

KANT'S THEORY OF MOTIVATION:
A HYBRID APPROACH

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I

ANYONE REMOTELY FAMILIAR WITH Kant's practical philosophy knows that an agent's actions count as moral only if he is moved to act by moral considerations. But once we get past this truism, the water becomes murky. Kant's moral theory is committed to the view that moral judgments must be efficacious—the cognition "I ought to act morally" must be able to move us to *act* morally. The nature of the connection between cognition and action is the source of much disagreement, and scholarly interpretation diverges quite dramatically. On one side, we have Henry Allison, Andrews Reath, and Christine Korsgaard, all of whom endorse what is called intellectualism.¹ In their estimation, moral agents are moved to act solely by their intellectual recognition of the authority of the moral law. But affectivists such as Patrick Frierson, Richard McCarty, and Iain Morriison vigorously contest this picture, contending that affective forces, or feelings, are conditions of the possibility of moral judgment and moral action.²

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¹ Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Andrews Reath, *Agency and Autonomy in Kant's Moral Theory: Selected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Christine M. Korsgaard, "Morality as Freedom," in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

² Patrick Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Richard McCarty, "Kantian Moral Motivation and the Feeling of Respect," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31, no. 3 (1993): 421–35; Richard McCarty, "Kant's Incorporation Requirement: Freedom and Character in the Empirical World," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 38, no. 3 (2008): 425–53; Richard McCarty, *Kant's Theory of Action* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Iain Morriison, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008). Other affectivists include Larry Herrera and Josefine Nauckhoff. Larry Herrera, "Kant on the Moral *Triebfeder*," *Kant Studien* 91, no. 4 (2000) 395–410; Josefine Nauckhoff, "Incentives and Interests in Kant's Moral Psychology," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (2003): 41–60. Owen Ware defends a qualified form of

What I will call the motivational dispute might sound like so much Kantian inside baseball, but the stakes are quite high.³ At issue is something far more important than clarifying the minutiae of Kant's analysis of moral motivation. Kant's justification of morality, or more specifically, his justification of the authority of the moral law, stands or falls with the success of his theory of motivation. This is because Kantian morality places stringent demands on agents, requiring that they act independently of self-interest. Given the severe difficulty of meeting these demands, Kant finds it necessary to ward off worries that moral action is impossible.⁴ Kant's attempt to vindicate morality requires him to explain how we can act on moral grounds and independently of our abiding self-interest. And this is just to explain how moral judgments can move us to act.

The controversy surrounding Kant's explanation stems from the existence of two apparently incompatible textual positions. Consider the following well-worn passages:

(1) What is essential to any moral worth of actions is *that the moral law determine the will immediately*. If the determination of the will takes place *conformably* with the moral law but only by means of a feeling, of whatever kind, that has to be presupposed in order for the law to become a sufficient determining ground of the will, so that the action is not done *for the sake of the law*, then the action will contain *legality* indeed but not *morality*.⁵

(2) The moral law . . . is also a subjective determining ground—that is, an incentive—to [moral] action inasmuch as it has influence on the sensibility of the subject and effects a feeling conducive to the influence of the law upon the will.⁶

affectivism; see his "Kant on Moral Sensibility and Moral Motivation," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (2014): 427–46.

³ The conceptual and dialectical framework of contemporary debates about moral motivation is not always congruent with Kant's, and I will hew more closely to the latter.

⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 406; Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, ed. and trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 15, 94. All citations employ the Akademie pagination of *Kants Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1900–).

⁵ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 71.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 75. The tension between affectivism and intellectualism can also be found in early writings such as the *Prize Essay* and the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*.

(1) seems to state that in cases of moral action, the moral law determines the will immediately, without any help from feeling, while (2) seems to state that the feeling associated with the representation of the moral law is what enables the moral law to determine the will. (Hereafter, "action" should be understood in a broad sense that includes deliberating, setting ends, and legislating principles.) Intellectualists plant their flag in the immediacy of the determination of the will by the moral law, concluding that feeling plays no important role in moral choice and action. Affectivists brandish statements like (2) to argue that the feeling of respect is in fact a condition of the possibility of moral choice.

Given this textual state of affairs, both sides must give something up. Intellectualists must explain away or soft-pedal passages like (2), while affectivists must do the same with passages like (1). This should worry friends of Kant's moral theory. Unless either the intellectualist or the affectivist reconstruction is completely convincing, we are confronted with the specter of incoherence on Kant's part. If some texts must be read as assigning feeling a necessary role in moral choice, and others as insisting that cognition does all the work, we might reasonably doubt that Kant's vindication of morality passes argumentative muster. The present paper is an attempt to rescue Kant from this problem.

Although I am going to advocate for what I call a hybrid interpretation of Kant's theory of motivation, my aim is not to split the difference between affectivism and intellectualism. Rather, I will develop a modified version of intellectualism that successfully repels two lines of affectivist attack, both of which land telling blows against orthodox intellectualism. The first objection is philosophical, and it maintains that intellectualism cannot provide a satisfactory Kantian response to the motivational question, insofar as intellectualism lacks a satisfactory account of how cognition leads to action. The second, textual objection points out that intellectualism cannot accommodate the passages from Kant's mature moral theory (such as 2, above) that grant feeling a robust motivational importance.⁷

Though these are powerful objections, I do not think they warrant a turn to affectivism, both because affectivism has much more

⁷ McCarty develops the most sustained critique of intellectualism to date in *Kant's Theory of Action*. See also Morrisson, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action*.

worrisome implications, which are discussed below, and because a modified version of intellectualism can meet the affectivist challenge. In what follows, I argue that we should see Kant as adopting a hybrid theory of motivation that incorporates elements of affectivism into intellectualism. My key claim is that Kant is a special kind of motivational internalist: on his view, agents are moved to act by a feeling of intellectual pleasure at the prospect of accomplishing a task they have set for themselves, a feeling that originates in free choice. This interpretation proves immune to the affectivists' Humean attack, and accommodates passages seeming to favor affectivism without resorting to ad hoc devices.

My paper proceeds in a straightforward fashion. I first sketch the disagreement between intellectualists and affectivists. I then discuss the two objections to intellectualism in some detail. After explaining why I want to resist affectivism, I set out the hybrid theory. I conclude with a few remarks on the hybrid interpretation of respect.

II

Intellectualism and Affectivism: The Dispute. The debate between intellectualists and affectivists is wide ranging, touching on issues concerning both moral and nonmoral motivation. Broadly put, intellectualism is the view that cognitive acts can, of themselves, move agents to act. Affectivism is the view that feeling is a necessary condition of both moral and nonmoral action. In lieu of a detailed examination, the interpretive dispute can be profitably characterized as centering on two related questions, which I dub the genetic question and the efficacy question. (While this is a fruitful analytical framework for excavating the nuances of the debate, neither camp explicitly employs it.) The genetic question is about the ultimate source of our choices and actions; it is about the role feeling plays, or does not play, upstream from choice. The efficacy question is about how we are moved to act; it is about the role feeling plays, or does not play, in rendering our choices efficacious. This framework helps to clarify the precise nature of the dispute: intellectualists' answer to both questions is choice; they claim that choices are the source of moral and nonmoral action, and that

choices effectuate action of themselves.⁸ Affectivists' answer to both questions is feeling; they claim that feelings are a condition of (effective) choice and are the mechanism by which our choices lead us to act.

The intellectualist response to the genetic question leans heavily on the incorporation thesis, which in its most general sense refers to Kant's assertion that the will (*Willkür*) "cannot be determined to action through any incentive *except so far as the human being has incorporated it into his maxim.*"⁹ The incorporation thesis states that a sensible interest, a felt attraction to an object, can play a role in willing only if an agent takes it to be a sufficient reason in virtue of a maxim or practical principle that states why his interest counts as a sufficient reason for action.¹⁰ The thesis captures what intellectualists see as a crucial feature of Kant's conception of agency, namely, the claim that rational choice is free—free not necessarily in the full-blown transcendental sense, but in that choice is not directly determined by sensibility.¹¹

So, intellectualists assert, all rational action has its source in cognitive acts or, more specifically, in practical judgments grounded on practical reasons. (This paper will ignore cases of nonrational action, in which sensible interests immediately cause action,¹² since affectivists and intellectualists have no quarrel here.) Intellectualists argue that an agent is, so long as he is rational, moved to act by his cognition of his reasons, which result from rational deliberation.¹³ In other words, intellectualism's response to the efficacy question is provided by a specific type of motivational reasons internalism (though

⁸ "Choice" and "judgment" are used more or less interchangeably, since judgments are expressions of choices.

⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, ed. Allen W. Wood and George Di Giovanni, trans. George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24.

¹⁰ Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, 126.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 6, 126; Henry Allison, *Essays on Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 144–45; Reath, *Agency and Autonomy*, 13, 18. A will is free in this less robust sense when it can freely choose to set ends and pursue them, even if those ends ultimately get their content from sensible interests. A robustly, or transcendently, free agent can choose to act on ends that are given by pure practical reason.

¹² Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 212.

¹³ Reath, *Agency and Autonomy*, 26 n. 7, 38, 43; Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, 241.

intellectualists rarely use this terminology¹⁴). Generally speaking, motivational reasons internalism asserts a necessary connection between reasons and motivation.¹⁵ The nature of this connection can be understood in two ways, each of which leads to a different type of internalism. The first contends that an agent can sincerely judge that he ought to ϕ only if he can be moved to ϕ . The second asserts that if an agent judges that he ought to ϕ , he possesses, or generates, an ability to be moved to ϕ . The first version is by far the more popular, and in its Humean flavors is used to defend moral noncognitivism. Kantian intellectualists adopt the second, lonelier variety.¹⁶ On their view, Kant believes that it is just part of the nature of practical reason that judgments, or conclusions of practical syllogisms, issue in actions. It is just part of the nature of practical reason that legislative acts issue in executive actions.

These internalist commitments mean that intellectualists' answer to the efficacy question is similar in moral and nonmoral contexts. In both cases, choosing to act on a maxim constitutes a sufficient reason to perform the action represented in the maxim, and the cognition of this reason is what moves us to act. Moral and nonmoral motivation are differentiated primarily by the (objective or subjective) form of the principle or maxim into which an interest is incorporated.

If the intellectualists' answers to the genetic and efficacy questions are affectively austere, the touchstone of affectivism is the claim that feeling plays a necessary role in both contexts.¹⁷ With respect

¹⁴ See, for example Nelson Potter, "Kant on Obligation and Motivation in Law and Ethics," *Jahrbuch fuer Recht und Ethik* 2 (1994): 95–111; Nelson Potter, "Duties to Oneself, Motivational Internalism, and Self-Deception in Kant's Ethics," in *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals: Interpretative Essays*, ed. Mark Timmons (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹⁵ For more on the array of views clustered under internalism, see Robert Jay Wallace, "How to Argue About Practical Reason," *Mind* 99 (1990): 355–85; Sigrun Svavarsdottir, "Moral Cognitivism and Motivation," *Philosophical Review* 108, no. 2 (1999): 168–219.

¹⁶ Contemporary cognitivist internalists include Thomas Nagel and Jonathan Dancy. Thomas Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970); Jonathan Dancy, *Moral Reasons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

¹⁷ Intellectualism does leave some room for feeling. Respect is admitted to possess an affective element, although this force is said not to motivate. Reath, *Agency and Autonomy*, 11–12; Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, 123 and following. Matters get more complicated when it comes to nonmoral

to the genetic question, most affectivists attribute to Kant a determinist, vector-force model of motivation.¹⁸ On the prevailing affectivist view, an agent's choice, and hence action, are caused by the moral or sensible interests¹⁹ shouldering the strongest affective weight or force.²⁰ Affectivists do not deny the incorporation thesis, but they hold that feeling plays a causal role in the process of incorporation; for them, the incorporation of an interest is caused by an attraction to the interest in question. If I am more attracted to the end, whatever it may be, contained in the principle "take time for friendship" than I am in "early to bed, early to rise," my interest in this end will cause me to decide to

motivation. Intellectualists acknowledge that an agent's set of interests contains interests that are products of his sensible attraction to objects, say, in drinking whiskey. But intellectualists insist that these contingent attractions (or aversions) do not causally determine us to form interests.

An example will help illustrate these differences of interpretation. Say I have a penchant for Szechuan food and have made it a policy to eat at good Szechuan restaurants whenever possible. While attending a conference in a cosmopolitan city, I come across a Szechuan establishment of high repute. I decide to dine there and call to reserve a table. Reath claims that the motivational component that leads me to make a reservation derives solely from my maxim and the choice to act on that maxim, not from the gustatory interest expressed therein, while Allison seems to believe that the motivational force of my decision derives from the affective force tied to the gustatory interest incorporated into my maxim.

¹⁸ Richard McCarty, "Motivation and Moral Choice in Kant's Theory of Rational Agency," *Kant-Studien* 85, no. 5 (1994): 22, 25, 30; McCarty, "Kant's Incorporation Requirement: Freedom and Character in the Empirical World," 438; Nauckhoff, "Incentives and Interests in Kant's Moral Psychology," 46; Patrick R. Frierson, "Kant's Empirical Account of Human Action," *Philosophers' Imprint* 5, no. 7 (2005): 9 n. 25.

¹⁹ While many interpreters use "incentive" to name practical reason's representation of something as potentially choiceworthy, or as a candidate for incorporating into a maxim, I will substitute "interest"; this is consistent with all of Kant's mature works of practical philosophy. Kant, *Groundwork*, 460 n.; Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 79; Kant, *Metaphysics*, 212; Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 207; but compare Kant, *Metaphysics*, 212. I avoid incentive because it refers ambiguously to interests in the sense just described and the object that moves us to act. For an example of this ambiguity, see Christine M. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 167–71.

²⁰ Nauckhoff, "Incentives and Interests in Kant's Moral Psychology"; McCarty, "Kantian Moral Motivation and the Feeling of Respect"; McCarty, "Motivation and Moral Choice in Kant's Theory of Rational Agency"; McCarty, "Kant's Incorporation Requirement: Freedom and Character in the Empirical World"; Frierson, "Kant's Empirical Account of Human Action."

have another drink at the bar rather than go home and sleep. On this interpretation, moral action is possible only in cases where the affective force accompanying moral principles outweighs the affective force attached to nonmoral principles.²¹ In both cases, feeling also plays a causal role downstream from choice, moving an agent to act in the way specified by his judgments.

Before moving on, I want to sketch briefly my resolution of the conflict. On my interpretation, an agent is moved to act by a feeling, a feeling of anticipatory pleasure at the prospect of carrying out a task he has set for himself. This feeling is produced by an act of free choice. So, I argue, feeling answers the efficacy question, and choice answers the genetic question. The hybrid theory has definite affectivist sympathies insofar as it portrays feeling as an ineliminable feature of motivation. But it also endorses the intellectualist claim that free choice is the spring of motivation. What reconciles these seemingly opposing commitments is the following key claim: for Kant, the pleasure that moves one to act on one's practical judgments is a special kind of pleasure, intellectual pleasure, that is a consequence of choice.

III

Intellectualism and Its Critics. Intellectualism is the dominant interpretation of Kant's theory of motivation. To some degree, this is because intellectualists number among themselves many of the leading Kant scholars writing today. But intellectualism also happens to have important substantive advantages. It emphasizes the role of free choice in moral agency, and Kant's commitment to the freedom of moral choice is often taken to be a defining feature of his moral theory. Although Kant's position on nonmoral agency is harder to discern, it is commonly contrasted with Hume's and thought to involve an independence from sensible desire. In short, intellectualism fits best with what even

²¹ By contrast, weak affectivism sides with intellectualists in rejecting the vector-force model, and incorporates spontaneity into its conception of motivation; see, for example, Morrisson, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action*, 122 and following, esp. 131–32. Morrisson argues that the motivational question is answered by reference to an affective force that is freely incorporated into an agent's maxims. Weak affectivism mounts a rather modest challenge to intellectualism, and so I will set it aside.

affectivists concede to be the prevailing understanding of Kant's theory of rational agency.²²

But the philosophical and textual challenges posed by affectivists are powerful ones, and orthodox intellectualism does an unsatisfactory job of turning them aside. To get clear on the nature of these objections, let's schematize the intellectualist theory as follows:

Time₁: Interest \Rightarrow Maxim

Time₂: Cognition of salience of maxim \rightarrow Action specified by the maxim²³

The double arrow represents an act of incorporation: the left-hand item is incorporated into the right. The single arrow represents the fact that practical cognitions somehow effectuate action. This "somehow" dumps us out at the affectivists' Humean objection to intellectualism: they urge us to acknowledge that it is not obvious that our practical judgments, all by themselves and without cooperation from sensibility, can move us to act; that is, it is not obvious that the cognitivist version of motivational internalism is true. Since intellectualists reject the standard belief-desire model, according to which agents are moved to act by sensible interests incorporated into a maxim, the affectivist can level the well-known Humean charge that reason alone is "perfectly inert."²⁴ On this score, affectivists are allied with most contemporary

²² McCarty, "Motivation and Moral Choice in Kant's Theory of Rational Agency," 19; "Kant's Incorporation Requirement: Freedom and Character in the Empirical World," 427.

²³ Strictly speaking, the cognition of the salience of a maxim does not guarantee that we will act. I want to retain the possibility of accidie, as well as situations where passion overwhelms us; see, for example, Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Practical Point of View*, ed. Robert B. Loudon and Günter A. Zöllner, trans. Robert B. Loudon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 251.

²⁴ McCarty's version of this criticism is focused upstream from choice, and so is slightly different from my own. He argues that the intellectualist model of free choice does not enable an explanation of how "practical reasoning that justifies action also explains it." *Kant's Theory of Action*, 87. The criticism I am developing focuses downstream from choice, and charges intellectualism with failing to explain how cognitive acts of choice can move us to act. McCarty sees this problem but couches it in a discussion of weakness of will that I find obscures more than it illuminates; see *Kant's Theory of Action*, 57. Furthermore, by demanding that choice be explicable in terms of a prior

motivational internalists, insofar as motivational internalism is usually employed in defense of a noncognitivist, Humean account of motivation.²⁵

Indeed, Kant himself is aware of these Humean difficulties, as can be seen in two of his initial attempts at sketching a motivational theory. In lectures from the early and mid-1770s, he distances himself from moral sense theorists, identifying a moral will with a will that acts on its conceptions of the good, rather than its feelings.²⁶ But he goes on to say that these concepts must nevertheless be able to “rouse feeling,” because concepts by themselves would be motivationally inert. Here Kant allows that feelings can play an important motivational role, yet worries that he cannot explain how concepts of the understanding incite feeling.²⁷ In lectures from 1784, we find Kant transitioning to his mature view. He flirts with internalism, claiming that the understanding has the power to move us to act on its own, but adds that this power can be outweighed by sensibility.²⁸ That is, “when I judge by the understanding that [an] action is morally good, I am very far from doing this action of which I have so judged.”²⁹ What is needed to secure the possibility of moral action, he thinks, is some kind of cooperation from sensibility, which must generate a moral feeling that renders judgments of the understanding efficacious.³⁰ Kant goes so far as to claim that moral feeling is a “condition” of moral action.³¹ Although Kant now appears

cognitive act or psychological state of affairs, McCarty seems to deny possibility of free choice.

²⁵ Svavarsdottir, “Moral Cognitivism and Motivation,” 168.

²⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology Friedländer*, ed. Robert B. Loudon and Allen W. Wood, trans. Robert R. Clewis and G. Felicitas Munzel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 649.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 650. See also Immanuel Kant, *Collins's Lecture Notes*, ed. Peter Heath and Jerome B. Schneewind, trans. Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 258.

²⁸ Immanuel Kant, *Mrongovius's Lecture Notes*, ed. Peter Heath and Jerome B. Schneewind, trans. Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1429.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1428.

³⁰ The feelings in question appear similar to Hutcheson's exciting reasons, which are attractions and aversions that move us to act. Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 341.

³¹ Kant, *Mrongovius's Lecture Notes*, 1429.

fairly self-assured that most people have such a feeling, he still cannot justify this confidence.

The intellectualist will likely respond to the objection at hand by pointing out that Kant's mature moral theory no longer seems plagued by these doubts and just supposes that practical-cognitive acts can be efficacious,³² or that the legislative power of reason is also an executive power. On this approach, Kant's considered theory of rational agency just insists that when one makes a practical judgment, one brings it about that one acts in the way specified by one's judgment. (The intellectualist might add that this supposition is natural given Kant's debts to the Wolffian rationalist tradition.³³) But this reply is less than satisfactory, insofar as it has Kant solving the problem by fiat.

The second affectivist objection to intellectualism is textual in nature. Affectivists point to a number of important Kant passages that depict feeling as crucial to motivation. Here are just a few:

The moral law . . . is also a subjective determining ground—that is, an incentive—to [moral] action inasmuch as it has influence on the sensibility of the subject and effects a feeling conducive to the influence of the law upon the will.³⁴

Respect for the moral law must be regarded as also a positive though indirect effect of the moral law on feeling . . . and must therefore be regarded as a subjective ground of activity.³⁵

Every determination of choice proceeds from the representation of a possible action to the deed through the feeling of pleasure or displeasure, taking an interest in the action or in its effect.³⁶

³² Kant, *Groundwork*, 401 n.

³³ At the very least, this is something like Reath's view, as he confirmed in conversation. Wolff believes that human beings naturally, though imperfectly, strive for the good, in the guise of perfection. By provident design, any theoretical cognition of an action, object, or state of affairs as containing a perfection inclines us to pursue that action, object, or state of affairs; see Paul Guyer, “Kantian Perfectionism,” in *Perfecting Virtue: New Essays on Kantian Ethics and Virtue Ethics*, ed. Lawrence Jost and Julian Wuerth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 201.

³⁴ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 75. See also Kant, *Groundwork*, 460.

³⁵ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 79.

³⁶ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 399, emphases altered.

Affectivists are especially impressed by the third passage, where Kant unequivocally asserts that feeling is what moves agents to both moral and nonmoral action.³⁷

Intellectualists handle the first two passages by allowing that respect has an affective component, yet denying that this component does anything to address the efficacy question. Reath, Allison, and Korsgaard construe respect as an intellectual recognition of the moral law, a cognitive act capable of moving us to act all by itself.³⁸ According to intellectualists, these passages are mainly intended as a phenomenological description of how the recognition of the moral law can influence ordinary sensibility. Regardless of what we make of this strategy, it will not help with the third passage, which simply cannot be rendered consistent with the intellectualist commitment to affective austerity. Intellectualists' basic strategy for handling Kant's claims about pleasure in nonmoral contexts is to argue that pleasure alerts agents that they are in the vicinity of a contingent practical interest (say, in eating Szechuan food) that is choiceworthy, or worth incorporating the interest into a maxim.³⁹ But in the third passage, Kant assigns pleasure a different role. Its job is not (or not only) to draw attention to an attractive state of affairs, but to bring the agent to action. Yet intellectualism cannot account for why Kant says that choice proceeds from the representation of an action in an act of choice *to* the action *through* the feeling of pleasure or displeasure.⁴⁰

To be sure, affectivism has problems of its own. Because affectivists enthusiastically portray Kant as a psychological determinist, claiming that deliberation, choice, and, thereby, action are all caused by our various attractions and aversions to objects and states of affairs,

³⁷ McCarty, *Kant's Theory of Action*, 52; Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, 120.

³⁸ Reath, *Agency and Autonomy*, 11–12; Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, 123 and following; Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*, 175–76.

³⁹ See, for example, Reath, *Agency and Autonomy*, 33–66.

⁴⁰ Janelle DeWitt offers an interesting attempt to reconcile the cognitive and affective elements of respect, rather than excise one or the other. Although I am obviously sympathetic to this project, I disagree with her solution, which rests in part on the claim that rational agents naturally feel pleasure at the thought of the morally good, absent any contribution from a cognitive act; see DeWitt, "Respect for the Moral Law: The Emotional Side of Reason," *Philosophy* 89, no. 1 (2014): 51.

affectivism presents a disfigured picture of Kant, at least the Kant who insists that moral actions are freely chosen. Some affectivists reply by restricting psychological determinism to the empirical world, and locating freedom in the intelligible world.⁴¹ Although this two-world metaphysics defuses the threat to freedom, it has struck many readers as metaphysically extravagant. It also makes it difficult, bordering on impossible, to understand how the choices of a noumenal agent relate to the choices of a temporally and spatially located human being, and this identity is necessary for human beings to be thought of as responsible moral agents.⁴² Put slightly differently, the firewall dug in between empirical and transcendental psychology leaves Kant incapable of accomplishing one of his most important tasks: assuaging doubts about whether finite rational agents can act as morality requires. To put these doubts about the possibility of morality to pasture, one must show that the will is free and that pure reason can be practical and move us to act. And the mere possibility of freedom protected by the two-world interpretation furnishes an insufficient basis for the justification of morality Kant desires.⁴³ It is for these reasons that I want

⁴¹ McCarty, *Kant's Theory of Action*; Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, 118, 42–46. Herrera and Nauckhoff do not draw any such distinction and endorse strong affectivism all the way down. Herrera, "Kant on the Moral *Triebfeder*"; Nauckhoff, "Incentives and Interests in Kant's Moral Psychology."

⁴² This criticism goes back at least to Henry Sidgwick. For an admirably clear discussion, see Ralph Walker, "Kant on the Number of Worlds," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 18, no. 5 (2010): 836–37.

⁴³ Two-world theorists sometimes recognize this point and try to develop more satisfactory justifications of morality. Frierson's effort can be summarized as follows: since the second *Critique* shows that freedom is the condition of morality, and since the possibility of freedom is kept alive by transcendental idealism, we can infer our freedom from the consciousness of the authority of the moral law. Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, 142–44. But though Frierson is far from alone in embracing this view, regress strategies of this sort face serious difficulties. A valid regress argument can get off the ground only if the consciousness in question is accurate, and we really are subject to the authority of the moral law. If our consciousness of the authority of morality for us is false, the regress will fail to vindicate our freedom. Take, for example, someone completely determined by sensible desire who comes to believe that he is subject to the authority of the moral law. His consciousness cannot be the starting point of a regress argument. Only a veridical consciousness will do the trick. But here we run into an insurmountable epistemic hurdle: we cannot know if our consciousness is

to steer toward a rehabilitated affectivist approach. (Nevertheless, there is much in the hybrid theory that should be to affectivists' liking.)

I will work us out of the intellectualist-affectivist impasse by using Kant's remarks on feeling, especially those that are the thorns in the intellectualists' side, to show that Kant possesses an affectively rich theory of motivation. This interpretation at the same time offers a plausible response to Humean doubts and safeguards the central role of free choice in Kant's practical philosophy. My hybrid theory of motivation thus turns out to be immune to the philosophical and textual problems besetting orthodox intellectualism, while retaining its principle advantages.

IV

The Hybrid Account of Motivation. The central interpretive claim of the hybrid theory is that, for Kant, agents are moved to act by an affective force, namely, a feeling of anticipatory pleasure at the prospect of carrying out a task they have set for themselves. But this feeling always originates in choice or practical judgment; *pace* affectivists, it is not the product of incorporated feeling. Since this feeling is a consequence of choice, feelings play their motivational role downstream from acts of choice. In other words, choice is the correct answer to the genetic question, feeling is the correct answer to the efficacy question, and choice is the genesis of motivational feeling.

Many of the passages that furnish fuel for the affectivist-intellectualist debate reflect on how principles and feelings "determine

accurate, because the structure of our cognitive apparatus precludes any cognition of freedom. So regress arguments are not up to the task at hand.

Frierson also tries on a Korsgaardian two-standpoint defense of affectivism, arguing that we can view ourselves as psychologically determined from the theoretical, third-person perspective, while viewing ourselves as free from the practical, first-person perspective. Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, 145 and following. This solution is ineffective insofar as we can still legitimately ask the motivational question within the first-person perspective, and we thus require a response amenable to that perspective, that is, an intellectualist response. So the problems with intellectualism discussed below undercut Frierson's two-standpoint defense.

the will" or "determine choice."⁴⁴ To commence my resolution of the dispute, I need to distinguish two moments of the determination, one upstream and one downstream from choice. Looking upstream from choice, we find the basic ingredients of practical deliberation, including principles and sensible and intellectual interests. Interests, as the intellectualists remind us, play an effective role in agency only insofar as they are incorporated into a maxim or practical principle. Practical principles state what it would be morally or prudentially good to do.⁴⁵ Examples include specific principles of action,⁴⁶ general principles regarding ends, and second-order principles stating deliberative rules. Practical principles determine a will when they perform their characteristic role in the will's activity, that is, when they ground judgments regarding what we are to do, the ends we ought to pursue, or the way we are to deliberate. In the first and second cases, practical principles function as premises in a practical syllogism.⁴⁷ For example, "treating people with respect is good" serves as a major premise, which, along with a minor premise such as "telling the truth is respectful," grounds the judgment "telling the truth is good." In the third case, practical principles, such as the moral law or the principle of happiness, guide deliberation about the premises we employ in practical reasoning. Looking downstream from choice, we see that a determination of choice results in action,⁴⁸ namely, the action specified by the choice or practical judgment.⁴⁹ This aspect of determination is what enables practical

⁴⁴ *Wille* in the broad sense comprises *Willkür*, or the faculty of choice, and *Wille* in the narrow sense, that is, the faculty of practical principles. Kant, *Metaphysics*, 213. Feelings determine the will in the broad sense, in that they determine the faculty of choice, which is part of the complete package. Feelings do not, of course, determine the faculty of principles.

⁴⁵ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 20.

⁴⁶ To sidestep debates about the distinctions between principles and maxims, I will employ a coarse typology of general and specific principles, associating maxims with the latter.

⁴⁷ For a helpful discussion, see Richard McCarty, "Maxims in Kant's Practical Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 44, no. 1 (2006): 65–83, as well as "Kant's Incorporation Requirement: Freedom and Character in the Empirical World."

⁴⁸ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 42.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 15, 42. See also Kant, *Groundwork*, 446.

reason, in the guise of rational principles, to be the “efficient cause” of our actions.⁵⁰

Distinguishing the two moments of the determination of choice enables me to develop an affectively sensitive model of Kant’s internalism that enjoys the philosophical and textual advantages mentioned above. The key to my interpretation is the interplay between two basic features of the will (*Willkür*)—its spontaneity and its efficacy—which I will discuss in turn. During the discussion of the efficacious nature of the will, we will see why Kant’s internalism is not the austere version advertised by intellectualists. While intellectualists take Kant’s anti-Humean commitments to imply that feeling plays no part in motivation, it turns out that he assigns an important and ineliminable motivational role to pleasure downstream from choice. Although the deliberative component of choice is independent of feeling, feeling is crucial to the downstream efficacy of choice, by which choice brings agents to action.

Kant’s internalism flows from his conception of the will as spontaneous and efficacious. A practically spontaneous being is spontaneous in that he is the source of his own causality. Kant builds this feature into his definition of the will as the faculty of desire “in accordance with concepts, insofar as the ground determining it to action lies *within itself* and not in its object.”⁵¹ When Kant says that the ground (normatively) determining the will to action lies “within itself,” what he means is that agents are in some sense self-determining; the will (*Willkür*) itself chooses what it is to do. Positively speaking, the will has the power to set its own ends, to choose the goals it will pursue.⁵² Negatively speaking, our decision to act on a sensible interest remains causally independent of that interest.⁵³ This conception of will commits Kant to the claim that the incorporation of interests into a maxim is always exercised independently of the affective force associated with the interest. Sensible interests do not show up on our doorstep as

⁵⁰ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 48. Though Ameriks and Morrisson also discuss this distinction, they do not apply it to the matters at hand; see Karl Ameriks, *Interpreting Kant’s Critiques* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2003), 252–53; Morrisson, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action*, 15–16.

⁵¹ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 213, emphasis added.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 381, 382, 385.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 213.

reasons for action; rather, they become operative in willing insofar as we take them to be reasons in virtue of a practical principle that states why they count as a reason.⁵⁴

The efficacious nature of willing can be seen in Kant’s claim that will is “by means of its representations the cause of the actuality of the objects of these representations.”⁵⁵ It is the efficacious nature of will that distinguishes the practical employment of reason from its theoretical employment. While theoretical reason is used to determine the concepts of objects, practical reason also aims at making its objects actual (*wirklich*).⁵⁶ And while theoretical cognition of an object depends on the actuality, or existence, of its object, practical cognition aims to bring its object into existence. It is the efficacious nature of willing that allows us to characterize will as the “efficient cause” of its actions.⁵⁷

Now let’s pull these two threads together. A spontaneous will is efficacious in virtue of “its representations,” the representations specific to it as an exercise of practical reason, namely, concepts, maxims, principles that render maxims valid or invalid, and judgments that represent acts of choice. These representations all belong to the capacity for choice (*Willkür*) and its exercise. (Although pleasure is a representation, pleasurable representations are not representations belonging to the will unless and until they are incorporated; pleasure

⁵⁴ Even though spontaneity entails causal independence from sensibility, it is not equivalent to full-blown freedom. The *Metaphysics* passage cited above provides textual support for the notion of a spontaneity that is something less than robust freedom; see also A803/B831, and the passages cited in Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Freedom*, 39. Kant emphasizes that the capacity to act on the basis of reasons that “lie within” our respective wills should not, without further argument, be construed as a capacity to act on the basis of purely rational interests, and it is the latter that is essential to robust freedom. Kant, *Metaphysics*, 213. So, in principle, a practically spontaneous being could be restricted to choosing among options that are grounded in one’s contingent set of sensible interests. I should note that Kant does not use “spontaneity” in exactly this sense. Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysik Morgovius*, ed. and trans. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 877, 880.

⁵⁵ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n., translation altered. See also Kant, *Metaphysics*, 211, 356.

⁵⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Bx; Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 67.

⁵⁷ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 48.

and will are two different faculties.⁵⁸) So the will is efficacious by means of its choices. To return to my restaurant example (n. 18 above), given that will is spontaneous and efficacious, Kant would explain my action—calling and making a reservation—by reference to the efficacy of my spontaneous choice to do so. He would say that it is my choice that moves me to act in the way specified by my judgment. So there is good textual reason to dub Kant an internalist.

Exploring the details of Kant's internalism will reveal that his theory of motivation is not, *pace* the intellectualists, void of reference to feeling. In fact, feeling turns out to be integral to the will's efficacy. Kant's position is that while our moral and prudential judgments are efficacious by themselves, this is so due to a feeling that issues from the judgment. As we have already seen, Kant says to the delight of affectivists that choice brings us to act "through the feeling of pleasure or displeasure."⁵⁹ But with the distinction between the deliberative and efficacious aspects of choice in hand, we can construe the text as expressing a hybrid view: pleasure's essential motivational role, in both the moral and nonmoral domains, is to enable us to carry out our judgments. According to Kant, once an agent has decided on a course of action, he takes pleasure in the thought of actualizing the object of choice or performing the action. And it is this pleasure, downstream from choice, that moves him to act.

Additional support for this interpretation can be found in many of Kant's remarks about pleasure and satisfaction (*Wohlgefallen*).⁶⁰ In the second *Critique* he writes that "pleasure is the representation of the agreement of an object or of an action with . . . the faculty of the causality of a representation with respect to the actuality of its object (or with respect to the determination of the powers of the subject to

⁵⁸ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 177.

⁵⁹ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 399. See also Kant, *Metaphysics*, 211; Kant, *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, 894.

⁶⁰ Although Kant develops an empirical account of pleasure, he also considers pleasure to be a "basic faculty" of the soul, along with cognition and desire. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 177. I take the following passages to describe the role of pleasure in this fundamental sense; the fact that most occur in the *Critique of Judgment* shows that they do not belong to an empirical account. I hesitate to characterize what Kant is doing here as "transcendental psychology," but it is perhaps the best label to apply.

action in order to produce the object)."⁶¹ The faculty of causality is the will, and what we take pleasure in is the thought of producing an object or performing an action that we have determined ourselves to produce or perform. The forward-looking thought of actualizing the object is what Kant refers to with the disjunct "or with respect to the determination of the powers of the subject to action."⁶² Put more simply, Kant's view is that we take pleasure in representing the actualization of our judgments—we take pleasure in the prospect of the activity of actualization, not just the actualized object, even when our goal is onerous or painful.⁶³

The third *Critique* echoes this contention, stating that "that is good which pleases by means of reason alone, *through the mere concept*."⁶⁴ In other words, the judgment that some object, state of affairs, or course of action is good—either good in itself, that is, morally good, or prudentially good—generates a pleasure of itself.⁶⁵ Kant later writes, "the state of mind of a will determined by something, however, is already *in itself* a feeling of pleasure and identical with it."⁶⁶ Here too, the decision to do something is said to cause a feeling of pleasure. Kant adds that this is pleasure in the thought of "self-activity," or of effectively exercising one's will.⁶⁷ In other words, it is pleasure in the thought of our rational efficacy.

Neither *Critique* reduces the pleasure necessary for efficacy to a feeling attached to a desired object. Rather, Kant insists that we feel pleasure at the thought of actualizing the objects of our practical judgments, whatever they may be, and regardless of their hedonic value.

⁶¹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n., translation altered.

⁶² This is likely what Kant means when he discusses a feeling that belongs to the promotion of "life" and the promotion of the activity of one's powers. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n.; see also Immanuel Kant, *Vienna Logic*, ed. and trans. J. Michael Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 891, 894.

⁶³ The earliest appearance of this view that I have found is in a 1782 lecture. Kant, *Vienna Logic*, 891.

⁶⁴ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 207, emphases altered.

⁶⁵ Kant accepts the received view that practical judgments are always about the good. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 59.

⁶⁶ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 222, emphasis added.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 242, 207. See also Immanuel Kant, *First Introduction to the Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 230–31, and Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 22.

In other words, rational agents such as ourselves have a disposition to take pleasure in the thought of our rational efficacy. This disposition can be thought of as a natural predisposition,⁶⁸ though it is better construed as a power (*Vermögen*) inherent in the basic power of desire,⁶⁹ as Kant asserts in the *Metaphysics*.⁷⁰ This point is crucial, because it entails that moral motivation is possible even when there is no sensible interest in acting morally, and this provides just what Kant needs from his account of motivation.

To be sure, we often also take pleasure in the object actualized.⁷¹ This is what is emphasized by most accounts of the role of pleasure in nonmoral action. Pleasure in the object actualized can take two forms, a pleasure in the accomplishment of the specific task (distinct from the anticipatory pleasure in efficacy itself) and a pleasure in the object achieved or produced; for example, when I finish a run, I feel good both because I did what I set out to do, and because I feel relaxed and energized. As a result of this proliferation of pleasures, nonmoral motivation is frequently overdetermined. The pleasure involved can be some combination of the anticipation of accomplishing a task, an anticipation of feeling pleasure at accomplishing the task, and an anticipation of feeling pleasure in the object actualized.

Two further points of clarification are necessary. First, in the passages cited above, Kant specifies the pleasure in question as an anticipatory satisfaction. Anticipatory satisfaction is not a theoretical representation of a future satisfaction, but an anticipatory satisfaction: a forward-looking pleasure. It is anticipatory in the sense that it is attached to a forward-looking thought of actualizing one's judgment and exercising one's will.⁷² Second, this pleasurable thought of efficacy is a

⁶⁸ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 399.

⁶⁹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n.; Kant, *Metaphysics*, 211, 356.

⁷⁰ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 300.

⁷¹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n.; Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 187.

⁷² Kant scholars debate whether the feeling of pleasure is a mere sensation, as per Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 104–05, or whether it has intentional content. For the latter view, see Rachel Zuckert, "A New Look at Kant's Theory of Pleasure," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 60, no. 3 (2002): 239–52. Zuckert's interpretation fits nicely with my emphasis on intellectual pleasure, but intellectual pleasure can do its motivational job either way. On an intentional

special kind of pleasure, which the *Anthropology* calls an intellectual pleasure and distinguishes from sensible, or sensuous, pleasure.⁷³ (This distinction is also registered in Kant's pure practical philosophy.⁷⁴) Sensible pleasure is defined by the fact that it is produced solely by sensibility; it is a contingent attraction to objects or states of affairs, the attraction being a product of natural propensities in combination with historical, biological, and cultural influences. The *Anthropology* oddly lacks a substantive description of intellectual pleasure, but we can construct one by means of a simple contrast with sensible pleasure: intellectual pleasure must be a pleasure that arises from the active, spontaneous judgments of practical reason. And in fact, this is just what Kant says in his lectures on empirical psychology.⁷⁵ Kant's lectures go so far as to attach different labels to intellectual and sensible pleasure, calling the former "satisfaction" (*Wohlgefallen*) and the latter "pleasure" or "sense-pleasure" (*Lust*), though he does not consistently adhere to this distinction.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, intellectual pleasure is still a feeling bearing affective force, and it is for this reason that it can move us to act.⁷⁷ The difference between intellectual and sensible pleasure lies in the origin of the pleasure. If the pleasure originates in sensibility, it is sensible; if it originates in practical reason, it is intellectual.

Kant's view, then, is that rational agents possess a disposition to take pleasure in the thought of their rational efficacy. Accordingly, when we judge that we ought to do something, we immediately take pleasure in the thought of our ability to bring into existence the object of our judgment, whatever that object may be, and accomplishing the

account of pleasure, anticipatory pleasure can be "about" a future-directed cognition.

⁷³ Kant, *Anthropology*, 230.

⁷⁴ Kant, *Groundwork*, 399; Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 22; Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 222; Kant, *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, 877–78; Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysik Vigilantius*, ed. and trans. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1013.

⁷⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysik L2*, ed. and trans. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 586; Kant, *Metaphysik Vigilantius*, 1024.

⁷⁶ See especially Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysik Dohna*, ed. and trans. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 675; Kant, *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, 891.

⁷⁷ In his lectures, Kant typically identifies intellectual pleasure with moral pleasure. Only in the third *Critique* and the *Metaphysics* does he state his considered view, which is that intellectual pleasure is also found in cases of nonmoral action.

task we have set for ourselves. The fact that his discussions of this power appear in his pure practical philosophy indicates that he sees the capacity for downstream pleasure as a feature of rational agency as such (or at least of the rational agency belonging to rational beings possessing sensibility). So this feeling is necessarily instigated by choice and is not contingent upon an agent's subjective set of desires. Although our subjective desires vary over time, whenever we choose to do something, we feel some pleasure at the thought of our own efficacy.

Kant's picture of agency is not immune to criticism. But once the details of his account are on the table, it looks like a fairly intuitive psychological and phenomenological story. It is all the more plausible given Kant's conception of the will as fundamentally geared toward bringing its objects into existence. It is natural to think that a being who, by his very nature, strives for efficacy,⁷⁸ and strives for efficacy through his practical judgments, will feel anticipatory satisfaction at the thought of realizing that efficacy and actualizing his practical judgments.

We can now see what is behind my contention that Kant has an explanation of the intimate connection between choice and action that complements his commitment to free will and goes some way toward responding to Humean concerns. Kant's conception of the will as an active faculty, and all that this conception entails, warrants the claim that agents feel anticipatory satisfaction regarding the use of their practical powers, and it is this feeling of pleasure that moves agents to action. We can also see why it is appropriate to call this a hybrid theory. On my interpretation Kant embraces the intellectualist response to the genetic question and a modified version of the affectivist response to the efficacy question. He holds that the ultimate source of both moral and nonmoral action is choice. But he asserts that what moves us to act is a feeling, a feeling that originates in practical judgment. More precisely, what moves us to act is a choice, which moves us to act by means of a feeling.

The resulting picture of motivation can be represented as follows:

⁷⁸ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 9 n.

Nonmoral

Time₁: Sensible pleasurable representation ⇒ Interest

Time_{1, or 2}: Interest ⇒ Maxim

Time_{1, 2, or 3}: Cognition of salience of maxim → Intellectual feeling of anticipatory pleasure/satisfaction → Action

Moral

Time₁: Commitment to the moral law

Time_{1, or 2}: Moral interest ⇒ Moral maxim

Time_{1, 2, or 3}: Cognition of salience of maxim → Intellectual feeling of anticipatory pleasure/satisfaction → Action

Double arrows indicate acts of incorporation, and single arrows indicate causal relations.

Earlier I argued that the most important reason for developing a successful alternative to affectivism is that an affectivist account of moral motivation is at odds with Kant's justification of morality. To make good on my claim that a hybrid interpretation has no such problem, I want briefly to explain the second diagram, though space requires me to omit some interesting points of detail. As we can see, the ultimate source of moral action is, *pace* affectivism, cognitive rather than affective. The moral-motivational process begins with the fundamental commitment to the moral law;⁷⁹ Kant states quite clearly that "the determination of the will by reason alone is the *ground* of the feeling of pleasure."⁸⁰ Now, a moral agent, an agent who has sincerely committed himself to the moral law, will necessarily judge that the moral law is good, and so moral agents will always possess an interest in the moral law.⁸¹ Moral interests have the same function as sensible interests: they identify their objects as choiceworthy and invite us to incorporate them into our principles and maxims.⁸² When we

⁷⁹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 92; Kant, *Religion*, 47.

⁸⁰ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 116, emphasis added. See also Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 222; Kant, *Metaphysik Vigilantius*, 1024.

⁸¹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 79–81, 90.

⁸² An agent takes an interest in something when he implicitly or explicitly judges that it is good in either a prudential or a moral sense. *Ibid.*, 79, 90. Given Kant's internalism, these judgments generate affective force. So interests, as

incorporate moral interests into action-guiding moral maxims, our choice necessarily generates an affective force, an “impulse to activity,”⁸³ that moves us to act in the way specified by our moral maxims.⁸⁴

Two points are worth emphasizing here. First, interests bear affective force, and the affective force of moral interests is a consequence of the intellectual anticipatory pleasure that derives from our commitment to morality. As a result, moral interests boast a rational, rather than empirical, pedigree.⁸⁵ Second, on the interpretation offered here, moral action in no wise depends on a contingent, or sensible, attraction to morality. It depends only on the commitment to the moral law and the downstream feelings of anticipatory satisfaction, which are an ineliminable feature of rational agency. As a result of this independence from sensibility, Kant can confidently assert moral agents’ ability to act freely, to be moved to act by pure practical reason. And so the affectively robust hybrid theory supports, rather than undermines, his justification of morality.

My interpretation of moral motivation enjoys further interpretive merits. Recall the two passages from the beginning of the paper. Affectivists typically resolve the inherent tension by restricting (1) to the intelligible world, even though Kant makes no mention of the intelligible world here, and intellectualists do so by soft-pedaling (2). On the hybrid approach, both passages can be read as full-throated assertions. Harmony is achieved by showing that while pleasure does play an important role in moral motivation, this role is consistent with (1): as I have been emphasizing throughout, pleasure plays an important role downstream from the determination of the will. When Kant talks about the moral law “immediately” determining the will, he means that

the products of practical judgments, are always attached to an anticipatory pleasure or satisfaction at the thought of actualizing the object of our interest. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 204, 209, 222, 296.

⁸³ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 116.

⁸⁴ For a detailed elaboration of this picture, which pays special attention to the concomitant vindication of free will, see Benjamin S. Yost, “Kant’s Demonstration of Free Will, or How to Do Things with Concepts,” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 2, no. 2 (2016): 291–309.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 73. Kant says that the structural parallels between moral and nonmoral motivation are so strict, we can easily fall prey to the illusion that moral feelings are products of mere sensibility. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 117.

in every case of moral action, our judgment that we ought to act morally is determined by a moral principle. This judgment is made spontaneously, and feeling plays no causal role in its formation. When Kant says in (2) that the moral law effects a feeling, he should be understood as referring to the feeling involved in moral interest and respect.⁸⁶ This is why, a few lines later, Kant can smoothly transition to the claim that human beings possess no “antecedent feeling” specifically attuned to morality. Moral feelings play no role upstream from the fundamental commitment to morality, but they do play a role subsequent to that commitment. As Kant quite clearly puts it, “the moral law determines the will objectively and immediately in the judgment of reason,” and only “*now* has an effect on feeling.”⁸⁷

To conclude, I want to make some brief remarks on the hybrid interpretation of respect. Kant uses respect in a variety of ways, some which differ quite dramatically from each other,⁸⁸ but I will mention only two. In the first sense, respect refers to moral interest.⁸⁹ This conception of respect is covered by the previous discussion, and it is in this sense that respect directly enters into the process of moral motivation. In the second sense, respect names the impact of the moral feelings associated with the recognition of the authority of the moral law on sensible feeling.⁹⁰ Other than my interpretive claim about the genesis of these feelings in acts of choice, my position is fairly anodyne: the feelings of humiliation and elevation that result from respect focus our attention on the fact that we have committed ourselves to the moral law. (Precisely how this works is an interesting question, but one I will set aside; my view is on all fours with much of the secondary literature.⁹¹) These feelings operate upstream from specific acts of choice, inviting us to form specific moral interests and to incorporate those interests into moral maxims. (Freedom is safeguarded on this account because these feelings do not exist upstream from the

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 78, emphasis mine.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 76, 80, 81; Kant, *Religion*, 29.

⁸⁹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 79.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 72 and following.

⁹¹ I find Engstrom’s analysis of the role of respect in cultivating virtue quite persuasive, though nothing I argue here is incompatible with either Allison or Reath. Stephen Engstrom, “The *Triebfeder* of Pure Practical Reason,” in *Kant’s “Critique of Practical Reason”: A Critical Guide*, ed. Andrews Reath and Jens Timmerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

fundamental commitment to morality corresponding to Time, above, and because they enjoy a rational pedigree.) These invitations help us properly to orient our deliberative capacities and resist the temptations represented by nonmoral interests. In a nutshell, respect facilitates moral virtue and moral character.

Evidence for this interpretation of respect can be found even in the second *Critique*, where Kant is otherwise not terribly concerned with virtue and character. Here he says that respect is an incentive to, or interest in, the “moral disposition,”⁹² and that it is a ground for maxims of a “*course of life* in conformity with [the moral law],” the latter being a life of striving for virtue.⁹³ In the moral theory of the *Metaphysics*, virtuous character steps to the fore, and respect recedes in importance, though Kant repeats the point made in the *Critique*, stating that respect helps us progress toward virtue.⁹⁴

Now that the hybrid theory has been laid on the table, its philosophical and textual advantages should be on full display. The hybrid theory captures the philosophical strengths of orthodox intellectualism and sidesteps its weaknesses. It accounts for the role of freedom in moral motivation that is central to Kant’s conception of moral agency, as well as to his vindication of the authority of morality. Yet it does not suffer from intellectualism’s failure to respond to the Humean challenge. Furthermore, the hybrid theory can handle any text advanced in favor of affectivism and can do so in a systematic fashion, assigning Kant’s remarks on feeling to their proper places upstream and downstream from choice.⁹⁵ The affective forces required for the

⁹² Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 75.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 79, emphases added.

⁹⁴ Kant, *Metaphysics*, 397; Kant, *Religion*. It is harder to get a grip on the relationship between the concepts of respect and moral feeling. Kant often equates them, though in many passages discussing moral feeling, respect is conspicuously absent. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 80; Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 292; Kant, *Metaphysics*, 399–400. While Kant never clearly differentiates the two, moral feeling seems to be a more capacious notion than respect, one that captures the variety of tasks that feeling performs in moral life, as well as the capacity (*Empfänglichkeit*) to have such feelings.

⁹⁵ I cannot fully defend this claim here, though I would flag the passage that raises the most difficulty for my interpretation. Kant suggests that if we knew enough about someone, we could predict his future conduct with “as much certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse.” Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 99. Although it is natural to read this as evidence for affectivism, it is important to note that Kant’s remark occurs in a discussion of character. A person with

efficacy of our practical judgments are located downstream from choice, where they perch modestly, lacking any presumption of answering the genetic question, or of infringing on the freedom of the will. While it is allowed that feelings of moral interest play a role upstream from choice, their rational pedigree and their origin in the fundamental commitment to the moral law ensure that they, too, pose no threat to freedom. Given these results, there is, I believe, a strong case for attributing this view to Kant, or at least to think that it is the view he would settle on, were he to reflect on the textual and philosophical issues raised by intellectualists and affectivists.

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a character, be it moral or immoral, will be predictable, yet Kant insists that character is freely chosen. Manfred Kuehn, “Ethics and Anthropology in the Development of Kant’s Moral Philosophy,” in *Kant’s “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals”: A Critical Guide*, ed. Jens Timmerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 16–17.