ABSTRACT. This paper is a study of the role of happiness in Kant's theory. I begin by noting two recurrent characterizations of happiness by Kant, and discuss their relationship. Then I take up the general issue of the relation of happiness to moral virtue. I show that, for Kant, the antagonists are not morality and happiness, but the moral point of view and "self-conceit", the inveterate tendency to elevate the concern for contentment or satisfaction of inclination to the status of a supreme principle. Indeed, I try to show that there are deep positive connections between happiness and moral virtue because of the distinctive content of the moral life and of the indeterminacy of happiness. The capacity to unite one's ends into a "system" in accordance with reason requires the moral point of view. Not only is morality not imprudent, but by itself prudence alone gives no definite principle of organization.

The second issue I investigate is Kant's theory of the non-moral or conditional good. Since the Highest (complete) Good for Kant consists of perfect virtue and happiness, it follows that all non-moral goods have value only because they are components or conditions of happiness. This is a strong and dubious position. Given Kant's account(s) of happiness, it entails that nothing that fails to affect contentment or the satisfaction of inclination has non-moral value. This
denies the possibility of non-moral ideas of excellence that could compete with both morality and happiness for human allegiance. Consequently, although Kant is often thought to give too little importance to happiness in human life, arguably he accords it too much value.

... it is in suffering that the purity of morality and virtue most notably show themselves. [1]

Now if one asks, what is the aesthetic character, the temperament, so to speak, of virtue, whether courageous and hence joyous or fear-ridden and dejected, an answer is hardly necessary. The latter slavish frame of mind can never occur without a hidden hatred of the law. And a heart that is happy in the performance of its duty (not merely complacent in the recognition thereof) is a mark of genuineness in the virtuous disposition. ... [2]

No doubt Kant took a solemn view of the human lot—so much so that his writings leave many with the distinct impression that a cheerful temperament even disqualifies one for virtue. Although that impression is certainly hasty, the exact nature and value of happiness in Kant's theory remains somewhat obscure. [3] For, among other things, Kant works with significantly different conceptions of happiness without ever explaining their differences or relationships.

This fact presents serious problems of critical interpretation. It affects a number of his characteristic views and arguments: about the relationship between virtue and happiness, and about the constitution of the Highest Good. Though it has sometimes been noted, its significance has never, to my knowledge, been explored sufficiently.

Such imprecision is to be expected, it might be thought, from a theorist who accords to happiness only a marginal value—what is inessential may be neglected. [4] On the contrary, a clear understanding of this concept is crucial to Kant's enterprise. For happiness is not merely a foil to virtue, a meretricious good that tempts us from the "dry and earnest" road of duty. It occupies a unique and central role in Kant's theory of value. Not only must we make significant room in our lives for the advancement of the ends of others, but happiness in proportion to virtue is the "Highest Good". [5] While happiness is not the best thing there is for human beings—individually or collectively—it alone is chosen as the crown of human moral perfection. This essay is an exploration of the role of this concept in Kant's theory, undertaken in the hope of describing more exactly what he wishes to honor in this singular man-
SUCCESS AND CONTENTMENT: KANT'S TWO CONCEPTIONS

Two characterizations of happiness[7] are especially recurrent in Kant's writings. On one way of putting it, happiness is said to be satisfying one's inclinations. In a familiar phrase, in the idea of happiness "all inclinations are summed up".[8] On the other formulation, happiness has to do with one's basic attitude toward one's life on the whole; it is "contentment (Zufriedenheit) with one's state along with assurance that it will last".[9]

The "inclination-conception" and the "contentment-conception"[10] (as I will call them) are closely related but importantly different. The satisfaction of our desires is unquestionably relevant to our contentment with our lives, but it is not the sole determinant. The following elaboration should make the point clear.

To begin with the inclination-conception, two preliminary points are noteworthy. First, happiness is a second-order "inclusive" end or good. To realize this end or good is necessarily to realize other ends in which it "consists"; to strive for happiness is necessarily to strive to realize one's particular ends.[11] To illustrate, consider a "plan" that I form for the weekend, providing for various interests. It may provide for writing letters, seeing a play, visiting friends, playing tennis, doing the laundry, doing "nothing", and so on. My desire to realize this plan is an example of an inclusive end. The ends of writing and socializing are not instrumental means to this end, as doing the laundry is an instrumental means to cleanliness. Rather, these ends constitute my plan. The end of implementing my plan is not definable or achievable independently of the ends that make it up. To achieve the former goal is to achieve the others. Happiness is said to be an inclusive end in this sense.

Second, however, this end is importantly qualified by Kant by his technical use of the term 'inclination' (Neigung), which denotes ends that arise from "natural" (phenomenal) needs and desires, and from the expectation of pleasure from their satisfaction.[12] Consequently, happiness is not a purely inclusive end; for one thing, it excludes moral "ends". So defined, the pursuit and achievement of ends that do not arise from inclination are not relevant to happiness. (This implication, as we'll see, is one significant difference from the contentment-conception.) Happiness is inclusive only with respect to the ends of inclination.

This conception remains fairly inchoate. The idea of "summing up" one's inclinations is not too clear. Kant pro-
vides a helpful hint, though, in his remark that happiness is the satisfaction of "all inclinations taken together" in a "fairly tolerable" system (2,76[73]). The suggestion here is that one's inclinations form (or rather are formed into) a system in the sense of a scheduled hierarchy of ends: a ranking of the ends of one's inclinations along with the conception of the future that allows for their ordered pursuit over time. So refined, this conception holds that happiness is the realization of one's scheduled hierarchy of ends, or, to use a currently popular phrase, one's life-plan.[13]

This idea ties in closely with Kant's view of prudence, which stresses the systematizing function of that faculty. "Prudence (Klugheit) is the ability to unite all one's purposes to one's lasting advantage" (3,33n[416n]); "in the precepts of prudence, the whole business of reason consists in uniting all the ends that are prescribed to us by our desires in the one single end, happiness, and in coordinating the means for attaining it" (1,800,B828). The business of prudence, therefore, is not only to secure but to define our happiness.[14]

Kant calls the concern for the realization of one's system of inclinations (so understood) self-regard (Selbtsucht) and sometimes self-love; it can as well be called the desire for happiness.[15]

At first sight, the contentment-conception appears more straightforward. Happiness is not then an inclusive end but a complex attitude or psychological state. Although the realization of other ends is causally relevant to this state, it is not the case that to realize these other ends just is to be in this state. While more should be said about what contentment involves, it is sufficient for now to stress that this attitude concerns one's life over-all (on the whole, in all important features).[16] Self-regard will be defined, on this conception, as a concern for one's overall lasting contentment (as distinct from this or that pleasure of the moment), and the responsibility of prudence is to guide us to this end.

These two conceptions are plainly not equivalent. The most striking difference results from the fact that inclination in Kant's sense is not the sole source of contentment or discontentment. Moral concern is another. Therefore, as Kant knew, one might be discontent, even though one satisfied all one's inclinations, because one lacked self-respect. But, secondly, even a purely inclusive notion of happiness would not be equivalent to the contentment-conception. Even the realization of all of one's ends could leave one discontent. (My desires are "satisfied" but I am not.) Finally, it seems conceptually, if not humanly, possible that a person who fails to realize her system of inclinations might be content overall just the same.[17]
If they are not equivalent, we may, perhaps, view their relationship in the following way. The contentment-conception is the most fundamental, we might say, because no one who is deeply discontented with his life on the whole could be happy (at that time), however successful he might be in implementing his life-plan.[18] Nevertheless, the inclination-formulation is not idle; the notion of a system of inclinations is important for understanding the happiness of human beings. Given what we are--our contingency, the plurality of our ends--we could not attain overall contentment without attending to our natural needs and desires and forging some sort of harmony among them. Our contentment is not free-floating but grounded in part in the realization of other ends. So any clear view that one has about one's happiness will perforce involve a conception of the ordered satisfaction of one's inclinations.

The contentment-conception still provides for the unifying and defining role of prudence. We must still answer the question: what system of ends might bring overall contentment? Since various systems are possible for each of us, there is organizational work to be done, and in effect, our systems of inclinations are our answers to this question. Given that we have somehow arrived at an answer in the form of a "life-plan", we will then think of our own happiness as consisting in the realization of our particular plans. But realizing that plan is not a defining criterion; we might be happy in failure and unhappy in success.[19]

I offer this interpretation tentatively. For one thing, there is no direct evidence that Kant held it; he is silent on the matter. For another, some of Kant's remarks fit the inclination-conception best, as we will see. So there is some indirect evidence against it. But for the most part, I will work with this interpretation in the remaining sections.

THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN HAPPINESS AND MORALITY

On Kant's theory, the two determinants of contentment appear also to be at odds in human life. On either conception, happiness depends heavily upon inclinations, but a harmony between "nature and morality" is "foreign to each as such" (2,133[128]). If it were not for the clear voice of reason, one's sensuous nature, that "powerful counterpoise" to the dictates of duty (2,36[35]), would "drive morality to ruin" (2,36[35]). Indeed: "Virtue presupposes the presence of an enemy" (5,50), namely our tendency to give priority to our inclinations. Morality "sternly places restricting conditions upon my boundless longing for happiness" (2,134[130]), and virtue could be defined as the readiness to sacrifice one's happiness for the sake of the moral law. Does this imply that, under similar conditions of external
Kant underscores what he calls the heterogeneity of the concepts of virtue and happiness (2,115-16[111-12]). By this he means that virtue and happiness are not necessarily harmonious. The "ancients", as Kant understood them, had attempted to avoid conflict in two different ways: by defining virtue as the correct apprehension and wise pursuit of happiness (the Epicureans), or alternatively, by defining happiness as the consciousness of one's virtue (the Stoics). The heterogeneity of these concepts dooms these attempts to failure. But Kant's writings seem certainly to suggest a stronger antagonism than the mere possibility of conflict; the passages I cited seem to imply that virtue and happiness are by nature opposed in human life. Let us consider this matter in some detail.

We often speak of people sacrificing (to various degrees) their happiness for moral reasons. Taken literally, to sacrifice one's happiness is to do something that results in one's being less happy than otherwise. We voluntarily sacrifice our happiness when we sacrifice our happiness willingly or knowingly (and could have done otherwise). A moral sacrifice of happiness is made when a voluntary sacrifice of happiness is made for moral reasons. Surely a morally good person is more likely to make moral sacrifices than others.[20]

But consider two grounds of skepticism about attributions of moral sacrifice. Some think or suspect that we always seek happiness as we conceive it; if they are correct the motivational condition for moral sacrifice is never met.[21] A quite different reason for skepticism is the observation that one would not be happy acting contrary to one's moral principles; therefore, one's moral choice does not result in a less happy situation for one than would otherwise have obtained. This observation casts doubt upon the counter-factuals that seem implicit in attributions of moral sacrifice.

Kant himself acknowledges this last point: "... the upright man cannot be happy [kann sich nicht glücklich finden] if he is not conscious of his righteousness, since with such a character the moral self-condemnation to which his own way of thinking would force him ... would rob him of all enjoyment ... which his condition might otherwise entail" (2,120[116]).[22] The very moral concern that motivates the alleged sacrifice would probably spoil the possibility of being happier otherwise.[23] On the inclination-conception, this claim is implausible. For it is fairly clear, in Kant's terms, that people frequently sacrifice the satisfaction of inclination for the sake of "duty". But for reasons we have mentioned, to sacrifice inclination is not necessarily to forswear an available source of contentment;
due to one's moral outlook, contentment does not lie that way. So on the contentment-conception, the claim has considerable force.

Does it diminish the alleged antagonism between morality and happiness? No. All it shows is that virtue is a source of discontent. Those who lack moral concern would be open to discontentment only from the frustration of inclination. The virtuous are more vulnerable. In this sense, morality and happiness remain antagonistic. What is relevant is not whether the morally concerned would be discontent in disobedience, but how living with moral concern compares with living without it. It might even be said that moral sacrifice consists in one's continued allegiance to the moral point of view. There may be a clash between virtue and reasons of happiness at this higher level.

It is doubtful that the moral point of view is escapable in this way.[24] Even so, this suggestion misses the significance of so-called moral sacrifice. For Kant, its significance does not depend upon problematic speculations about the possibility and outcome of eliminating our moral concern. What is significant about attributions of moral sacrifice is that they express the recognition of the commitment on the part of moral agents to look upon their conduct from a special point of view, to which other viewpoints are placed in absolute subordination. From this point of view, it does not matter whether acting from this point of view is likely or not to diminish one's prospects of happiness. What matters is not whether a sacrifice is made, in the specified sense, but the willingness to make it. Considerations of conflict between morality and happiness, whether occurring at a lower or higher level, are ignored altogether by the virtuous person.[25]

In Kant's theory, the true antagonist to morality is not happiness or self-regard, but our persistent tendency to evaluate our lives solely from the point of view of ourselves as creatures of natural needs, governed by pleasure and pain, "just as if that were our entire self" (2,77[74]).[26] From this partial point of view, moral concern is seen as simply one among a person's many incentives, as a potential source of contentment or discontentment. One's interests and incentives are viewed holistically, according to their systematic impact on one's total system of ends and overall contentment. Particular interests are to be weighed and balanced against one another on this scale, and sometimes qualified or abandoned if possible.[27]

This perspective treats moral concern as something it is not: as merely a particular "affection" or "passion". But moral incentives are--and present themselves as--authoritative, overriding all other particular interests as well as the holistic standard of self-regard.[28] Kant expresses this point by saying that "pure practical reason"

85
(morality) checks self-regard, but "strikes down self-con­ceit" (defined as the tendency to elevate self-regard to the status of a supreme principle).[29]

For Kant, when we are prompted to speak of moral sacri­fice, we are witness to this phenomenon. To decide whether we are giving up some happiness otherwise attainable is less important than to see that in moral action we are giving up a point of view (to which we are perpetually drawn) accord­ing to which our happiness is what matters most.

Thus, the real conflict is between two points of view to which we are inherently susceptible, not between morality and happiness. For these reasons, Kant would regard discus­sions of the relative advantages of virtue to be wrongheaded. To love the moral life is to set such considerations aside. Still, I will argue that several of Kant's views entitle him to an interesting and more positive conclusion about the relationship between virtue and happiness. Kant's conception of moral character and the content of the moral life gives reason for believing that moral agents have a distinctive and abiding source of contentment that is unav­ailable to those who live by the "principle of happiness". Kant would not wish to press these points himself, but in the next two sections, I wish to draw out some of their im­plications.

**THE CONTENT OF THE MORAL LIFE**

Virtue partially defines a way of life, a way of life that is shaped by three general ends. (a) It will allow significant room for the pursuit of one's own general well-being as determined by one's natural needs and particu­lar inclinations. (b) It will include the pursuit of the happiness of others. And, (c), it will include the pursuit of one's own natural and moral perfection. (These last two Kant calls "objective" (morally incumbent) ends.)

These three ends are to be brought into balance with one another according to the circumstances of an individu­al's life and temperament. How large a role each will play is not capable of exact determination, beyond the vague principle that a rational being must not pursue one or more of these to the exclusion of another. Finally, the pursuit of each of these ends, and the implementation of the plan that harmonizes them, is restricted by perfect duties as determined by the Categorical Imperative.

Hence the morally good person will generally pursue the ends of inclination, but in a way that promotes (b) the well-being of others and (c) the perfection of his own natu­ral and moral powers. (In contrast, (b) and (c) would con­cern the "self-conceited" only so long as they contributed to (a), or to contentment.) The duties to advance one's
powers as well as the ends of others are said to be "imperfect" because one's own preference may legitimately (indeed must) influence which ends of others and powers of oneself to promote, as well as the extent to which one promotes them. Certain ways of pursuing even morally incumbent ends are forbidden by the Categorical Imperative; these correspond to "perfect" duties (or duties of "justice"). For example, one may not seek one's own development or the happiness of others by homicide, fraud, or robbery.\[30\]

The content of the moral life supports three general observations. Barring extreme misfortune, morally good people will not only be able to pursue the satisfaction of their inclinations, but the conflicts between inclination and morality will be reduced in number and intensity (though not of course eliminated). For we should not expect the inclinations of the morally good to be just the same as others since they will have striven and to various degrees managed to bring their inclinations into harmony with the demands of the moral life. Their natural needs and preferences will be morally informed.

Second, it is plausible to suppose that the development and exercise of one's natural and moral powers is a significant source of satisfaction. They call for the intricate and interesting exercise of "intuitive" and "conceptual" faculties. If so, living a moral-life will be in this way a continuous source of enjoyment.\[31\]

The third observation concerns the important place of "self-contentment" and self-respect in the moral life. According to Kant, the consciousness of virtue necessarily brings with it a self-contentment not otherwise available; it is a consciousness of our autonomy that provides "the exclusive source of an unchanging contentment" (2,122,[117]). In the same vein, Kant distinguishes two kinds of pleasure "with oneself", one of which is highly sensitive to success and failure, whereas the other is independent of how it fares with our inclinations (5,41n). As we will see in the next section, nothing in the non-moral life can securely support this kind of attitude, if Kant is right.

**THE INDETERMINACY OF HAPPINESS**

We have seen that the content of the Kantian moral life provides a positive basis for happiness. What is more, there is no reason to suppose that alternative ways of life promise more. Indeed, there is no determinate answer to the question of what the content of one's life would be if one were not susceptible to moral concern. Kant believed that only the moral life has a content determined by rational principle. The only alternative application of practical reason is that of prudence. But prudence is by itself a
pretty feeble thing. It does not after all provide action-guiding principles. Only the moral life is significantly structured by practical reason. It would therefore be mistaken to think that, without the constraints of the Categorical Imperative, practical reason would point the way to happiness.

This conclusion can be gleaned from Kant's remarks on the indeterminacy of the concept of happiness. He writes: "... the concept of happiness is so indefinite that, although each person wishes to attain it, he can never definitely and self-consistently state what it is he really wishes and wills" (3,35[418]). But surely what we want in wanting happiness is to realize our systems of inclination, thereby finding contentment with our lives as a whole. The answer is consistent; in what ways is it indefinite? Kant's point is that it is too abstract to be action-guiding. He also urges that the process of making the goal of happiness definite enough to be action-guiding is largely a non-rational one.

If prudence cannot define (make definite) happiness beyond what has been said, it can discharge its responsibility very imperfectly. Its responsibility is two-fold: to unite one's inclinations into a realizable system, and to determine the means for implementing the specified plan. (About the latter task, Kant tended to be pessimistic as well. What interests me here is his attitude toward the first.) To be action-guiding, prudence must generate specific maxims of action. According to what principles?

Without morality, practical reason can yield only specific "hypothetical imperatives", according to the general schema: "If (or since) S wills e, and if (since) S knows that m is a necessary means thereto, S ought to will m" (3,35[417]). This principle is very weak, as we should expect of something that Kant takes to be analytic. It does not contribute to the unifying task of prudence, since it comes into play only given a clear specification of ends. In fact, from inconsistent ends the general schema leads to inconsistent ought-statements. To avoid contradictions among particular hypothetical imperatives, the general principle would be construed as stating only that so long as we espouse certain ends, we must adopt certain means, or, equivalently, that we must either give up the end or take the means. We may always abandon the end.[32] This formulation brings out the point that the Hypothetical Imperative fails to give reasons for choosing among ends--such choices are pervasive, and prior to the selection of means.

Elsewhere, Kant intimates that prudence concerns itself as well with the number and variety of desires to be satisfied, with the degree of satisfaction, and with the duration of satisfaction (1,A806/B834). These criteria may be of some help in designing a life-plan. Other things
KANT ON HAPPINESS

equal, of two prospective life-plans, one is preferable if it provides for the satisfaction of a larger number and variety of ends, a greater degree of satisfaction of those ends, and a more enduring satisfaction of those ends.[33] It seems clear, however, that these criteria are not very strong and can, at least in practice, conflict with one another.

Kant's position, I think, is that the concept of happiness is rationally indeterminate, not in the sense that it is indeterminate whether a given individual is happy or not, but in the sense that the precept, "Seek happiness", has very little practical content. Each individual must give it content, but in this task he or she is assisted to a very small extent by reason.

In this connection, Kant says: "The maxim of self-love (prudence) merely advises; the law of morality commands" (2,37[36]). He believes that the relation between the moral law and the particular maxims it may generate differs importantly from the corresponding relation between the principle of self-love and prudential maxims. The difference is not, as some passages seem to suggest, that prudential maxims depend upon particular circumstances and inclinations, therefore varying from person to person. Moral maxims are variable in this way as well: what is right or wrong to do always depends upon particulars of the situation, sometimes including facts about our inclinations.[34] The difference is that each person must give practical content to the principle of happiness before particular maxims can be derived. The process of forming our inclinations into a "fairly tolerable system" is rationally underdetermined. Not only will we do so differently from one another; each of us may well have done so very differently in our own case. According to Kant, there is no counterpart to this in the case of the moral law. It has a content independently of our particular decisions (2,38[36-7]). So Kant thought.

For these reasons, any particular maxim of prudence will be advisory rather than genuinely imperative; it depends not only on means-end calculations but upon one's own way of specifying the end, a specification that is quite underdetermined by reason and always may be revised. While reason bids us, conditionally, to seek happiness, it does not determine its content.[35]

Nor does contentment provide an action-guiding criterion independently of a complex specification of one's life-plan. On the contentment-conception, happiness is a psychological state, or complex of attitudes toward one's life on the whole. But even so happiness could not be one's sole (non-moral) intrinsic end, since the attitude in question will depend in part upon the pursuit of other things one intrinsically wants. As a standard for the adoption of these other final ends, contentment will therefore be of
The relative weakness of prudence does not of course show that the non-virtuous are unlikely to be happy; they may manage just the same. These observations aim at two general points: (1) That the reliance solely upon prudence as a faculty of practical reason does not significantly increase the likelihood of one's being happy; or, to put it otherwise: morality is not imprudent. (2) That, on Kant's view, the only way to bring one's various ends into a systematic harmony in accordance with reason is to embrace the Categorical Imperative. For better or for worse, one's actions and desires would not be governed, otherwise, by reason. The capacity to unite one's ends into a "fairly tolerable system" in accordance with reason thus requires morality. Prudence alone gives no definite principle of organization.

I conclude this section with a final point about the comparative happiness of the virtuous. We have seen that the moral life is alleged to be a distinctive source of self-contentment. I would like to explain Kant's idea here more fully, and to answer the objection that there are many bases of self-esteem and contentment for the immoral and amoral as well. Kant would, I think, have denied this.

He believes that discontentment "always accompanies" inclinations (2,123[118]), and he endorses the traditional wisdom according to which the more one seeks one's happiness the more it eludes one (3,11[395]). "For inclinations vary, they grow with the indulgence we allow them, and they leave behind a greater void than the one we intended to fill."[37]

Is Kant's idea here simply a version of the ancient view of "appetites as leaky vessels"? This view would favor the moral life insofar as its satisfactions do not depend solely upon inclination. But it would seem to blunt the force of our earlier observation that the moral life enjoins the pursuit of the ends of inclination. In any case, why couldn't we derive satisfaction—and self-esteem—from the pursuit and achievement of our various non-moral goals?

Possibly Kant has a stronger point in mind: namely that the life devoted to inclination will be devoid of meaning and at least dimly discerned as such by those who live it. Such a life finally creates a great "void", an emptiness that leads us on a futile search for significance among the various ends of inclinations. Even those who satisfy their inclinations are not likely to be satisfied. In contrast, the moral life gives rise to our "consciousness of freedom, as a capacity for following the moral law with ... independence from inclinations ... "(ibid.). In this way of life, the fulfillment of natural desires has a different significance. That fulfillment would then be part of the consciousness of a general life-plan that expresses the
KANT ON HAPPINESS

agent's autonomy. Even the satisfaction of natural needs could be, in this context, an appropriate source of self-contentment.[38] Our lives derive meaning, not from the objects of any inclinations as such, but from the role of those objects in a general way of life the formulation and execution of which exhibits one's "mastery". Given who we are--namely, autonomous beings--the control of inclination for the sake of inclination, or for overall contentment, is not likely to fill the void of meaning.

I conclude that Kant's theories do not support the doctrine that virtuous people are less likely than others to be happy. Morality gives a systematic order to the moral life that provides for the satisfaction of one's natural needs and desires, and for the enjoyable exercise and perfecting of one's natural talents. More importantly, the moral life will engender a unique and abiding self-contentment that is relatively impervious to the vagaries of fortune.

Due to the indeterminacy of happiness, prudence is in contrast a faltering guide. It gives little direction, while the pursuit of the ends of inclinations by itself creates general discontentment with one's lot. All things considered, it may be hard to tell where happiness lies. But the moral life suffers no peculiar disadvantages, and offers special prospects of its own.

HAPPINESS AND SELF-CONTENTMENT

In view of the special self-contentment inherent in the moral life, it might be argued that virtue is sufficient for happiness. And yet Kant emphatically rejects this ancient teaching. Why did he do so? By answering this question, we can bring into prominence some important features of his theory of value.

Of course Kant thought that this ancient doctrine was not only theoretically mistaken but morally dangerous. It encourages us to look in the wrong place for the basis of morality: to happiness rather than "autonomy". On the same grounds, as we have seen, Kant would have regarded our extended consideration of the relative advantages of virtue to be misguided. Nevertheless--it may be thought that virtue suffices for happiness--even necessarily--without the confusion that happiness is what the virtuous ultimately seek. If we are clear-headed, this thesis need not be morally subversive in practice. But why is it mistaken in theory?

The firm and constant self-content that arises exclusively from the consciousness that one is expressing one's autonomy is said by Kant to be analogous to bliss or blessedness (Seligkeit) (2,127[118]), which is a self-sufficient and "perfect well-being independent of all contingent causes in the world" (2,128n[122n]). The similarity is that self-
contentment, too, is independent in origin of inclinations. However, for this very reason, Kant refuses sometimes to call it happiness. It is only a "negative satisfaction with one's existence" involving no "positive participation of feeling" (2,122-3[117-18]). Elsewhere he goes so far as to reject the notion of "moral happiness" as a self-contradictory concept (4,34 and 46[376 and 386]).

Kant leans heavily here upon the inclination-conception; it is self-contradictory on that view to speak of happiness as independent of inclination. But to deny, on these grounds, that moral contentment might suffice for happiness seems uninteresting. For one thing, Kant would not then be disagreeing substantially with the ancients (as he supposed), for they did not construe the notion of happiness in this narrow way. The "quasi-bliss" for which virtue does suffice may seem very close to that which the ancients wished to describe and to link with virtue. It would be most artificial to refuse to call it happiness by definition. If overall contentment flowed from virtue in this way, it would matter little that one might not be happy in the technical sense of the inclination-conception.[39]

But Kant's disagreement with the ancients runs deeper. It involves, I believe, both a dispute about the virtuous character and a dispute about value.

Consider first what Kant says against the Stoics, who "placed the highest good only in acting and in contentment with one's personal worth, including in it the consciousness of moral character. But the voice of their own nature could have sufficiently refuted this"(2,132[127]). Here Kant's complaint is not that the Stoics contradicted themselves by speaking of moral happiness, but that their view contradicts the "voice of their own nature". What is its message?

Imagine that the Stoics had reasoned as follows. "The only thing worth caring significantly about is virtue—the rest counts for little or nothing. The virtuous will care significantly only about what is worth caring significantly about. Therefore, the virtuous will be content with their lives on the whole." The first premise is a judgment of value; the second is a thesis about character.

Kant seems to reject the thesis about character. He complained that the Stoics "made their sage, like a god in the consciousness of the excellence of his person, wholly independent of nature (as regards his own contentment), exposing but not subjecting himself to the evils of life" (2,131-2[127]). In Kantian terms, they mistook human moral perfection for holiness, rather than virtue, which presumes a "moral disposition in conflict" (2,87[84]). But we are incapable of blessedness so long as we are capable "only" of virtue.[40]
KANT ON HAPPINESS

Kant's position is that human beings necessarily will care significantly about the fulfillment of their natural needs and desires. Even if we were perfect in virtue, our contentment with our lives on the whole would depend upon fortune. When things go very badly (and virtue does not preclude this), we will not be happy. While self-contentment is not irrelevant to happiness—-not excluded by definition—-it is simply insufficient to provide us with contentment with our lives on the whole.

This reply seems eminently realistic, but the Stoic has a formidable rejoinder: to deny the second premise is to allow the virtuous to be self-alienated in an unacceptable way. If virtue is granted to be the only thing worth caring significantly about (and the virtuous above all know this), then in Kant's view they would be unable to bring their fundamental attitudes toward life into line with their basic judgments of value. They would care too much about the trivial, and too little about the important. They would be inappropriately downcast, discontented despite themselves. Their hearts would not be in the right place. Such descriptions do not seem to be appropriate for the truly virtuous character.[41]

To avoid this conclusion, Kant would have to reject the Stoic's first premise instead. He would have to deny that the only thing worth caring significantly about is virtue. Otherwise the discontent of the virtuous person would not be consonant with the correct judgment of value. This denial is perhaps implicit in Kant's complaint that the Stoics "not only exaggerated the moral capacity of man" (in thinking people capable of holiness), but "refused to recognize the second component of the highest good, i.e., happiness, as a special object of human desire"(2,131[127]).

A good life for us as human beings--as finite, rational creatures with needs--simply could not be a life that failed to meet our basic needs and interests. As he puts it in one place, that "could not be in accordance with the complete volition of an omnipotent rational being" (2,115,[110]). Given his doctrine of moral contentment, and of the unconditional goodness of the moral life, the virtuous could not be rendered morose or totally cheerless even by serious misfortune. But such a fate would prompt the judgment that their existence as finite rational beings is lacking in something significantly good. They would say of such troubles: "It's only pain, not evil, for it leaves my moral worth untouched" (2,62[60]). But when that pain is great and long-lasting, life will be wearisome and severe, perhaps even tainted with melancholy. The virtuous heart is nevertheless in the right place: virtue and the ends of inclination are valued according to their worth.

Suppose that a morally good person witnesses the destruction of her family, her community, her life's work.
Kant's position is that not only would this good woman care deeply about these losses, her resulting discontent would be quite appropriate. Kant's rejection of the Stoics' view of the sufficiency of virtue for happiness reflects both his belief that moral contentment is insufficient for the overall contentment that is human happiness, and his judgment that the achievement of personal aspiration is an important good. Otherwise the possible discontent of the morally good person would not be consonant with the theory of value.

KANT'S SUBJECTIVE THEORY OF VALUE

In summary, to live a life appropriate to a human being is to organize and pursue the satisfaction of one's needs and interests under the discipline of practical reason. To live under that discipline is to be virtuous; to succeed to a significant degree in one's pursuits is to fare well. One's contentment with one's life on the whole will properly depend upon both of these factors. And happiness consists in such contentment. Therefore, happiness has an eminent place in Kant's theory of value.

What room is there for other good things? At the beginning of the Foundations, Kant contrasts the "good without qualification" (good will) with various conditional goods. His list includes "intelligence, wit, judgment, and other talents of the mind" (goods of nature), as well as "power, riches, ... health", and "the contentment with one's condition which is called happiness" (goods of fortune, 3.9[393]). But when he formulates his doctrine of the Highest (complete) Good, he singles out happiness among all conditional values as the complement to virtue. Clearly happiness is not one among many conditional goods, but in some way comprises them all. In this section, I want to examine how Kant's view of happiness fits in with his theory of the Highest Good.

The theory of the Highest Good is the theory of the complete good. It will include an account both of moral and non-moral good and their relationships. The moral good is that which depends for its specification on the theory of right. According to Kant, morally good actions and states of character are of "unconditional and incomparable" value. The non-moral good is definable independently of the moral good but is conditional upon it.[42] Since the Highest Good consists only of perfect virtue and happiness, it follows that all non-moral good is identical with happiness or its conditions. Goods of nature and fortune are goods only when they are consistent with the moral law (the theory of right) and contribute in some sense to happiness.

On the contentment-conception, then, Kant's position entails that something is non-morally good only if it contributes to a person's overall contentment; on the inclina-
Kant's theory of non-moral value belongs in an important way to the tradition of Bentham and Hume. His conception of the Highest Good and his conception(s) of happiness jointly entail that nothing that fails to affect contentment or the satisfaction of inclination has non-moral value.

Kant's theory is, in some important sense, "subjectivist". It is at odds with certain "objectivist" judgments, according to which a person who is perfectly content and virtuous could still lack many excellent things. For example, suppose I am systematically deceived and betrayed by my family or "friends". Or suppose I am praised in my lifetime for my influential theoretical work, which turns out to be subtly fallacious, setting back philosophy and science for decades. My name becomes the standard way of referring to certain fallacies and mistakes that are memorized by generations of school children. These eventualities are surely misfortunes for me, the objectivist wants to say, even though I never learn them. To some degree, they diminish the quality of my life.

Similarly, some objectivists count the development and exercise of certain talents (intelligence and creativity) as valuable independently both of happiness (so conceived) and virtue. Such goods might even engender discontent.[43] Judgments of these kinds would have to be mistaken on Kant's view. For all their important differences, he and Bentham finally agree that pushpin is as good as poetry, illusion as good as reality, as far as non-moral good is concerned.

It is crucial to separate two notions of "subjectivity" implicit in these remarks. (1) That my good depends solely upon how things seem to me, not upon how they are. (2) That there is (ultimately) no criterion for whether something is good or part of my good besides someone's, or my own, inclinations. In the first sense, illusion is as good as reality, perhaps better. In the second sense, pushpin is as good as poetry. The first denies the relevance of truth except as it affects belief or consciousness. The second denies the relevance of the alleged quality of the objects or activities to which one is inclined.

On the contentment-conception, Kant's theory of non-moral good is "subjective" in both senses. Nowhere does Kant require that contentment rest on true belief, nor does he appeal to any "perfectionist" standards for distinguishing the quality of the ends of inclination. On the inclination-conception, however, Kant's theory can avoid the first kind of subjectivity. In the above examples, I fail, presumably, to achieve some of my most important goals. One's life-plan can be wrecked without one's knowledge. So the theory, on this conception, can allow and explain the judg-
ment that these eventualities are misfortunes (for me); it defines my good in terms of realizing my ends, not in terms of appearing to do so.

But the theory would still be subjectivist in the second sense. There are no general grounds for saying that poetry is better than pushpin as far as the satisfaction of inclination is concerned. Poetry will be non-morally better if and only if it better furthers one's system of inclinations. Apparently, that will sometimes be so, and sometimes not.[44]

Whether or not subjectivism of the second kind should be embraced seems to be a fundamental but unsettled question in the theory of value. But it seems much easier to accept than the first kind. The difficulty with perfectionist judgments of non-moral good is that they abandon the person's own point of view entirely. But objectivism of the first kind does not face this problem. The judgment that something is a misfortune for someone who never learns of it can still be made from the standpoint of that person's values and goals.

For this reason, Kant's theory of the Highest Good seems to me less plausible on the contentment-conception than on the inclination-conception. Therefore, if, as I have suggested, the contentment-conception is his real view, his theory of value does not sit well with his conception of happiness. He must either abandon the contentment-conception, or admit that happiness is not the sole complement to virtue in the Highest Good.

For better or worse, the second kind of subjectivism seems to me an ineliminable part of Kant's outlook. We can see this by considering some of the ramifications of the introduction of "objective" values into the account of non-moral good. As far as I can tell, the inclusion of such values would amount to treating happiness in yet a third way: as the all-inclusive non-moral good. On this interpretation, the happiness of a life would be measured by the extent to which it realized the whole range of subjective and objective values. Contentment and the satisfaction of inclination would then be simply one (two?) among many non-moral goods.

One implication of this proposal is that it would make Kant's theory of the Highest Good more accommodating at the cost of making it less of a theory. For he would then lack any account of what is included in the inclusive non-moral good of happiness. Now he can say what makes good of nature and fortune (conditionally) valuable. His unifying criterion is either contentment or the realization of one's system of inclinations. On the accommodating proposal, Kant would lack a way of bringing the elements of the non-moral goods into any kind of ordering. Heterogeneity would then be ex-
KANT ON HAPPINESS

tended to the class of non-moral goods; the term 'happiness' would merely conceal a plurality of potentially conflicting and incommensurable values. A related point is that Kant would then lack a motivational psychology. He would not be able to say why human beings would care about alleged values independently of contributions to their contentment or goals.\(45\)

Consequently, the objectivist proposal would require a revision or reinterpretation of a number of Kant's basic positions. In particular, Kant's view of the tension between the moral and the non-moral points of view would have to be reconsidered. For the idea of the non-moral point of view would then be in jeopardy: the enemies of virtue would turn out to be many. That may be just as well, but it would surely not be Kant.\(46\)

AN APPENDIX ON THE DESIRE FOR HAPPINESS

In this final section, I leave the main theme of this study to take up some remaining difficulties with Kant's remarks on the motivational status of the desire for happiness. The unclarities of his account of the nature of happiness regrettably extend to these as well.

It is crucial to distinguish three kinds of incentives to action on Kant's theory: moral incentives, self-regard or the desire for happiness, and particular inclinations. A particular inclination can conflict not only with moral considerations but with self-regard. For example, it may be imprudent of me to follow my inclination to gamble at blackjack. It would seem, then, that not all actions that are prompted by inclination are explained by self-regard.

Kant recognizes these distinctions when he calls attention to actions done "neither from duty nor from direct inclination but only for a selfish (Eigennutziger) purpose" \(3,14[397]\), for example, trading fairly for the sake of good reputation. He notes also that some people, "without any motive of vanity or selfishness (Eigennutze) . . . find an inner satisfaction in spreading joy" \(ibid.,\) Here the "motive" is a spontaneous "direct inclination", distinct not only from moral concern but from the inclination of self-love, which is calculating, concerned with one's long-term, overall contentment (or system of inclinations on the whole).

At other times, however, Kant blurs these points, conflating distinctions that Butler had drawn clearly before him. In an attempt to establish that "all material principles . . . belong under the general principle of self-love or one's own happiness", Kant reasons as follows:

A rational being's consciousness of the agreeable-
ness of life which without interruption accompa­
nies his whole existence is happiness, and to make
this the supreme ground for the determination of
choice constitutes the principle of self-love.
Thus, all material principles, which place the
determining ground of choice in the pleasure or
displeasure to be received from the reality of any
object whatsoever, are entirely of one kind.
Without exception, they belong under the principle
of self-love, or one's own happiness. (2,24[25])

Kant's premises do not entail his conclusion. A desire
for a particular "pleasure"--to gamble at blackjack, say--or
a maxim to pursue such a pleasure, is not the same as the
desire for happiness or the maxim to pursue one's happiness.
As Butler had observed, the object of such a desire (or max­
im) is just that: to enjoy blackjack (or to seek such en­
joyment). One's overall contentment is a different mat­
ter.[47] Since these are distinct, the incentive to pursue
the pleasures of gambling could be incorporated into a "ma­
terial principle" different from and in conflict with the
"principle of self-love". Kant's inference seems to depend
upon the conflation of incentives of different orders.

A similar problem arises for Kant's argument that we
have no duty to pursue our own happiness. The argument is
simply that 'duty' implies (potential) constraint, and hence
no one has a duty to do what he necessarily does, or to will
what he necessarily wills.[48] Here again Kant's reasoning
seems to depend upon a confusion. "The only determinant
of the will besides the moral law is the prospect of pleasure",
it is as though Kant reasons, "therefore, when one's will is
moved by a non-moral incentive, it must be moved by the de­
sire for happiness". But the gap is the same as before:
from the fact that I acted in order to experience the pleas­
ures of blackjack, it does not follow that I acted in order
to attain happiness. Even if one necessarily desires happi­
ness[49], that end may require the suppression of conflict­
ing inclinations. Unless the particular inclination for
pleasure is conflated with the desire for happiness, the
requirement of potential constraint is satisfied, and we may
have a duty to seek our happiness.

Perhaps Kant could fill the gap without the conflation.
He could get to his conclusions by denying prudential weak­
ness of will: by assuming that, except when they are moved
by the moral law, people never act contrary to what they
take to be their happiness. This assumption would ensure
that all "material principles" are subordinate to ("belong
under") the principle of happiness without denying their
distinctness. And it would also help with the claim that we
have no duty to pursue or will our own happiness.

Possibly Kant thought that the inclinations of impru­
dent agents cloud their view of their real advantage.[50]
KANT ON HAPPINESS

In that case, when we are not moved by moral considerations, we are always seeking happiness or something consistent with it. Since even imprudent people take themselves to be complying with the principle of happiness, it would be inappropriate to command them to do so. (Their imprudence consists in their distorted prudential judgments.)

Kant's texts do not yield a decision on his view here. Nowhere does Kant offer a straightforward example of knowingly pursuing a pleasure to the clear detriment of one's long-term happiness. His description of the person with gout is hedged. The man chooses "to enjoy what he likes and suffer what he may", but his idea of happiness is fluctuating: "according to his present calculations at least on this occasion he has not sacrificed the enjoyment of the present moment to a perhaps groundless expectation of a happiness supposed to lie in health" (3,15[399]; my emphasis).

In any case, the denial of imprudent weakness would fill the gap we noted in Kant's reasoning. If one never acts on non-moral incentives contrary to the principle of happiness, all of one's non-moral maxims will be consistent with or subservient to the principle of happiness. For the same reasons, it would be inappropriate to speak of one's duty here. In summary, in these passages Kant either confuses the higher-order incentive of happiness with the first-order incentives for particular enjoyments, or commits himself to the controversial thesis that we never knowingly act contrary to our perception of our long-term happiness for the sake of particular "pleasures". Perhaps we should attribute to him the controversial assumption rather than the conflation, but the evidence is quite inconclusive.[51]

Notice that Kant's arguments here are guided by a further controversial assumption, this one a tenet of his motivational psychology. Kant believes that all first-order non-moral incentives have particular pleasures or enjoyments as their objects; he also assumed that happiness is the only higher-order non-moral incentive. This scheme is not obviously exhaustive. Some might think that human aspiration is directed by other things besides morality and pleasure—for example, that some aesthetic ideal, distinct from either, might lead certain individuals to subordinate both the principles of morality and happiness. We have already seen that these motivational assumptions are at work in the theory of the Highest Good. Here Kant's dualism needs defense.

One final question about Kant's classification of incentives. Kant sometimes speaks of an inclination of happiness (3,15[399]; 4,154[480]). This way of speaking may strengthen the suspicion that Kant indeed conflated the different orders of incentives. But it also obscures the way in which self-regard is, for Kant, rationally authoritative with respect to other (particular) inclinations. Surely
this incentive is not one inclination among others, to be balanced and unified by prudence into the system of one's inclinations. Self-regard has a special rational status. Otherwise when it conflicted with particular inclinations, it would be subordinated to these others without irrationality. The rationality of submitting one's actions to prudential reasoning cannot be explained by saying that such reasoning serves the desire for happiness, conceived as an inclination. For imprudent actions serve particular inclinations as well. Invoking an inclination to happiness, then, will not explain the special weight that self-regard is supposed to possess in practical reasoning. The desire for happiness must be seen somehow as arising from reason in a way that remains to be explained. [52]

FOOTNOTES

* This study was partly supported by a Faculty Fellowship from the University of California, Irvine, for which I am most grateful. I am thankful to the many people who have commented on various portions and drafts, particularly to Robert Audi, John Giuliano, and Richard Kraut.

1. 2,160 (156). See Bibliography for references. References to Kant's texts are given by a numeral referring to the particular work, followed by a reference to the page of the English edition. References to the pagination of the Prussian Academy edition of Kant's writings are given in parentheses.

2. 5,18n.

3. Most commentators are now eager to correct this impression, citing such passages as the one quoted above from 5. But the fact that Kant is moved occasionally to such utterances does not show that or how his theory entitles him to be.

4. Of course, the value of happiness is placed in absolute subordination to that of the morally good will. It does not follow that it is not of central importance. As we will see later on, it is arguable that Kant's theory gives too much value to happiness as he conceives it.

5. Virtue is said to be the "supreme" and unconditional good; but it is not the "complete" good.

6. It is therefore a study of Kant's theory of value. It presumes a basic acquaintance with his theory of "duty" or right action.

7. Kant's term is Glückseligkeit.

8. 3,15 (399). See also: 2,75-6 (73), and 5,51.

9. 4,46 (386). Similarly: Happiness is "a rational being's consciousness of the agreeableness (Annehmlichkeit) of life which without
Cary Watson

interruption accompanies his whole existence" (2,20[22]). I will ignore possible differences here between 'being content with' and 'finding agreeable'.

10. In Laws of Freedom (Barnes and Noble, 1963, pp. 78 and 177), Mary Gregor notes Kant's employment of these two conceptions. In his Commentary on the Critique of Practical Reason (University of Chicago Press, 1960), Beck mentions the contentment-conception only. He is right, I think, to single this out (since as I suggest below, it is in some sense the fundamental one). Nonetheless, some account of their relationship is necessary.

11. This distinction is discussed by W.F.R. Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics", Philosophy, Vol. 40, 1965. Hardie contrasts inclusive ends with "dominant ends", ends to which all others are subordinated or at least instrumental.

12. See especially: 3,30n.(413n.)—"... the dependence of the faculty of desire on sensations is called inclination..." Under this rubric, Kant includes a diversity of motivation, "impulses to honor, to increase our knowledge, and so forth." (Introduction to the Metaphysic of Morals, Academy edition, p. 214.). Also consider his classification of "original predispositions" in 5,21-2, which includes, in addition, "impulses" for the care of offspring, for community, and for the esteem of others. Some of these presuppose the possession of "reason". Occasionally, Kant speaks of natural inclinations, a phrase that ought to be redundant. Moral concerns are not inclinations.

I discuss Kant's classification of motivations further in the appendix.

13. The realization of one's plans is usually called success—hence the title of this section. The similarity of this conception to Rawl's definition of happiness is striking: "A person is happy when he is in the way of a successful execution (more or less) of a rational life-plan drawn up under (more or less) favorable conditions, and he is reasonably confident that his intentions can be carried through". (A Theory of Justice, Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 548.) The clause, 'under favorable conditions', is a needed supplement to Kant's conception as well.

14. The imperatives of prudence require not only "a mode of reaching the end... but also... a definition of what constitutes this end itself." (First Introduction to the Critique of Judgment, Academy edition, xx, 200.) I discuss prudence at greater length below.

15. See 2,76f.(74). For the most part, I will follow Kant in regarding prudence as a capacity or skill, and self-regard as a motivation. Ordinarily, we would not call someone prudent who did not have both.

16. Among the questions to be addressed here are these. What is the relation between being content with a particular aspect of life and having the attitude overall? It is tempting to think of the latter as simply an additive result of particular "contentments". Although I am not sure what Kant's view was, this temptation should I think be resist-
ed. It is not necessarily so that the more particular "pleasures" I experience, the happier (more content overall) I will be; so I would argue.

Kant may have looked at it this way: Just as pleasure is the satisfaction of particular inclinations, happiness (contentment overall) is the satisfaction of your system of inclinations.

Another question is whether happiness on this conception is a "felt" state, like a "warm glow". Whatever Kant's view, an advocate of the contentment-conception need not (and should not) say this.

(The word 'contentment' may not be the most felicitous for this conception. It may seem too bland. But since happiness has degrees, this point is fairly minor. While it may leave a lot of room for improvement, at least contentment occupies a positive position on the scale.)

17. I discuss Kant's attitude toward this possibility in a later section.

18. As it stands, Rawls' characterization of happiness is also open to this objection: it ensures only one of the conditions of self-respect, which involves not only confidence in one's ability to carry out one's life-plan, but also the "secure conviction" that one's ends are worth pursuing (op. cit., p. 440). On p. 564 Rawls intimates the importance of this condition for happiness.

19. If you asked someone what happiness was (for her), she would probably point to a life in which her final ends were achieved. But she would not be offering an analysis.

20. To be sure, the pursuit of happiness is not immoral (2,96[93]); it would be "contradictory" to universalize the renunciation of happiness for the happiness of others. If it were not permissible, within limits, to pursue one's own, it would not be required, within limits, to pursue others'. We have at least an "indirect duty" to look after our own prosperity (4,53[392]). In this respect, Kant's theory is arguably more lenient than utilitarianism. Considerations of our own happiness may qualify our pursuit of certain ends (others' happiness and our own perfection). Therefore, (act) utilitarianism will sometimes (often?) require sacrifice of one's happiness where Kant's theory would not—namely, where doing so would promote greater general happiness. Kant's theory would sometimes (often?) require sacrifice of one's happiness where utilitarianism would not—where the sacrifice promotes no one's happiness but is required by "justice" or "perfect duty". See 2,159-60 (155-156), for a dramatic example of this.

21. According to Bentham (Deontology), no one would make a sacrifice of his own happiness to the happiness of others; "unless in some shape or other he derived more pleasure from the sacrifice than he expected to derive from abstaining from making the sacrifice, he would not, he could not make it". (Quoted by A.J. Ayer, Philosophical Essays, p. 251.) If he derived more pleasure (or thought he would?), it would not be a real sacrifice; it would be a sacrifice of one source of pleasure for a greater. Not only moral sacrifice, but imprudent weakness, it
GARY WATSON

gainsaid by this view. I conjecture in the appendix that Kant accepted Bentham's motivational psychology applied to non-moral contexts.

22. At the same time, Kant cautions against an inveterate confusion: the avoidance of this discontentment could not be the virtuous person's reason for adhering to the law, since that feeling would itself be explained by his recognition of an independent moral reason. "The discontent is thus not the cause but the effect of being virtuous." (6,50n.[283n]). (On the same page, Kant characterizes moral feelings—such as moral discontent—in terms of "the will's receptivity in subjecting itself to the moral law as an unconditional constraint.") This confusion would conflate the two grounds of skepticism that we have distinguished.

23. Hereafter I will ignore skepticism about moral motivation.

24. The moral law impresses itself upon every rational being as a "fact of reason"; it "makes even the boldest sinner tremble" (2,82[80]). No one is "so depraved as not to feel an opposition to this moral transgression and an abhorrence of himself on account of which he has to constrain himself" (4,37[379]).

Here I think Kant engages in hyperbole; if immoral action incurs such heavy costs, it would be hard to understand how it could persist. The recognition Kant speaks of might occur with various degrees of clarity. One might blunt the pangs of conscience by "rationalization". Kant speaks of our "propensity to argue against the stern laws of duty and their validity, or at least to place their purity and strictness in doubt, and, where possible, to make them more accordant with our wishes and inclinations" (3,21[405]). By such "natural dialectic" we might fool ourselves. Kant recognizes self-deception—the "inner lie" and its apparent paradoxes: 4,93 (429).

25. In this paragraph, I am indebted to a discussion with Michael Bratman.

26. As this passage indicates, Kant could, as aptly, have spoken of moral concerns as true self-regard, since that is the supreme interest of the rational self.

27. In the course of an acute criticism of hedonist theories that try to distinguish higher from lower pleasures, Kant remarks: "If the determination of the will rests on the feelings of agreeableness or disagreeableness that he expects from any course, it is all the same to him through what kind of notion he is affected. The only thing he considers in making a choice is how great, how long-lasting, how easily obtained, and how often repeated this agreeableness is... no man asks, when he is concerned only with the agreeableness of life, whether the ideas are from the senses or the understanding; he asks only how much and how great is the pleasure that they will afford him over the largest time" (2,22[23]).

28. On this point, Kant was close to Butler, who held that "conscience" and self-love were "sovereign" principles with manifest authority. Butler held that reasonable self-love and conscience are different
but compatible principles. "Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and Interest are perfectly coincident, for the most part in this world, but entirely ... if we take in the future and the whole" (Sermons, III, p. 232, Ethical Theories, ed. A.I. Melden, Prentice-Hall).

The main differences between these philosophers are (1) that Butler had no real theory of right: no philosophical account of the content of conscience (determined for Kant by the Categorical Imperative) or of the source of its rational authority (autonomy, on Kant's theory); and (2) Kant insisted upon the absolute subordination of self-love to "conscience". They present considerations of entirely different kinds, and hence from Kant's point of view, Butler failed to face up to their "heterogeneity".

29. 2,76-77 (73-74). This propensity is the enemy whose presence is presupposed by virtue. It corresponds to "original sin". To keep it totally and constantly in check would be perfect virtue; to transcend it somehow would be holiness.

30. The view sketched here is presented by Kant most fully in 4. Helpful discussions of his theory of virtue can be found in Gregor, op. cit., and Onora O'Neill's Acting on Principle (Columbia University Press, 1975).

31. This assumption is of course what Rawls calls the Aristotelian Principle. Whether Kant would endorse it is not entirely clear. He writes that "we ultimately take a liking to that the observation of which makes us feel that our powers of knowledge have been extended ..." (2,164[160]). On the other hand, he allows that, even though we ought to cultivate our powers, Rousseau may have been right in thinking that the "advantage might turn out to be on the side of crude natural needs", that is, on the side of the uncultivated character. 4,111(443-4). In any case, the assumption seems plausible and consistent with his general theory.


33. Compare Rawls' discussion of "principles of rational choice", especially the principle of "inclusiveness", section 63, op. cit.

34. See "Categorical Imperatives and Moral Principles", Allen Buchanan, Philosophical Studies (31,1977), for a useful discussion of points that Kant often failed to keep clear.

35. Happiness is an ideal of "imagination", not reason. (3,36[418]). I do not fully understand the role of imagination here. But again compare Rawls' notion of "deliberative rationality", which also depends upon this faculty; op. cit., section 64.

36. At least in the typical circumstances of life. If we had Nozick's "experience machine", matters would be different. We might then be able to achieve "contentment" with high probability. Selecting a machine-tape would be like "selecting" a system of final ends. (See
37. 2,122 (118). This remark points directly to an inadequacy of the inclination-conception.

38. In a sense, even the satisfaction of a natural need (say, eating a meal) has moral worth in the case of a virtuous person: for that activity flows from a life-plan that as a whole expresses the agent's nature as an autonomous being.

39. In one place, Kant speaks as though happiness were solely a matter of external fortune: "Happiness contains whatever (and no more than) nature can obtain for us; but virtue contains what nobody but the person himself can give to or take from himself" (6,50n. [283n.]). On the inclination-conception, this is approximately right. For then happiness always requires the cooperation of "nature"; whereas, on Kant's "transcendental" view of virtue, moral contentment would not. So moral contentment would not be (a constituent of) happiness. (But the remark overlooks whatever unifying work is done by prudence.)

40. We are capable only of an analogue of blessedness: "Thus human morality in its highest stages can still be nothing more than virtue, not [sic] even if it were entirely pure (quite free from the influence of any motive other than duty), as when it is often personified poetically in the Sage, as an ideal (to which we must continually approximate)" (4,41[392]).

As I understand Kant, there are two types of moral perfection. Virtue is the perfection of our moral strength; if our wills were constantly pure, we would be perfectly virtuous. Most of us are virtuous to various degrees, but no one perfectly. Holiness would be the attainment of one no longer subject to the tendency to elevate happiness to a supreme principle ("self-conceit"). In contrast, this state does not admit of degrees.

41. In an important way, Kant granted less autonomy to human beings than did the Stoics.

42. The thesis that virtue and acts of good-will are unconditionally good is extremely strong. As I understand it, it assigns to these a value that is absolute, with respect to other values, in the following sense. Consider two actions, one an action from duty, another an action opposed to duty. This thesis says that no matter how horrible the foreseen and unforeseen results of the first act, and how beneficial the results of the second (as determined by the theory of non-moral value), the situation comprising the moral act with its results is always and necessarily better than the situation comprising the immoral act and its results. It would be inconsistent with the proper order of values even to wish that someone had acted immorally rather than morally.

44. Bear in mind that Kant's theory of right (or moral good) accounts for many "objectivist" judgments. First, Kant often defines the Highest Good in terms of a community of persons (kingdom of ends). Betrayals and deceptions will conflict with the Highest Good so defined. What is at issue is whether his theory can allow these wrongs to be contrary to the good of the individual who is unknowingly wronged. The morally good individual will care about his moral relations to others, and their quality could be said to affect his "moral interests". In this sense it could be said that the interests of the virtuous person are bound up with the interests of the moral community.

Second, if Kant is correct in his claim about our duties to perfect our natural talents, then his theory of right can account for some perfectionist preferences for poetry over pushpin. On this picture, then, the Highest Good for an individual is that which serves one's moral and natural interests, where the latter are largely subjectively determined (in the second sense). Contentment will then be only a proper part of one's non-moral good.

45. Actually, this question may be put to the inclination-conception as well. Why do we care about realizing our ends independently of impact on contentment? Kant's psychology of non-moral motivation is decidedly hedonistic. This point strengthens my conviction that Kant took the contentment-conception to be basic, but it highlights the vulnerability of his theory of value on that conception.

46. I suspect that the rejection of "objective" non-moral values (in the second sense) is also connected for Kant with human autonomy. At 3,46(498), 53(434-35), and 56(437), Kant seems to suggest that part of the special "dignity" of human beings, what makes them ends-in-themselves, is that they are somehow the source of all (non-moral) value, and that part of what this means is that nothing has non-moral value unless it is chosen as an end to be pursued by rational beings. If this is correct, then subjectivity in the realm of non-moral values is not only not regrettable, but a pre-condition of our freedom.

47. For a discussion of a similar point, see Beck, op. cit., pp. 100-102.

48. "What we will inevitably and spontaneously does not come under the concept of duty" (4,44[385]).

49. This proposition is not self-evident either. Kant claims that happiness is "a purpose which we can a priori . . . assume for everyone because it belongs to his essence" (3,33[415-16]). It may be analytic that finite rational beings have inclinations; but this does not entail that we aim to realize the system of our inclinations. Earlier on (3,15[399]) he reasoned that "all men have the strongest and deepest inclination to happiness because in this idea all inclinations are summed up". We might try to fill in the steps as follows:

(1) Anyone who has an inclination to do x desires to satisfy his inclination to do x.

(2) Happiness is the satisfaction of inclinations.
(3) All human beings have inclinations.

(4) Therefore, human beings desire to satisfy their own inclinations.

(5) Therefore, human beings desire their own happiness.

Kant would have the a priori conclusion he wants, if the argument were valid, (2) and (3) were analytic, and (1) a priori true. But (1) seems to me false. The inference to (5) is fallacious. From the fact that you have a second-order desire to satisfy each of your inclinations, it does not follow that you have any desire whose object is the satisfaction of all your (other) inclinations.

50. Gregor attributes this view to Kant, if I understand her correctly; op. cit., p. 178f.

51. Some weaknesses of this second interpretation are these. (1) Kant never explicitly endorses this view of imprudence. (2) It would be odd if Kant left such a controversial assumption unstated in these passages. (3) The claim about imprudence will strike many (including myself) as false. Regarding (3), at least this claim is arguably true, whereas on the other interpretation Kant is simply confused.


Notice that if the desire for happiness were just an inclination, it would fit into prudential reasoning as follows.

(1) Anyone who wills the end ought to will the necessary means.
(2) I will my own happiness.

(3) Given my gout, abstaining from corn-beef and cabbage is necessary to my happiness.

(4) I ought to abstain from corn-beef and cabbage.

Such reasoning has no priority over the reasoning of the man with the gout, according to which eating corn-beef and cabbage is necessary to his end of gratifying his present appetites. The inclination to happiness simply would be one input that might conflict with other inclinations (say, to eat corn-beef). Again, the Hypothetical Imperative cannot adjudicate among ends.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


