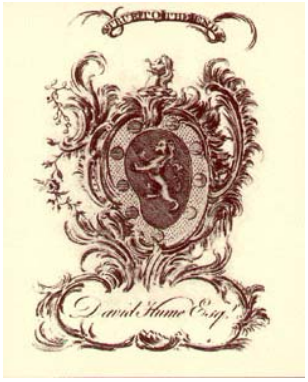

David Hume on Reason, Passions and Morals
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DAVID HUME ON REASON, PASSIONS AND MORALS

Perhaps the most notorious passage in Hume's Treatise is the one that concerns the relative roles of reason and passions, where he says: *Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions* (T 415).[1] This psychology of action is the foundation of Hume's moral theory, wherein we find his two other notorious dicta, one being *Moral distinctions cannot be derived from reason*, and the other, *Ought cannot be derived from is*. Many commentators have interpreted Hume as saying that reason plays no role in the making of moral judgments, and, while not taking the rationalistic line, criticized him for not giving reason its proper due. The aim of this paper is to show that Hume's primary concern is to argue against the rationalist position which takes reason to be sufficient (always or sometimes) to move one to act, and to give rise to moral judgments. I wish to show that Hume is only concerned with dismissing the claim that reason could be a sufficient condition, not that it is a necessary one. Indeed, Hume could be interpreted as saying that reason is no less important than passions in shaping human conduct, and in the area of moral conduct, there can be no moral judgments without the work of reason. At the same time, however, passions remain the prime mover; reason does not move us to act (generally, hence morally). I shall try to show that the dictum 'Moral distinctions cannot be derived from reason' is essentially correct, but its being correct in no way shows that reason is not a necessary element of moral distinctions.

I

Before discussing the views of some critics of Hume's moral theory, it is important to clear up one source of misunderstanding that lies in Hume's discussion of the psychology of action. When Hume says that reason is the slave of passions, he does not say thereby that reason is unimportant. He is saying merely that reason alone does not move one to act. The force that propels one to action is the passion, whether it be love, or anger, or pride, or envy, or fear, or desire. Reason alone does not provide the motive. However, it is reason that does the groundwork, analyzing facts, perceiving relations, and drawing conclusions, all of which go to determine which action to perform, but the action will not be performed unless one of the passions is also present. Just because reason is the slave does not indicate that its work is not relevant. To extend the slavery metaphor, we may observe that slave owners supported slavery for the very reason that the slave's work was found indispensable; analogously, it must be observed that Hume is most unlikely to hold that reason plays no part in human action. To complete the analogy, we should say that while much could be achieved with slaves, it was the masters who conceived the plan, and the masters must rank higher in the causal order. We may observe further that greater achievement could be had by treating slaves properly, not overworking them, and not ill-treating them. If reason is the slave, it will be in our interest to cultivate it, sharpen it, and use it always and to the full. This could be inferred from Hume's discussion of the understanding in Book 1 of the Treatise. Indeed, in the conclusion of Book I, Hume points out forcefully that we contradict ourselves if we hold that *no refin'd or elaborate reasoning is ever to be*

receiv'd (T 268). For it is only through reasoning that we arrive at any such conclusion. He goes on to say: *Very refin'd reflections have little or no influence upon us; and yet we do not, and cannot establish it for a rule, that they ought not to have any influence; which implies a manifest contradiction* (T268). There cannot be a clearer demonstration that it is not the case that Hume fails to give reason its proper due. Later, I shall cite further evidence for this in relation specifically to the role of reason in moral judgments.

Hume's psychology of action is not without its critics. J.L. Mackie claims to have discovered a phenomenon which 'Hume does not notice, and which literally falsifies his thesis that reason alone cannot be opposed to passions.' [2] According to Mackie, we may reason that, for instance, alcohol is bad for our health in the long term and refrain from drinking out of a desire to be healthy, but faced with a present urge to have a drink, we may dismiss the belief 'by a psychological trick of unconscious rationalisation' (ibid.) Here, Mackie claims, we have a situation where two passions unite to oppose reason.

Now I completely fail to see why this, admittedly common, phenomenon falsifies Hume's thesis. If anything, it strengthens it. It shows clearly that no belief, no matter how well-founded, can override a passion. I suspect that Mackie's use of the word 'oppose' is not the same as Hume's. Mackie seems to take 'oppose' to mean 'in conflict with,' whereas by 'oppose' Hume means 'override the influence (of a passion).' Reason cannot oppose passions in the sense that it prevents a person from acting out of desire, or fear, or anger... Hume rejects the posssibility that one follows one's head and not one's heart: we always follow our hearts. Mackie's 'unconscious rationalisation' is also, contrary to what he thinks, a support

of Hume's thesis. When we follow our hearts, we often marshal reason to rationalize our actions. This process of rationalisation may take two steps, firstly dismissing all previous beliefs which may be contrary to the present action, and secondly discovering or concocting new beliefs supportive of the present action. In Mackie's example, the agent first dismisses the belief that drinking is harmful to one's long-term health, and next adopts the belief that there is no connection between alcohol and health, or even the belief that an occasional drink is beneficial. Being a slave, we can make reason do this kind of work. It is precisely this that explains Hume's assertion that nothing we do is contrary to reason in that well-known passage where we find statements beginning with *'Tis not contrary to reason.*

Mackie also believes that there is a rival psychology of action according to which what moves us to perform an action is not a desire but a rational perception that the action is fitting, 'the perception of a fitness which in itself necessarily requires the action in question' (p. 48). He attributes this view to Samuel Clarke and claims that 'it is a theory that has some basis in our ordinary ways of speaking' (ibid.). However, as stated by Mackie, the theory is unconvincing. The perception of the fitness of an action is clearly influential, but if we perform the action, we must do so because, at the very least, we want to do what is fitting. As we shall see later, Mackie elsewhere admits this much. We shall see that Hume maintains that it is one thing to admit that an action is right, it is another to proceed to doing it. It is true that in our ordinary ways of speaking, we often gloss over the underlying desire, taking it to be obvious, but if we pay close attention, we will see that it is always present. We do often say 'Because it

is right' if asked why we did something. But this is not the whole answer. The questioner can, if he or she wants to, persist by asking 'So what?' In the end, the only answer that satisfies is 'Because I want to.' Notice that once this reply is given, it is unreasonable to question the agent any further.

II

I turn now to Hume's moral theory proper. Hume's critics generally advance two points: (i) We do occasionally, if not commonly, arrive at a moral judgment by reasoning, and (ii) A moral judgment thus arrived can influence actions. I shall consider the first in this section.

D.D. Raphael clearly thinks that at least some moral judgments are based on reason. He thinks that (i) above is true even if (ii) is not.[3] More specifically, Raphael takes the structure of Hume's argument to be as follows:

1. Morality influences actions.
2. Reason does not move one to act.
3. It follows that morality is not based on reason.

According to Raphael, premise (1) is likely to be false, as it is likely that some moral judgments do not lead to actions. Thus, argues Raphael, even if we accept Hume's psychology of action (premise (2)), we could still deny premise (1). He says that 'Hume's argument is invalid quite apart from the doubtfulness of his premise (2)' (p. 49). He goes on to say:

> I can judge an action to be right without necessarily performing it... Even if Hume has proved his premise (2), he has proved that reason is not the moral faculty only in the sense in which 'moral faculty' means the faculty moving us to moral action, not in the sense in which

> it means the faculty that discerns the morality of action (ibid.).

It is, however, clear from this passage that Raphael has failed to show that 'Hume's argument is invalid.' For Hume can very well agree that 'I can judge an action to be right without necessarily performing it.' What Hume insists is that it takes more than reason to judge an action to be right. Whether or not we go on to emulate the action we have judged to be virtuous is a different matter, and Hume's argument does not depend on it. The fact that we may not perform a just act does not show that (1) above is false. To prove that it is false, Raphael has to show that the judgment in question is a moral judgment, and further, that reason alone can help us reach it. It is not sufficient to show that we can praise an action without emulating it, or condemn one without trying to avoid doing it. What has to be shown is that reason alone can lead us to praising or blaming someone. To judge someone, i.e. praising or blaming that person, is to perform an action, and Hume says that we need more than reason to move us to doing it. What moves us to act generally is a passion, and what moves us to judge someone is a special kind of passion that Hume calls the moral sentiment. And what are more judgments, or distinctions, but expressions of the moral sentiments? To judge someone is to express a sentiment, so without it, we cannot judge. It is the moral sentiment that in a sense causes moral judgment to be made against someone. Without the moral sentiment, no moral judgments can ever be made. Reason can only tell us, for instance, that a man shows ingratitude towards his parents; it does not tell us to condemn the man. Reason can only distinguish between gratitude and ingratitude; it does not distinguish between good and evil. When we condemn the man, we make a moral

distinction. But we only condemn the man if we feel like doing it. It is in this sense that 'reason does not judge of right,' only of facts and relations.

Sensing that this would be an objection to his argument, Raphael later says, against Hume, that an element of right (or wrong) may be included in the facts or the relations, and it will arise from the cognition of the facts and relations, i.e. from reason (p. 60). Thus, using my example above, Raphael would say that an element of wrongness is included in the fact of ingratitude; if reason could discern this fact, it must be said that reason could discern wrongness. Now, it could well be true that an element of right or wrong is "included" in certain facts and relations, but it does not follow that when we make a statement concerning those facts and relations, we thereby make a moral judgment. It is well-known and accepted that certain facts and relations are, so to speak, value-loaded, but to judge of them does not imply judging the value therein. Of course, we have to be very careful to guard against a wrong imputation. People often say things such as 'I'm only telling you as it is; I'm not making any moral (or value) judgment,' just for this purpose. The fact that A killed B, or that a man shows ingratitude towards his parents, is laden with serious moral implications, but to say that A has committed an act of killing, or shows ingratitude, is not to judge that A's action is immoral, at least not yet. Admittedly, to say any such thing is to come very close to making a moral judgment against A. But without a moral sentiment, whatever that is, we do not have a moral judgment. People who enter the caveat 'I'm not making any moral judgment' are indicating precisely that they are not expressing any such sentiment in their judgment of the fact. It is a mistake then to say that one has made a moral judgment when all that

one has done is to make a judgment concerning certain value-loaded facts.

A somewhat similar mistake is often made elsewhere, in metaphysics. Certain statements have strong existential implications; we might say that they are "ontologically loaded." There is a tendency to equate the making of these statements with the making of an ontological commitment. But to do so would be a mistake, one that has prompted Quine to devise a formula to help keep our tendency in check: 'To be is to be the value of a variable.'[4] Quine draws a distinction between linguistic facts and ontological attitudes, a distinction that is reminiscent of Hume's fact-value distinction. The fact is, as Russell and Quine have pointed out, that statements can be meaningful without referring to anything. A person can play with linguistic objects to his or her heart's content without embracing any ontology that might be said to be "included" or "inherent" in the objects. We can tell stories about Pegasus without committing ourselves to its existence. Of course, with certain linguistic entities, the ontological implication can be strong, and the game can be dangerous. One has to be very careful, for instance, in handling the item "God." These days, we have quite happily accepted the Russell-Quine doctrine, and do not see ontological commitments in statements employing certain linguistic entities. We now accept that we only commit ourselves when we specifically give the variable a value. What we have <u>not</u> so happily accepted is that there is no <u>ethical</u> commitment in a statement of fact, that the only way we can commit ourselves is when we explicitly give an ethical value to a factual variable. Yet, the two cases are parallel, and I submit that the logic in both cases is the same, and similarly compelling. Hume's distinction is no less valid that Quine's. And

Quine's formula, to be is to be the value of a variable, can be seen as a general formula, valid in the case of ontological commitments as well as in the case of ethical commitments. Raphael's claim that 'Hume allows that reason judges of fact, but has failed to provide that it may also judge of right,' is not to the point. The onus of proof is on Raphael to show how exactly reason judges of right. His claim earlier that certain facts and relations "include" an element of right does not do the job, as I have clearly shown.

Further support for Hume's case can be gained from the current debate on artificial intelligence. According to John Haugeland, the 'trouble with artificial intelligence is that computers doen't give a damn.'[5] Haugeland points out that although a computer could be programmed to perform complicated calculations, to play chess, to arrange facts and figures in certain ways, etc., it does not care about the outcome, is not proud of its ability, is not ashamed of its limitations, does not fear the social implications of its presence. It does not have passions. A computer is good at judging facts and relations, but lacking passions, nothing it does is moral or immoral. It can even be said that the "real" achievements are not those of the computer. As Ned Block says, the computer is only a 'conduit of intelligence,' and the computer itself has 'the intelligence of a toaster.'[6] If Block is right then, unless we give the computer the passions of a programmer translated into if-then statements that computers can process, such as, if an action is performed in such and such circumstances then it is virtuous, the computer can never judge of right. But programmed with a human's passions, the computer's judgment is necessarily that of the programmer. Generally, a logical machine capable of high-speed reasoning can never act on its own because it lacks

passions, and specifically, it does not produce moral judgments and distinctions because it lacks that special kind of passion that Hume calls the moral sentiment.

My argument against Raphael applies equally to Mackie. Mackie says that we could deny that

> ...the state of mind which is the making of moral judgments and distinctions has, by itself, an influence on actions. We could say that just seeing that this is right and that is wrong will not tend to make someone do this or refrain from that (p. 54).

The first thing to note is that the making of a moral judgment cannot be a state of mind. While we are making a judgment, we are in a certain state of mind, but the two cannot be equated. However, we may let this pass. What Mackie wants to say in this passage is similar to what Raphael says above, that is, 'we could deny the intrinsic action-guidingness of moral judgments' (ibid.). But nothing will come of denying the "action-guidingness" of a moral judgment. A blame or a praise may or may not have any influence on further actions, and Hume never assumes that it has. It is worth pointing out that on the following page, Mackie makes a linguistic point about moral judgments:

> ...it is linguistically odd to use words like 'right' and 'wrong' with no prescriptive force - to say, for example, 'X is right and Y is wrong, but of course it is entirely up to you whether you prefer what is right to what is wrong.'

This seems to contradict his earlier denial of the intrinsic action-guidingness of moral judgments. Hume, or course, does not see anything odd in this: while it may not be up to us to prefer to do what is right, we can only bring ourselves to doing it if directed strongly enough by a relevant passion, such as wanting

to do what is right. Mackie, as we shall see later, has conceded this point.

III

Naturally, the moral rationalists do not just want to say that reason can discern moral distinctions, that moral judgments can be derived from reason alone. They want to say also that moral judgments thus derived can guide or influence further actions. Reason can make us judge that X is the right action, and it is this judgment that can make us perform X; transitively, it is reason that sometimes at least makes us perform a right action. It is not clear whether Mackie wants to endorse this tough-minded rationalism, but he does say that so long as someone does endorse it, Hume's theory is falsified, and since Samuel Clarke endorses it, Hume's theory is false. Thus:

> (If) Clarke, say, believes that there is a necessary fitness which requires him, in circumstances of kind X, to do Y, and also believs that the present circumstances are of kind X, will not these two beliefs together give Clarke a motive for doing Y? Even if Clarke's moral theory is false, the mere fact that he sincerely holds it is sufficient to falsify the strong premiss which Hume seems to be using here. It is evident that there can be sets of moral and factual beliefs which are, by themselves, motives to action (page 53).

This argument will not do for two reasons. First, Hume would happily accept that 'there can be sets of moral and factual beliefs which are, by themselves, motives to action.' This is because he also holds that moral beliefs are derived not from reason but from moral sentiments. It is a moral sentiment that makes me judge that action Y, in circumstances X, is virtuous. Having so judged, I have a moral belief (judgment)

about Y, and combined with a factual belief that the present circumstances are of kind X, the two will influence my behaviour, i.e. make me do Y. My doing Y then is not based on reason alone, it is based also on the moral sentiment that gave rise to the relevant moral belief, a sentiment that flows over, so to speak, to the actual performance of Y. Hume's theory has not been falsified. The second reason is that it is up to Clarke to explain why anyone should do Y simply because the present circumstances are of kind X, if he or she does not want to do Y *per se*, or to do what is right. Mackie cannot endorse Clarke's view and say at the same time, as he does on the following page, that 'just seeing that this is right and that is wrong will not tend to make someone do this or refrain from that: he must also want to do whatever is right' (emphasis original). In the end, it is difficult to deny that we do something because there is something that we want in doing it. This follows from Hume's psychology of action, as we have seen. Thus, to perform a (mental) action of judging that something is right, or the (physical) action of doing the right thing, requires a passion of some sort, a certain sentiment. It is this passion that truly explains a person's action in the way that 'Because it is right' does not. Hume would say that the passion is the terminus; it is where rationalisation of actions stops, in the sense that it would be unreasonable, or absurd as Hume says, to enquire further after someone has said 'Because I want to.' [7]

Mary Midgley has provided a rather interesting support for the position that I am here attributing to Hume.[8] Midgley equates "closed" instincts with a complex set of specific behavioural patterns, and "open" instincts with 'general desires and interests' (p. 332). She then argues that animals on 'higher

evolutionary scales,' having higher intelligence, require more and stronger open instincts to guide their intelligence. Thus, 'as you go up the evolutionary scale, much wider possibilities [for action] open. The more adaptable a creature is, the more directions it can go into. So it has more, not less, needs for definite tastes to guide it' (ibid.). Midgley's use of the word 'intelligence' is such that we can interpret it as the general power of reason. Thus, she is saying that general desires, or general passions, provide the motive for intelligence, or reason, in actions, or the ends towards which intelligent, rational, creatures project their actions. According to Midgley, it is precisely our passions - desires and interests in her terminology - that help us to discover what to do: 'The less firmly the next action is settled in advance [Hence the greater role for reason to settle what action to be done], the stronger must be the general desire that will lead to discovering it' (ibid.). Her examples drawn from the animal world give further support:

> More obviously still, mammals could not improve on the automatic brood-tending of bees merely by being more intelligent about what benefits infants. They have to want to benefit them. And they must want it more, not less, than bees, because they are so much freer, and could easily desert their infants if they had a mind to, which is the sort of thing that could simply never occur to a bee (ibid., emphasis original).

Quite apart from giving support to Hume's point that reason alone would be pointless without passions, Midgley's argument also provides some explanation of the origins of human passions. Our needs and desires, she says, are grounded in our human nature, or that set of instincts that regulates our whole pattern of life. Indeed, Midgley's program is to show that morality is

grounded in human nature. But this line of thought is decidedly Humean.[9] After all, it was Hume who said that our experimental (or practical) reasoning is *a species of instinct(s),*[10] and that we derive all our instincts from *the original hand of nature.*[11] Pure (as opposed to practical or experimental) reasoning too is derived from nature: *In so sagacious an animal, what necessarily arises from the exertion of his* (man's) *intellectual faculties may justly be esteemed natural.*[12]

We have seen then that Hume could easily accept the rationalist's claim that a moral judgment can influence an action. However, it does so only because the judgment itself was based on a moral sentiment. If it is treated like any other object in the world, stripped of the moral sentiment that gave rise to it in the first place, it can have no such influence. For Hume, having judged, there is a judgment, and the judgment itself is just an object in the world. This object alone or together with other facts cannot by themselves influence actions. If the underlying moral sentiment does not "flow over" (or does so in insufficient strength), as I argued above, the judgment together with other facts do not constitute a motive to action. Suppose some time ago, I was moved to judge that it was wrong to kill animals for meat. As a result, it must be included among the facts of the world that someone has judged that it is wrong to kill animals for meat, and the judgment itself must be included among the objects of the world. However, this fact, this object, can only influence my present behaviour if I still have the moral sentiment underlying it. If I no longer have that sentiment, if I no longer feel that it is wrong to kill animals for meat, the fact that someone has judged, that I once judged, to the contrary cannot prevent me from dissent-

ing from it now, let alone preventing me from eating meat.

Of course, the passion that is the moral sentiment that gives rise to a moral judgment (or belief) may not be sufficiently strong to motivate a person to act according to it. When it comes to actual behaviour, there may be other passions at work. I may like the taste of meat more than I dislike killing for meat. This is why Hume says: *'Tis one thing to know virtue, and another to conform the will to it* (T 465). In this connection, it is plain that Raphael has misunderstood Hume, claiming that Hume's argument against the rationalists 'depends on an absurd identification of obligation with causal necessity' (p. 61). The offending passage is the following:

> *'Tis one thing to know virtue, and another to conform the will to it. In order, therefore, to prove, that the measures of right and wrong are eternal laws, obligatory on every rational mind, 'tis not sufficient to shew the relations upon which they are founded: We must also point out the connexion betwixt the relation and the will; and must prove that this connexion is so necessary, that in every well-disposed mind, it must take place and have its influence* (T 465).

But there is another interpretation of the passage above that does not make Hume's argument depend on an 'absurd identification of obligation with causal necessity.' Thus, it can be said that Hume is merely saying that either obligation obligates in all cases, or it does not: If it does, it will lead to absurdities, e.g. it will obligate the will of the deity as well, but if it does not, it is up to the rationalists to explain why it fails to do so in some cases. Hume, of course, does have an explanation: A person does not do what is judged to be virtuous because the requisite passion, or moral sentiment, is lacking, or not strong enough. This explanation is not

available to the rationalists. We might note in passing that there is very little room for the notion of obligation in Hume's scheme of things.

IV

I began the discussion with a remark about Hume's psychology of action. I now bring the discussion to a close by returning to the role of reason. Hume is anxious to show that reason is not a sufficient condition for morality. There is no evidence to show that he wants to say that reason is not necessary. Everywhere we look, we find that Hume is careful to qualify his remarks about the role of reason by phrases such as 'of itself,' 'by itself,' 'in itself,' 'alone,' and so on. Some examples: 1. *Reason of itself is impotent...*, 2. *... if reason be inactive in itself, ...*, 3. *If the thought and understanding were alone capable of fixing the bounderies of right and wrong...*, 4. *Vice and virtue are not discoverable merely by reason* ((1), (2) and (3) from III i 1, and (4) from III i 2). In view of this, the title of one of the sections on Hume's moral theory in Raphael's book, 'Arguments Against Reason,' is misleading. Hume has nothing <u>against</u> reason, and does not hold that reason plays no part in morality. It would be a contradiction, Hume says, to rule that reason ought not to influence us. Indeed, Hume can be interpreted as saying that without reason, with which we arrange facts and relations, we cannot arrive at the moral judgment we finally arrive at. We may not arrive at any judgment at all. Since moral good and evil are, Hume says, *deriv'd from our situation with regard to external objects* (T 464), which judgment we are moved to make (by a moral sentiment) depends on how in the first place we arrange the facts and relations regarding those

external objects. To illustrate, consider the following facts:

> A young man has killed his father. He is in a desperate financial situation and the death of his father allows him to enjoy his inheritance.

From this we may reason that the man has killed his father for money, and only having so reasoned may we be moved (by a moral sentiment) to make a moral judgment against the man. But if our reason has not done its work, if it still has not allowed us to conclude that the man has killed for money, we may not have any moral judgment against the man, or any judgment at all. How could we judge if we still doubt that the man killed for money? How could we judge against him if we think that there is a possibility that he killed accidentally? Suppose further facts come to light: The father was now known to be suffering from terminal cancer. Reason might then help us conclude from these facts that it was a case of mercy killing. If so then we might be moved to praise the man instead. In this case as in others, without the work of reason, no judgment can be made.

Suppose a man fails to condemn what we think to be a bad act. But before we blame him for having so failed, we must first find out why. It could well be that his reason tells him that the facts are not as our reason tells us. If we are correct then he must have made an error of facts, and if so, Hume says, the man cannot be blamed for his failure. It is only after we have ascertained that our facts and his facts correspond can we blame his attitude. Here again, to blame a man who fails to condemn a bad act is to make a moral judgment against him. We can (or should?) only do so by first establishing by reason a matter of fact,

and that is whether he gets his facts about the said act in the same way as we do.

Reason could, of course, be made to work in a perverse way. It could well be that I passionately dislike the man in the first example, and such passion makes me arrange the facts and relations in such a way as to justify my condemnation of his act. Such passion could make me ignore the fact that his father was suffering from terminal cancer and any other fact that would not warrant the conclusion that he killed for money. Reason could be made to work in this perverse way because it is a slave.

Among the facts that our reason arranges are the moral judgments we make ourselves. Having judged, there is a judgment, and that judgment is just one of the objects in the world. We have seen that it can be combined with other facts to give rise to certain conclusions on the basis of which we may make further moral judgments, or act in other ways. My action of judging that the man's act of killing his father is immoral causes, or gives rise to, a judgment against the man; it is one of many such judgments. This object, my judgment, together with other facts, such as the fact that the police let him go scot free, may cause me, but only obliquely as Hume says, to make a further judgment that the police have acted wrongly. But I could only make this further judgment against the police if it concurs with my original passion, i.e. the moral sentiment that underlies my judgment about the killer, or some other passion. This is the only natural way of reading the following passage from the Treatise: *The action may cause a judgment, or may be obliquely caused by one, when the judgment concurs with a passion* (T 459, emphasis original).

If we accept the teleological view of human beings, we must accept that, in the end, there is

always something that we want in all our actions. At bottom, this is the passion that drives us forward. Sometimes, it is such a calm passion, as Hume would say, that we ignore that it is there. And if making moral distinctions is one of the things we do then it must be said that those distinctions are based on a passion of some sort. It must be said, in other words, that Hume's dictum, that moral distinctions cannot be derived from reason, is correct. At the same time, however, it is reason that guides and influences us in the making of these distinctions. Reason is the track on which the human train is running, passions the engine. Without passions, we go nowhere, but without reason, we go nowhere in particular.

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1. A Treatise of Human Nature (Selby-Bigge Edition).

2. J.L. Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p. 49.

3. D. Daiches Raphael, The Moral Sense (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 49.

4. W.V. Quine, 'On What There Is,' Review of Metaphysics, Vol. 2, 5(1948): 21-38), p. 32.

5. John Haugeland, 'Understanding Natural Language,' Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 76 (1979: 619-32), p. 619.

6. Ned Block, 'Psychologism and Behaviorism,' Philosophical Review, Vol. 90(1981: 5-43), p. 21-22.

7. An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Appendix 1, Section 244 (Selby-Bigge Edition), p. 293.

8. Beast and Man (Hassocks, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1979).

9. Curiously enough, Midgley lambasts Hume's psychology of action, saying that there 'is something comic in Hume's picture of Reason as the slave of the Passions' (p. 184).

10. An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, IX, 85 (Selby-Bigge Edition), p. 108).

11. Ibid.

12. An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Appendix III, 258 (Selby-Bigge Edition), p. 307).