

“Work Should Be Rewarded”: On the Origins and Functions of an Innate Moral Principle

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“Work Should Be Rewarded”: An Innate Moral Principle

Morality does not come primarily from reasoning: it arises rather from some combination of innateness and social learning.¹ While the significance of social learning explains why behaviors that are considered “immoral” or “moral” vary enormously by culture, the significance of innateness is manifest in the presence of certain moral precepts that, in contrast, seem universal, and, as such, do not seem subject to the particular vagaries of the culture within which one finds oneself.² The relative universality of certain specific moral precepts suggests that there are some evolved intuitions that arise in all of us as a result of a genetically transmitted endowment that are to a significant extent immutable, i.e., that there is a moral endowment that is to a large extent universally inherited and that is to this extent

not subject to substantial variation between specific ethnic or cultural groups. The “*Work Ethic*” - defined here as the precept that *Work Should be Rewarded* – is one such precept. Regardless of profound and pervasive disagreement among members of disparate cultural groups with regard to whether specific actions would or would not constitute moral behavior, individuals in all cultures assent to the proposition that *Work Should be Rewarded*.³

In Nature Work is not a “Cost”

While human beings often need to envision a reward before they will undertake complex goal-directed activity (i.e., “work”), animals will work even in the absence of anticipated reward. The ethological literature describes 11 animal species that will work for food that is earned rather than avail themselves of food that has been made easily available to them.⁴ These studies demonstrate that intellectual constructs such as “work” and “reward” are not readily distinguishable in Nature: in animals - including those species that are most closely related to humans (such as the chimpanzee) – work *is* reward.

Animals need to work in order to survive. Animals are in this sense genetically “programmed” to continue to work for “earned” food in nature even when food can be easily

obtained. The fact that animals work for food when food can be readily obtained without work contradicts psychological and economic theories that presume that animals and humans strive to maximize the ratio of reward to effort. Put another way, *findings that consistently indicate that animals will work in the absence of anticipated reward contradict any theory that conceptualizes “work” as a cost.* In nature, work is not a cost but is rather inseparable from the goal that drives it.

While the Appetite for Reward is Imperturbable, the Degree to Which Individual Organisms Deploy Energy as a Means of Pursuing Rewards is Highly Variable

Work entails deployment of energy as a means of obtaining a reward for which one has an appetite (or “desire”). Appetite remains a relatively fixed feature of our psychic lives, for when the object one’s appetite is obtained, desire is not extinguished: the object of our appetite is instead replaced with yet another object of desire.⁵

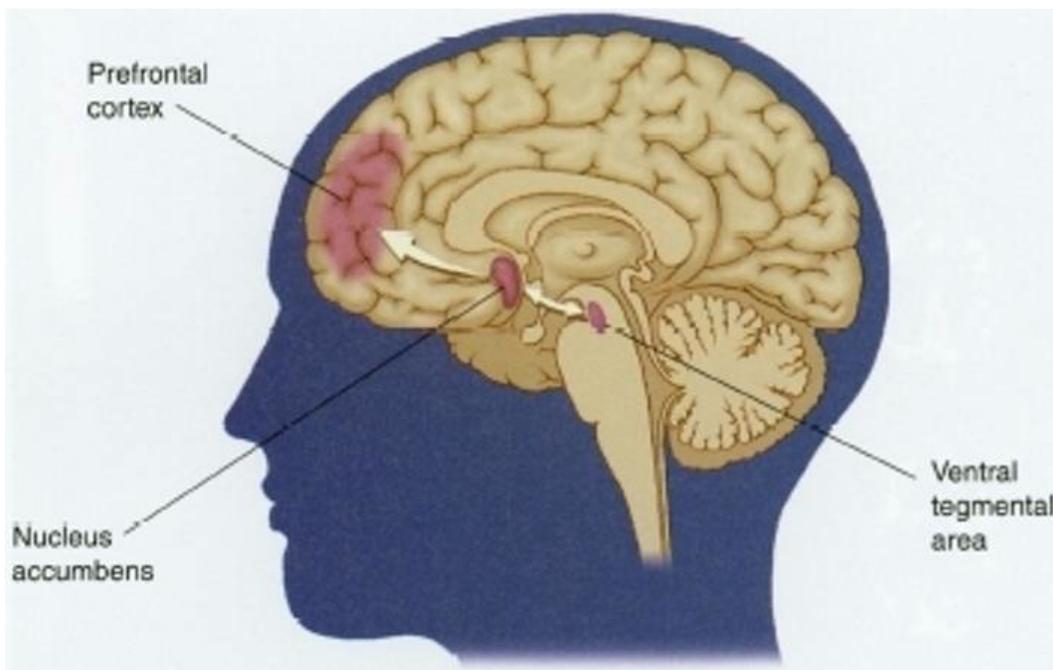
“Wanting” = Appetite + Activation

Whereas our appetite for rewards remains relatively constant, the degree to which an individual is activated to

pursue rewards is highly variable and is subject to a spectrum of biological (neuroanatomic)⁶ and cultural⁷ influences. While appetite remains constant, the degree to which we will engage in goal-directed activity as a means of satisfying our appetites is highly variable and is contingent upon a broad spectrum of biological, cultural, and individual factors.

Neuroanatomically Based Variability

The fact that our capacity for Activation (i.e., the deployment of energy in pursuit of anticipated reward) is exquisitely vulnerable can be demonstrated pharmacologically.



Pharmacologically induced depletion of dopamine in the Nucleus Accumbens or GABA depletion in the Ventral Tegmental area will powerfully influence effort-related decision-making. In essence, animals that are so treated will retain their appetite for reward but the degree to which they will engage in goal-directed behavior in order to obtain rewards is sharply reduced in association with the degree to which dopamine (in the Nucleus Accumbens) or GABA (in the Ventral Tegmental Area) is depleted.

Culturally Based Variation:

In cultures characterized as “progress-prone” people assume that they can shape their own destiny, that wealth is expandable, and that wealth is a product of human creativity. People in cultures characterized as “progress-resistant”, on the other hand, assume that what exists will always be.⁸ Simply put, the prevailing question that informs behavior in “progress-resistant” cultures is: “Why work any harder than I need to if such hard work cannot substantially change the conditions within which I live?”

The Role of Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology:

While effort-related decision-making is exquisitely

sensitive to neurochemical conditions that prevail in the mid-brain, Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology work at the level of the Pre-Frontal Cortex. Ideas and moral precepts that extol the value of hard work – and that exhort the individual to work – confer survival value insofar as such exhortations induce behaviors associated with activation that would not otherwise be elaborated. We tend to experience disconnection of work and reward as emotionally, morally, and mentally dissonant. (Specific examples of such dysfunctional situations are discussed below). These innate moral intuitions evolve and - are intellectually elaborated upon - in intellectual constructs and social systems that we call morality, religion, ethics and ideology. These moral-intellectual systems are critically important from a functional perspective because they provide a justification to engage in work activity that would otherwise not occur.⁹ Unlike animals, there is a significant risk that humans will remain idle in the absence of a justification to remain active. Humans therefore tend to search for justifications to engage in work activity. Even a specious justification can be used to motivate people to work. Moral-intellectual systems that exhort adherents to work hard conduce not only to productivity but also

promote positive mental states (i.e. “happiness”): there is substantial empirical evidence to support the everyday observation (clinical and otherwise) that working people are “happier” at work than when idle.¹⁰

*Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
All Religions Promote Hard Work*

The religious significance of hard work is most broadly and deeply emphasized in Protestantism. The central role that the “Protestant Ethic” played in the development of Capitalism was famously described by Max Weber in his 1905 landmark study.¹¹ We can appreciate the significance of Weber’s contribution without losing sight of the fact that all religions promote hard work. Many cross-cultural studies have established the presence of a work ethic outside traditional protestant culture. The Prophet Mohammed, for example, gives direct expression to the work ethic: “*He who neither worketh for himself, nor for others, will not receive the reward of God.*”¹²

*Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
The Birth of Organized Religion Coincides With
Emerging Need for Work on a Massive Scale*

The religious and social function of the work ethic is

reflected in its historical origins. Organized religion developed during the time period in which agriculture was invented (i.e., between 1,000 BC and 1,000 AD. The birth of organized religion coincides precisely with the emergence of a social need for cooperation – or “pro-social” behavior – on a massive scale. A population explosion occurred during this period in human history: the forms of social organization changed from foraging groups of individuals organized into Bands and Tribes into much larger groups of individuals organized into Chiefdoms” and States. Whereas the principal cause of death in Tribes and Chiefdoms is murder, forms of social cooperation (and organized religion) reduced the prevalence of violent death in States. ¹³

<u>Year</u>	<u>Society</u>	<u>Individuals</u>
100,000 – 10,000 BC	Bands	10 – 100
8,000 – 3,000 BC	Tribes	100 – 1000
3,000 – 1,000 BC	Chiefdoms	1000 – 10,000
1,000 BC – 1000 AD	States	10,000 – 100,000
1000 AD – Present	Empires	> 100,000

States and empires precipitated and developed forms of religion that reflected the new social and political environment. Whereas bands and small tribes possess supernatural beliefs, these beliefs do not serve to justify central authority and cooperation between large groups of individuals, the transfer of wealth, or the maintenance of peace between unrelated individuals. Organized religion – by emphasizing hard work, maintaining intra-group peace between unrelated individuals, and codification of the principle of proportionality (i.e., codification of the innate moral precept that work should be rewarded) - performs each of the aforementioned social functions.

*The Role of Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
The Work Ethic is Subject of the Earliest Extant Work
of Western Literature (and Religion) Whose
Authorship is Definitively Known*

In the 6th Century BC - as individuals began organizing themselves into the “states” described above – the earliest works of Western Literature were written. One such book was entitled *Works and Days*, by Hesiod. While some scholars believe *Works and Days* to be the oldest work in Western Literature, all scholars agree that it is the earliest extant work of Western Literature whose authorship is

definitively known.¹⁴

Works and Days is an elaboration of the moral precept that Work Should be Rewarded. The fact that it is among the oldest works of Western Literature reflects the centrality and relevance of the principle that it elaborates with respect to subsequent individual and social development.

It is relevant to observe in this context that the term “*should*” is a verb that is used to indicate obligation, duty, or correctness, i.e., a desirable, expected, or *just* state of affairs. As described below, for Hesiod - and the civilization that he anticipated - work *is* Justice.

*The Role of Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
Work as Dispensation of Existential Justice*

For Hesiod (and the civilization that evolved in his wake) work constitutes justice in two respects. In its most fundamental respect work constitutes Justice in the sense that work is an existential fact that has been rendered necessary by the universe, i.e., it is a fact that we must work in order to survive. Hesiod explains this fact in theological terms: Zeus – the God who incarnated the principle of Justice – decreed that work constituted dispensation of justice for theft. (The specific theft involved a criminal named Prometheus. Prometheus stole

fire from Zeus and made it available to humans). Humans might think it unfair that all human beings are being punished for Prometheus' crime, but it is not for us to decide. The Gods – i.e., a way of conceptualizing forces that govern the universe and that are by definition beyond our control – have decreed that work constitutes dispensation of Justice.

But while work constitutes universal dispensation of justice, and while – in its original incarnation – work was devised as a sentence that applied to all humans in response to crime perpetrated by Prometheus, our work and our lives need not be experienced as a kind of prison sentence.

For Hesiod it is not our fate as decreed by the Gods that is pivotal, but rather our attitude towards our fate. *Our attitude and response to the existential fact that we need to work will determine the quality of our lives.* The human condition is defined by the fact that we need to work. If we accept that work is the fate that has been allotted to mankind, we can flourish within the parameters that have been set for us. While unremitting labor will remain our lot – and while we will never be free from various kinds of suffering – if we accept (i.e., do not try to escape our fate by avoiding work) we will flourish with the human limits that are assigned to us. In essence, Hesiod's message is that

there is hope. Hope is derived from the flourishing (i.e. the reward) that comes from accepting the fate (i.e.) that is appropriate to our proper role/station in the universe.¹⁵

*The Role of Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
Work as Guarantor of Social Justice*

But the original relationship between work and justice is broader: work not only constitutes the just relationship between individual human beings and forces over which it has no control (i.e., the Gods), Hesiod also explains that work also maintains justice between human beings. People who accept their fate and work are not only acting justly in relation to the Gods (i.e. in accordance with their proper role in relation to the Gods). Such persons are also acting justly in relation to other people.

In the absence of work, according to Hesiod, humans behave as animals: they have no justice and nothing prevents them from devouring each other. If Zeus's justice means that humans must toil in the fields for their living, at least they thereby manage to nourish themselves in some way other than by eating their fellow men. Work contains

human aggression (or “strife”) by ensuring that such aggression is expressed in a manner that does not lead to destruction.

The same willingness to acknowledge divine justice that expresses itself in labor by adaptation to the rules of non-human nature also manifests in social intercourse. By following the rules that govern the morally acceptable modes of competition and collaboration with other individuals, we can live a just life.¹⁶

Two types of strife animate humankind: the first is “much better for men” insofar as it rouses us to work. The second type of strife culminated in the crime that served as the impetus for Zeus’ dispensation of work as justice. Prometheus was a thief: he *stole*, rather than *earned*, the goods that he sought. A moral corrective (i.e., work as justice) is dispensed to all humanity in response to Prometheus’ crime. *By working for what we want – rather than stealing, fighting, or killing for what we want – we are not only accepting a universal/existential moral corrective but also ensuring that our relationship with other human beings is predicated upon pro-social behavior, i.e., cooperation, hard work, and social cohesion.* Work not only constitutes existential justice but also promotes

social justice by providing individuals with a pro-social means of survival.

*The Role of Morality, Religion, Ethics and Ideology:
Sisyphus Sought Reward without Work and is
Punished by Work without Reward*

Ancient Greek mythology vividly illustrates religious expression of the innate moral principal that work should be rewarded. While the image of Sisyphus's punishment (characterized by perpetually unsuccessful attempts to roll a boulder up a hill) is frequently referenced,¹⁷ the crime for which Sisyphus is being perpetually punished is much less well-known. Sisyphus repeated a series of acts that were criminal to the extent sense that they violated the work ethic. Sisyphus sought to avoid work by means of those behaviors that Hesiod remonstrated against, i.e., he sought rewards not by working but by means of deceit. The myth



elegantly expresses the dangers associated with seeking

reward without work. Sisyphus' punishment fits the crime: whereas Sisyphus sought reward without work, Sisyphus is sentenced to eternal work without reward.

The Work Ethic as Nexus of American Political Ideology

While fairness is a universal human preoccupation, opinions diverge widely with respect to how fairness should be achieved. Ideological differences – i.e., differences in ideas that pertain to how society should be organized, in general, and how society should be organized in a manner that most conduces to fairness, in particular – reflect genetic variation that manifests in divergent moral matrices.¹⁸ While the work ethic is embedded in all moral matrices, moral matrices that equate fairness with what Haidt identifies as “proportionality” (i.e., that one should receive rewards that are proportionate to one's work) most explicitly emphasize the “work ethic”, individual responsibility for one's own situation, and the importance of ensuring that society is organized in a way that ensures that rewards will flow to those who work. Those who embrace notions of fairness that are imbued with proportionality are also most concerned with the “free rider” problem: the perennial problem - faced by all

societies – of what to do with individuals who seek rewards from society without contributing to work required to maintain that society’s prosperity. Persons whose moral matrix is so constituted tend to use the term “conservative” to describe their political inclinations. The term “work ethic” was originally coined by seventeenth century German political theorists who were concerned about the potential negative implications of expanding social welfare programs. Psychological studies demonstrate that attitudes and traits that correlate with a strong “work ethic” are found disproportionately among individuals who identify themselves as politically “conservative”.¹⁹

In a section of his book aptly titled “What I Had Missed” (page 194) Haidt describes “quite a few angry responses” that he had received from economic conservatives who believed that Haidt had misunderstood their morality. He writes that one such reader sent him an email with the subject line “Head up ass” in which the reader explained:

“I vote republican because I’m against other people ...taking my money (that I work hard for) and giving it to a non-producing, welfare collecting, single mother, crack baby producing future democrat. Simple... You’re an over educated “philosopher” with soft hands who gets paid to ask stupid question and come up with “reasonable” answers...Go drop some acid and read some Jung.”

Another angry reader posted his own list of the “top fifteen reasons that people vote Democrat.” His number one reason was “Low IQ”, but the rest of his list pertained specifically to the work ethic and perceived liberal violation of the work ethic:

- Laziness
- You want something for nothing
- You need someone to blame for your problems
- You’re afraid of personal responsibility or simply not willing to accept any.
- You despise people who work hard for their money, live their own lives, and don’t rely on the government for help cradle to grave.
- You’ve had 5 kids from 3 different men and you need the welfare check.

Wanting “something for nothing” is experienced as offensive to the extent that it violates an innate moral principle. The notion that one should “get something for nothing” is experienced as offensive because it confers rewards in the absence of work. “Laziness” (i.e. lack of an inclination to work hard) and lack of self-reliance (i.e., “blaming others for your problems”, failure to assume responsibility for one’s problems, relying on the government, etc) are also perceived as antithetical to this

innate moral principle.

The above described communications express a particular perspective on fairness. Whereas liberal ideology tends to equate fairness with equality, conservative notions of fairness focus on proportionality. For persons who identify themselves as “conservative”, “liberal” ideas, policies and programs are experienced as morally offensive to the extent that they violate the moral principle that people should be rewarded in proportion to their work. For “conservatives”, “entitlements” end up rewarding lazy and irresponsible behaviors (i.e. people whose behavior impresses them as inconsistent with the presence of a work ethic). A strong sense of proportionality leads to a passionate interest in ensuring that persons who do not work hard should suffer the consequences that naturally flow from the absence of hard work.

While the morality of persons who self-identify as “liberal” is also informed by an innate sense of proportionality, in “liberals” such concerns are overshadowed by a moral matrix that emphasizes care and compassion. Conversely, the conservative emphasis on proportionality can impress persons who identify as liberal as deeply offensive, for such an emphasis does not attend sufficiently to persons who are

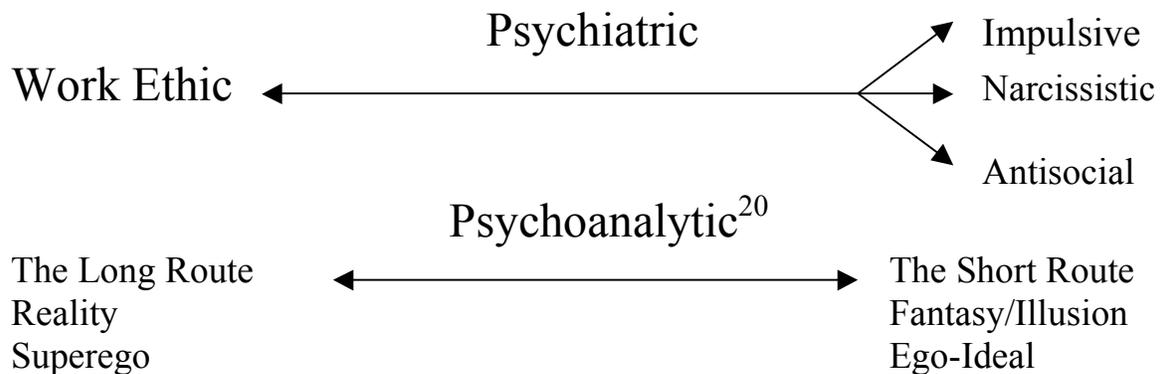
conceived of as deserving of compassion and care (those who are rendered incapable of working, for example). For “liberals”, the moral sense of fairness is bound up with notions of equality and is to this extent less informed by a sense of proportionality. Persons who identify as “liberal” tend to be less concerned about the “free rider” problem and more concerned about ensuring that all those who need care receive it. Persons who identify as “conservative”, on the other hand, are more concerned about the risk that ideas, policies, and programs that provide rewards based on need (rather than hard work) will ultimately reward persons who can work but choose not to (i.e., “free riders”). The risk of establishing such programs is that they will reward persons who don’t work, and, in so doing, corrode values that ultimately drive social and economic prosperity.

In summary, both “liberals” and “conservatives” are passionately concerned about fairness. For “liberals”, fairness tends to be equated with a concern for equality, caring, and compassion, while for “conservatives” fairness primarily relates to concerns about proportionality. As the “work ethic” maps to innate moral systems that relate more to proportionality than to care and compassion, it can be called a “conservative” ethic.

A profound dissonance has occurred in American culture in association with a fundamental misunderstanding of the moral matrix that drives the thinking of opposing ideological camps: liberal ideological “blindness” is associated with a tendency to underestimate (or even ignore) the dangers associated with the “free rider” problem¹¹ and leads liberals to misunderstand “conservative” inclinations such as the moral significance of proportionality to working class and rural voters. Conservative ideological “blindness”, on the other hand, leads to a tendency to ignore important causes of social and economic problems such as unemployment and poverty. Whereas liberal ideology blinds adherents to the dangers of ignoring exhortations that emphasize hard work and individual responsibility, conservative ideology blinds adherents to the reality that social problems (and the suffering associated with) poverty, illness, and unemployment are not always reducible to deficits in individual responsibility. Such ideologies also “blind” by “binding” adherents to like-minded adherents: ideological “liberals” and ideological “conservatives” risk blindness to the “wisdom” that resides in the moral matrix that constitutes the moral foundations of the opposing group’s ideology.¹²

Psychiatric and Psychoanalytic Diagnosis: Locating the Work Ethic in Contemporary Paradigms

Work's role as differentiator between antisocial and pro-social patterns of psychological development and behavior is implicitly embedded in the diagnostic paradigms that are employed by modern Physicians and mental health professionals.



In Psychiatric nosology the work ethic is implicitly regarded as the norm. Attitudes and behaviors are pathological to the extent that they reflect an insufficiently developed or distorted expression of the relationship that normally prevails between reward and work. Three pathological expressions of this relationship are embedded within the prevailing diagnostic system (i.e., the DSM-5): Narcissistic Personality Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder, and disorders of impulse control. In narcissistic

pathology, the principle is violated insofar as the narcissist feels unreasonably entitled to rewards (i.e., he or she is expectant of rewards in the absence of, or disproportionate to, his work). The behavior elaborated by the antisocial individual closely conforms to behaviors that Hesiod remonstrated against: he or she seeks rewards through theft (sometimes requiring violence or threatened violence) and deceit. The impulsive individual violates the principle in ways also inveighed against by Hesiod: he or she cannot defer gratification to an extent that is typically required by institutions and structures that facilitate work.

The Decoupling of Work and Reward

“Idleness and lack of occupation tend - nay are dragged – towards evil.” - Hippocrates

The critical functions served by the relationship of work to reward are most conspicuously evident in situations where the relationship is absent, i.e., in situations where work and reward have been decoupled. There is a high level of risk that psychological and social dysfunction will occur in direct association with any situation in which rewards are derived in the absence of work. Such systems and structures include:

- Inherited Wealth²¹
- Gambling, in general²²
- Lottery, in particular²³
- Systems of Compensation that are Not Contingent on Productive Activity²⁴;
- “Resource Curse”/“Paradox of Plenty”²⁵

While the dysfunction that occurs in association with the above listed phenomena cannot be reduced to a single explanation, in each situation the dispensation of rewards in the absence of work leads to a state of individual or social deregulation. In his classic study, Emile Durkheim describes insufficient regulation of appetites as a primary driver of suicide:

“When the void created by existence...is filled, the animal, satisfied, asks nothing further. Its power of reflection is not sufficiently developed to imagine other ends than those implicit in its physical nature...This is not the case with man, because most of his needs are not dependent on his body or not to the same degree...appetites sooner or later reach which they cannot pass. But how (to) determine the quantity of well-being, comfort, or luxury legitimately craved by a human being? Nothing appears (in man’s constitution) which sets a limit on such tendencies.”²⁶

In the animal model referenced above (see “*In Nature Work is Not a ‘Cost’*,”), the animal whose work provides

him with the food that he desires is satiated. In humans a very different situation prevails: gratification of appetites tends to stimulate the production of yet more appetites. Appetites consistently gratified in the absence of work become “impatient of control”. Such appetites are unbounded by the limits that would otherwise be conferred by a system that tethers rewards to work.

*(Appetites have constantly increased since the beginning of history)...it is not human nature which can assign the variable limits necessary to our needs. They are thus unlimited so far as they depend on the individual alone. Irrespective of any external regulatory force, our capacity for feeling is in itself an insatiable and bottomless abyss.”*²⁷

As referenced above, animals are innately “programmed” to work and are satisfied when their appetites are gratified by the rewards conferred by work. For human individuals and human society, work is the regulatory force that assigns necessary limits to our needs.

Work & Reward as Psychological and Social Regulator

“...the workman is not in harmony with his social position if he is not convinced that he has his desserts. ..”

“human activity can (not) be released from all restraint (without incurring morbidity). Nothing in the world can enjoy such a privilege. All existence...depend(s) not only on itself but on other beings, who consequently restrain and regulate it...”

“The less limited one feels, the more intolerable all limitation appears.”

- Emile Durkheim²⁸

Although the discipline of Sociology was established by Weber in his path breaking study of the Work Ethic, the work of another founder of Sociology is also essential to an understanding of the relevance of the work-reward relationship. Emile Durkheim systematically elaborated upon the consequences of disruption of the work-reward relationship in his classic study of Suicide. Durkheim sought to explain the “enormous (suicide) rate of those with independent means” and his observation that the “possessors of the most comfort suffer the most.” In the person compelled to work, the “necessary effort for sustaining a little more discomfort costs ... relatively little, since he is used to discomfort and constraint. But when every constraint is hateful in itself, how can closer

constraints not seem intolerable?”

“The enormous (suicide) rate of those with independent means...sufficiently shows that the possessors of the most comfort suffer most...Those who have only empty space above them are almost inevitably lost in it, if no force restrains them.”²⁹

The individual – absent constraints conferred by work- has limited means by which his or her desires may be constrained. In animals, appetites are automatically constrained by physiological mechanisms. But since most individual human beings have no way of limiting their desires, this function must be performed by a force that is exterior. A regulative force – i.e., work - must play the same role for moral needs which the organism plays for physical needs.

“Men would never consent to restrict their desires if they felt justified in passing the assigned limit. But...they cannot assign themselves this law of justice. So they must receive it from an authority which they respect, to which they yield spontaneously... society alone can play (this role). (Society) alone has the power necessary to stipulate law and to set the point beyond which the passions

*must not go. Finally, (society) alone can estimate the reward to be prospectively offered to every class of human functionary... ”*³⁰

The presence of work can allow the individual to regulate his or her appetite by providing rewards that are construed by the individual as just. Such a system regulates the individual by insulating him from the state of normlessness and agitation that would otherwise prevail. Social systems that justly reward work provide the individual with what Durkheim called “average contentment” and, in so doing, perform a critical regulatory function for the individual and society.

“(The) relative limitation and the moderation (that work) involves, make men contented with their lot while stimulating them moderately to improve it; and this average contentment causes the feeling of calm, active happiness, the pleasure in existing and living which characterizes health for individuals for societies as well as individuals. Each person is then at least, generally speaking, in harmony with his condition, and desires only what he may legitimately hope for as the normal reward of his activity. . .He may seek to give beauty to his life; but his attempts in this direction may fail without causing him to despair. For,

*loving what he has and not fixing his desire solely on what he lacks, his wishes and hopes may fail of what he has happened to aspire to, without his being wholly destitute. He has the essentials. The equilibrium of his happiness is secure because it is defined, and a few mishaps cannot disconcert him.”*³¹

Durkheim’s findings imply that social conditions promote mental health to the extent that they mirror innate principles of work and reward embedded in the individual.

References, Notes, Amplifications & Explorations

¹ For a highly accessible and broadly based discussion of the foundations of morality from the perspective of a moral psychologist and cultural anthropologist, See Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided about Politics and Religion* (2012).

² See Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* (2002); Donald Brown *Human Universals* (1991), and David Brooks *The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement* (2011).

³ The “surface” universal of behavior and overt language that forms the basis of what we refer to as “The Work Ethic” is described in the ethnographic literature as “Reciprocal Exchange of Labor, Goods, and Services” or as “Reciprocity, positive”. See also Donald Brown’s *Human Universals*.

⁴ The phenomenon whereby animals will work for “earned” food even though “free” food is readily available is called “Contrafreeloading”. A functional explanation for such behavior can be found in Inglis, IR, Forkman B, and Lazarus J, “Free Food or Earned Food? A Review and Fuzzy Model of Contrafreeloading”. *Animal Behavior*, 1997 June; 53(6): 1171-91.

⁵ Economists refer to this problem as “Adaptation”: As people get used to gratifying more material wants, their idea of a what level of gratification is sufficient grows with their income. They are to this extent “trapped” by desire. For an Economic perspective on this problem, see the works of London School of Economics professor Richard Layard, as reflected in *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science*, (Penguin, 2011). For an extensive reflection on the philosophical implications of this problem, see Arthur Schopenhauer’s *The World and Will and Representation* (1844). This problem is also addressed in texts reflecting the teachings of the world’s great religious leaders, and is a

pervasive theme in the teachings of the Buddha. Schopenhauer reached his conclusions independently – i.e., prior to becoming familiar with Buddhism. In his later years he made the following statement when discussing religions: “If I wished to take the results of my philosophy as the standard of truth, I should have to concede to Buddhism pre-eminence over the others. In any case, it must be a pleasure to me to see my doctrine in such close agreement with a religion that the majority of men on earth hold as their own... And this agreement must be yet the more pleasing to me, inasmuch as *in my philosophizing I have certainly not been under its influence* [emphasis added]. For up till 1818, when my work appeared, there was to be found in Europe only a very few accounts of Buddhism.”

⁶ Salamone, JD, et al. “Effort-Related Functions of Nucleus Accumbens Dopamine and Associated Forebrain Circuits”. *Psychopharmacology* (2007) 191:661-482. See also Floresco, S. et al, “Mesocortical Dopamine Modulation of Executive Functions: Beyond Working Memory”, *Psychopharmacology* (2006) 188:567-585.

⁷ Wolf, Thom. “Progress-Prone versus Progress-Resistant Societies: Mariano Grondona’s Paradox and A Cultural

Typology of Human Development.” (2010) Lecture to Finance and Budget Academy of the Finance Ministry of the Russian Federation. “Argentinean sociologist and macroeconomist Mariano Grondona developed a cultural typology to analyze what he painfully called his country’s disappointing history. He presented his Cultural Typology of Economic Development’ as a clarification of his conclusion: The paradox of economic development is that economic values are not enough to ensure it...The values accepted or neglected by a nation fall within the cultural field. We may thus say that economic development is a cultural process. Grondona was mindful that his conclusions were controversial in the midst of the cultural relativism prevalent in the thinking of so many—the view that all cultures are essentially equal and all comparative value judgments are equally invalid. But as he pointed out, the fact remains that some cultures show themselves to be resiliently progress-prone while others are persistently progress-resistant.”

⁸ Ibid.

⁹For an interesting demonstration of this phenomenon in see Hsee et al. Idleness Aversion and the Need for Justifiable Busyness. *Psychological Science* 21(7) 926–930

¹⁰ For a highly readable account of these studies – and a

proposed explanation for - why people are happier at work
– see *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, by
Mihaly Csikszentmihaly, 2008.

¹¹Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism* (1905). Penguin, 2002.

¹²Furnham, A., Bond, M., Heaven, P. , Hilton, D. , Lobel, T., & Masters, J. (1992). A comparison of Protestant Work Ethic beliefs in thirteen nations. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 133(2), 185-197. Also Niles, F. S. (1999). Toward a cross-cultural understanding of work-related beliefs. *Human Relations*, 52 (7), 7-18.

¹³Diamond, Jared. *Guns Germs and Steel*. 1997.

¹⁴Hesiod. *Works and Days*. Volume I of Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2006. Edited and Translated by Glenn Most.

¹⁵ Ibid. Dr. Most's introduction to Hesiod's *Works and Days* is indispensable.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷ Camus, A. 1955. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*. Vintage. See also Arieli, Dan et al: *Man's Search for*

Meaning: The case of Legos. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 67 (2008), 671-677.

¹⁸Haidt, Jonathan. (2012) *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*.

¹⁹Furnham, A. (1990). *The Protestant work ethic: The psychology of work-related beliefs and behaviours*. London: Routledge.

²⁰ Chasseguet-Smirgel, Janine. *The ego ideal: a psychoanalytic essay on the malady of the ideal* translated by Paul Barrows ; introduction by Christopher Lasch. 1st American ed. (English version of *Idéal du moi*. New York : W.W. Norton, 1985, c1984. xvi, 271 p. ; 23 cm

²¹ For a series of particularly poignant narratives reflecting the experience of inheritors, see The Inheritance Project.com. See “Why Inheritors Need to Work”, Parts I through IV, accessible through this website.

²² Schull, Natasha Dow. *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas*. (2013) Princeton University Press.

²³ Hankins, et al. (2009) *The Ticket to Easy Street? The Financial Consequences of Winning the Lottery*. Vanderbilt

Law and Economics Research Paper, March 2010.

“Results show that although recipients of \$50,000 to \$150,000 are 50% less likely to file for bankruptcy in the two years after winning relative to small winners, they are equally more likely to file three to five years afterward.” For serial accounts of the extremely negative outcomes facing Lottery Winners, see “Why Lottery Winners Go Bankrupt”, Wall Street Journal, March 24, 2011. “Callie Rogers blew a 2003 U.K. lottery jackpot of \$3 million on shopping, cocaine, friends and breast augmentation and told reporters two years ago she was working as a maid. William "Bud" Post squandered his 1988 Pennsylvania prize of more than \$16 million on houses, vehicles and bad businesses before going bankrupt and serving time for firing a shotgun at a bill collector before his death in 2006. Are these outcomes rare? A recent study of Florida lottery winners suggests no.”

²⁴ Of particular relevance to psychiatrists are social systems and institutions that have been established to ensure the economic security of individuals who have been rendered incapacitated by the presence of severe mental illness. To the extent that such systems are predicated upon a prospective beneficiary’s capacity to demonstrate illness and impairment – rather than on the individual’s capacity to

engage in productive activity despite illness and impairment— such systems disrupt the work-reward relationship. Such systems are invariably associated with very high rates of iatrogenic illness and dysfunction.

Systems that disrupt the work-reward relationship - such as systems that compensate individuals in association with the individual's capacity to demonstrate illness and impairment - were established to protect individuals from the economic consequences of disease-based impairment. Such systems can conduce to the production of psychiatric problems that arise independently of – and that are frequently more problematic than – the dysfunction associated with the disorder that they were designed to address. Such systems deprive individuals of the critical regulatory function that is typically conferred by participation in regular, complex, goal-directed activity in accordance with parameters established by an authority. The negative consequences that are typically associated with such separation are in part attributable to the loss of work's regulatory function.

²⁵ The resource curse, also known as the paradox of plenty, refers to the paradox that countries and regions with an abundance of natural resources, specifically point-source non-renewable resources like minerals and fuels, tend to have less economic growth and worse development outcomes than countries with fewer natural resources.

²⁶Durkheim, Emile. (1897) *On Suicide*. The above described situation was identified by Durkheim because it explained *anomic* suicide, in particular, and extreme variation in the rates of suicide among different social groups, more generally.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Ibid.