press, 1978

³⁶ See Wood, p. 212

³⁷ G 4:414