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*The Role of Feelings in Kant's Account of Moral Education<sup>i</sup>*

In line with familiar portrayals of Kant's ethics, interpreters of his philosophy of education focus essentially on its intellectual dimension: the notions of moral catechism, ethical gymnastics and ethical ascetics, to name but a few.<sup>ii</sup> By doing so, they usually emphasise Kant's negative stance towards the role of feelings in moral education, as they do in his moral philosophy in general.<sup>iii</sup> Kant's emotionless ideal for humanity applies to children just as fully-fledged moral agents, and the task of education *vis-à-vis* feelings is one of restraint. Children need to learn self-control, discipline and most of all, the discipline of their sensible nature, which includes their feelings, inclinations, and desires. For, 'The child should not be full of feeling but rather full of the idea of duty' (LP 9:490). Kant is clear: the thought of duty is always better than the reliance on feelings. And yet there seem to be noteworthy exceptions: 'The inclinations to be honored and loved are to be preserved as far as possible.' (LP 9:482) Whilst the feeling of love of honor 'should not occur in the first stage of education' (LP 9:465) since a certain level of intellectual development is necessary, from the second stage, discipline, it should be cultivated and relied upon for the child's moral development.<sup>iv</sup> This statement is not only at odds with Kant's general claim that education should not encourage feelings, but more importantly, it encourages a feeling, the love of honor, that is on the face of it paradigmatically un-Kantian. How are we to understand the fact that of all feelings, it is the love of honor that should be preserved?

To answer this question, I will begin by clarifying the reasons behind Kant's negative stance towards feelings in moral education. I will then turn to his account of the feeling of love of honor. After distinguishing between its good and its bad forms, I will consider two ways of making sense of the positive role Kant assigns to it. The first, modest reading will suggest that the feeling of love of honor is morally useful because it has two functions: an epistemic one, and a motivational one. The second, more ambitious reading will suggest that the feeling of love of honor enables the child to experience her inner worth as bearer of value. I will conclude on the respective strengths of each reading and draw their implications for our understanding of moral education.

### *1. Kant's negative stance towards feelings in moral education*

While it may surprise readers of Kant who are only familiar with his *Groundwork*, he believes that the cultivation of feelings is not only an important part of the moral development of adults, it is even the object of a duty, albeit an indirect one.<sup>v</sup> In particular, they have the indirect duty to get acquainted with natural beauty so as to develop their capacity for disinterested love, and to get acquainted with those in need so as to further their capacity for sympathy.<sup>vi</sup> These feelings are meant to be helpful to moral agency by enabling them to become more morally efficacious – for instance by making them better able to detect situations where their duty of benevolence applies, or by facilitating the control of their self-interested tendencies. Whereas adults should cultivate their capacity for love and sympathy, children should not: ‘The child should not be full of feeling but rather full of the idea of duty’ (LP 9:490). Kant forbids children’s reliance on their feelings for two reasons.

First, cultivating children’s feelings could expose them to the risk of being unable to control them. Thus, it is crucial that they learn discipline first, for it is the means to teach them self-control, and in particular control of their sensible nature; for instance by learning to sit still and doing what they are told.<sup>vii</sup> As Kant sums up, ‘Education should only prevent children from becoming soft’ (LP 9:463). To avoid children indulging their inclinations, we need to teach them to control themselves, and in particular their feelings, through discipline: ‘Discipline amounts to corrective training’ ([V-Mo/Collins](#) 27:466). This is what Kant calls ethical gymnastics, which ‘consists only in combating natural impulses sufficiently to be able to master them when a situation comes up in which they threaten morality’ (MM 6:485). Thereby, children become better able to act for the sake of duty rather than their inclinations, desires and self-interest.<sup>viii</sup>

Second, cultivating children’s feelings, even if this cultivation is limited to so-called ‘positive’ feelings such as sympathy and disinterested love, may threaten their understanding of what acting for the sake of duty consists in. For, they may be led to believe that those feelings are a suitable source of moral motivation. After all, why not help others because we feel sympathy towards them? The risk of misunderstanding the nature of duty is too great, and thus ‘One must not so much soften the hearts of children in order for them to be affected by the fate of others, but rather make them upright’ (LP 9:490).<sup>ix</sup> Education should not encourage children’s

reliance on feelings in moral matters, even as a mere means to moral efficacy. They must have ‘the inner value of actions and deeds replace words and emotions, understanding replace feeling’ (LP 9:493). Of course, appealing to inclinations may be necessary in the first stage of education since moral discipline is only appropriate to the later stages of a child’s development. But Kant is clear: ‘Even if the child is unable to understand the duty, it is nevertheless better this way.’ (LP 9:482)

Yet whilst ‘[t]he formation of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure...must be negative and the feeling itself must not be coddled’ (LP 9:477), there seem to be noteworthy exceptions. Namely, ‘The inclinations to be honored and loved are to be preserved as far as possible’ – in fact, not only should they be preserved, they are ‘aids to morality’ (LP 9:482).<sup>x</sup> This statement is at odds with Kant’s general claim that moral education should not encourage feelings. But more importantly, as I will show in the next section, it encourages a feeling that seems on the face of it paradigmatically un-Kantian.

## 2. *The paradoxical nature of the love of honor*

To make sense of Kant’s claim, we should begin by examining how he accounts for the feeling of honor from a naturalistic perspective. For, the feeling of love of honor that is encouraged in children is not, or at least not originally, a moral feeling but rather a natural one.

As part of a human being’s natural predispositions, the feeling of love of honor belongs to the predisposition to humanity ‘as a living and at the same time *rational* being’ (R 6:26). According to Kant, it is ‘a drive constantly to perfect oneself in comparison with others’ ([V-Mo/Vigilantius 27:680](#)), and like all natural drives, it has been implanted by nature to preserve the human species: ‘This inclination prompts the activity of making oneself equal to the other in every respect; nature has implanted this emulation in us’ ([V-Mo/Vigilantius 27:695](#)).<sup>xi</sup> The feeling of love of honor is an inclination to equality that is part of the natural mechanism that aims at the progress of the species.<sup>xii</sup> By making human beings desire honor through their love of it, nature motivates them to do whatever is necessary to ensure that they are equal to others in all respects – whether it is in terms of possessions, status, power, strength, and so on.

Out of this self-love originates the inclination *to gain worth in the opinion of*

*others*, originally, of course, *merely equal worth* [...] but from this arises gradually an unjust desire to acquire superiority for oneself over others. (R 75 [6:27])

Through the competition they create for each other, human beings are forced to work and cultivate themselves, thereby realizing nature's purpose for them, the development of their natural predispositions.

However, whilst the feeling of love of honor begins as a desire to be valued by others, social interaction turns it into the desire to be valued over and above them in an on-going and never-ending quest for recognition:

if he finds himself lowered by comparison with the other, that arouses in him dislike of the other's person, and instead of actively exerting himself to become equal in value with the other, he succumbs to resentment at the latter's worth and merit, or tries to diminish him. (V-MS/Vigil 27:695)

Mechanically, through the interplay of social forces, the feeling of love of honor turns into a competitive drive that gives rise to what Kant calls the 'vices of *culture*' (R 6:27).<sup>xiii</sup> For, human beings soon realise that fulfilling their desire for honor does not necessarily require real worth: 'it is striving after the *reputation of honor*, where semblance suffices' (A 7:272). The mere appearance of worth can achieve the same result but at a lesser cost. Think, for instance, of the infamous shopkeeper who gives the correct change in order to retain his customers. The mere appearance of virtue suffices to guarantee the reputation he needs to have a successful business.<sup>xiv</sup> Whether he is actually worthy of honor is indifferent to him as long as he appears to be so, and even if he knows it is undeserved. Appearance and reputation thereby take the place of true worthiness.

There is thus the original feeling of love of honor, which is beneficial for the species and morally neutral, and the bad feeling of love of honor, what Kant calls 'love of honor in a bad sense' (V-Mo/Vigilantius 27:695), which is a degenerate form of the former, and which is selfish and dangerous.<sup>xv</sup> They are both natural feelings, but when Kant talks of love of honor as an aid to morality, he has the former in mind rather than the latter. For, the feeling in its initial form, as it is found in young children for instance, has not had a chance to evolve. It is as nature intended it, as a drive to activity that is beneficial to the development of the species, and crucially for

our understanding of its role in moral education, there is no reason to think of it as necessarily selfish.

Man has an impulse towards honor, which is quite unselfish; the craving for honor is often selfish, to wit, when it seeks honor to better its condition, to procure an office or a wife thereby; but he who seeks honor, without any ulterior motive, merely in the approval of others, is truly a lover of honor. (V-Mo/Collins 27:410)

Caring for and seeking the approval of others for its own sake, what Kant calls the “true” love of honor, is a laudable natural drive that is naturally unselfish.

And yet encouraging the love of honor, even in its best form, seems paradigmatically un-Kantian. For, whilst famously for Kant, the worth of the person consists in her capacity for autonomy, the love of honor defines it heteronomously in terms of others’ opinion of it. There is thus a sense in which even the good form of love of honor retains the wrong direction of fit: the worth of the person is defined by whatever others take to constitute ‘honor’. The lover of honor allows her self to be defined, at least partly, by something that is beyond her control, and thereby, she compromises her autonomy:

[A] human being's consciousness of his own nobility then disappears and he is for sale and can be bought for a price that the seductive inclinations offer him. (MM 6:483)

The feeling of love of honor is thus dangerous. Dangerous because it can easily degenerate into a mania or a craving to be valued over others, and thereby turn the self into its worst possible version. But most dangerous because it is a self-centred inclination that consists in the desire to be valued by others. In other words, in spite of the distinction between good and bad love of honor, it remains unclear why it is the only feeling, or at least one of the very few feelings, that moral education should preserve, cultivate and rely on.

In what follows, I will consider two ways of making sense of the positive moral role assigned to the feeling of love of honor. The first reading, the modest one, will suggest that it is morally useful because it has two functions: an epistemic one, which enables the child’s openness to others and their judgment, and a motivational one, which encourages her to become worthy of honor. The second, more ambitious reading will suggest that the feeling of love of honor enables the child to experience

her inner worth.

### 3. Making sense of the educational role of the love of honor

#### 3.1. A natural feeling with a moral function

On Kant's account, the task of the educator consists in using the child's natural tendencies to cultivate her powers and reach her vocation: 'Many germs lie within humanity, and now it is our business to develop the natural dispositions proportionally and to unfold humanity from its germs and to make it happen that the human being reaches his vocation.' (LP 9:445) On the modest reading I would like to propose, the feeling of love of honor should be understood as one of the most efficient means the educator can use to facilitate her moral development. For, as I will show, it has two functions: an epistemic and a motivational one. I will examine them in turn.

The first function of the feeling of love of honor is that it gives rise to a concern for the judgment of others. As early as the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, it is a feeling that is depicted as providing hidden incentives to adopt a standpoint outside oneself in order to judge the propriety and demeanor that one presents to the world: 'We have, therefore, an honour-loving urge to refer our knowledge to the judgment of others.' (V-Mo/Collins 27:411)<sup>xvi</sup> In an educational context, it makes the child care about others' judgment in such a way that she cannot help but take it into consideration. It takes her out of herself and broadens her way of thinking, thereby fulfilling an epistemic function akin to the second principle of the *sensus communis*, 'Thinking in the place of another' (V-Anth/Busolt 25:1480), which allows 'broad-minded' thinking (CJ 5:293f).

[P]rovidence has instilled the inclination [to honor] in us, and hence no man, even a great one, is indifferent to the opinion of others....The intent of providence, in implanting this desire for respect from others, is that we should assess our actions by the judgment of others, so that such acts may not proceed solely from motives of self-love (V-Mo/Collins 27:408)

Of course, the feeling of love of honor does not ensure that the child does not act from self-love. But minimally, it makes her care about others' points of view insofar as she desires their recognition. If she does so for selfish reasons, it is at worst a self-centred openness to others' opinion of her. But at its best, it is a legitimate care for others'

judgment. And whichever form it takes, it forces her to think beyond herself, and thereby, it enables her to escape the subjective, private condition of judgment.<sup>xvii</sup> In this sense, the epistemic contribution of the feeling of love of honor is not so much that it helps the child notice oversights or errors, as it does in adults. Rather, it makes her aware of the fact that her opinion does not always dictate the nature of honor: whatever it consists in, it is not up merely to her. Whilst it is still a long way away from adopting an impartial standpoint, it is the first step towards it, a step out of her own perspective.<sup>xviii</sup>

The second function of the love of honor is that it gives rise to a care for the child's own worth. According to Kant, the most effective means to motivate a child to become morally worthy is not to harm her physically, but to harm her love of honor instead. Not only does it fulfill the retributive aspect of punishment, more importantly it motivates her to become worthy of honor:

With regard to the love of honor, the instruction is negative; he must only learn to be sensible of the worth of his person. Through [his] merits, however, he must seek to become worthy of honor. (V-Anth/Fried 25: 728)

The child's love of honor prompts and strengthens her sense of her self as having worth through the development of her self-esteem.<sup>xix</sup> By giving her a sense of her potential for worthiness, it yields a desire to become actually worthy of it. Of course, when the feeling of love of honor functions as a motive in this context, as such it is not a moral motive. But if the educator directs its natural function towards moral worth, it will make her aspire to be truly deserving of honor when she becomes able to appreciate its worth.

In this sense, to sum up the first modest reading, both the epistemic and the motivational functions of the feeling of love of honor are natural aids to the child's moral development. They prepare her for morality by enhancing the capacities that are particularly conducive to it, namely her openness to the judgment of others and her sense of inner worth. But crucially, they are merely helpful means – they are neither necessary nor sufficient to ensure the child's moral awareness.

### *3.2. A moral feeling that opens the child to the realm of value*

On the second, more ambitious reading I would like to propose, Kant maintains that the feeling of love of honor should 'be preserved' (LP 9:490) because something sets



it apart from all other feelings. Namely, it opens the child to the realm of value by enabling her to experience her dignity as bearer of value.

There are a number of means an educator can use to enable a child's awareness of her dignity. Kant mentions a few, for instance:

The dignity of the human being could also be made perceptible already to the child with regard to itself; for example, in cases of uncleanliness, which after all is unbecoming for humanity (LP 9:489).

Cleanliness, propriety, politeness can all be used to convey a concrete sense of the child's worth.<sup>xx</sup> But my suggestion is that by contrast with these, the feeling of love of honor conveys it directly, as the awareness of herself as bearer of value. How are we to make sense of this function in light of the fact that the feeling of love of honor is such a dangerous feeling? As I pointed out at the beginning of this paper, whilst it can easily degenerate into a mania for honor, especially in children who are literal works in progress, as Kant suggests in the following passage, even in its worst form, it retains its potential for morality.

[N]othing except honor can deter the individual from meanness. If an individual thus has no conscience, then a spark of honor can still be in him, which can check him. But if he is without honor, then all is lost with him, then there is nothing more on which one can base the good. (V-Anth/Fried 25:652; my emphasis)

Unlike other feelings, the worst forms of the feeling of love of honor retain their potential for morality because in their very structure, they define the self as a bearer of objective value.<sup>xxi</sup> For, what all the forms of the love of honor have in common is that they involve regarding one's self as having a worth that is not defined merely by the agent herself but rather by something other than herself (or at least other than her subjective, private standpoint) – whether it is other agents, what society values, what god values or, of course, the moral law. The love of honor may consist in valuing others' opinions of ourselves for the wrong reason (e.g., to be loved by them), or for the right reason (e.g., to improve our own judgment of ourselves). It may consist in valuing the wrong kind of attributes (i.e., non moral ones such as beauty, money, power and so on) or the right kind of attributes (i.e., moral ones such as kindness, generosity, doing one's duty and so on). In other words, there are good and bad values, there are good and bad selves, and there is good and bad love of honor. But the crucial

point is that whichever form it takes, at its core, the feeling of love of honor consists in acknowledging the self's potential as bearer of value which, whatever it consists in, is not merely up to her. In this sense, and somehow paradoxically, what we originally viewed as potentially un-Kantian, namely the fact that the love of honor defines the self's worth heteronomously in terms of others' opinion of it, turns out to be what makes it most conducive to morality. For, it assigns it a value that is grounded independently of the self's private sphere.

This is why the feeling of love of honor should be used in education despite the fact that the worth it is attached to is not grounded on the self's dignity as an autonomous being – at least not to begin with. As it operates in young children who are in many ways pre-moral if not amoral beings, it originally takes a heteronomous form that is motivated by self-interest. But the role of moral education is precisely to connect the feeling of honor to the child's conception of her own value, her dignity, and to do so in the right way: the right feeling for the right value. For, as I noted earlier, this feeling, which can easily degenerate into a mania for honor, is particularly dangerous in an educational context where it can come apart from the moral law, which is why Kant is more cautious than he is with adults. However, if the connection is done correctly, there is no reason why the feeling of love of honor cannot be used to enable the child's openness to her own value. Of course, it is just one part of the process of moral education; and with it we are still a long way away from a fully-fledged recognition of her dignity. But Kant's point is, I believe, that with it, she is closer to it than it seems – or at least not as far as she would be otherwise.

Yet one could object that just as the feeling of love of honor, shame, guilt and remorse also share an intrinsic connection to value. There is nothing special about honor, and thus there is no reason for Kant to treat it differently from other feelings. Yet on my reading, there is an important difference between the affective awareness of value enabled by the love of honor and what we usually call 'moral emotions'. Moral emotions are affective reactions to our choices.<sup>xxii</sup> We feel guilty because we hurt someone; we feel proud because we helped someone in need. These feelings are the emotional effects of our moral choices, and our moral character more generally. By contrast, the feeling of love of honor is distinct from the particular feelings we happen to have as effects of our moral attitudes. It is the affective experience of our special status as bearers of value. Of course, in accordance with Kant's transcendental framework, it does not amount to cognising ourselves *as* persons. Nevertheless, it

enables the awareness of our worth as persons insofar it enables us to appreciate the fact that we are morally worthy ‘as a *person*, that is, as the subject of a morally practical reason, exalted above any price’ (MM 6:434).<sup>xxiii</sup>

Thus the role of the feeling of love of honor is not to guide the child by telling her what is morally valuable. Just as inclinations, feelings, including the feeling of love of honor, ‘can lead only contingently to what is good and can very often also lead to what is evil’ (G 4:411). It neither grounds nor spells out the child’s dignity; the moral law and practical reason do that.<sup>xxiv</sup> What it does, however, is enables her to become aware of her unconditional worth. For, as I have suggested, the feeling of love of honor is a crucial part of the educational process that teaches the child to value herself – her moral self rather than her sensible self, her intelligible character rather than her sensible character. It enables her to have a unique experience of herself, one that differs in crucial ways from her experience of other objects, including herself as a sensible being. Thereby, she becomes affectively attuned to her distinctive worth.<sup>xxv</sup>

### *Conclusion*

To conclude, I would like to sum up the respective strengths of the readings I have presented and their implications for our understanding of moral education. The first reading, the modest one, suggests that the feeling of love of honor is morally useful because it has two functions: an epistemic one, which enables the child’s openness to others and their judgment, and a motivational one, which encourages her to become worthy of honor. The second, more ambitious reading suggests that the feeling of love of honor enables the child to experience her inner worth. Where these readings differ is that the modest reading emphasises its function as a moral aid, whilst the ambitious reading defines it as the child’s experience of her unconditional value. The former is a natural feeling that has a moral function; it is not intrinsically moral. It is a natural means to a moral end. The latter, by contrast, is properly called a ‘moral’ feeling. It is the affective awareness of one’s worth. What these readings have in common however is that in both cases, the feeling of love of honor has to do with the experience of value. They share the idea that what is important in education, by contrast with the cultivation of morality in adulthood perhaps, is its experiential dimension. For, just as the feeling of honor enables the experience of her dignity, much of Kant’s account of moral education has to do with the child’s experience of

her powers, whether it is her freedom or her consciousness of the moral law or her moral character.<sup>xxvi</sup> She needs to experience her powers as much as possible, and so in spite of the fact that paradoxically perhaps, what she needs to experience the most lies beyond the bounds of her experience. This is what makes education the most challenging task for humanity.

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<sup>i</sup> As the following works by Kant are cited frequently, I have used the following abbreviations: V-Anth (*Lectures on Anthropology*), V-Mo (*Lectures on Ethics*), LP (*Lectures on Pedagogy*), G (*Groundwork*), CPrR (*Critique of Practical Reason*), CJ (*Critique of the Power of Judgment*), MM (*Metaphysics of Morals*), Obs (*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*), R (*Religion within the Boundaries of Pure Reason*). The reference is to the Akademie edition of Kant's works, using the translations from the Cambridge Edition of Kant's Works (Cambridge University Press). I would like to thank Pablo Muchnik for inviting me to think about this issue for the NAKS meeting of the Eastern APA in 2014 as well as two referees of this journal for their help in revising this paper.

<sup>ii</sup> See for instance Munzel (2003), Scott Johnston (2006), Surprenant (2010) and Roth (2010). Note that the aim of this paper is not to question the intellectual dimension of Kant's account of moral education, a dimension that has been extremely well documented in these works. It is rather to question what is presumed to be Kant's negative stance on the role of feelings in moral education. One notable exception is Moran (2009), esp. pp. 474 and 483.

<sup>iii</sup> From the *Groundwork* to the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Metaphysics of Morals*, his works seem to warrant this view (e.g., G 4:428, CPrR 5:118, MM 6:408). However, as recent work in Kant scholarship has suggested, Kant's view of the role of feelings is a lot subtler than it is usually thought. See for instance Papish (2007) and Geiger (2011).

<sup>iv</sup> According to Kant, education has three stages: care, discipline and formation (LP 9:441).

<sup>v</sup> 'Sympathetic joy and sadness (*sympathia moralis*) are sensible feelings of pleasure or pain (which are therefore to be called 'aesthetic' [*ästhetisch*]) at another's state of joy or sorrow (shared feeling, sympathetic feeling.) Nature has already implanted in man susceptibility to these feelings. But to use this as a means to promoting active and rational benevolence is still a particular, though only a conditional, duty. It is called the duty of humanity (*humanitas*)' (MM 6:456). For a discussion of these indirect duties, see Cohen (2009): chapter 4 and Timmermann (2006).

<sup>vi</sup> CJ 5:267 and MM 6:456–7 respectively.

<sup>vii</sup> LP 9:442.

<sup>viii</sup> The child's ability to determine himself independently of sensuous impulses is what Kant calls the culture of discipline in the *Critique of Judgment*: it 'is negative and consists in the liberation of the will from the despotism of desires, a despotism that rivets us to certain natural things and renders us unable to do our own selecting...in fact we are free enough to tighten or to slacken, to lengthen or to shorten [desires], as the purposes of reason require' (CJ 5:432).

<sup>ix</sup> See CPrR 5:151. As Sullivan notes, 'it is a mistake to try to base morality on any feelings, even on what may seem to be moral emotions such as feelings of nobility. All such tactics...turn morality into prudence' (Sullivan 1989:289).

<sup>x</sup> See also 'One must excite the inclinations that most closely agree with morality', and in particular the love of honor (Refl 6619 19:113). The other two inclinations that most closely agree with morality are, unsurprisingly, sociability and freedom.

<sup>xi</sup> See also [V-Mo/Collins 27:408](#), [V-Mo/Herder 27:63](#) and [R 6:26-7](#). Kant's account of 'Nature's intentions' for the human species has been the object of numerous debates with which I cannot engage here due to restrictions of space. As is well known, Kant often portrays nature as having providential aspects, and in particular as designed to help human beings fulfil their moral destiny. For my present purposes, it is sufficient to note that his conception of human nature characterizes it as consisting of natural predispositions that aim at the preservation of the species: 'one can assume as a principle that nature wants every creature to reach its destiny through the appropriate development of all predispositions of its nature, so that at least the species, if not every *individual*, fulfills nature's purpose' (A 7:329).

<sup>xii</sup> In this sense, the feeling of love of honor (*Ehregefühl*) is the basis of a desire to be honored, and as we will see, this desire can take more or less pathological forms depending on the agent's motivational set and her social circumstances (inclination, desire, drive, mania, urge, etc). Whilst Kant distinguishes between the faculty of feeling and the faculty of desire, I do not think that it is particularly problematic in the context of this discussion since feelings for Kant are typically motivational. For a discussion of the transformation of the feeling of love of honor into mania and urge for honor, see Cohen (2014).

<sup>xiii</sup> [Recall Kant's remark about the human capacity 'to explore the thoughts of others but to withhold one's own; a neat quality which then does not fail to progress gradually from dissimulation to intentional deception, and finally to lying' \(A 7:332\). The capacity to conceal one's thoughts plays a crucial role in the deterioration of the feeling of love of honor, as Rousseau noted in his second Discourse: 'It now became the interest of men to appear what they really were not' \(Rousseau \(1973\): 86\). For Rousseau's criticism of politeness as a source of evil and a social veil on vice, see Rousseau \(1973\): 6.](#)

<sup>xiv</sup> See G 53 [4:398].

<sup>xv</sup> Note that the good and bad forms of the feeling of love of honor, which are both natural feelings, should be distinguished from the love of honor as a moral feeling, which is akin to the feeling of self-esteem. There are thus three different kinds of feeling of love of honor: a natural one, which is morally neutral, a social one, which is a degenerate and immoral form of it, and a moral one, which is 'the feeling of inner worth (*valor*), in terms of which he is above any price (*pretium*) and possesses an inalienable dignity (*dignitas interna*), which instills in him respect for himself' (MS 558 [6:436]). This paper is focused on the first two feelings.

<sup>xvi</sup> See also [Obs 2:226f](#). [For a compelling account of the feeling of love of honor in the Observations, see Makkreel \(2012\). Note that there seems to be an interesting shift that occurs from the Observations to Kant's later anthropological works. In the former, the feeling of the love of honor merely compensates for the lack of virtue in order to secure the survival of the human species in spite of the moral shortcomings of its parts \(see Cohen \(2012\)\). In the latter by contrast, it is portrayed as a means to its moral development.](#)

<sup>xvii</sup> Through this principle, one 'sets himself apart from the subjective private conditions of the judgment' (CJ 5:295). In this sense, the question of whose judgment the love of honor is meant to

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encourage children to seek is irrelevant. The only thing that matters is that the child becomes aware that her opinion is not the be-all and end-all.

<sup>xviii</sup> Note that what Kant encourages in children is the capacity to look at themselves from an outside perspective, which differs from the act of comparing themselves with others, which is something he disapproves of. For instance, ‘Envy is aroused when one points out to a child to value itself according to the value of others. Instead the child should value itself according to the concepts of its own reason.’ (LP 9:492) On my reading, the epistemic role of the love of honor is one way of enabling children to achieve the latter.

<sup>xix</sup> See for instance [V-Mo/Collins 27:357](#).

<sup>xx</sup> This function is akin to the function they play in the moral development of the human species. See for instance *Conjectures on the Beginning of Human History* 8:113.

<sup>xxi</sup> Other feelings such as guilt and anxiety are also centred on the self and its value. What distinguishes the love of honor from these feelings, however, is that it ties together the value of the self and the opinion of others, thereby forcing the self to go beyond its private standpoint and thus its subjective judgment of itself. I would like to thank an anonymous referee of this journal for helping me refine my account on this point.

<sup>xxii</sup> ‘an aesthetic of morals, while not indeed part of the metaphysics of morals, is still a subjective presentation of it in which the feelings that accompany the constraining power of the moral law (e.g., disgust, horror, etc., which make moral aversion sensible) make its efficacy felt, in order to get the better of *merely* sensible incitements’ (MM 6:406). See for instance Sullivan (1989): 135

<sup>xxiii</sup> To formulate this claim slightly differently, although I cannot defend it here, we could say that the feeling of love of honor is the natural or sensible form of the feeling of respect for oneself as moral being. Thomason could be read as hinting at a similar claim (Thomason (2013): 238).

<sup>xxiv</sup> For instance, ‘common human reason, with this compass in hand [the moral law], knows very well how to distinguish in every case that comes up what is good and what is evil, what is in conformity with duty or contrary to duty’ (G 4:404). Practical reason and the moral law spell out the objective grounds of the duties of virtue: ‘For, every morally practical relation to human beings is a relation among them represented by pure reason’ (MM 6:451). Thus, ‘we no more have a special *sense* for what is (morally) good and evil than for *truth*’ (MM 6:400). As Sherman puts it, feelings ‘serve poorly both as norms and as motives’ (Sherman (1997): 128).

<sup>xxv</sup> Note that this is only the beginning of Kant’s account of the moral role of love of honor. For, in his *Lectures on Ethics*, Kant claims that love of honor is the object of ‘a duty’ ([V-Mo/Vigilantius 27:635](#)), ‘the highest duty of humanity toward oneself’ ([V-Mo/Vigilantius 27:664](#)). However, this paper is limited to the discussion of the natural feeling of the love of honor. For a discussion of it as a duty, see Denis (2014). As she writes, ‘we must sharply distinguish [human beings’ various feelings, inclinations, impulses, predispositions, interests, and drives regarding worth, standing, or esteem] from the virtue love of honor, even if Kant sometimes labels them ‘love of honor’’ (Denis (2014): 204). On my interpretation, the function of love of honor as a natural feeling is not to turn into a moral feeling. It is rather to play a moral role by enabling the child to become aware of her value.



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<sup>xxvi</sup> It is in this spirit that Kant disapproves of the use of habit or swaddling: ‘All artificial devices of this kind [machines, corsets, weights] are so much the more detrimental in that they run contrary to the end of nature in an organized, rational being, according to which it must retain the freedom to learn to use its powers.’ (LP 9:463)