

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The main ideas for this project grew out of the first half of my 1998 dissertation, which was titled *Self and Will* and directed by Karl Ameriks at the University of Notre Dame. However, less than a third of this book has any parallel in my Ph.D. thesis, so Karl is certainly not to blame for any problems. Although my argument is closely related to Kant's critique of the eudaimonist view that happiness is the proper function of human reason (and thus of human nature generally), the historical analyses and my theory of projective motivation go beyond anything found in Kant, and so the great German deontologist is the subject of only one episode in this story. Still, Karl's criticisms and advice were an indispensable help in formulating some of the initial ideas for this theory.

Among so many others who provided encouragement and questions, I want to single out for special thanks David Solomon, Fred Dallmayr, and Stephen Watson. The discussions of Kant, virtue ethics, and Levinas owe a great deal to their insights—and indeed, my conception of the will can be regarded as a development and expansion of Levinas's notion of metaphysical desire. In addition, my intellectual debts to Alasdair MacIntyre are too enormous and obvious to need stating. Though he must disagree with much of this work, I hope to have added in some small way to the new dialogue among traditions that he started. The other great debt in this work, as in much of what I have published, is to Harry Frankfurt. Here I can only repeat MacIntyre's refrain that constructive criticism of a philosopher's work is the greatest compliment one can pay.

Although this book does not discuss Kierkegaard at any length, the inspiration of countless Kierkegaard scholars stands behind it. In particular, I would like to express special appreciation to Edward Mooney, who has helped through the years in too many ways to name, including many valuable suggestions on how to make this work more readable. MacIntyre was right when he wrote that giving can never be equally reciprocal and we can only hope to pass on to others in the future the great benefits of generosity that we have received. It is also a pleasure to thank my colleague Merold

Westphal, who has provided advice on this work and helpful comments and support throughout my years at Fordham University. In this respect, he is like virtually all my colleagues at Fordham, who have seen strengths rather than weaknesses in my own philosophical pluralism. It is a high honor to serve with such a faculty.

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Now to my institutional debts. The main work on the manuscript of this book began during the summer of 2001 with the aid of a Fordham Faculty summer fellowship and continued with the help of one course reduction from our standard 3/3 load during the fall of 2002. The project also benefited from the opportunity to teach seminars on moral psychology at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Finally, chapters 13 and 14, which were initially conceived as part of a new book project on autonomy, were completed during the first weeks of an NEH Summer Fellowship in June of 2004.

In truth, however, the ultimate source of this book lies much earlier in my biography. Although its terminology reveals a Heideggerian pedigree, the idea expressed by the term "projective motivation" was with me long before I read any philosophy. I have hung onto it, perhaps out of a spirit of resistance, through twenty years of studying and teaching a philosophical canon in which few of the greatest authors recognize self-motivational phenomena. In short, I acquired my idea of the will from the literary masterpieces of Tolkien and Donaldson, which I read in high school. This book is a testament to their view of the great powers and dangers of the human spirit. I also saw the striving will at work in my parents and grandparents, who in their own ways each exhibited great volitional strength.

But my greatest debt of all—one that transcends all these others—is to my wife Robin, without whom there would be not only no book but probably no author either. In addition to all her love and support, she has also read most of the manuscript for grammar and typos. In her career, Robin gives new meaning to the biblical phrase, "Wonderful Counselor." In mothering our two wonderful children, she reveals the true meaning of commitment. I was drawn to Princeton University Press after college by interests in Kierkegaard, Jung, and the Bollingen Series, but I found Robin there instead. Thank goodness I learned enough from Kierkegaard not to make his mistake! We are the choices we make, and not all of mine have been good, but something gave me the grace to get the most important one right.