

Title: Kant and the duty to promote one's own happiness

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Abstract: In his discussion of the duty of benevolence in §27 of the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant argues that agents have no obligation to promote their own happiness, for ‘this happens unavoidably’ (MS, AA 6:451). In this paper I argue that Kant should not have said this. I argue that Kant should have conceded that agents do have an obligation to promote their own happiness.

Keywords: Kant, Kant’s ethics, Kantian ethics, happiness, duty to oneself, self-love

## Introduction

In the *Metaphysics of Morals* Kant argues that human agents have a general duty to promote the happiness of others. That is, Kant argues that human agents have a general duty to adopt the happiness of others as an end. Kant’s argument for the duty of benevolence is as follows:

I want everyone else to be benevolent to me (*benevolentiam*); hence I ought also to be benevolent toward everyone else. But since all *others* with the exception of myself would not be *all*, so that the maxim would not have within it the universality of a law, which is still necessary for imposing obligation, the law making benevolence a duty will include myself, as an object of benevolence, in the command of practical reason. This does not mean that I am thereby under obligation to love myself (for this happens unavoidably, apart from any command, so there is no obligation to it); it means instead that law-giving reason, which includes the whole species (and so myself as well) in its idea of humanity as such, includes me as giving universal law along with all others in the duty of mutual benevolence, in accordance with the principle of equality, and *permits* you to be benevolent to yourself on the condition of your being benevolent to every other as well; for it is only in this way that your maxim (of beneficence) qualifies for a giving of universal law, the principle on which every law of duty is based. (MS, AA 6:451)<sup>1</sup>

In this passage, Kant argues that agents as a matter of fact want others to be benevolent to them. However, he thinks it follows from this that agents ought to be benevolent to others. Moreover, because a maxim to be benevolent to others would not have the universality required of a law, the duty of benevolence must be a duty to be benevolent to *all*.

But Kant stops short of saying that there is a general duty to promote one’s own happiness. Although he concedes that the duty of benevolence is a duty toward everyone, he argues that this should not be understood as conferring an obligation to love oneself. Kant argues that there is no obligation to love oneself because this happens unavoidably. Instead of being understood as entailing a duty to love oneself, Kant argues that the duty to be benevolent to all should be understood as giving one permission to love oneself. In particular, it is permissible to

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<sup>1</sup> All citations are in accordance with the standard Academy pagination. All translations are taken from the Guyer/Wood Cambridge Blue series.

love oneself on the condition that one be benevolent toward others. Thus, although the duty of benevolence, when formulated with universality (as it should be according to Kant), is a duty to be benevolent to all, Kant does not think that there is a duty to be benevolent to oneself.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper I argue that Kant should not have said this. I argue that Kant should have conceded that agents do have an obligation to promote their own happiness. The paper is divided into four sections. In the first, I argue that Kant thinks it is possible for agents in deliberation not to choose to pursue their own happiness. In the second, I point out that the argument against a duty to promote one's own happiness cannot (on pain of inconsistency) be based (merely) on the fact that one has an immediate inclination to do so. In the third, I discuss Kant's argument for an indirect duty to promote one's own happiness. In the fourth, I return to §27 to conclude that Kant should have conceded that agents have an obligation to promote their own happiness.

## 1 When duty and happiness meet

In his discussion of the highest good, Kant is careful to distinguish his views from those associated with Epicureanism and Stoicism. According to Kant, Epicureanism and Stoicism make similar mistakes. Epicureanism equates the pursuit of happiness with the pursuit of virtue. According to the doctrine of Epicureanism (as Kant represents it), to be prudent is to be virtuous. Thus, there is nothing more to virtue than counsels of prudence. Stoicism equates the pursuit of virtue with the pursuit of happiness. According to the doctrine of Stoicism (as Kant represents it), true happiness is the contentment that arises from consciousness of virtue. Thus, Kant argues as follows:

Of the ancient Greek schools there were, strictly speaking, only two, which in determining the concept of the highest good followed one and the same method insofar as they did not let virtue and happiness hold as two different elements of the highest good and consequently sought the unity of the principle in accordance with the rule of identity; but they differed, in turn, in their choice of which of the two was to be the fundamental concept. The Epicurean said: to be conscious of one's aim leading to happiness is virtue; the Stoic said: to be conscious of one's virtue is happiness. For the first, *prudence* was equivalent to morality; for the

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<sup>2</sup> Here I am disagreeing with Guyer. Guyer claims (1) agents have a duty to promote their own happiness and (2) Kant finally concedes this at MS, AA 6:451. These claims can be found in the following passage from Guyer:

Kant finally concedes that this [i.e., that one can have a duty to promote one's own happiness] is both possible and necessary later in the "Doctrine of Virtue" when he recognizes that "since all others with the exception of myself would not be *all'*" (§27, 6:451), under appropriate circumstances the pursuit of my own happiness can be part of my duty to pursue universal happiness. (Guyer 2002, 79n15)

Glossing 'benevolence' as 'promoting happiness,' it may be seen that at MS, AA 6:451 Kant does not concede that one can have a duty to promote one's own happiness. Indeed, Kant is at pains to point out that, although this duty should be formulated as a duty to promote the happiness of all, this should *not* be understood as entailing a duty to promote one's own happiness. Rather, it should be understood as a *permission* to promote one's own happiness *on condition* that one promote the happiness of others. Thus, although I would agree with Guyer if Guyer were to argue that Kant *should* have concluded at MS, AA 6:451 that agents have a duty to promote their own happiness, I do *not* agree with Guyer that Kant did *in fact* conclude that agents have a duty to promote their own happiness. Quite the contrary: I argue that Kant did *not* conclude this even though he should have.

second, who chose a higher designation for virtue, *morality* alone was true wisdom. (KpV, AA 5:111)

In contrast with ancient Greek schools, Kant does not think that virtue and happiness are the same thing. Kant thinks that the connection between virtue and happiness is not analytic; therefore, insofar as there is a connection between virtue and happiness, it must be synthetic. In the highest good, virtue leads to happiness as cause and effect.

Kant concedes that there is an ‘analogue of happiness that must necessarily accompany consciousness of virtue’ (KpV, AA 5:117). But this is not the same as happiness; this is self-satisfaction. Thus, Kant argues as follows:

This word is *self-satisfaction*, which in its strict meaning always designates only a negative satisfaction with one’s existence, in which one is conscious of needing nothing. Freedom, and the consciousness of freedom as an ability to follow the moral law with an unyielding disposition, is *independence from inclinations*, at least as motives determining (even if not as *affecting*) our desire, and so far as I am conscious of this freedom in following my moral maxims, it is the sole source of an unchangeable contentment, necessarily combined with it and resting on no special feeling, and this can be called intellectual contentment. Aesthetic contentment (improperly so called), which rests on satisfaction of the inclinations, however refined they may be made out to be, can never be adequate to what is thought about contentment. For the inclinations change, grow with the indulgence one allows them, and always leave behind a still greater void than one had thought to fill... (KpV, AA 5:117-118)

From this it may be seen that Kant does not think that duty and happiness always coincide. Moreover, Kant thinks that there can be situations in which agents have a duty to do something that is contrary to their happiness (and conversely: there might be situations in which the pursuit of one’s happiness is contrary to duty). A Kantian example of this might be Thomas More, who was executed for refusing to swear his allegiance to the Act of Succession; it is likely that More represented himself to himself as doing his duty at the expense of his (earthly) happiness.

Now it is vital to Kant’s theory that if an agent is in a situation in which morality requires him/her to forgo his/her happiness, s/he be able to do so. If an agent required to forgo his/her happiness were not able to do so, it is not clear how s/he could have such a requirement, for, according to Kant, ought implies can.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the sense in which agents unavoidably pursue their

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<sup>3</sup> For a helpful survey of various passages in which Kant evinces his commitment to ought implies can, see (Stern 2004). However, Stern maintains that the version of ought implies can to which Kant is committed differs from the version often evoked in modern discussions. Stern seems to think that Kant is committed to something like ought conversationally implicates can, a principle defended by Sinnott-Armstrong in various publications (see, e.g., Sinnott-Armstrong 1984). According to this version of ought implies can (unlike the version generally evoked in modern discussions), it might be true that S ought to A even though S cannot A, but it would violate a conversational norm for someone to assert as much under normal conditions. However, note that if Stern were correct, then Kant would not be able to appeal to ought implies can in its contrapositive form (as he clearly does in *On the common saying: that may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice* in inferring from the claim that agents cannot renounce their happiness to the claim that they have no duty to do so (TP, AA 8:278)).

own happiness cannot be so strong that it rules out the possibility of doing one's duty when duty and happiness are at variance with one another.

This is an important result. Kant argued in the passage quoted above that agents do not have a duty to promote their own happiness, 'for this happens unavoidably, apart from any command.' But duty and happiness are not the same thing, and in cases of conflict agents are able (and sometimes do) choose to forgo happiness. Thus, Kant cannot mean that it is necessary that all agents in all instances pursue their happiness. This would be empirically false and, more importantly for present purposes, in conflict with central tenets of his moral theory.

## **2 The duty to preserve one's life**

One thing that Kant might mean in saying that agents promote their own happiness unavoidably is that every agent always has an immediate inclination to promote his/her own happiness. One might try to lever this into an argument against a duty to promote one's own happiness as follows. An agent can have a duty to X only if that agent does not have an immediate inclination to X. Because every agent always has an immediate inclination to promote his/her own happiness, no agent ever has a duty to promote his/her own happiness.

This argument is valid, but it is not clear that Kant would adhere to it. It is not clear that Kant would adhere to this argument because it is not clear that Kant would adhere to the claim that an agent can have a duty to X only if that agent does not have an immediate inclination to X. In discussing the duty to preserve one's own life, Kant makes the following remark:

...to preserve one's life is a duty, and besides everyone has an immediate inclination to do so. (GMS, AA 4:397)

This quotation shows that Kant does not think that it is impossible for an agent to have an immediate inclination to X and to have a duty to X.

This, again, is an important result. If agents do not have a duty to promote their own happiness, this cannot rest on the claim that, for Kant, an agent can have a duty to X only if that agent does not have an immediate inclination to X. However, one still might wonder whether Kant thinks that every agent always has an immediate inclination to promote his/her own happiness. In the next section, I argue that Kant thinks that immediate inclination and happiness can conflict and that in such cases agents have an indirect duty to promote their own happiness.

## **3 The Kantian podagrist: an indirect duty to promote one's own happiness**

In part I of the *Groundwork for a Metaphysics of Morals* Kant argues as follows:

To assure one's own happiness is a duty (at least indirectly); for, want of satisfaction with one's condition, under pressure from many anxieties and amid unsatisfied needs, easily could become a great *temptation to transgression of duty*. But in addition, without looking to duty here, all people have already, of themselves, the strongest and deepest inclination to happiness because it is just in

this idea that all inclinations unite in one sum. However, the precept of happiness is often so constituted that it greatly infringes upon some inclinations, and yet one can form no determinate and sure concept of the sum of satisfaction of all inclinations under the name of happiness. Hence it is not to be wondered at that a single inclination, determinate both as to what it promises and as to the time within which it can be satisfied, can often outweigh a fluctuating idea, and that a man—for example, one suffering from gout—can choose to enjoy what he likes and put up with what he can since, according to his calculations, on this occasion at least he has not sacrificed the enjoyment of the present moment to the perhaps groundless expectation of a happiness that is supposed to lie in health. But even in this case, when the general inclination to happiness did not determine his will; when health, at least for him, did not enter as so necessary into this calculation, there is still left over here, as in all other cases, a law, namely to promote his happiness not from inclination but from duty; and it is then that his conduct first has properly moral worth. (GMS, AA 4:399)

In this passage, Kant tells us that happiness is the idea of the satisfaction of all inclinations united together. Further, he tells us that everybody has a strong and deep inclination for happiness. But he also tells us that happiness often infringes on single inclinations. In such cases (i.e., in cases in which happiness infringes on single inclinations) agents have an indirect duty to promote their own happiness. Agents can and sometimes do forgo their happiness in favor of single inclinations (in Kant's example 'the general inclination to happiness did not determine his will'). But they should not do this. Agents have an indirect duty to promote their own happiness because unhappiness can be a great temptation to transgression of duty. Thus, Kant thinks (1) it is possible for happiness and single inclinations to be at variance, (2) it is possible for agents to choose single inclinations *or* happiness when these two are at variance and (3) agents have an indirect duty to choose happiness when happiness and single inclinations are at variance.

In order to illustrate this, Kant describes a gout sufferer who sacrifices happiness for enjoyment of the moment. To flesh out this example, imagine the following. Sir Leicester Dedlock is trying to decide whether to eat a meal of rich sausage and ham, which he knows will bring on an attack of gout the next day, or to eat a bowl of porridge and go to bed. The sausage and ham are quite tempting. He knows that eating the porridge would be prudent. But maybe he will feel bad tomorrow, anyway. Or maybe he will die in his sleep and this will be his last meal.

Or maybe someone will invent a cure for gout.<sup>4</sup> And the pain is not that bad, is it? Happiness is too indeterminate and wavering an idea for Sir Leicester Dedlock. So he throws it to the wind, perhaps by lying to himself (or, more gently, by rationalizing), perhaps not. He decides to eat the sausage and ham. In this case, Sir Leicester Dedlock chose to pursue a single inclination (the inclination for fine foods) over happiness. But it is easy to imagine that Sir Leicester Dedlock's pain and discomfort the next day might tempt him to be disrespectful to the servants and to infringe on his moral duties. Thus, Sir Leicester Dedlock had an indirect duty to promote his own happiness and to eat the porridge rather than the rich meal. But he did not do so; he chose a single inclination, instead.

This result is more important than the ones from the previous sections. It cannot be the case that the only ground for denying that agents have a duty to promote their own happiness is that they always have an immediate inclination to do so. And agents can fail to pursue their happiness not only if it is at variance with duty; agents can fail to pursue their happiness if it is at variance with a single inclination. When Kant says that agents unavoidably pursue their own happiness, he must mean something like what he says in the passage at 4:399: agents have 'the strongest and deepest inclination to happiness.' However, agents can fail to act on this inclination when it is in conflict with duty or with other inclinations.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4 The duty to promote one's own happiness

According to Kant, the moral law is expressed as an imperative to human agents because an imperative is 'an objective law of reason to a will that by its subjective constitution is not necessarily determined by it (a necessitation)' (GMS, AA 4:413). Human agents do not follow the moral law by necessity. Even if some action is represented to a human agent as a good thing to do, s/he still might not perform that action (or s/he might not perform it on those grounds).

Along the same lines, duty, on Kant's account, involves constraint: the concept of duty contains the concept of a good will, but it contains the concept of a good will under 'certain subjective limitations and hindrances' (GMS, AA 4:397). In particular, Kant thinks that an agent can have a duty to X only if s/he has a countervailing inclination. This helps us to understand

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<sup>4</sup> Korsgaard argues that Kant's claim about the 'perhaps groundless expectation of a happiness that is supposed to lie in health' renders the example 'muddled':

...if there were *good reason* to doubt whether forgoing the unhealthy treat is a means to happiness, then the man's resistance to the imperative that forbids the unhealthy treat would to that extent be *rational*. And in that case the indirect duty to pursue one's happiness would no more forbid the unhealthy treat than the imperative of prudence does. (Korsgaard 2008, 79)

Something similar might be said about the rationalizations I offer above. That is, if Sir Leicester Dedlock would feel bad tomorrow anyway, or if this were to be his last meal, or if someone were to invent a cure for gout, then prudence would pull in the same direction as the single inclination. There are complications regarding Sir Leicester Dedlock's epistemic position and the evidence available to him for these possibilities. These complications might render the example less problematic. But hopefully the point of the example is clear without a detailed analysis.

<sup>5</sup> Timmermann argues that in cases in which happiness conflicts with both a single inclination and with duty, it is not clear what an agent could be motivated by in pursuing happiness. Timmermann argues that even if there is a motive of prudence, 'it cannot be effective in this case' (Timmermann 2005a, 12n7). It is not clear to me why Timmermann thinks that the motive of prudence cannot be effective in this case. Indeed, it seems to me (*pace* Timmermann) that such cases are precisely the ones that show the motive power of prudence.

why Kant thinks the claim that self-love ‘happens unavoidably’ moots the duty to promote one’s own happiness: if agents promote their own happiness unavoidably or if self-love is inevitable, then there can be no duty to promote one’s happiness.

However, as we are now in a position to see, the problem with this argument is that (based on Kant’s own philosophy), it is not true in any relevant sense that agents unavoidably promote their own happiness or that self-love is inevitable. That is, any sense in which agents do unavoidably promote their own happiness or in which self-love is inevitable is not strong enough to preclude a duty to promote one’s own happiness. Not only is it false that agents always do promote their own happiness (as seen in section 1), but even if agents always have an inclination to do so, this is consistent with their having a duty to promote their own happiness (as seen in section 2) because agents also have countervailing inclinations (as seen in section 3).<sup>6</sup>

So if the arguments in the previous sections are sound, then Kant’s argument for denying a duty to promote one’s own happiness is not. But this does not show that there is such a duty. So that is what I am going to try to do now.

One way to show this might be to focus on Kant’s claim that there is an indirect duty to promote one’s own happiness. In her recent work on Kant’s anthropology, Cohen argues that indirect duties (in general) have genuine normative force. She argues for this on the grounds that ‘they can be interpreted as duties that are indirectly prescribed as means to the realisation of a direct duty, namely the direct imperfect duty that commands the pursuit of one’s own perfection’ (Cohen 2009, 95). Cohen’s idea is to appeal to the hypothetical imperative in conjunction with a direct duty: if an agent A ought to X and if Y is a necessary means to X, then A ought to Y. One ought to pursue one’s own perfection and (according to Cohen) promoting one’s own happiness is a necessary means thereto, so one ought to promote one’s own happiness.

The problem with this strategy, however, is that promoting one’s own happiness is not a necessary means to the realization of one’s own perfection.<sup>7</sup> On Kant’s account, promoting one’s own happiness enables one to be moral in the same way that not buying cookies makes it easier to stick to one’s diet. That is, it is much easier not to eat junk food if it is not there. So it makes sense not to stock up on chips if trying to lose weight (when parents go on diets, kids often get dragged along). But even if the junk food is there, one need not eat it. So appealing to the

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<sup>6</sup> I would like to thank an anonymous referee from *Inquiry* for pressing me to clarify this.

<sup>7</sup> Cohen considers this objection explicitly. In response, she distinguishes between the standpoint of a rational being (in general) and the standpoint of a human rational being. On this basis, Cohen asserts that ‘although indirect “duties” are not entailed by the moral law, the fact that they are directed to an embodied human agent whose actions take place in the empirical world suggests that they can be said to be necessary given certain features of human nature’ (Cohen 2009, 101). But this misses the point of the objection. The objection is not that there are some rational beings in general for whom promoting their own happiness is not a necessary means to the realization of the duty to promote their own perfection. Rather, the objection is that even for human rational agents it is not so.



hypothetical imperative does not help.<sup>8</sup> It is because of this that some commentators maintain that indirect duties are not actually duties properly so called.<sup>9</sup>

An alternative approach might be to note that the in/direct duty distinction seems to be unstable in Kant's work. For instance, in the *Metaphysics of Morals* Kant argues for the duty to promote one's natural talents, a direct duty, on the grounds that 'a human being has a duty to himself to be a useful member of the world, since this also belongs to the worth of humanity in his own person, which he ought not to degrade' (MS, AA 6:445-446). The problem with Kant's argument here is that promoting one's natural talents is neither necessary nor sufficient for being a useful member of the world. The independently wealthy athlete who practices tennis alone all day everyday is not a useful member of the world. And there are plenty of useful things one could do without being a specialist or having any particular talents (cultivated or not). Cultivating one's talents might make it easier to be a useful member of the world or it might enable one to become a more useful member of the world (assuming that usefulness to the world can be ordered lexically). But the same could be said about promoting one's own happiness in relation to one's other duties.<sup>10</sup>

However, even if the in/direct duty distinction is unstable in the way suggested in the previous paragraph, this does not show that there is a duty to promote one's own happiness. Indeed, perhaps some would argue that it shows only that the *Metaphysics of Morals* derivation of the duty to promote one's natural talents does not work. So appealing to the indirect duty discussed in section 3 looks like it will be an uphill battle. Accordingly, I would like to offer an independent argument for a direct duty to promote one's own happiness on the basis of interpersonal considerations.

According to Kant, every agent has a duty to treat humanity in his/her own person as an end. But I want to argue that any agent who constantly is promoting the happiness of others at the expense of his/her own is not treating his/her own humanity as an end. That is, such an agent seems to be expressing a value judgment, *viz.*, that his/her happiness is of lesser value and, hence, that his/her humanity is of lesser value than that of the other people whom s/he is constantly serving.

Of course, an agent might take great joy in sacrificing his/her own aims and long-term plans. Indeed, sacrificing one's own happiness for the sake of others' might satisfy an inclination (for example, the inclination to be seen as self-sacrificing). But it is important to be clear here: if the bond between two people is so strong that their respective conceptions of happiness become intertwined, then it might not make sense to say that one is sacrificing his/her happiness for the other. Rather, it might be a hard case in which the person has to make a choice about how best to pursue his/her happiness given the harsh reality of an uncompromising world. For example,

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<sup>8</sup> Additional complications arise from Cohen's association of promoting one's own happiness with strengthening the capacity for self-mastery and with a culture of self-discipline (see Cohen 2009, table 4.4 (page 95) and table 4.5 (page 97), respectively). Self-mastery and self-discipline might be undermined for many by utter misery, but that seems relevantly different from saying that happiness is necessary for self-mastery and/or self-discipline.

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., Timmermann 2005b, p. 131: 'although it is tempting to think of "indirect" duties as a species of duties alongside the better known "perfect" and "imperfect" varieties, that would be a mistake.'

<sup>10</sup> It is also worth pointing out that in the podagrist passage quoted above in section 3, Kant says that one can promote one's own happiness *from duty* and that doing so can have moral worth, thereby further undermining the in/direct duty distinction.

parents often make great sacrifices for their children. But it is not always correct to say that they sacrifice their happiness for their children's happiness (although sometimes no doubt it is so). Sometimes it would be more accurate to say that they are sacrificing one life-goal that previously had factored into their happiness for the sake of another after realizing that these two goals are, for one reason or another, mutually exclusive. This is not to say that such sacrifices are easy or unimportant, nor is it to say that they are not sacrifices: rather, it is to say that such cases are not what I have in mind here.

Along the same lines, an agent might have a very good reason to sacrifice his/her own happiness, both in the short-term and in the long-term. This is obviously so for agents whose happiness is bound up with morally abhorrent ends. And it also can be so for agents with more quotidian aims. But this, again, is not what I have in mind here.

What I have in mind here is that care for the happiness of others, and especially an officious care for the happiness of others, at the expense of one's own happiness is immoral if it expresses a devaluation of oneself (or an arrogant pride). Indeed, simply not taking an interest in one's own happiness, even if not accompanied by officiousness, is immoral insofar as it expresses a devaluation of oneself. And on these grounds, I want to argue, there is a general duty to promote one's own happiness (provided one does so consistently with the duty to promote the happiness of all).

A somewhat frivolous example might help to make the point. Suppose that two friends, Carstone and Clare, go to an amusement park together. They are trying to decide which rides to go on; which booths to eat from; which characters to pose for pictures with; and so forth. Further, suppose that they end up going on Carstone's favorite rides, eating at Carstone's favorite booths, etc. Finally, suppose that the decision process is not undemocratic, undermined or insincere and manipulative: it is not that one of the two is hijacking the decisions, unilaterally declaring the next step in the game plan, ready to throw a tantrum if s/he does not get his/her way or being hammed up in anticipation of some later decision.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, it is not Carstone's birthday, nor are they there because Clare is trying to make up to Carstone for some previous foible. For my purposes, Carstone need not know that although the decision process is equitable, its results are not. Nor need it be the case that Clare actively dislikes Carstone's favorite rides, foods, etc. Each individual decision is no great sacrifice, and even on the whole, Carstone's happiness does not come at the price of Clare's misery. Rather, Clare simply rates Carstone's happiness as more important than her own, and she therefore pushes for his preferences over her own. And this need not be something about Clare and Carstone in particular: perhaps Clare would have behaved this way with anyone.

I maintain that in this example there is a misvaluation of the worth of a rational being evinced through a misvaluation of the worth of her preferences when pitted against those of

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<sup>11</sup> This is where my argument pulls away from a similar argument made by Hill regarding the duty of self-respect (Hill 1973). Failure to fulfill this duty, according to Hill, results in servility, which he defines as allowing others to infringe on perfect duties they owe to one on the basis of mistaken ideas regarding one's own worth relative to those others. By way of contrast, the duty to promote one's own happiness as I am arguing for it here need not involve any violation of perfect duties (such as one person openly talking over another's voice during deliberations). This raises important questions about whether some aspects of Hill's examples unwittingly blur the distinction between a duty of self-respect and a duty to promote one's own happiness, something with which he would be displeased (he denies that there is a Kantian duty to promote one's own happiness). But I cannot pursue such details here. I would like to thank an anonymous referee from *Inquiry* for pressing me to clarify this.

another. The premises I need to support this idea are, I believe, as follows: first, that all rational beings have equal moral worth; and second, that one of the ways in which the value of rational beings is expressed is through the value attributed to their happiness as a complex of various ends, preferences and inclinations. If these two premises are correct, then there is an important misvaluation of the worth of one rational being in relation to another when one person fails to value sufficiently someone *else's* happiness in relation to his/her own. But there is also an important misvaluation of the worth of one rational being in relation to another when one person fails to value sufficiently his/her *own* happiness in relation to someone else's. It is this second kind of misvaluation that underlies the duty to promote one's own happiness.

Of course, there might be other arguments that one might make in favor of the idea that there is a duty to promote one's own happiness. Perhaps, for example, in addition to the interpersonal argument I am pushing here, an intrapersonal argument could be made (perhaps appealing to the way in which one values one's current utility as compared with how one values the utility of one's past and/or future selves). But the point is that if I am right, then there are good Kantian grounds for thinking not only that Kant's argument against the general duty to promote one's own happiness is contradicted by what he says elsewhere, but also that there actually is a such a duty.

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