

SELF-DEVELOPMENT AS AN IMPERFECT DUTY

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'You ought to make something of yourself.' That certainly has the ring of truth about it. But is there really any obligation to develop yourself? Those who let abilities lie idle are shortsighted, of course. But are they guilty of anything more than imprudence? It is easy to think that there could be a moral fault in failing to help others such as your children to develop their talents and abilities. But what about not developing your own? And if this is a moral failing, is the fault solely in your having let others down in some way? Or is there fault in having let yourself down as well?

In my view, Kant had the right answers to these questions: "A human being" he argued, "has a duty to himself to cultivate his natural powers," and "owes it to himself" to do so, quite apart from what he might owe to his family, friends or community.¹ There is thus a moral obligation to develop yourself, and, moreover, what makes it wrong to fail in this obligation is not that you will let others down or even that the world will be made worse off, although both might also be true. What makes it wrong is that you have failed to respect your own humanity. These are the right answers, I think, but proving it is a large task. Elsewhere I defend Kant's arguments that your duty is to develop your own capacities, but not anyone else's, and that this is a duty toward yourself rather than to others.² The part of the task I take addressed two basic questions about Kant's views: First, what is (and to some extent what ought to be) the nature and extent of the Kantian duty toward yourself to develop your natural capacities, talents, abilities and the like?

And, second, what, according to that model, do moral failings with regard to this duty look like?

It will come as a surprise to many that Kant's views on self-development should be worth taking seriously. For instance, Robert Paul Wolff remarks that they are so moralistic that they may be dismissed out of hand.³ Indeed, it may seem surprising to some that there is any view to defend. But I believe that Wolff's views are based on substantial misunderstandings of Kant's position on these matters. The development and exercise of natural talents or capacities, are important parts of one's good, if not parts of one's happiness as Kant conceives of this. And while it is true that Kant holds that a (direct) duty to pursue your own happiness is impossible, he thinks it is a duty to pursue one's own *good* if this is broadly construed to include natural self-development. Moreover, far from being overly moralistic, I think it can be shown that Kant's view that we owe it to ourselves to develop our capacities comports very well ordinary intuitions about what morality asks of us in this regard. The range and significance of this duty of natural self-development shows, surprising as it may seem, that the dissatisfaction with Kant's views expressed by philosophers such as Wolff and Slote is quite unfounded. That, at any rate, is what I hope the following shows.

Before I go further, I want to make my present aims clear. My interest is in obligations regarding our *natural*, rather than *moral*, capacities.⁴ Kant agrees that we are obligated to develop both, but it is a more interesting question if and why there is a moral obligation regarding our talents and abilities. Of course, given that we should improve

our *moral* characters, it would follow that, other things equal, we should develop any abilities required for this. And certainly we ought to develop abilities, if there are such, required to fulfill any of our moral obligations. But Kant's position, and I think common sense morality, goes well beyond valuing natural talents merely as instrumental to, or constitutive of, morally good character or the performance of one's moral duties. One of the famous four examples in the *Groundwork*, for instance, is of a duty to develop talents with no obvious connection to moral ends, and in the *Metaphysic of Morals* Kant argues quite explicitly for a duty of natural perfection regardless of its role in moral perfection. I am interested, then, in the rationale for this *non-derivative* duty to develop oneself in *non-moral* respects.

I recognize that the very idea of an obligation to oneself has itself been controversial. If we had such an obligation, some argue, then, since it is an obligation *to ourselves* we should be able to free ourselves of it at will.⁵ Yet an obligation from which one could free oneself at will would be no obligation at all. Kant himself offered a solution to this supposed paradox, but it is not clear that the paradox arises in his own theory. One comes to have a duty toward a person or persons, on his view, once and because one proposes to make use of their rational wills. Hence, although a person's will is an essential component in his account of how we come to acquire duties toward that person, it is not in virtue of that person's actual consent or agreement that this relationship is generated. Duties are thus generated toward yourself, not because of some fanciful prior agreement one has made with oneself, but because human beings must rely on the

use of their rational will—rather than relying on instinct, say—to move about and change the world around them.⁶

I also realize that talk of natural human capacities that should be developed will naturally raise suspicions that an outdated teleological conception of human nature is at work.⁷ Indeed, Kant's own appeals to the natural purpose of various capacities, and occasional suggestion that these were implanted by God, will reinforce these suspicions.⁸ I do not pretend that these ideas can be entirely ignored, nor that they did not influence Kant in his thinking about an obligations to develop talents. But I am convinced that no dubious teleological considerations are actually required by his arguments. Kant nowhere argues that it is *because* our capacities are God-given or that Nature has a purpose in mind for them that we are obligated to develop them. Indeed, his argument is that we owe it to ourselves, not to God or Nature, to develop whatever natural capacities we have (taking other moral obligations into consideration).

To be sure, advocating the development of talents raises questions about, for instance, the justifiability of public standards of excellence in the context of conflicting ideals of the human good (e.g., as they might be found in a liberal educational system).⁹ But my project circumvents these questions, being devoted not to what we may or ought to do to promote human development generally, but what we ought to do with regard to our own development. Granted, conceptions of the human good, and hence what counts as genuine human development, may be caught up in complex social contexts with histories and traditions. This adds complexity to the question of which of talents one

ought to develop, and how far. But whatever conceptions of human talents we possess, regardless of their origins, the issue I am presently concerned with is not what is or is not 'really' a human capacity, but whether we're obligated to develop what, in some sense, we reasonably hold to be our natural capacities.

Another preliminary worry: It will seem to some—as it evidently does to Wolff—to be obviously illegitimate to take a *moral* interest in whether anyone develops his or her own talents. Is it in general anyone else's business if someone prefers, say, watching TV to practicing piano? Perhaps it is not just *anyone's* business, but this isn't enough to undermine my project at the outset. Judgments that a family member has let himself down, or that a friend or a student owes it to herself to 'make something more of herself', and so on, are commonplace.¹⁰ When you make such judgments, you are not simply pointing out the direction of his or her well-being. There is an element of moral reproach in your judgment. What if anything justifies this element? Moreover, even if self-development were 'not just anyone's business', it wouldn't follow that there are no grounds for moral judgment. What would follow is only that not just anyone is in a position to find fault with a person who refuses to develop herself. Indeed, if Kant's view is right, it can explain this consequence: that this is a duty toward oneself rather than others implies that the only person who will always be in a position to blame you if it is not fulfilled is you yourself. So in the following, when I speak of the failure to develop yourself as a moral failing, it will help to imagine that the person with the failing is, if not yourself, then a family member or close friend.

I

In this section of the paper, I explain the nature and extent of your duty regarding your natural capacities as this is represented in Kant's views. Although the following points focus on the *Metaphysics of Morals*, I aim to reconstruct views also found in the *Groundwork* and elsewhere where noted. Although these views are found in different works, unlike his views on some other topics, there are few apparent discrepancies that need working out between different texts. Thus, I will make the working assumption that these views are elements of a single consistent overall position. Still, at a number of points my account will have to go well beyond anything Kant actually says to fill out the position, and I will mark those points clearly. I want to stress that my main aim is not to argue for Kant's position on self-development, but simply to lay it out as I think it is best understood.

1. Kant holds that the duty of natural self-development is 'wide and imperfect'.¹¹ By this Kant means that the development of our natural capacities is an end we are morally obligated to adopt. As such, this duty can determine "nothing about the kind and extent of actions themselves but allows a latitude for free choice."¹² We are not, therefore, morally required to develop particular talents or abilities at particular times. By contrast, perfect duties, such as those forbidding suicide, gluttony, theft and so on, forbid or require particular acts at particular times. Now in setting and pursuing an end, as in performing or omitting an action, we are adopting a maxim (Kant's term for a practical principle, policy or, more generally, a guiding rationale for action), and it is, strictly speaking, these *maxims* that ethics concerns itself with. Any maxims we adopt, whether

maxims of performing actions or of pursuing ends, must at the outset qualify for legislation as universal laws of nature.¹³ Perfect and narrow duties turn out to be mainly negative duties forbidding certain kinds of behavior without exception or latitude. They forbid us from acting on maxims that can not even be *conceived* of as coexisting with themselves as universal laws of nature. By contrast, imperfect and wide duties are positive duties, enjoining the pursuit of certain ends. Such duties arise, not because we cannot conceive of maxims of refusing to do so as universal laws (since we can), but because we nevertheless are not supposed to be able to rationally *will* these maxims as such.¹⁴ Although conceivable that these maxims could coexist with themselves as universal laws of nature, human rational wills could not will that they become laws. This is supposed to be because such wills must will, insofar as they are rational, that they be happy and that their capacities be developed.

These are familiar features of Kant's views concerning wide imperfect duties, and I will return to elements of them below. But even these familiar features have significant implications for the extent of our duty of self-development: since one's maxim must be conceivable as a universal law in order to take the further step of willing it as such, it follows that one cannot fulfill a duty of self-development by violating a perfect duty—say, by unjustly harming or stealing from others. Indeed, if we take Kant seriously here, talents developed by knowingly and intentionally trampling human rights, even if they produced some of the world's great cultural treasures and human achievements, would not count as fulfilling anyone's moral obligation to perfect herself, and will even be blameworthy. That they produced treasures and achievements, and represent in some

sense the heights of human development, cannot make up for the wickedness of the means used to produce them.¹⁵

This does not, however, tell us how we should weigh self-development against promoting the happiness of others, our other obligatory end. Intuitively, it seems that helping others ought to be a weightier concern than developing talents, that selfish indifference to the plight of others is a worse fault than idleness. Imagine two people, for instance, who are each equally observant of his moral duties and, in particular, have adopted their own perfection and the happiness of others as their ends. It is likely that they will differ on the amount of time they spend on each of these ends. One may spend more of his time on self-development, while the other spends more on helping others. Though equally free from blame, many will find on balance the latter to be the morally better person. Yet there can be no moral difference between them in terms of observance of their duties for Kant. Are we then simply to use intuition to decide when to leave off helping others in favor of developing ourselves, or vice versa?

Kant's view provides no general moral guideline for deciding this matter. But this is not itself an objection. As long as each person genuinely adopts both ends, neither has done better in performing his moral obligations than the other. This does not make it permissible, for instance, for Nero to fiddle while Rome burns, though not simply because each should spend *more time* on the needs of others. It is impossible to take seriously someone who claims to have taken the wellbeing of others to heart, yet when their needs are dire, knowingly and deliberately pursues self-development instead. To

adopt the wellbeing of others as your end in any sense that is not a sham requires that you do something to promote it when there is an obvious opportunity, when little or no sacrifice and no violation of other duties is required. So although the person who helps others more than develops himself may seem to some to be a better *person* than the person who does the reverse—perhaps he seems more 'saintly'—he has not done better, from a Kantian perspective, than the latter in meeting his moral obligations.

In fact, the choice Kant himself envisaged in his discussions of the duty of self-development is not between, on the one hand, ignoring self-development, and, on the other, lying to an admissions committee, failing to feed one's family or risking one's health and sanity. What is forbidden is "devoting [one's] life to pleasure" rather than "enlarging and improving [one's] fortunate natural predispositions".¹⁶ Moral failing here will thus normally require conditions in which one has, to put it bluntly, some opportunity to loaf. The latitude for free choice allowed in imperfect duties does not imply that the pursuit of any whim or pleasure excuses failure to pursue an obligatory end. But it does show that one cannot be required to ignore one's own needs. If one does not develop oneself because one lives in life-threatening poverty, for instance, this does not mean that one has failed in one's obligation. To attempt to develop a worthwhile capacity under such circumstances might require violating a perfect duty toward oneself and perhaps others who might depend on you. Therefore, those who are economically disadvantaged or socially oppressed and so lack opportunities for self-development are not morally blameworthy for not developing themselves. Were such people to lack developed human capacities, it would therefore be no moral failing.

One may, of course, prefer to spend all of one's time developing one's capacities, but Kant's standard does not 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 read it, Kant's 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.¹⁷

2. The duty of natural self-perfection differs from the related duty of moral self-perfection, in that, although both are imperfect, the latter, unlike the former, 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"¹⁸ or a "general weakness of the human heart in complying with" moral maxims.¹⁹ Even an honest and complete change of heart can be overcome by competing desires. Moreover, we cannot be certain whether we have ever succeeded in becoming morally perfect, since we cannot "see into the depths of [our] own heart[s]".²⁰ Nonetheless, one's obligation is "to 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."²¹ That is, by contrast with natural perfection, the form of our obligation regarding moral perfection is *always* to perform an action that will not vary in kind or extent from individual to individual based their different ends. This maxim, in other words, leaves no

playroom for inclinations. The maxim of natural perfection, by contrast, lacks this perfect quality. It explicitly leaves playroom for inclinations, since human ends, and so the natural capacities that might serve those ends, vary from person to person and across cultures and social settings. This leaves it up to each to decide the kind and extent of the capacities to develop.

Nevertheless, because perfection represents an ideal limit, there is presumably no stopping point for the development of talents—a determinate point at which one is permitted to say 'I've done enough; now I shall devote the rest of my life to pleasure.' Again, this is not because one must aim to *maximize* self-development. One can genuinely have an end without seeking to maximize its realization. But, clearly, to relinquish self-perfection entirely at any point is to give it up as one's end. Therefore, even if the kind and extent of self-development is left up to each to decide for him or herself, that does not imply that one escapes moral blame if he, say, spends a few years fanatically developing his musical abilities, only to stop and spend the rest of his life drinking beer and lying on the sofa.

3. Sometimes we feel disappointed when gifted friends or family do nothing, or at least not enough, to develop or use that gift. And Kant's example from the Formula of the Universal Law of Nature in the *Groundwork* suggests that he is speaking to just this sort of disappointment. There, he refers to the relevant capacities as "talents" and "fortunate natural predispositions".²² This suggests that our obligation is to develop those capacities with which we are particularly well endowed by nature, as opposed to simply some human capacities, however naturally well-endowed by nature we might be. So, for

example, I would on this reading violate my duty of self-perfection if I refuse ever to develop my any gifts I might have and instead, because it happens to interest me, develop capacities that are not gifts at all.

Despite this reference to fortunate predispositions, I think that the Kantian view does not in fact entail that this is a moral failing. For one thing, the mere fact that you are gifted *alone* does not obligate you to develop that gift rather than some lesser ability unless that obligation is somehow based on its really being a gift, say, from God. If someone gives you a gift, perhaps you now owe a debt of gratitude. And perhaps the appropriate way to show gratitude were talents gifts would be to develop them fully. For instance, if someone makes a gift to you of a rare plant, it seems right that you should water and feed it or somehow do something to cultivate it. To let it wither and die seems an offence to the giver. Yet the development of talents is a duty *toward oneself*, while a duty based on gratitude for a gift would be a duty *toward the giver*. Indeed, as I will discuss more fully below, Kant insists that it is impossible for us to have duties toward God or nature, the two most likely candidates for a duty of gratitude. Kant's reasoning, moreover, nowhere appeals to talents being gifts, even if he refers to them as such in his example. Which talents one chooses to develop, he claims, and "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".²³ Because of this, it seems clear that Kant's considered position is that even if a person has, for instance, an unusual talent for music or mathematics, there is no

moral failing if she decides instead to develop abilities required for auto mechanics. She might decide that a musician's life is not desirable. Or she might love the violin but realize that it would be folly to think that her abilities will ever reach the level required to lead the life of a violinist in the sense desirable to her.

That said, even if there is no moral failing in those who ignore their gifts in favor of other capacities, Kant's view is not that *which* capacities a person should develop can therefore be left up to impulse, whim, or fluke. One's obligation is to develop one's talents based minimally on rational reflection about both the sort of life one wants to lead and whether one's own endowments will be up to the task. That means that a person who, for instance, randomly develops now this, now another, then another capacity, flitting from one to the other without giving any thought to how these capacities will serve some coherent way of life, will not have adopted self-development as a rational end. In particular, this would indicate that she has not sincerely willed her own perfection as her end, given that willing an end requires, at least minimally, following through to some degree in a recognizably coherent direction. Each person has a variety of capacities of various sorts she *could* develop, but some will take rational precedence over others depending on the sort of life she has chosen for herself. If one wants to lead the reflective life of a mathematician, for instance, one should obviously develop mathematical skills. If one wants to live a life creating art, one should develop artistic abilities instead. And if one believes that one's achievement of mathematical or artistic skills will not be sufficient to achieve the sort of life as mathematician or artist that one wants to live, one has good

reason to abandon development of those skills and pursue the development of others appropriate for an alternative sort of life one finds desirable.

Therefore, although Kant refers to the failure of self-development as a failure to improve one's fortunate natural predispositions, this does not require us to read this as the view that the gifted have some special obligation to develop their gifts. In deliberation about self-development, one obviously ought to take into account facts about the status of one's endowments. One such fact is that human capacities are not equally, but 'fortunately', distributed among persons in such a way that each can become aware in rational reflection with which of these capacities he might be better or worse endowed. Clearly if one's reflection is to be rational, one's fortunes should be factored in when thinking about what sort of life, together with its course of self-development, it would be reasonable to pursue. The point can obviously be generalized without appealing to innate endowments, if such there be: By the time one engages in this sort of reflection about one's capacities, nurture as well as nature has had a large hand in presenting one with one's endowments.

There is thus still room within this view for moral criticism of those who forgo the development of gifts in favor of pursuits at which they are naturally less well-endowed. It is one thing if you possess *nothing* in the way of a talent. Your vain bungling in that kind of case would then be inevitable. But if it could be avoided, and you knew that it could, it seems that you let yourself down by deliberately ignoring your gifts. Imagine someone looking back over a life filled with personal failures that could have

been avoided, and blaming himself for it. His self-evaluation would surely appeal to exactly the sorts of considerations Kant refers to, for instance, his failure at the time to be guided by rational reflection on his capacities and future prospects.

It is not merely natural endowments that one must weigh in rational reflection. Projects for self-development may be ruled out, on the Kantian view, because on reflection, they turn out to be immoral, impossible or foolish. It would be impossible for me now to develop skills necessary to be a professional ballet dancer, and not simply because I lack natural endowments to that end. Different talents take different amounts of time and experience to develop, and it would be unreasonable not to take this into account in making decisions about self-development. Thus, by embarking on a quixotic project, I would not thereby be fulfilling my obligation of self-development, since my obligation is to develop myself, taking into account such rational considerations. This is not to say that one may not take reasonable chances. But in order to *will rationally* to develop oneself as one's end (and so to fulfill one's duty) one could not knowingly take only entirely unreasonable or utterly foolish chances, especially when one has other reasonable options.

Further, there is no reason to limit Kant's position in this regard to the young. Throughout one's life one has opportunity to rationally reflect on how far one has developed oneself, on how much further one needs to go to have developed oneself. At that point, rational reflection may include sizing up one's previous goals and achievements, one's capacities as they now stand, the time and energy one could devote

to various projects, and the likelihood of success in new goals one sets for oneself. The obligation of self-development should not be thought of as binding only the young; it is an on-going project, always revisable in light of current circumstances.

4. Kant refers to the relevant capacities as "predispositions to greater perfection" in humanity.²⁴ Neglecting such predispositions, he says, may not 'conflict' with treating humanity in ourselves as an end, but it does not 'harmonize with' or 'further' it. And, again, although we can 'conceive' of a world in which no one perfects her talents, we cannot really rationally *will* such a world to come about.²⁵ We are to conceive of ourselves, then, as possessing a collection of capacities that constitute our 'humanity', at least some of which can be more or less 'furthered' in any one individual toward some limit of full development or perfection. Although no single individual could even begin to develop *every* determinate human ability, each can develop some to some extent.

Further, one can imagine an ideal future state in which all human capacities are or have been fully developed by sum of all human beings. Here, I think, the best way of understanding Kant's position regarding human natural perfection is as a group rather than individual project. Thus, the complete development of human capacities is not a burden that each must or even could bear, but a task that all are jointly to take part in. Kant refers to such a joint task in various places. For instance, in the *Anthropology*, he writes "All other animals left to themselves reach as individuals their full destiny [*Bestimmung*], but human beings reach their full destiny only as a species."²⁶ I take 'full destiny' to include the development of all human capacities. If that is right, the

complete perfection of *all* individual human capacities would be something left for the totality of humanity to achieve in the fullness of time.²⁷ Thus, although Kant denies that we can have an obligation to perfect others, the obligation to perfect ourselves is in fact an obligation to 'do one's part' toward this joint task of humanity as a whole.

Kant's discussion of the capacities that constitute our humanity themselves is brief and in general terms.²⁸ In the *Groundwork*, he makes no distinction between moral and natural capacities, as he does in the later *Metaphysics of Morals*. Regarding moral capacities, Kant holds that no one who has duties is utterly without them, though all can and should be cultivated and strengthened.²⁹ Aside from developing self-control and strengthening one's will, moral self-development includes cultivating four moral 'endowments' of moral feeling, self-respect, conscience and love of humanity.

One does not find on Kant's list of natural abilities painting, sculpture, poetry, singing, dancing and so forth. He divides natural capacities into three much more coarse-grained categories: powers of mind (including capacities used in the pursuit of mathematics, logic, science and philosophy), spirit (including memory, imagination, learning, and taste) and body (including athletic abilities and "gymnastics in the strict sense").³⁰ This categorization is meant to be very general. Clearly anything we might ordinarily think of as a 'talent' or 'ability' will tend to involve the exercise of some complex combination of elements from more than one category. Thus, Kant is not thinking as abstractly as the terms he uses might indicate. These more general terms refer to capacities that are combined in what we ordinarily think of as talents. And so when

one develops a talent in the ordinary sense, we will typically be developing many of these more general capacities all at once.

5. Two reasonable worries about my construal of this element of Kant's position.

(1) Kant argues that a person cannot rationally will that there be a world in which everyone lets talent rust since "as a rational being he necessarily wills that all his powers be developed, since they are after all useful to him and given to him for all sorts of possible purposes".³¹ This apparently implies that complete human perfection is not humanity's collective project at all, but a project to be undertaken by each person because each has a seemingly unlimited set of possible purposes to which to put human capacities. (2) In the second *Critique* Kant goes out of his way to argue that it is rational to hope for the immortality of the soul precisely because we are obligated to perfect ourselves individually, and no finite amount of time is sufficient to achieve perfection.³²

The second worry is the easier to address. The kind of perfection requiring immortality of the soul is *moral* rather than *natural* perfection, and I am here restricting my concern to the latter. It is consistent to hold that the moral perfection of humanity must be carried out by each and every individual person by perfecting the moral aspect of his humanity in himself, while holding that the natural perfection of humanity must be carried out by the entire human race with each contributing his or her own part.

The first worry, however, is more difficult. Now there is no disputing that Kant's official position was not that we should develop *all* of our capacities *completely*. We are

to develop natural capacities "some among them more than others, insofar as people have different ends".³³ The trouble is getting from the premise that insofar as we are rational, we will that all of our capacities be developed, to this desired conclusion. If the argument is simply that since rational wills necessarily will that all of their capacities be fully developed, we imperfectly rational creatures ought to will that 'some among them more than others' should be developed, it is hardly worth taking seriously. Perhaps rational wills with an *infinite amount of time, ends and curiosity* will that all of their talents to be developed, but not rational wills *as such*.

Alternatively, one might think his position is that rational wills necessarily will that all of their capacities be developed *somewhat*, however little. But, although the premise is less implausible, the intermediate premise, that if rational wills develop all of their capacities somewhat imperfectly rational wills ought to develop some among them more than others, is at best *ad hoc*.

The context of Kant's claim about fully rational wills is an example of one who "finds in himself a talent that, with a certain amount of cultivation, could make him a useful man for all sorts of purposes."³⁴ This might suggest that, contrary to my above representation of his position, when he says that as a rational being he necessarily wills that *all* of his powers be developed, he means all of his *talents* or the abilities at which he is particularly gifted. Hence, if I find that I have a gift for music, insofar as I am rational, I will that this gift be developed, that it is irrational for me not to pursue the development

of everything for which I have a particular knack. And since no one is talented at everything, this is clearly not impossible.

Charity, however, undermines this reading, and the reasons should put to rest any view of Kant's position that has him focusing on obligations that arise because we possess 'gifts'. First, although no one is talented at everything, some are talented at far too many things to rationally will that *all* of these talents be developed. Picking and choosing when time and energy are at stake is a virtue of rationality, not a vice. Moreover, if some are talented at many things, but others are talented at a few, those who have fewer talents but develop them all would be more rational than those who have many more talents but develop the same number to the same, or even to a further, degree. Surely we should not take the homily 'of those to whom much is given, much is asked' this far. Finally, although many are talented at something, and a few at many things, some are talented at nothing. These agents would then have no duty of self-perfection at all. But even if morality were inequitable in this way, since self-perfection is one of the two obligatory ends, it is just incredible to attribute this view to Kant. It would allow fully one half of these ethical duties not to apply at all to some people.

Kant states that it is because these powers are given to him "for all sorts of possible purposes" that a rational being wills that they all be developed. Perhaps we should then read "all of his powers" as 'all of the powers necessary to achieve all sorts of possible purposes'. But then the argument would be invalid.³⁵ It is indeed true that, for any (morally permissible) end (perhaps a limitless number), it *possible* for a rational will

to adopt it. Now a rational will must also will the means necessary to achieve or realize any end that he wills. Moreover, for each end he might adopt, that end will require as means in turn some human capacities and talents to achieve or realize it. From this, however, it does not follow that a rational will must will to develop all of his human capacities and talents. What follows is only that for each human capacity or talent, it is *possible* that a rational will must will to develop it. And that is clearly compatible with a rational will actually not developing any talent to any extent.

Although this argument does not show that rational wills develop all or even any of their talents, there is an intuitively plausible idea behind it. Rationality does not require omniscience. Full rationality does not imply knowledge of all of the talents that might be needed to achieve current ends, nor knowledge of the novel ends in the future that one might adopt, nor which new talents these ends might require as means to their realization. Intuitively, it makes sense to develop at least some capacities we might need as a hedge against these contingencies. But of course, this is so only if we are not talking about all of the ends it is logically possible for a rational agent as such to adopt. Take a given person as he is, given details about his background, culture, physical nature, psychology and interests. There are a range of ends that it is psychologically, physically, perhaps culturally possible for him to adopt, and there are talents necessary to realizing them. Given you are who you are, it is in some sense not possible for you to adopt certain ends, but quite possible and perhaps likely that you will adopt other ends. Clearly, this is a graded affair; becoming a professional musician or mathematician may not be *impossible* for some people though perhaps it would take Herculean efforts. Perhaps a rational being

develops or at least tries to develop all of the talents he knows are actually necessary to achieve not only the ends he actually does have, but also those that might be necessary to achieve those actual ends, as well as those that are or might be necessary for ends he might adopt in the future. In any case, although this strikes me as plausible, and as perhaps getting at something Kant may have had in mind, I confess that I do not see how the argument according to this line of interpretation can be taken any further.

My suggestion, which admittedly goes beyond the text, is to adopt an alternative way of construing Kant's position that fits with the view I have been setting out so far. As we have seen, he divides natural perfection into mental, spiritual and physical categories. Further, he holds that the destiny of mankind is achieved as a species, which I have read as the position that complete development of the sum total of human potential is not to be undertaken by each alone, but in the sense that in developing oneself one is doing one's part toward a goal that can be reached only by all together. These positions suggest a reasonable way of understanding the claim that necessarily a rational being wills all of his capacities be developed and hence his own perfection as a person. In short, (i) a rational being must will that *some* of every *kind* of human capacity (more or less as Kant defines this) be developed in himself, some more than others depending on his ends and circumstances, in himself; (ii) he also must will that everyone else ultimately develop a virtually limitless range of other human capacities sufficiently so that he can achieve his own ends; (iii) the inevitable outcome of this is that all human capacities will be developed fully, each of which is in some sense contained as a potential in each person's own humanity, in the fullness of time; (iv) and each person's own self-development will

represent a part (however small) of this full development of the totality of human capacities.

First, regarding (i), it is easy enough to see that some capacities from *all three categories* rationally should be developed as means to the ends that any human being in fact will adopt. Insofar as we are rational agents, we will the necessary and available means to our ends. Rationally willing any end at all requires willing to possess and use the abilities that are necessary to achieve that end. Hence, I rationally will to play Mozart's Piano Sonata in B-Flat only if I will to develop the ability to play that piece. But I will to develop that ability only if in turn I will to develop the ability to play piano at all. And any higher-level abilities such as playing the piano will at some point be composed of lower abilities in several of Kant's categories. So it is at least clear that necessarily, insofar as we are instrumentally rational we will that all of the *kinds* of human capacities be developed.

Second, Kant shows that he thinks of the duty of self-development as a duty to 'broaden' ourselves as much as to perfect some particular ability. Given the limitations on one's time, energy, and circumstances, complete human development is better thought of as each person being more or less 'well-rounded'. Developing the capacity to play piano requires rudimentary abilities from each category, but those abilities would clearly be stunted if only developed to the degree required to play piano—at whatever level of accomplishment. So a freakish obsession to develop a particular capacity as far as one can would leave one 'one-sided'.

Third, regarding (ii), insofar as we are instrumentally rational, we must will to develop fully some set of capacities of different kinds. But we also require others to develop capacities for which we have neither the time nor ability to develop, but also which we require in pursuit of the ends we adopt. I cannot adopt as my end playing Mozart's piano sonatas if Mozart had not composed them, if no one had invented the piano, if no one had built pianos, and so on. Indeed, apart from what is required for pursuit of our own ends, it is undeniable that human life would be a pathetic thing if no one developed herself. Each person's life is more rewarding not only for the talents she develops in herself, but for the talents that others have developed. Indeed, for a given individual to develop virtually any capacity in himself at all requires as a necessary means that others have developed capacities in themselves. Hence, each, insofar as he is rational, must will to take advantage of the developed human capacities of others.

Finally, regarding (iii) & (iv), I admit that this does not establish that all human capacities must be fully developed by humanity as a whole, since no matter how broad the range of one's own ends, not *every* human capacity is required to realize them. However, the known novelty and diversity of current and past human ends, as well as the human talents developed to realize these ends, it is 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 as an end and 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 notion of 'complete human development' for Kant. One crucial point to remember from this, however, is that however one interprets Kant here, it is clear that, as he is thinking of it, our duty requires more than fanatical devotion to a particular skill or endeavor in ourselves. Genuine self-development, as self-perfection, requires giving thought to more than merely one side of oneself.

6. Kant uses a number of different terms in his discussion of self-development: talents [*Talents*], powers [*Kräfte*], natural predispositions [*Naturanlagen*] and capacities [*Vermögen*]. Whatever differences exist among the items in this list, the important common features are the following:

i) Unlike the capacities of our sense organs, as Aristotle was first to point out, talents and abilities (or at least those Kant regards as relevant to our duty of self-development) require development in order to be used.³⁶ Thus, our natural perfection will consist "in what can result from [our] deeds, not in mere *gifts* for which [we] must be indebted to nature".³⁷ Kant is thinking primarily of gifted individuals who are so in some sense 'by nature'. But one cannot deliberate about capacities one simply has or doesn't have, whether they are artistic capacities or simply capacities to see, hear and so on. What one can do, however, is size up one's current endowments, however fortunate, and make reasonable judgments about what sorts of education, training and cultivation could produce a level of proficiency that would make sense in the context of some pursuit or activity.

ii) These capacities are all to be thought of as "means to all sorts of possible ends".³⁸ Instrumental rationality, of course, enjoins us to take the necessary and available ends to whatever ends we make for ourselves, on Kant's view.³⁹ Thus it would be irrational not to will to develop those talents we know to be necessary to achieve all of the ends that we will for ourselves. Kant is thinking of not only our own capacities, but those of our fellow human beings. Our duty is "to be a useful member of the world",⁴⁰ and Kant's thoughts on the collective fate of humanity also make this plain. Thus, although it is natural to think that we ought to develop our talents as means to ends that we ourselves have, and so to think that there is some sort of prudential justification for self-development, Kant's view is that, even if this is a duty to ourselves regarding our own capacities, these capacities are valuable to other rational wills as well. That we owe it to ourselves to be a useful member of the world means that proper respect for one's own humanity requires being able to see that it is of value, not merely to oneself, but to others, and to the collective task of humanity.

iii) That these capacities and so on are useful as *means* need not exclude the possibility that their full development apart from this usefulness could be present among our ends. If my end is that I speak a language, that end includes within itself the idea of a developed linguistic capacity. Developing an ability to speak French would thus be achieving my end, even if this is of no real use to me in pursuing other ends I may have.

iv) That they are means both to our own ends and those of others does not, however, covertly introduce a consequentialist justification of self-development. It is not because adopting the maxim of self-development best furthers our own good or the overall good that we are required to adopt it. Each, Kant thinks, "could be satisfied with the innate scope of his capacities".⁴¹ Indeed, Rousseau's vision of humanity happier in a natural state might well be right in Kant's view.⁴² Yet however much or little a person's natural capacities contribute to overall well-being, they belong "to the worth of humanity in his own person, which he ought not to degrade."⁴³ Developing these capacities and abilities is thus an obligation, not because it contributes to our own or general welfare, but because it is, again, demanded by respect for our own humanity.

v) Although some range of levels of mastery will constitute having 'developed' such capacities (being 'competent', 'fluent' and so on), as even the world's finest musicians and artists know, there is no end to the degree to which one can 'perfect' a capacity or talent. This is true, not only of a single capacity, but of the complete development of a human being taking into account the development of a variety of such capacities.

vi) Finally, Kant probably thought that there is some collection of uniquely human capacities and so on which set human nature apart from other animals, and that these were of particular importance in fulfilling our duty of self-development. But even if human beings have striking intellectual, emotional and physical capacities, it is unlikely that these mark an *essential* difference between ourselves and the rest of nature. Other

animals—higher primates, whales, dolphins, and so on—probably have rudimentary versions of human capacities. Even so, Kant's position also provides us with other less controversial ways of circumscribing the range of capacities on which we should focus, in terms of human interests and social usefulness, available professions and realistic human ways of life. It goes without saying that learning to use twigs to fetch grub worms out of rotting logs won't count as self-development.

7. Kant was quite conscious of the fact that talents do not exist in a social vacuum: "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."⁴⁴ Thus, he describes the duty of self-perfection as a duty to "make ourselves worthy of humanity by culture in general".⁴⁵ Indeed, part of what makes this duty imperfect is that when a person chooses talents to develop, he chooses them in the context of "the occupation for which he should cultivate" those talents.⁴⁶ Although the development of *which* capacity is left to each to decide for him or herself in the context of deliberations about what sort of life he or she wishes to lead, that is mainly because the choice of pursuits for which that capacity can be used is itself left up to each to decide. Such pursuits—Kant mentions "trade, commerce, or a learned profession"⁴⁷—are a part of the culture with a history and tradition of use, and so developing a talent involves taking part in that history and tradition. Therefore, when Kant speaks of the "ends set forth by reason" that the development of our capacities serves, he is thinking of these ends as nevertheless existing in a historical and social setting substantial enough to have such trades, professions and so on.

8. Readers of the *Groundwork* are first given a picture of a person who fails in his duty to develop talents as lounging on a South Pacific beach living on coconuts and mangoes—that is, someone who is *so* lazy he fails to develop *any* capacities whatever. But this is surely a caricature. For one thing, most people must develop *some* rudimentary skills such as clothing themselves, talking, reading and so on. These are typically skills that we develop through parental or other adult guidance. Yet once one has developed such basic abilities as one has, one is in a position to fail in one's obligation to continue that development. For another, as is implied by the broadness of Kant's idea of human perfection, even those who have developed some capacity to a very high degree might later violate their duty by being idle and refusing to do anything further to broaden themselves.

In any case, this example is not intended to be typical. Its point is to illustrate how the duty can be derived from the Categorical Imperative. Moreover, since perfection represents a limit, it is evidently always possible to re-evaluate one's development and carry it a step further. Like lying or refusing ever to help others in need, the failure to develop talents could be a moral failing of anyone, and everyone can think of someone who actually does have this failing. So when we think about Kant's point here, we should think of it as addressed to *us*, that is, people who either have considered or might well in the future consider not developing any capacities any further.

9. To summarize, we have a duty to adopt a policy of developing at least some of a vast collection of unactualized or minimally actualized (mostly) human capacities (mental, spiritual, physical), in the direction of the 'limit' of perfection. All will have leeway to choose which to develop, taking into consideration whatever natural predispositions they may have; the ends they and those around them have and that would be served by developing some of their capacities; their material circumstances, including time, access to education, a trade or profession and so on; and the context of their cultural traditions and practices. One's obligation is, in sum, to develop some capacities to some degree, based on rational reflection on one's circumstances, broadly construed in the above ways.

II

Based on the above summary of Kant's views, I want now to sketch five models of the *failure* to conform to this duty of self-development. I set aside various ways in which a person may fail, as I mentioned above, by pursuing self-development when doing so would violate some perfect duty (e.g., lying to get into an exclusive training program, stealing money to pay for it, and so on). I see the following as mainly models of failings where failure at other duties is not in question, allowing a variety of details to fill them out.

1. The first model of a failure to develop oneself is of one who fails to develop *any* human capacity to *any* degree, such as Kant's own *Groundwork* example illustrates:

call such a person the Ne'er-Do-Well. In this category belong not just a fantasy life on an exotic tropical island, but also the 'idle rich' who rely entirely on the developed talents of others, and the 'slacker' who has no interest in pursuing ends lying outside the reach of his endowments as he finds them. It is important here to remember that virtually every normal human being has developed human capacities, since virtually every normal human being has parents, and has had some education. It is only once the responsibility of others to develop your capacities ends that the possibility of failing this duty begins. Thus, a complete failure to develop oneself does not imply, absurdly, that you would lack completely any skills or abilities. No doubt, a Ne'er-Do-Well's capacities, such as they are, may well be almost useless to himself and others. And, in the case of the idle rich, his possessions and money may yet be quite useful to others. But, be that as it may, he refuses to *make himself* useful. When opportunities arise for developing a talent or ability that might be useful, the Ne'er-Do-Well chooses instead not to make any effort, not to take away time and energy from enjoying what fate has thrown his way. He refuses to take part in an occupation, activity or a culture as an active member, so to speak, by developing capacities that might be of value within these pursuits.

2. The Self-Sacrificer displays a different failure: He is unlike the Ne'er-Do-Well in spending time and energy developing human talents, but like him in never developing his own. The Self-Sacrificer focuses instead entirely on the capacities of his children, friends, even people off the street, offering to provide money, help with menial or boring tasks, help in finding studio space, playing fields, coaches, teachers, and so on, going well beyond what is required by any obligations he has toward these people. The Self-

Sacrificer, to be sure, has to have or develop the capacities required for focusing on the capacities of others. The moral fault is not that he lacks developed capacities, but that he does not adopt as his end the development of these or any other of his capacities. He thus treats himself—his human capacities—as *mere means* to the development of others. A Self-Sacrificer *might* be self-deprecating, thinking "I'm no good at anything. It's a waste to spend time on my pathetic 'abilities'." But he need not be. He may simply tell himself, in a sense selflessly, "I'll never be a Mozart or an Einstein, but one of these people could be." The Self-Sacrificer refuses to make *himself* and his *own* capacities of use to himself or others, even if for apparently noble reasons.

Notice that if the justification for the development of talents appealed solely to their social value, there would be no grounds to think there is anything morally wrong with the Self-Sacrificer. One might, naturally, argue that the social goals that the development of human capacities achieve or realize would be best realized if each person developed her own capacities. But this argument would provide no basis for the claim that there is something we owe ourselves here. Indeed, it presumes that we owe the development of our talents to others, not to ourselves—as means to achieving various social goals.

3. Another model of failure to conform to the duty of self-development is the One-Dimensional person: She only aims to develop a capacity absolutely necessary to succeed at a single narrowly construed undertaking. Perhaps she ignores intellectual or emotional development in search of perfecting some athletic ability. She may refuse even

the most rudimentary upkeep of her physical or emotional condition in favor of honing some intellectual skill. She would thus avoid being a Ne'er-Do-Well, since she does well in one respect. She avoids being a Self-Sacrificer, because she does not aim to sacrifice her own development for the development of others. Moreover, she will be useful to others, at least insofar as she contributes her one share. Some would take the One-Dimensional person to be boring, lacking depth, and so on. But the moral failing here would be that she is tedious, but that she utterly disregards or actively avoids tending to the range of human capacities that she possesses in service of only one. When the opportunity arises to expand her horizons, so to speak, the One-Dimensional person instead uses the time to make incremental progress on her one skill. Since she refuses to adopt full self-development as her end, but rather only pursues this in a very narrowly circumscribed way, the One-Dimensional person's fault is that she does not take to heart the idea that her obligation is to perfect *all* of herself as a person.

This may well strike many as taking well-roundedness too far.⁴⁸ For instance, what about a code-breaker in WWII, someone whose valuable abilities could only have been developed to the necessary degree by being One-Dimensional? And think of the sacrifices achieving greatness requires. Reason shouldn't pass judgment on artistic genius, it might be thought. But—and this is important—Kant's position does not condemn *being* one-dimensional—nor the mere lack of developed capacities. It only forbids failing to adopt full and complete development as your end. The fault in the One-Dimensional person is thus not that she is in fact one dimensional, but that her One-Dimensionality is principled. On the basis of adopting one-dimensionality as her end, she

refuses to give any consideration *at all* to other sides of herself. Someone whose overall development as a person is waylaid by considerations of perfect duties, or by pressing considerations of the good of others, for instance, is not at moral fault.

Further, adopting full and complete development as one's end should normally be possible without sacrificing greatness as one's end. We are, again, to develop our talents "some among them more than others, insofar as people have different ends".⁴⁹ It is possible, however, for there to be a choice someone faces: Achieve greatness or adopt full development as your end. And, as I have portrayed it, the Kantian position will have to view significant human achievements as immoral because of the sacrifices to broader self-development that are required. It is thus possible on this view for artistic genius to require immorality. But other moral theories allow this possibility as well, and it seems to me that they should, or at least I see no reason why great achievement must always be morally possible. What is unique about the Kantian view is that there can be cases in which it is not possible, not because you are like Bernard Williams' Gauguin, who must wrong others to pursue an artistic vision, but because you must wrong yourself to do this.

This does not, however, imply that it is morally better to be mediocre than achieve One-Dimensional greatness. Indeed, deliberate mediocrity will also be a fault on Kant's view, as depicted in the next model.

4. This fourth model, the Mediocre Man, will not fail entirely to develop some, or not some of each kind, of capacities in himself (and so is neither a Ne'er-Do-Well nor a

Self-Sacrificer), nor will he develop only one narrow capacity leaving all others utterly undeveloped (as does the One Dimensional Person). Still, those abilities he develops, the Mediocre Man develops only in a deliberately half-hearted way, never taking them seriously or putting effort or energy into their development. He commits himself to a bare minimum of development or proficiency, and opts at every opportunity to give himself over to loafing rather than to put any energy into self-development. The Mediocre Man doesn't take to heart, we might say, that his obligation is to *perfect* himself, not merely to make a feeble gesture in the direction of self-improvement.

5. The final model is the Fool. He may develop a range of capacities, and to a considerable extent, but there is a serious defect in the purposes that they serve or the way that they fit into his natural or social context. They are a mere hodgepodge or collection of capacities which are each individually and together useless for, or incompatible with, any minimally coherent plan of life. The Fool is in some ways like the Ne'er-Do-Well, since he is, for any coherent purposes, useless to himself and others. Yet this is not because the Fool does not develop his capacities; rather, he gives no thought to how the capacities he develops serve a coherent life plan for himself or fit into any possible socially defined niche. He develops capacities as the urge strikes him. He may develop randomly this or that peculiar capacity (say, medieval bloodletting or fetching grubs out of rotting logs). What is important is not the capacities in themselves, but that the Fool has given no thought to how they might serve some culturally embedded rational life plan. Thus, he develops capacities, perhaps fully and in a sense broadly, but always does so at great cost to a plan of life, or at odds with the capacities that could conceivably

contribute to his culture. When opportunities to develop abilities that would serve some way of life present themselves, he invariably opts instead to hone some new bizarre trick in isolation.

These models have several intuitive features worth noting. First, each fails to do something it seems she owes to herself, by failing to develop talents, abilities or capacities. Each lets herself down by failing to develop herself. Second, this is not an obligation that it seems plausible that each of these sorts of people would owe to others, that is, they need not be thought of as letting anyone else down by failing to develop capacities in herself. In each case, the person is letting *herself* down. Third, it morally significant *whose* capacities are left undeveloped in these cases, and in particular that it is *his or her own* capacities that each ought to be tending to, not the capacities or talents of others. We need not look around for a parent or mentor as having failed the person in each of these cases. Fourth, it makes a moral difference *how far* each develops his or her capacities; some effort at *perfecting* oneself is lacking in them. Finally, it is not just *any* of their capacities that they should pay attention to, but a more or less coherent set of capacities that would serve some, if even only very sketchy, life plan they have adopted that makes sense, especially within their cultural settings.

IV

The above lays out features present in Kant's account of this obligation as I have described it. I think they also reflect important features of ordinary thoughts we have

about what we owe to ourselves in terms of self-development. However, it may strike many as confirming Wolff's charge of moralism. Do we really want to condemn those who conform to the models I've described above?

The answer is, No. We do not want to condemn these people. The issue is whether there is a moral failing in the character of the people who conform to these models. One can imagine, if one were a close friend or family member of someone fitting these models, thinking and saying that each of these people are letting themselves down and so owe it to themselves to develop or put more effort into developing capacities useful to themselves and others, to make something, or something more, of themselves. Indeed, one can imagine thinking or saying this in each case even if the person is not wronging anyone else by failing to develop him- or herself.

NOTES

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

¹ 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.

² In Chs. 4 and 5 of my *Reason and Virtue: Kant's Conception of Moral Character*, mss.

³ *The Autonomy of Reason: A Commentary on Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* (NY: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 169

⁴ MM 6:693

⁵ See, for instance, the well-known exchange between Daniel Kading, Marcus Singer, and Warner Wick. Kading, Daniel, "Are there Really No Duties to Oneself?" *Ethics*, 70 (1960), pp. 155-7. Singer, Marcus G. *Generalization in Ethics* (NY: Knopf, 1961), pp. 311-18; "Duties and Duties to Oneself", *Ethics* 73 (1963), pp. 133-42. Wick, Warner, "More about Duties to Oneself", *Ethics*, 70 (1960), pp. 158-63; "Still More about Duties to Oneself", *Ethics*, 71 (1961), pp. 213-17.

⁶ Kant's discussion of this 'paradox' is at MM 6: 417-18. Others who discuss this aspect of Kant's views are Hill, Thomas E., Jr., "Servility and Self-Respect", reprinted in his *Autonomy and Self-Respect*. NY: Cambridge U. P., 1991. Reath, Andrews, "Self-Legislation and Duties to Oneself", in Timmons, M. ed., *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals: Interpretative Essays*. NY: Oxford U.P., 2002, pp. 349-370. Denis, Lara, *Moral Self-Regard: Duties to Oneself in Kant's Moral Theory*. New York: Garland, 2001, pp. 85-123.

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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

⁹ An excellent discussion of some of these problems can be found in 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.

¹⁰ Kant himself claims that it is a friend's duty to point out one's faults.

¹¹ G 4:421-23; MM 6:445-46

¹² MM 6:446

¹³ G 4:426, 431, 436-37; MM 6:389

¹⁴ G 4:423; see also MM 6:389-91

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ G 4:423

¹⁷ There is some controversy over how much Kant requires in the pursuit of obligatory ends. See, e.g., David Gauthier, *Moral Decision Making*, 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.

¹⁸ MM 6:446-7

¹⁹ R 6:29

²⁰ MM 6:392

²¹ MM 6:393

²² G 4:423

²³ MM 6:445

²⁴ G 4:430; also see MM 6:644

²⁵ G 4:423

²⁶ A 7:324; *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Standpoint*. V. L. Dowdell, tr.

Carbondale, IL: So. Illinois U. Press, 1978

²⁷ See Wood, p. 212

²⁸ He goes into more concrete detail in other works, most notably, in

Anthropology

²⁹ MM 6:399-403

³⁰ MM 6:445. See also *Vigilantius* 27:608. Baumgarten's divisions are found in his *Philosophica Ethica*, reprinted in *Kants Gesamelte Schriften* vol. 27, Walter de Gruyter, 1975.

³¹ G 4:423

³² CPrR 5:122-24

³³ MM 6:445

³⁴ 4:422-23

³⁵ Cf., op. cit. Aune, p. 56

³⁶ *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a15-1103b25

³⁷ MM 6:386-7

³⁸ MM 6:446

³⁹ G 4:414-17

⁴⁰ MM 6:446

⁴¹ MM 6:445

⁴² 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.

⁴³ MM 6:446

⁴⁴ A 7:324

⁴⁵ MM 6:392

⁴⁶ MM 6:392

⁴⁷ MM 6:445

⁴⁸ Thanks to Jon Kvanvig for pressing me on this.

⁴⁹ MM 6:445