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Two Kinds of Respect*

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I

An appeal to respect as something to which all persons are entitled marks much recent thought on moral topics. The appeal is common both in writings on general moral theory and in work on particular moral problems. For example, such writers as John Rawls, Bernard Williams, David Gauthier, R. S. Downie, and Elizabeth Telfer refer to the respect which is due all persons, either in arguing for or in articulating various moral principles.¹ The idea is not particularly new, since one of the keystones of Kant's ethics is the view that respect for the moral law entails treating persons (oneself included) always as ends in themselves and never simply as means. Precisely what Kant meant, or should have meant, by this is a matter of some controversy, but it is generally thought that the same claim is expressed in saying that one must respect persons as such.²

The appeal to respect also figures in much recent discussion of more specific moral problems such as racism or sexism. For example, it is argued that various ways of regarding and behaving toward others, and social arrangements which encourage those ways, are inconsistent with the respect to which all persons are entitled.

* I am indebted to several of my colleagues at Chapel Hill, to Lawrence Crocker and Stephen Hudson, and to the editor of *Ethics* for help with this essay.

1. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971); Bernard Williams, "The Idea of Equality," in *Moral Concepts*, ed. Joel Feinberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 158–61; David Gauthier, *Practical Reasoning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 119–20; R. S. Downie and Elizabeth Telfer, *Respect for Persons* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969).

2. Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. L. W. Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1959), hereinafter *FM*. See especially p. 46 (Ak. p. 428), where Kant claims that "rational beings are designated persons because their nature indicates that they are ends in themselves." See also *The Metaphysical Principles of Virtue*, trans. James Ellington (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1964), pp. 96–98, 112–14, 130–33. It is interesting to observe in this connection the rather different use that various writers have made of the Kantian principle. Both Rawls and Robert Nozick invoke it in support of quite different substantive conceptions of justice; see Rawls, *passim*; and Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), p. 32.

The claim that all persons are entitled to respect just by virtue of being persons may not seem wholly unproblematic, however. How could respect be something which is due to all persons? Do we not also think that persons can either deserve or fail to deserve our respect? Is the moralist who claims that all persons are entitled to respect advocating that we give up this idea? Questions of this sort should call into question just what respect itself is.

Other questions about respect appear as soon as one starts to press. Is respect a single kind of attitude? Is it primarily, or even solely, a moral attitude? Are persons the only sort of thing to which respect is appropriate? Everyone at least understands the coach who says that his team must respect the rebounding strength of the opposing team's front line. No moral attitude is involved here. Nor may persons be respected only as persons. Frank may be highly respected as a weaver, Sarah as a doctor.

II

Several writers have in fact given explicit attention to what constitutes respect for persons. On most such accounts it is a willingness to take into consideration one or another aspect of persons when one's actions affect them. Candidates for the relevant aspects of persons which are owed our consideration are their wants,³ their point of view on a particular situation,⁴ and the like. These accounts are not intended as general accounts of respect. They are only meant to give some more specific content to what it is that persons are entitled to by virtue of being persons.

One notable exception to such accounts is a recent attempt by Carl Cranor to give a general account of respect.⁵ Cranor holds respect to be a complex relationship which obtains between two persons (the respecifier and the respected), some characteristic (the basis of respect), and some evaluative point of view (from which the person is respected). This relationship consists, roughly, in the respecifier's judging that the person's having the characteristic is a good thing (from the relevant point of view), his appreciating why it is a good thing, and his being disposed to do what is appropriate to the person's having that characteristic.

III

One problem that infects each of the accounts mentioned as a general theory of respect is that each fails to distinguish two rather different ways in which persons may be the object of respect. Or, as I am inclined to say, two rather different kinds of attitude which are both referred to by the term

3. Gauthier, p. 119; and Downie and Telfer, p. 29.

4. Williams, p. 159; and Rawls, p. 337.

5. Carl Cranor, "Toward a Theory of Respect for Persons," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 12 (October 1975): 303–19.

respect.⁶ The two different ways in which a person may be respected provide but one instance of a more general difference between two attitudes which are both termed respect. Crudely put the difference is this.

There is a kind of respect which can have any of a number of different sorts of things as its object and which consists, most generally, in a disposition to weigh appropriately in one's deliberations some feature of the thing in question and to act accordingly. The law, someone's feelings, and social institutions with their positions and roles are examples of things which can be the object of this sort of respect. Since this kind of respect consists in giving appropriate consideration or recognition to some feature of its object in deliberating about what to do, I shall call it *recognition respect*.

Persons can be the object of recognition respect. Indeed, it is just this sort of respect which is said to be owed to all persons. To say that persons as such are entitled to respect is to say that they are entitled to have other persons take seriously and weigh appropriately the fact that they are persons in deliberating about what to do. Such respect is recognition respect; but what it requires as appropriate is not a matter of general agreement, for this is just the question of what our moral obligations or duties to other persons consist in. The crucial point is that to conceive of all persons as entitled to respect is to have some conception of what sort of consideration the fact of being a person requires.

A person may not only be the object of recognition respect as a person. As Erving Goffman has shown in great detail, human beings play various roles, or present various "selves," both in their interactions with others and in private before imagined audiences.⁷ Others may or may not respond appropriately to the presented self. To fail to take seriously the person as the presented self in one's responses to the person is to fail to give the person recognition respect as that presented self or in that role. It is this sort of respect to which Rodney Dangerfield refers when he bemoans the fact that neither his son nor his wife takes him seriously as a father or a husband with the complaint, "I can't get no respect."

There is another attitude which differs importantly from recognition respect but which we likewise refer to by the term 'respect.' Unlike recognition respect, its exclusive objects are persons or features which are held to manifest their excellence as persons or as engaged in some specific pursuit. For example, one may have such respect for someone's integrity, for someone's good qualities on the whole, or for someone as a musician. Such respect, then, consists in an attitude of positive appraisal of that person either as a person or as engaged in some particular pursuit. Accordingly the appropriate ground for such respect is that the person has manifested charac-

6. Though I prefer to put the point in this way, nothing crucial hangs on it. I could as well speak throughout of two different ways in which persons may be the object of respect.

7. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1959).

teristics which make him deserving of such positive appraisal. I shall later argue that the appropriate characteristics are those which are, or are based on, features of a person which we attribute to his *character*.

Because this sort of respect consists in a positive appraisal of a person, or his qualities, I shall call it *appraisal respect*. Unlike recognition respect, one may have appraisal respect for someone without having any particular conception of just what behavior *from oneself* would be required or made appropriate by that person's having the features meriting such respect. Appraisal respect is the positive appraisal itself. It is like esteem or a high regard for someone, although, as I shall argue later, the appropriate grounds for appraisal respect are not so broadly based as those of these latter attitudes.

Typically, when we speak of someone as meriting or deserving our respect, it is appraisal respect that we have in mind. We mean that the person is such as to merit our positive appraisal on the appropriate grounds. It is true that in order to indicate or express such respect, certain behavior from us will be appropriate. But unlike recognition respect, appraisal respect does not itself consist in that behavior or in the judgment that is appropriate. Rather, it consists in the appraisal itself.

In giving this characterization of appraisal respect, it would seem that I am giving no role to *feelings* of respect. Just as one may be said to have feelings of admiration so one may be said to feel respect for another. Although I won't pursue this point further, I suggest that such feelings may be understood as feelings which a person would explain by referring to his or her positive appraisal of their object. Just as we understand the feeling of fear to be that which is explained by one's belief in the presence of danger, so the feeling of respect for a person is the one which is occasioned by the positive appraisal which constitutes appraisal respect for that person.⁸

My project in this paper is to develop the initial distinction which I have drawn between recognition and appraisal respect into a more detailed and specific account of each. These accounts will not merely be of intrinsic interest. Ultimately I will use them to illuminate the puzzles with which this paper began and to understand the idea of self-respect.

IV

The most general characterization which I have given of recognition respect is that it is a disposition to weigh appropriately some feature or fact in one's deliberations. Strictly speaking, the object of recognition respect is a fact. And recognition respect for that fact consists in giving it the proper weight in deliberation. Thus to have recognition respect for persons is to give proper weight to the fact that they are persons.

One can have recognition respect for someone's feelings, for the law, for the judge (in a legal proceeding), for nature, and so on. In each case such

8. For a similar account of the moral sentiments see Rawls, pp. 481–82.

respect consists in giving the appropriate recognition to a fact in one's deliberations about how to act. It is to consider appropriately, respectively, the fact that a person feels a certain way, that such and such is the law, that the person one is addressing is the judge, that the object one is confronting is part of nature, and so forth. To respect something in this way is just to regard it as something to be reckoned with (in the appropriate way) and to act accordingly.

On this very general notion of recognition respect, any fact which is something that one ought to take into account in deliberation is an appropriate object. As it stands, then, the notion has somewhat wider application than what we would ordinarily understand as respect, even of the recognition sort.

One rather narrower notion of recognition respect conceives of it as essentially a moral attitude. That is, some fact or feature is an appropriate object of respect if inappropriate consideration or weighing of that fact or feature would result in behavior that is morally wrong. To respect something is thus to regard it as requiring restrictions on the moral acceptability of actions connected with it. And crucially, it is to regard such a restriction as not incidental, but as arising because of the feature or fact itself. One is not free, from a moral point of view, to act as one pleases in matters which concern something which is an appropriate object of moral recognition respect. To have such respect for the law, say, is to be disposed to regard the fact that something is the law as restricting the class of actions that would be morally permissible. It is plainly this notion which we have in mind when we speak of respect for persons as a moral requirement. Accordingly, when I speak of recognition respect below, I shall be referring specifically to moral recognition respect.

There are attitudes similar to moral recognition respect, and referred to as respect, but which differ importantly. A boxer talks of having respect for his opponent's left hook and an adventurer of respecting the rapids of the Colorado. Neither regards the range of morally permissible actions as restricted by the things in question. Rather each refers to something which he fails to consider appropriately at his peril. What is restricted here is the class of prudent actions. Thus a careful crook who has no moral recognition respect for the law *per se* may still be said to have this sort of respect for the power that the law can wield. Here again we have the idea that the object of respect (or some feature or fact regarding it) is such that the class of "eligible" actions is restricted. But in this case the restriction is not a moral but a prudential one. Some people hesitate to use the word 'respect' when speaking of such cases. That makes no difference. All that matters is that we understand what the attitude comes to and thus how it is like and unlike moral recognition respect.

As we are understanding recognition respect it includes a component of regard. To have recognition respect for something is to regard that fact as itself placing restrictions on what it is permissible for one to do. It is of course true that one can "be respectful" of something without having any

respect for it (even of a recognitional sort). This will be the case if one behaves as one who does have respect would have behaved, but out of motives other than respect. For example, a person participating in a legal proceeding who in fact has no respect for the judge (i.e., for the position he occupies) may take great pains to be respectful in order to avoid a citation for contempt. Such a person will restrict his behavior toward the judge in ways appropriate to the role that he plays. But his reason for so doing is not that the mere fact of being the judge is itself deserving of consideration, but that the possibility of a contempt citation calls for caution.

Importantly, the sort of regard involved in recognition respect is a regard for a fact or feature as having some weight in deliberations about how one is to act. This is rather different from the sort of regard involved in appraisal respect.

v

The latter sort of respect is a positive appraisal of a person or his character-related features. As such it does not essentially involve any conception of how one's behavior toward that person is appropriately restricted.

I have distinguished appraisal respect for persons judged as persons from appraisal respect for persons assessed in more specific pursuits. As I shall later argue in more detail, those excellences of persons which are the appropriate grounds for appraisal respect for a person as such are those which we delimit as constituting character. I shall also have something more specific to say by way of a rudimentary account of character.

Appraisal respect for a person as such is perhaps a paradigm of what people have in mind when they speak of moral attitudes. On the other hand, appraisal respect for persons judged in more particular pursuits need not be. The particular virtues or excellences of a particular pursuit may either be irrelevant or even bear negatively on an overall appraisal of the person judged as a person. To be highly respected as a tennis player, for example, one must demonstrate excellence in tennis playing which is not primarily excellence of character. At the very least one must be a good tennis player and that will involve, having abilities which are in themselves irrelevant to an appraisal of the tennis player as a person. Even in such cases, however, respect for a person assessed in a particular pursuit seems to depend on features of his character (or his excellence as a person) in at least two ways.

To begin with, somebody may be an excellent tennis player without being a highly respected one. He may be widely acclaimed as one of the best players in the world and not be widely respected by his fellows—though they may (in the extended recognition sense) respect his return of serve, his vicious backhand, and so on. Human pursuits within which a person may earn respect seem to involve some set of standards for appropriate and inappropriate behavior within that pursuit. In some professions this may be expressly articulated in a “code of ethics.” In others it will be a more or less informal understanding, such as that of “honor among thieves.” To earn respect within such a pursuit it is not enough to exercise the skills which define the pursuit.

One must also demonstrate some commitment to the (evolving) standards of the profession or pursuit.

Even in a game like tennis one can lose the respect of other players by paying no attention to such standards of behavior. If a player constantly heckles his opponent, disputes every close call to throw off his opponent's concentration, or laughs when his opponent misses shots, then even if his skill is such that he would be capable of beating everyone else without such tactics, he is not likely to be respected as a tennis player. Thus, insofar as respect within such a pursuit will depend on an appraisal of the participant from the perspective of whatever standards are held to be appropriate to the pursuit, such respect will depend on a judgment to which excellences of character are thought relevant. Note that exactly what aspect of the person's character is thought to be relevant in this instance is his recognition respect (or lack of it) for the standards of the pursuit.

Second, even when we attend to those features of a person which are the appropriate excellences of a particular pursuit and involve no explicit reference to features of character, the excellences must be thought to depend in some way or other on features of character. The point here is that purely "natural" capacities and behavior manifesting them are not appropriate objects of appraisal respect, although perhaps of recognition respect, even in the context of a fairly narrowly defined human pursuit.⁹ If someone is capable of some feat (which may be widely admired) solely by virtue of, say, his height, then neither this feat nor the person's ability to perform it are appropriate objects of respect—just as one cannot respect an ant for its ability to carry comparatively large objects long distances to the anthill, though one may be appropriately amazed.

This is because it is almost never the case that human accomplishments are a result of simple natural ability. Talents and capacities of various sorts are prerequisites for various accomplishments, but almost invariably talents must be developed, disciplined, and exercised in the face of various obstacles, and this will call into play features of persons which we identify as part of their character.

Which features of persons are properly regarded as features of their characters and hence as appropriate grounds for appraisal respect? Being resolute and being honest are character traits. Being prone to sneeze in the presence of pepper is not. But there are difficult cases as well. How about being irascible? Or being good natured? Or prudent? Discerning? Sensitive?

The notion of character (whether of persons or other things) seems to involve the idea of relatively long-term dispositions. But not all long-term dispositions of persons are held to be parts of their characters. The question then becomes, which such dispositions constitute character?

I have suggested that those features of persons which we delimit as constituting character are those which we think relevant in appraising them

9. On this point see Cranor, p. 312.

as persons. Furthermore, those features of persons which form the basis of appraisal respect seem to be those which belong to them as moral *agents*. This much Kantianism is, I think, at the core of the conception of the person which we generally hold to be relevant to appraisal respect. If this is true, then there may be other features of human beings, for example their capacity for affective sympathy, which are not encapsulated in the conception of the person which is relevant to appraisal respect. As Kant wrote, "Rational beings are designated 'persons' because their nature indicates that they are ends in themselves."¹⁰ Those features of persons which are appropriate grounds for appraisal respect are their features as agents—as beings capable of acting on maxims, and hence, for reasons.¹¹ Thus, there may well be characteristics of human beings which are regarded as *human* excellences but which are not appropriate grounds for appraisal respect. For example, warmth in one's dealings with other human beings is regarded as an excellence of humanity, but may be irrelevant in the appraisal of persons which constitutes appraisal respect. Compare lack of warmth or being stiff in one's relations to others to deliberate cruelty as a ground for failing to have appraisal respect for someone. Of course, lack of personal warmth is an appropriate ground for failing to have appraisal respect for someone to the extent that we conceive such a lack to be the result of insufficient effort on the person's part. But insofar as we so conceive it, we regard it as a lack in the person's agency: an unwillingness to do what is necessary to treat others warmly.

If the appropriate conception of the person which is relevant to appraisal respect is that of a moral *agent*, then one would expect our notion of character to be likewise tied to such a conception. I think that this is indeed the case. Those dispositions which constitute character (at least as it is relevant to appraisal respect) are dispositions to act for certain reasons, that is, to act, and in acting to have certain reasons for acting. For example, honesty is a disposition to do what one takes to be honest at least partly for the reason that it is what honesty requires. Aristotle's theory of virtue and Kant's theory of the moral worth of actions both stress that what is appropriate to the assessment of persons is not merely what they do, but as importantly, their reasons for doing it.¹²

As it stands the conception of character as constituted by our dispositions to act for *particular* reasons is inadequate. This account captures such par-

10. *FMM*, p. 46.

11. Thus Kant: "Only a rational being has the capacity of acting according to the conception of laws, i.e., according to principles" (*FMM*, p. 29).

12. Aristotle argues that character is constituted by our dispositions to *choose*, where the notion of choice is held to involve the idea of picking an alternative on some grounds or other (see, e.g., *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1112a15, and Book VI, chaps. 12–13). Especially relevant here is Aristotle's distinction between a "natural disposition" to virtuous qualities and virtue "in the strict sense" which involves a self-reflective habit of acting on the "right rule" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1144b1–28). Kant's famous discussion of the good will and the moral worth of actions as grounded in the "principle of the will," i.e., the agent's reason for acting, is in the first section of *FMM*.

ticular character traits as honesty, fairness, kindness, and the like. But there are other dispositions of persons which we hold to be part of their character, and thus relevant to appraisal respect, but which are not best thought of as dispositions to act for particular reasons. For example, we may fail to have appraisal respect for someone because we regard him to be weak of will or not sufficiently resolute. What is referred to here is not a disposition to act for any particular reason, but rather the higher-level disposition to act on what one takes to be the best reasons whatever they may be. Thus, the conception of character which is relevant to appraisal respect includes both rather more specific dispositions to act for certain reasons and the higher-level disposition to do that which one takes to be supported by the best reasons.

Two final points need to be made about appraisal respect. First, not every positive attitude toward a person on the ground of his or her character amounts to appraisal respect for that person. If I want to pull a bank heist and am looking for partners, I may look for someone who has no reservations about stealing (at least from banks) and who can be counted on to threaten violent action and, if need be, carry it out. Thus, I may have a favorable attitude toward such a person on the ground that he has those particular character traits. But my having that attitude toward such a person is not the same thing as my having appraisal respect for him for having those traits. This attitude fails of being appraisal respect in that my having it toward the person is *conditional* on those traits being such as to make him serve a particular purpose that I happen to have—heisting the bank. In order for the attitude toward the trait, or toward the person for having it, to constitute appraisal respect it must not be thus conditional on such an interest or purpose. We may employ some Kantian terminology here and say that it must be a *categorical* attitude, one which is unconditional on the fact that the traits in question happen to serve some particular purpose or interest of mine.¹³

The second point is that appraisal respect is something which one may have or fail to have for someone, *and* it is an attitude which admits of degree. One may respect someone more than someone else. When we speak of having or not having respect for someone what is implied is an appraisal of him as satisfactory with respect to the appropriate grounds. Many attitudes have this sort of structure. We speak alternatively of liking and not liking things as well as of liking something more than something else.

To sum up: Appraisal respect is an attitude of positive appraisal of a person either judged as a person or as engaged in some more specific pursuit. In the first case, the appropriate grounds are features of the person's char-

13. See Kant's distinction between hypothetical and categorical imperatives in *FMM*, sec. 2. This idea of unconditionality on one's interests (i.e., on the fact that they are one's interests) is involved in Hume's notion of "moral sense" and Butler's notion of the "principle of reflection." David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 472; Joseph Butler, *Sermons* (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1950), p. 27.

acter: dispositions to act for particular reasons or a higher-level disposition to act for the best reasons. In the second case, though features of character do not exhaust the appropriate grounds for appraisal respect, some such character traits will be relevant (recognition respect for the standards of a particular pursuit). Also, the other features which constitute the appropriate excellences of the pursuit must be related to traits of character in the way specified. In both cases, the positive appraisal of the person, and of his traits, must be categorical. It cannot depend on the fact that the person, because of his traits, serves an interest or purpose of one's own.

Appraisal respect brings into focus the idea of virtue. Much of recent moral philosophy has been exclusively concerned with the assessment of actions or social institutions. However, an account of the appropriate grounds for appraising persons, the virtues, is also a proper concern of moral philosophers.

VI

Since appraisal respect and recognition respect may both have persons, conceived of as such, as their objects, it is important to distinguish them as attitudes.

To have recognition respect for someone as a person is to give appropriate weight to the fact that he or she is a person by being willing to constrain one's behavior in ways required by that fact. Thus, it is to recognition respect for persons that Kant refers when he writes, "Such a being is thus an object of respect *and, so far, restricts all (arbitrary) choice*."¹⁴ Recognition respect for persons, then, is identical with recognition respect for the moral requirements that are placed on one by the existence of other persons.

This is rather different from having an attitude of appraisal respect for someone as a person. The latter is a positive appraisal of an individual made with regard to those features which are excellences of persons. As such, it is not owed to everyone, for it may or may not be merited. When it is, what is merited is just the positive appraisal itself.

To bring out the difference between recognition respect and appraisal respect for persons as such, consider the different ways in which the two attitudes may be said to admit of degree. When one person is said to be more highly respected as a person than someone else, the attitude involved is ap-

14. *FMM*, p. 428, emphasis added. Cranor is by no means alone in confusing recognition respect with appraisal respect. Hardy Jones faults Kant's identification of respect for persons with being disposed to treat persons as ends in themselves on the grounds that: "To respect a judge or a parent is not merely to behave in specific deferential (and thus 'respectful') ways. It is also to have a certain attitude toward them and to regard them in certain ways. 'To respect a person' is often properly used to mean 'to think well of him' " (Hardy Jones, *Kant's Principle of Personality* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971], p. 75). If we interpret Kant as identifying recognition respect for persons as such with a willingness to treat persons as ends in themselves no such problem arises. See also Downie and Telfer, p. 18, for another instance of this confusion.

praisal respect. One's appraisal of a person, considered as a person, may be higher than of someone else. Consider the instruction to order a list of persons according to one's respect for them. The natural way to respond would be to rank the persons in the light of one's appraisal of them as persons.

What sense can be given, however, to degrees of recognition respect? For example, a person might think that we should have more respect for people's feelings than for social conventions. Presumably what such a person thinks is that we ought to weigh other people's feelings more heavily than we do considerations of social convention. Insofar as we can give a sense to having more recognition respect for one thing than another it involves a disposition to take certain considerations as more weighty than others in deciding how to act. There is, of course, a kind of appraisal involved here. But it is not an appraisal of a person as such, but of the weight that some fact or feature ought to have in one's deliberations about what to do, and if all persons as such should be treated equally, there can be no degrees of recognition respect for them, although one may be a greater or lesser respecter of persons.

The confusion between appraisal respect and recognition respect for persons as such infects the account of respect for persons given by Cranor. He intends his account to capture the sort of respect that it is claimed persons are entitled to by virtue of being persons. Part of his account is the claim that for one person to have respect for another there must be some characteristic that the respected person is believed to have, and the possession of which is held to be a good thing from some point of view. Cranor fleshes this out with the following remarks: "In respecting a person we are giving him credit for having some trait or characteristic . . . the believed characteristic in virtue of which one respects a person must be believed to be a good-making characteristic of persons or contingently connected to a good-making characteristic of them."¹⁵

These remarks apply only to appraisal respect for persons. When one is appraising an individual as a person, those features which merit a positive appraisal are good-making characteristics of persons. Or to use the language of Cranor's other remark, they are to his credit as a person. On the other hand, to have recognition respect for a person as such is not necessarily to give him *credit* for anything in particular, for in having recognition respect for a person as such we are not appraising him or her as a person at all. Rather we are judging that the fact that he or she is a person places moral constraints on our behavior.

The distinction between appraisal respect and recognition respect for persons enables us to see that there is no puzzle at all in thinking both that all persons are entitled to respect just by virtue of their being persons and that persons are deserving of more or less respect by virtue of their personal characteristics.

Though it is important to distinguish between these two kinds of respect,

15. Cranor, p. 312.

there are connections between them. I will mention two in particular. First, there will be connections between the grounds of one's appraisal respect, or lack of it, for particular persons and the considerations which one takes as appropriate objects of recognition respect. For example, if one judges that someone is not worthy of (appraisal) respect because he is dishonest, one is committed to recognition respect for considerations of honesty. Our appraisal of persons depends on whether they show the appropriate recognition respect for considerations which merit it. The account of character brings this out. Second, the only beings who are appropriate objects of appraisal respect are those who are capable of acting for reasons and hence capable of conceiving of various facts as meriting more or less consideration in deliberation. Once again, so much is entailed by the account of character. Because of the particular sorts of reasons which are relevant to our assessment of character, we may say that the only beings who are appropriate objects of appraisal respect are those who are themselves capable of recognition respect, that is, of acting deliberately.

VII

Both recognition respect for persons as such and appraisal respect for an individual as a person are attitudes which one can bear to oneself. Accordingly, these two kinds of self-respect must be distinguished.

Consider the following remark of Virginia Held's: "For persons to acquiesce in the avoidable denial of their own rights is to lack self-respect."¹⁶ What 'self-respect' refers to here is recognition respect for oneself as a person. The passage is obviously false when we take it to refer to appraisal respect for oneself as a person. To acquiesce in the avoidable denial of one's rights is to fail to respect one's rights as a person. Exactly what such self-respect requires depends on what moral requirements are placed on one by the fact that one is a person.

It is recognition self-respect to which we appeal in such phrases as "have you no self-respect?" hoping thereby to guide behavior. This is not a matter of self-appraisal but a call to recognize the rights and responsibilities of being a person. As a person capable of recognition respect, one is liable to reflective appraisal of one's own behavior, and as such has a *stake* in it—that stake being appraisal self-respect or self-contempt.

One's behavior can express a lack of recognition self-respect in different ways. It may have a negative effect on one's ability to continue to function as a person. Such behavior is self-destructive, and therefore manifests a lack of appropriate regard for oneself as a person. If not actually self-destructive, behavior may be degrading in expressing a conception of oneself as something less than a person, a being with a certain moral status or dignity. Submitting to indignities, playing the fool, not caring about whether one is taken

16. Virginia Held, "Reasonable Progress and Self-Respect," *Monist* 57 (January 1973): 22.

seriously and being content to be treated as the plaything of others may or may not be actually self-destructive but nevertheless manifests lack of self-respect.¹⁷ Exactly what behavior is so regarded depends both on the appropriate conception of persons and on what behaviors are taken to express this conception or the lack of it. Certainly the latter is something which can vary with society, convention, and context.

One may give adequate recognition to the fact that one is a person and still have a rather low opinion of oneself as a person. People appraise themselves as persons, and the attitude which results from a positive appraisal is appraisal self-respect. Like appraisal respect generally, the appropriate grounds for appraisal self-respect are those excellences of persons which we delimit as constituting character.

It is important, therefore, to distinguish appraisal self-respect from other attitudes of appraisal which one can bear to oneself. One such attitude is that which we normally refer to as *self-esteem*.¹⁸ Those features of a person which form the basis for his self-esteem or lack of it are by no means limited to character traits, but include any feature such that one is pleased or downcast by a belief that one has or lacks it. One's self-esteem may suffer from a low opinion of, for example, one's appearance, temperament, wit, physical capacities, and so forth. One cannot always be what one would wish to be, and one's opinion of oneself may suffer. Such a failing by itself does not give rise to lack of appraisal self-respect, although it might suffer if one attributed the failing to a lack of will, an inability to bring oneself to do what one wanted most to do. So far forth the failing would be regarded as arising from a defect in one's character and not solely from, for example, a lack of physical ability.

The self-appraisal which constitutes self-respect is of oneself as a person, a being with a will who acts for reasons. The connection between respect and agency is striking. Recognition respect consists in being disposed to take certain considerations seriously as reasons for acting or forbearing to act. On the other hand, appraisal respect consists in an appraisal of a person on the basis of features which are part of, or are based on, his or her character. And we conceive a person's character to consist in dispositions to act for certain

17. Kant's writings on self-respect are especially useful here; see *Lectures on Ethics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 118–19. The place of respecting one's own autonomy is especially important in the Kantian idea of self-respect. For some illuminating comments about servility and its relation to a recognition of oneself as a person, see Thomas E. Hill, Jr., "Servility and Self-Respect," *Monist* 57 (January 1973): 87–104.

18. To some degree Rawls's remarks on self-respect in *A Theory of Justice* suffer from a confusion between self-respect and self-esteem. (This point is developed in Larry L. Thomas, "Morality and Our Self-Concept," forthcoming in the *Journal of Value Inquiry*.) Rawls's explicit account of self-respect (p. 440) is very close to my notion of appraisal self-respect. In other places, however, it seems to be the more broadly based attitude of self-esteem that he has in mind. This is especially clear in his remarks on the connection between natural shame and self-respect (p. 444). It is an interesting question to what extent this conflation affects his account of self-respect as a primary good and his argument for the proposed principles of justice.

sorts of reasons together with the higher order disposition to act for what one takes to be the weightiest reasons. Thus, the appropriate conception under which a person is appraised as worthy of respect is as a being capable of recognition respect for those things which are entitled to it. This is what connects the two kinds of respect. The one is the attitude which is appropriate for a person to bear, as an agent, toward those things which deserve his or her consideration in deliberation about what to do. The other is an attitude of appraisal of that person as just that sort of being, a being capable of expressing such consideration in action.