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978-0-521-13121-6 - Kant and the Ethics of Humility: A Story of Dependence, Corruption,
and Virtue

Jeanine Grenberg

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KANT AND THE ETHICS OF HUMILITY

In recent years, philosophers have either ignored the virtue of humility or found it to be in need of radical redefinition. But humility is a central human virtue, and it is the purpose of this book to defend that claim from a Kantian point of view. Jeanine Grenberg argues that we can indeed speak of Aristotelian-style, but still deeply Kantian, virtuous character traits. She proposes moving from focus on action to focus on person, not leaving the former behind, but instead taking it up within a larger, more satisfying Kantian moral theory. Using examples from literature as well as philosophy, she shows that there is a Kantian virtue theory to be explored in which humility plays a central role. Her book will have a wide appeal to readers not only in Kant studies but also in theological ethics and moral psychology.

JEANINE GRENBERG is Associate Professor of Philosophy at St. Olaf College, Minnesota.

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[More information](#)

To Anthony, the love of my life

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page ix</i>
Introduction	I
PART I KANTIAN VIRTUE	
1 Dependent and corrupt rational agency	15
2 Constraints on any possible Kantian account of virtue	49
3 A Kantian account of virtue	80
PART II A KANTIAN RESPONSE TO RECENT ACCOUNTS OF HUMILITY	
4 A Kantian response to recent accounts of humility	107
PART III THE KANTIAN VIRTUE OF HUMILITY	
5 The Kantian virtue of humility	133
6 Humility and self-respect	163
7 The humble person	193
PART IV THE VIRTUES OF KANTIAN HUMILITY	
8 The humble pursuit of self-knowledge	217
9 The humble pursuit of respect for persons	242
Conclusion	252
<i>References</i>	259
<i>Index</i>	263

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[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

Trying to thank all of the people and institutions who have contributed to the publication of this book seems an impossible task. But then so, at one time, did the very publication of this book. So, with actuality as the proof of possibility on the latter score, I endeavor here to accomplish the former, that is, to express my gratitude to the many persons and institutions without whom and which this book would not have been possible, or actual.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Acknowledgments

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

xi

Finally, I want to thank my skeptical philosopher-historian-theologian husband, Anthony Rudd, for being the font of patience and support that he is. His calming influence on me during months of writing (Me: “Problem? *Problem*?? What do you mean, ‘the *problem* I’m having with chapter 3’?? I’m not having a *problem* with chapter 3!!” Him: “No, of course not darling, quite right. I’m glad things are going so well.”) and the acute philosophical insight he brought to endless English lunchtime discussions of my work-in-progress were the stable foundation upon which I rested my soul, and without which this book would not have come to be. To him, both my gratitude and my love.