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The mind's “I”

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1 | INTRODUCTION

Both the first person concept and the form of self‐consciousness required for its use present difficult philosophical questions. Does the concept <I> refer?1 If it does, then to what does it refer? Is there some special mental capacity or set of capacities that distinguishes the possession of <I> from other indexical concepts? Is the form of self‐ consciousness characteristic of the use of the first‐person concept distinctive from other ways in which a subject might be aware of itself? Such questions and more besides are raised, and answers sketched, in Béatrice Longuenesse's ambitious book I, Me, Mine. The title of her book is taken from a Beatles song by George Harrison, a song that skewers the self‐absorption of popular culture and consumer capitalism. And throughout the book, we seen an important engagement with the push and pull between the individual and wider social or “objective” stand-points—a topic befitting the times in which we live.

Over the course of a svelte seven chapters (plus an introduction and epilogue), Longuenesse examines a variety of issues, both contemporary and historical, concerning the nature of the subject and the first‐person concept. The connection of figures and traditions is rewarding and engaging throughout. Indeed, this is one of the strongest and richest aspects of the book, as Longuenesse deftly analyzes and puts in dialogue a variety of time periods and tradi-tions. She begins by discussing philosophical attempts to articulate essential characteristics of <I> and its related form of self‐consciousness by, for example, Wittgenstein, Shoemaker, and Evans (ch. 2), goes on to survey Sartre's phe-nomenological investigations (ch. 3), before moving on to a thorough examination of Kant's views regarding self‐ consciousness and the first‐person (chs. 4–6) and finally (and perhaps most strikingly) discusses Freud (chs. 7–8) and connections between Freud and Kant's views.

No short discussion of the present sort can do justice to all the issues broached by Longuenesse's investigations. In particular, I will largely ignore her rewarding interpretive analysis of Kant's arguments in the Paralogisms, but it is an engaging and plausible account that repays close study. Instead, I examine claims central to the overall philosoph-ical project articulated by the book. Longuenesse describes her objective as one of analyzing the “fundamental mental structures governing our use of ‘I’” (206).2 She makes three central claims. First, that <I> fundamentally depends on a form of self‐consciousness that is essentially non‐bodily in nature, the structure of which is first articulated in its most groundbreaking form by Kant. This form of self‐consciousness is responsible for bringing “rational unity into the con-tents of one's mental states” (231). Second, that despite Kant's striking metaphysical claims concerning the

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“noumenal” subject's transcendental freedom and rational nature, a “naturalized” conception of the subject can be developed from Kant's position that “does not draw on a supposed unknown and unknowable noumenal realm” (166). Third, that Freud's conception of the psychological processes involved in the formation of the id, ego, and super‐ego presents a fruitful model for developing such a naturalized conception of the unity‐conferring subject. In what follows, I critically discuss each of these three claims. In each case, I think that Longuenesse's arguments face significant challenges.

2 | THE STRUCTURE OF SELF‐CONSCIOUSNESS

In thoughts of the form “I think that p” where p is some propositional content, to what, if anything does “I” refer? Relatedly, of what, if anything, is one conscious in thinking such a thought? I take Longuenesse to argue for two claims:

Fundamental Self‐Consciousness (FUND): There is a form of self‐consciousness that is fundamental and upon which all other forms of self‐consciousness asymmetrically depend.

Intellectual Self‐Consciousness (INT): There is a purely intellectual form of self‐consciousness which neither includes, nor depends upon, bodily self‐consciousness.

Three brief notes about these claims. First, Longuenesse intends to argue for their conjunction, but at least some of her discussion is aimed at them individually. Second, the two claims are framed in terms of consciousness, but Longuenesse also frequently speaks merely of representation.3 It is not entirely clear how Longuenesse conceives of the relationship between representation and consciousness, nor in what sense “consciousness” is meant (e.g., is it creature consciousness, state consciousness, access consciousness, phenomenal consciousness, some combination of these, or something else entirely?).4 Since the terms are used interchangeably, I am going to take Longuenesse as concerned with (i) representational states (i.e., states with correctness conditions) for which there is “something it is like” (as the saying goes) to be in them, (ii) that the representational and phenomenal content of the state can be something for the creature that has those states,5 and thus (iii) that the representational content of those states is available to the creature for thinking and acting. Third, I construe INT as the strong claim that intellectual self‐ consciousness can be had even in the absence of the capacity for bodily self‐consciousness, and not just the claim that, on some occasion or another, a creature might be conscious in and of its thinking without that conscious think-ing containing or currently making use of bodily information. Why should we read her claim in this strong manner? Because otherwise it is difficult to make sense of her dispute with Gareth Evans, about which more below.

Longuenesse initially approaches questions concerning these claims by means of Wittgenstein's (1975) distinction between “use of ‘I’ as object” and “use of ‘I’ as subject.” Instances of the use of “I” as object include “I am six feet tall” and “I have a broken arm.” Instances of the subject use include “I try to lift my arm” and “I think it will rain.” Longuenesse rejects Wittgenstein's famous claim that “I” does not refer and instead opts for Sydney Shoemaker's (1968) view that the subject use is immune to error through misidentification via the first‐person pronoun (or “IEM”). This contrasts with the object use: While I might be correct in thinking that someone is six feet tall, I could nevertheless be mistaken that I am six feet tall. No such error seems possible in cases like “I try to lift my arm” or “I feel pain.”

Longuenesse agrees with Gareth Evans that states demonstrating IEM are not limited to mental states alone, but include bodily states. Indeed, she thinks that “in most cases of such self‐ascriptions, our conception of ourselves as ourselves, namely, as the referent of ‘I,’ is that of an embodied entity” (26). What she disputes is whether this tells us that bodily self‐consciousness is fundamental, or essential to self‐consciousness in general, in the manner Evans describes. So Longuenesse agrees with Evans that there is a fundamental mode of self‐consciousness necessary for the use of <I> (i.e., FUND) but disagrees that this self‐consciousness is essential bodily. Instead, she argues for the priority of a form of intellectual self‐consciousness (i.e., INT).

Longuenesse defends these claims via a Kant‐inspired discussion of the essentially intellectual activity she calls “binding for thinking” (29; a paraphrase of Kant's use of “combination” or “synthesis”). This activity of binding for thinking is something we can become consciously aware of being engaged in.

The fact that “think” is predicated of “I” in the thought “I think” is the conceptual expression of the (mostly implicit) consciousness of an act of binding that the agent of that act takes to be her own just in virtue of being engaged in that act. (81)

According to this view, in making judgments like “I think that this is a tree” or “I think that the proof is invalid,” my thinking depends on my own activity in “binding” together my representations. This activity involves a multiplicity of different kinds of acts: combining representations given via one's sense modalities into one temporally unified rep-resentation of a complex, causally integrated and spatially bounded entity; conceptual recognition that this apparent object has a generic feature (e.g., treehood) that it and others can exemplify in a variety of ways; and the acknowl-edgment of some reason for applying this concept in a judgment, with a specific logical form, to the integrated sen-sory appearance of the object. Longuenesse acknowledges that awareness of all this will not typically be explicit, but the capacity for being self‐consciously aware of the activity must always be there if there is to be any conscious rep-resentation of an object at all (30).

Moreover, according to Longuenesse, the activity of binding for thinking and the capacity to use <I> are “mutu-ally conditioning” (29). On the one hand, all that is needed for one to successfully refer to oneself as oneself (including using <I> in the “subject use” exhibiting IEM) is to be “engaged in the activity which is asserted as the predicate of the proposition (‘think p’)” (30). Longuenesse calls this part of the conditioning relation “SY → I.” When engaging in such activities, one cannot know that someone is engaged in such binding for thinking but be uncertain as to whether it is oneself that is so engaged. On the other hand, there can be no employment of <I> in the requisite sense, without also engaging in some activity of binding for thinking. Longuenesse calls this “I → SY.”

Let us, for the moment, assume with Longuenesse that SY ↔ I and that this is Kant's view. How does this point support either FUND or INT?

Take INT first. Should the proponent of the view that all self‐consciousness depends on or involves a form of bodily self‐consciousness accept that SY ↔ I entails or requires INT? Longuenesse uses the view of Gareth Evans as her primary foil here, and considers, as an objection from that position, that any act of thinking is going to involve being aware of oneself in space, the disposition of one's body, and so forth. Her strategy to respond to this kind of objection is to say that we need to “distinguish the information about oneself (the referent of ‘I’) that justifies the self‐ ascription of a given predicate, and the concept of oneself that conditions the very use of ‘I’ in the argument place of one's judgment” (27; cf. 32, 236). The idea being that in a thought like “I think that this is a tree” or “I think that the proof is valid,” it is only the predicates and the conditions of their ascription that are empirically or bodily conditioned. The semantic content of concept <I> itself is left untouched. At best, Evans' position points only to epistemic condi-tions on the use of <I> in various contexts (36–7, 52, 148).

But it is not at all clear why this kind of strategy would have any purchase on Evans' position (or its near neigh-bors). According to Evans, all genuinely referential thought of individuals depends on the grasp of what he calls a “fundamental ground of difference” with respect to the relevant individual. The fundamental ground of difference of an individual is that which distinguishes it from all others. One's understanding of such a fundamental ground thus constitutes distinguishing knowledge of the individual in question.6 This is part of Evans' spelling out of his commit-ment to “Russell's Principle”—that is, the principle that in order to refer to an object, one must know which object it is. One must, in other words, be able to distinguish that object from all others if one is to count as thinking of (and thus referring to) it. Evans combines this “know‐which” requirement on reference with a particular conception of thought as structured, known as the “Generality Constraint,” according to which the capacity to think (and in particular to understand) a thought of the form “a is F” presupposes the operation of two distinct capacities: the capacity to think of any variety of objects b, c, d, and so forth, that they are F, and the capacity to think of a as having any variety of other properties (e.g., G, H, etc.).7 According to Evans, the capacity for such structured thought of oneself using <I>

depends on the capacity to think of oneself “fundamentally”—that is, via grasp of one's fundamental ground of differ-ence. Evans' view is that the very same understanding of the fundamental ground of difference that one employs with respect to other objects (i.e., spatiotemporal position) is also employed with respect to oneself. Hence, bodily information that gives one's spatiotemporal position is crucial to the identification of oneself and thus to referential thought of oneself.8

Returning to Longuenesse, recall that her view is that bodily information comes in only at the level of predicates and not with respect to any condition determining the content of the first‐person concept itself. But she seems not to account for more subtle ways in which bodily self‐consciousness allows one to think of and refer to oneself using <I>. We can see this by noticing that the appeal to the non‐bodily cases articulated by Longuenesse in which one employs the first‐person concept to successfully refer to oneself—namely, of engaging in acts of reasoning or of assessing one's reasons—does not obviously show that Evans' view is mistaken. Evans does not deny that some cases of successful self‐reference using <I> are cases in which no appeal to bodily information is made. But he denies that success in such cases is possible without the underlying capacity to appeal to such bodily sources of information.9 As he puts it,

A subject does not need to have information actually available to him in any of the relevant ways in order to know that there is just one object to which he is thus dispositionally related.10

INT is a claim about the independence of the form of self‐consciousness present in the use of <I> from any bodily information or the capacity thereto. Hence, an appropriate defense of INT from Evansonian objections requires more than simply showing that there are cases of first‐person thought for which there is no advertence to consciousness of some empirical or bodily information. One would rather need to show that one need not even have the capacity to appeal to such information in first‐person thought (i.e., the capacity for such information to control one's “Idea” of oneself) for successful self‐reference to occur, and this Longuenesse fails to do.11 One might worry here that I am interpreting INT too strongly, but if we take it in its weak form, then there is no disagreement with Evans, and we lose the uniqueness of Longuenesse's claim.

So what of the argument for FUND? Recall that Longuenesse regards the activity of binding and the capacity for use of <I> as mutually conditioning (i.e., SY ↔ I). What explains the fact that the intellectual activity of binding for thinking and <I> are mutually entailing? Longuenesse claims that we can best explain the mutually entailing capacities for binding and first‐person thought by positing a “common ground, a ground that makes it the case that one is not available unless the other is available as well” (31). This ground is what, in a famous passage from the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant labels the “transcendental unity of apperception.” He says,

[I call this] the pure apperception, in order to distinguish it from the empirical one, or also the original apperception, since it is that self‐consciousness which, because it brings forth [hervorbringt] the representation I think, which must be able to accompany all others and which in all consciousness is one and the same, cannot be accompanied by any further representation. (B132; Kant's emphasis)

This purely intellectual consciousness is what, for Kant, makes possible both the connection of representations in rational conceptual thought and the self‐ascription of those thoughts using <I>. In this passage, Kant plausibly endorses both INT and FUND. However, despite a great deal of scholarly discussion of Kant's characterization of pure apperception, it remains a subject of some dispute as to his actual argument for something along the lines of either INT or FUND.12

Longuenesse presents an argument, based on the importance of the transcendental unity of apperception, for both FUND and INT as follows:

“I think,” or rather “I think p” … is the only type of case where what is asserted of the referent of “I,” namely, of the individual currently thinking the proposition “I am F,” is precisely the activity of thinking that makes “I” available as a mode of presentation of that individual. All other uses of “I,” whether they are uses of “I” as

object or [“I” as subject] depend on that original binding‐for‐thinking (synthesizing) activity that makes possible any judgment at all. Even a judgment … [such as] “I have tooth‐ache” depends, as a judgment, on the activity in which alone, in Kant's terms, I am “conscious of myself as subject”: the activity of thinking. And this means also that, unless they are bound, compared, and conceptualized in the course of such an activity, subjective mental states are not self‐ascribed: they do not and cannot count as predicates in a proposition in which the subject is “I.” And when they are self‐ascribed, the relevant judgment expresses in each case, in Kant's terms, a consciousness of myself as an object—albeit as an object not of outer sense, but of inner sense. (31–2)

The argument, I believe, is this: Any judgment that involves self‐ascription requires, as a judgment, propositional structure, and thus binding for thinking. But binding for thinking entails the capacity to represent the content of that activity by means of <I>. There is only one type of representation of oneself that combines both the first‐personal representation of oneself and a representation of the activity by which this is possible—namely, representations of the form “I think that p.” Since the form of self‐consciousness present in “I think that p” must be (or be able to be) present in all other cases of self‐ascription (since all self‐ascription requires binding), but none of the other forms of self‐consciousness (e.g., in self‐ascription of mental or bodily states) are required for it, the self‐consciousness characteristic of thoughts of the form ‘I think that p’ is fundamental.

Longuenesse concedes that binding for thinking does not entail that one actually employ <I> in one's thinking—, that is, one can think without thinking ‘I think’ (32). So the argument can only succeed if we can make sense of the claim that the consciousness of oneself in binding for thinking is itself present in all other forms of self‐ascription, which means we need to make sense of what it is to be conscious of the activity of thinking itself, whether or not such activity is explicitly self‐ascribed using ‘I think.’

Unfortunately, Longuenesse's elaboration of the character of this fundamental self‐consciousness of one's intellectual activity, at least insofar as she draws on Kant, is not obviously consistent.13 She distinguishes in Kant's work three different forms of consciousness of thinking (86–93, 104–6). The first is a purely intellectual conscious-ness of being “engaged in the act of thinking (and synthesizing: transcendental imagination) just in virtue of being engaged in that act” (86). The second concerns the “mere perception [i.e. the indeterminate empirical intuition] of an act of thinking I take to be mine” (87). And the third is the “consciousness of my own existence in time as a thinking being” (91). How are these three related, and in particular, how might they govern or contribute to the content or use of <I>?

On the one hand, Longuenesse denies that the content of <I> is either narrowly sensory or broadly phenomeno-logical. In one note she says (correctly I think) that “[s]ubjective sensory or affective states … have no intrinsic con-nection to ‘I’” and goes on to say that “the ground for self‐ascription is not phenomenological but constitutive” (41, note 30).14 This suggests that the pure intellectual self‐consciousness is the primary factor in the contribution to the fundamental semantic content and use conditions of <I>. It also suggests that the self‐consciousness that is the ground of SY ↔ I is not any form of phenomenal consciousness and perhaps is best described as simply being the activity of thinking itself. One worry is that if this description of her view is correct, then I do not see why we should call this a basic form of self‐consciousness as opposed to a kind of self‐knowledge that one has merely by virtue of thinking.15

On the other hand, Longuenesse's remarks concerning the contributions made by the phenomenal character of the second and third forms of self‐consciousness—namely, one's perception of one's act of thinking and one's con-sciousness of one's existence in time—would seem to commit her to the centrality of phenomenal character in deter-mining the content and use of <I>. For example, she claims that perception of the activity of thinking is a necessary condition of thinking “I think” (85). She also says that one is aware of the activity of binding and that “aware” denotes a specific kind of phenomenal consciousness—that there is something it is like to be in the state (134, note 16; cf. 89).16 Further, she claims that, for Kant, we have a “sensation or feeling which is radically individual and as such jus-tifies the ascription of thinking to myself. It is this radically individual sensation that “makes me disposed to acquire a determinate representation of my own thinking” (91).

If I have correctly described Longuenesse's understanding of the three forms of consciousness of one's own thinking, then her characterization of the intellectual awareness of the activity of thinking is not obviously consistent with the supposed phenomenal contribution of one's perception of that activity.17 In particular, it is not clear how subjective sensory states, no matter how “radically individual” and which, as Longuenesse notes, have no “intrinsic connection” to the <I> (41) could ever be the basis for justifying their self‐ascription as states of one's own. The problem Longuenesse runs up against here is that concerning how it is one is able to grasp one's states as one's own (i.e., how it is that I could construe that state of which I am conscious as mine). Longuenesse seems to want to construe phenomenal character as in part the answer to this question, but this assumes what we need to explain.18 How could the fact that there is something it is like to be conscious of F tell me that I am F unless I already am in a position to know that in there being something it is like to be conscious of F there is something it is like for me to be conscious of F?

Hence, insofar as Longuenesse's argument for FUND relies on a disputable sense of what it is to be conscious of the activity of thinking itself, the argument itself remains disputable. In the next section, I discuss an alternative way of framing consciousness of one's activity of thinking, one which Longuenesse also seems to endorse at various points in the text. However, ascribing this alternative view to Longuenesse is problematic, for it presents a challenge to her project of “naturalizing” Kant's conception of self‐conscious thought along Freudian lines.

3 | AGENCY IN THOUGHT

At various points, Longuenesse links the activity of thinking with the agency of the thinker. For example, she says

In Kant's Transcendental Deduction … using “I” in “I think” expresses the consciousness, by the subject of the activity of thinking, of the unity of the contents of her thoughts, and thereby of herself as the agent of that unity, whatever the metaphysical nature of that agent might be. (81, original emphasis; cf. 30, 76)

On this interpretation of Kant, I am aware that a thought is mine in virtue of the fact that I am aware of a particular activity—the activity of thinking. On an alternative way of reading Kant, his view is not that I am able to ascribe a thought to myself because of my awareness of an activity. Rather, his view is that it is by virtue of the (fundamental or non‐derived) awareness that I am the source of the activity that I can ascribe the content of a thought formed through that activity to myself using <I> or its cognates.

In lectures just prior to the publication of the first Critique, Kant is reported as having argued for consciousness of the agency of the subject in first‐person acts of thinking19:

When I say: I think, I act, etc., then either the word I is applied falsely, or I am free. Were I not free, then I

could not say: I do it, but rather I would have to say: I feel in me a desire to do, which someone has aroused

in me. But when I say: I do it, that means spontaneity in the transcendental sense <in sensu

transcendentali>, But now I am conscious to myself that I can say: I do; therefore I am conscious of no determination in me, and thus I act absolutely freely. (Metaphysik L1 (1777‐80) 28:268)

Kant clearly distinguishes here between two senses in which one might be self‐conscious. One sense—namely, the sense in which one is aware of oneself as a subject of representation (e.g., “I feel in me a desire”) allows a kind of passive reporting. But a further notion used in the text is that of oneself as the agent of thought. This “agential” sense is also at work in Kant's reported rejection of Spinozism in lecture notes from the early‐to‐mid 80s:

when I think, I am conscious that my I, and not some other thing, thinks in me. Thus I infer that this thinking in me does not inhere in another thing external to me but in myself, and consequently also that I am a substance, i.e. that I exist for myself, without being the predicate of another thing. (Religion Pölitz 28:1042 (1783/84))

The point Kant is reported as making in this passage concerns the manner in which the sort of self‐consciousness characteristic of thinking—what Kant calls “pure” as opposed to “empirical” apperception—is consciousness of oneself as the ultimate origin of one's thought, and not of something else bringing that representation about in one.20 If this is correct, then Kant appears to link together the subjective and the agential sense of “I think” in a conditional manner. One cannot be (non‐empirically) aware of oneself as the subject of a thought unless one is aware of oneself as the agent of the thought.21

Appreciation of this fact helps us to see what is wrong with Longuenesse's method of explaining the manner in which intellectual self‐consciousness is fundamental.22 We saw above that Longuenesse construes “mineness” as dependent on awareness of the activity of thinking. But this leaves open the following question: How is it that con-sciousness of intellectual activity licenses consciousness of oneself as engaging in that very activity? In fact, given Kant's skepticism regarding inferences from effect to cause (see, e.g., A368) it will always be uncertain whether any given instance of activity awareness will license an inference to oneself as the agent of such activity. Indeed, it is hard to see how one could by this method ever arrive at the conclusion that it is oneself who is the agent. We avoid this problem if we take Kant's position in the reverse manner that I have suggested. One is conscious of the activity in oneself (i.e., in the terminology introduced above, one is conscious of oneself as the subject of the activity) only in virtue of one's consciousness of oneself as the agent of the activity—that is, as producing through one's act a determinate effect—a thought.

Kant famously denies that the agency condition on self‐conscious thinking could be satisfied if the natural (phe-nomenal) world constitutes all that there is. For in such a world, he claims, no subject of a thought is ever a proper cause of that thought—instead all beings are subject to a universal causal determinism stretching backwards in time. This “mechanism of nature” as Kant calls it would allow only that causal relations pass through thinkers, but not that they originate from thinkers.23 Kant's discussion of determinism in the Third Antinomy, and his conclusion that it is at least logically coherent to think that there may be “noumenal” beings (i.e., beings as they are in themselves that are neither spatial nor temporal) capable of being the causal origin of an event without that cause being itself temporally deter-mined (A533/B561; cf. A446/B474) is thus a central plank in his overall view of the spontaneity of rational beings.24

4  **|** FREUD AND A NATURALIZED CONCEPTION OF THE RATIONAL AGENT

Longuenesse understandably prefers to avoid Kant's metaphysical commitments and thus articulates an account “that does not draw on a supposed unknown and unknowable noumenal realm, but remains within the confines of the empirical domain of spatio‐temporal entities” (166). But as she goes on to explain, the “naturalism” endorsed here is not merely “anti‐noumenalist,” but rather a form of “second naturalism,” in which

the person's ego is the result of a developmental process that occurs in a social context, and in the course of which each person acquires her unique capacity for cognition and action: a normative capacity that includes the capacity to acknowledge error and failure, to take responsibility for them and eventually to correct them. (194–5)

Longuenesse discusses Freud and Kant (chs. 7–8) in the context of this (second) naturalistic project. She argues that Freud's account of the process by which the ego (das Ich) emerges from the more primitive representational system he calls the id (das Es) provides us with attractive resources for naturalizing Kant's conception of the subject—the “I” in “I think.” She then argues that a similarly attractive set of resources is provided by Freud's account of the socialized emergence of moral behavior in the development of the “super‐ego” for understanding Kant's “I ought to.”

Whether understanding Freud's conception of the forces involved in the formation of the ego and super‐ego will attract contemporary naturalists who might otherwise shy away from Kant's metaphysical commitments (e.g., those attracted to purely functionalist explanations in cognitive science or reductive biological explanation in neuroscience) is somewhat doubtful. But certainly Freud avoids Kant's noumenalism, and he clearly articulates a variety of societal influences on the organization of the mental processes involved in ego formation and for that reason may be useful in

trying to give an account of the social development of a rational being conceived along broadly Kantian lines. The worry, however, is that in recruiting Freud for the purposes of naturalizing Kant, we lose what is deeply distinctive in Kant's conception of rational agency.

There are two problems with Longuenesse's approach to naturalizing Kant, one general, and one specific to her use of Freud. The general problem is that any restriction of the causal structure of reality to the “natural” causes of the spatio‐temporal world is going to run into the issue of whether that world is deterministic or indeterministic. In neither case, on Kant's incompatibilist view, are conditions going to be appropriate to either (i) hold doxastic agents responsible for their patterns of belief or (ii) construe them as capable of making genuinely rational inferences from one belief to another. I lack the space to properly discuss the second problem, but let me briefly describe the first.25

The first problem arises, concerning the responsibility of agents, because Kant construes the imputation of actions to an individual and the rationality of criticizing individuals for actions so imputed as depending on their sta-tus as free actors. As Kant is reported to have said a lecture from the mid‐1790s:

[it is] certain that, if [his actions] were led merely by natural laws, it would be impossible to impute to [the human being] any action, since the ground of action then would never lie in his control, but rather would be determined in the previous time. (Metaphysik Vigilantius (K), 29:1020 (1794/95))

Kant's claim that phenomenal subjects would be wholly determined by previous temporal events is clearly articulated throughout his critical works (KrV A546‐48/B574‐76; RS 8:14; G 4:448; KpV 5:94). Hence, if subjects are to be ratio-nally criticizable for their doxastic attitudes, they must have control over their actions, control that Kant contends is impossible within a nature so conceived.

Certainly, both of these problems are controversial. But one must engage with Kant's incompatibilist position concerning the conditions of freedom as well as the way in which that position informs his conception of rational activity, if one hopes to show how his view might be translated into an alternative naturalistic framework.26 This problem seems especially pressing for Longuenesse since she often characterizes intellectual self‐consciousness in normative terms, for example, as “being accountable” for one's thinking (28) and of being “committed to the current reason‐giving process of thinking” (37). Such accountability and commitment only make sense if Kant's incompatibilist arguments are wrong. And if these normative notions are essential to the nature of intellectual self‐consciousness, as Longuenesse seems to indicate, then attention is due to the conditions for such norms. It is not clear how those con-ditions are satisfied within either a deterministic or indeterministic naturalistic framework.27

The more specific worry, concerning Freud, is relatively straightforward. If the best way to understand Kant's view of the self‐consciousness characteristic of rational activity, as Longuenesse sometimes seems to suggest, is to see it as a form of agency, then we need to take seriously the rational subject as an agent. But Freud's theory cannot do this. This is not because he provides a developmental and partly social account of the manner in which the rational subject is constructed out of a non‐rational being (or perhaps better, “subject matter”)—the id (das Es). Rather the issue is that Freud's conception of the human mind is fundamentally one of representatives of (subpersonal) drives and the marshaling of those representatives according to various “thought‐processes.” As Freud puts it, “[thought‐ processes] represent displacements of mental energy”28 and the unity of the mind achieved in the formation of the “ego” (das Ich) is merely the displacement of this energy for the purpose of self‐preservation (the “reality princi-ple”) rather than for purposes of pleasure (the “pleasure principle”). It is a conception of the mind Freud, approvingly citing Groddeck, construes as merely the locale in which irrational or arational forces play themselves out:

what we call our ego behaves essentially passively in life, and that, as [Groddeck] expresses it, we are “lived” by unknown and uncontrollable forces.29

Hence, because Freud conceives of the mind in terms of an ultimately passive receptacle for the psychic expression of various drives, the interplay of which find expression in very general governing forces (e.g., the pleasure and reality principles) that ultimately help constitute the formation of a discrete subject or ego, but from which the ego is never freed, any incorporation of Kant's conception of the mind into Freud's must give up the active element at the core of

Kant's view. To be sure, Longuenesse is aware of many of these costs (see, e.g., 226), but tends to construe them as ultimately dispensable aspects of Kant's conception of moral agency rather than as central aspects of his conception of rational agency. Longuenesse considers rationality “an ideal to strive for even while recognizing that it derives its very energy and the richness of its resources from what is radically irrational in us” (226). Kant certainly recognizes the fact that human beings are constructed from such irrational “crooked timber,” but if rational agency is an ideal towards which we ought in any way strive it must be the case that we can at least sometimes act rationally, and thus that at least some of the time the ultimate explanation of an action is one that adverts to the agency and agential control of the subject or person rather than to the triumph of some drive within that subject or person. Since it is not clear how Freud's view can accommodate this point, it is not clear how there could be genuine rapprochement between the Freudian and Kantian perspective on what it is to be a rational human being.

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ENDNOTES

1. I put all mention of concepts, as opposed to their linguistic counterparts, in pointy brackets.
2. All parenthetical references, unless otherwise noted, will be to Longuenesse (2017).
3. For example, §2.2 is entitled “Kant on Consciousness of Oneself as Subject,” but most of the discussion in that section concerns representation of oneself, one's activity in thinking, and objects of that activity.
4. In ch. 5, note 16 (134), Longuenesse distinguishes between her use of “awareness” as meaning only “phenomenal state consciousness” and “conscious” as meaning “phenomenal state consciousness plus the state's possessing correctness conditions.” But this distinction does not really help answer the question asked above.
5. See Kant's distinction between a representation's merely being in one as opposed to being something for one at B132; cf. Longuenesse's discussion in §7.2.1 (176–81).
6. See Evans (1982, 107).
7. Importantly, Longuenesse focuses only on the Generality Constraint and ignores the role of Russell's Principle in Evans' view. See, for example, Longuenesse (2017, 24–25).
8. Note that such information is a necessary and not sufficient condition for singular thought of oneself using <I>. There is also an “action component” necessary for such thought—see, for example, Evans (1982, 207). For relevant discussion, see Zong (2017; cf. Cassam, 1997).
9. Longuenesse seems to acknowledge this aspect of Evans' view (36), but it strangely does not figure in her argument against him.
10. Evans (1982, 216 note 21), emphasis in original.
11. This is not to say that Evans' position is entirely convincing. For one prominent criticism, see O'Brien (1995). For defenses of Evans' position, see Grush (2018), Luntley (1999), and Zong (2017); compare Cassam (1997).
12. Both FUND and INT have prominent contemporary defenders. See, for example, Boyle (2009), Burge (2013), and Moran (2001).
13. To be fair, it is not at all obvious that Kant is consistent, and the root of the problem may lie with him rather than Longuenesse's elaboration of his view.
14. Compare her remarks on the imagination where she says that there is nothing it is like to bind representations, and so there is no phenomenal consciousness of such an activity (181).
15. This would make Longuenesse's Kant very close to Shoemaker's constitutivist position, wherein knowledge of one's prop-ositional attitudes is constituted simply by (rationally) coming to have those attitudes.
16. Longuenesse does distinguish between “conscious of” and “aware of” (e.g., 134, note 16), but she includes in “conscious of” the qualitative or phenomenal component present in “aware of.” So we cannot distinguish the two by the presence or absence of phenomenology.
17. This may ultimately be Kant's problem rather than Longuenesse's, though as we'll see in the next section, I think there is another way to read Kant that does not generate these problems.
18. There are contemporary attempts to make something like a phenomenal account work. See, for example, Duncan (2017); Duncan (2018, 95) accepts that the uniqueness or individuality of one's phenomenal states is insufficient to ground self‐ ascription.

1. Longuenesse discusses this passage in the context of a “paralogism of spontaneity” (155), though she notes that Kant is not obviously guilty of paralogistic thinking with respect to his conception of the spontaneity of the thinker.
2. Here, one can see at work Kant's distinction, formulated in the Transcendental Deduction at B131‐2, between a represen-tation's being merely in one, and its being something for one.
3. The subject/agent distinction has gained some prominence in discussions of the phenomenon known as “thought inser-tion” in contemporary psychology and philosophy of mind. The distinction is especially championed in Stephens and Graham (2000) and subsequently taken up by a variety of philosophers and psychologists. See, for example, Radden (1998), Campbell (1999), Gallagher (2000), Coliva (2002), Bayne (2004), Kriegel (2004, 202 note 10), and Duncan

(2017). Longuenesse claims that it is “nonsensical” to suppose that one could wonder whether “someone is thinking that p, but is it me?” (29); but this seems to be precisely the situation of the subject suffering from thought insertion. The dis-tinction between “I” as subject and “I” as agent helps us make sense of this phenomenon.

1. Why might Longuenesse take this position? I suspect that part of it has to do with her commitment to an unnecessarily strong reading of Kant's argument in the Paralogisms. She claims that questions regarding what one is qua subject are “meaningless” (87) and that self‐consciousness “tells us nothing about the objective nature of the thing that thinks” (131). In my view, Kant construes such questions as meaningful and takes intellectual self‐consciousness to provide a characterization of what rational thought requires—namely, substantial beings with causal powers capable of bringing about changes in their own mental states without any interference by external forces. What Kant's account does not pro-vide us with is (theoretical) cognition or positive knowledge that we are in fact such rational beings.
2. For an overview of Kant's position with an eye to contemporary issues regarding freedom, see Pereboom (2006).
3. For some relevant discussion, see Wood (1984), Pippin (1987), Ameriks (2000, ch. 6), Watkins (2005, ch.5), Watkins (n.d.), Allison (2006), Pereboom (2006), Wuerth (2014), and Kitcher (2016).
4. The claim that (in)determinism threatens inference requires that a mental transition counts as a genuine inference only if the transition occurs in virtue of the subject's taking one state as based on the other. Such a “taking” condition on certain kinds of rational transitions between one's mental states is sometimes attributed to Frege. See, for example, Boghossian (2014, 4). That there is such a taking condition on rational transitions, particularly those characterizing inference or rea-soning more generally is controversial. For discussion and criticism, see Broome (2013, 2014), McHugh and Way (2016), Siegel (2017), and Wright (2014). I lack the space here to defend the taking condition as such or the evidence for thinking that Kant endorses it. I plan to pursue this in other work. For relevant discussion of connections between conceptualiza-tion and inference that would satisfy the taking condition (though she does not discuss it under this moniker), see the discussion of rational cognition in Kitcher (2011).
5. Longuenesse does discuss the relation between freedom and Kant's moral conception of personhood in §6.4. However, her discussion of freedom is mostly concerned with the basis of our cognition or knowledge of freedom (e.g. see the “paralogism of spontaneity” at p. 155) and its connection to morality, but here I have discussed Kant's view of the conceptual conditions of a rational being more generally. It is another issue entirely whether we are, and could know that we are, such rational beings.
6. For some relevant discussion, see McKenna and Pereboom (2016) and Pereboom (2006, 2014).
7. Freud (1960, 12).
8. Freud (1960, 17).

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