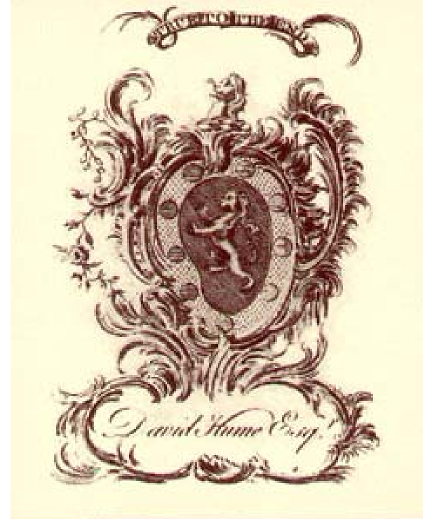

Locke, Hume and the Nature of Volitions

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LOCKE, HUME AND THE NATURE OF VOLITIONS

1. The concept of a volition plays a key role in the theories of mind that both Locke and Hume devise. It is central to the views each develops on the nature of action and of explanations of actions, on the character of practical reasoning, on the nature of desire, on the ways in which, most usefully, to categorize the several kinds of mental states and events. Without attending closely to their concepts of volition, one cannot get _quite_ clear about the views of each, and the considerations thought to support those views, on the vexed questions of free action and of responsibility. Whether it be Locke or Hume, then, there is good reason to scrutinize what he says of volitions.

Why take them together? The principal reason is that the views of each, when considered closely, throw a quite considerable light on those of the other (or so I hope to show). But there is a philosophical point as well. A theory of volitions more adequate than either proposes must borrow from each. What is amenable to being borrowed, and what ought to be borrowed, are fairly readily seen when the two theories are put face to face.

I concentrate on three central issues: the question whether volitions are thoughts; the relationship of volition to practical reasoning; the links between volitions and their effects. Hume's views on these topics are to be found chiefly in the _Treatise_ and the first _Enquiry_; Locke's, of course, in the _Essay_. Locke's recently published correspondence with the Dutch theologian Philippus van Limborch is, however, essential reading here, and I have made extensive use of it.[1]

2. Locke and Hume agree that volitions are indefinable psychological primitives that must be invoked in an analysis of voluntary action (T 399, EHU 69, E 249). They agree, too, in a number of the things that each says in his efforts to characterize volitions. They differ, however, on a fundamental point. Hume's volitions are 'internal impression[s]' (T 399); Locke's are 'thought[s] of the Mind' (E 235).

As internal impressions Humean volitions are feelings akin to, but not 'properly speaking' (T 399) instances of, passions.[2] They are like the 'direct passions' (desire and aversion, grief and joy, hope and fear) in two respects: they are 'immediate effects of pain and pleasure' (T 399); they are 'propense and averse motions of the mind' (T 574), and thus bear a special relation to action. Though they are not thoughts they have causal, thus contingent, links to thoughts, including in particular thoughts whose content specify the so-called 'immediate object of volition' (E 66). As 'distinct impression[s]' (T 625) volitions do not modify the thoughts of their objects in the logically intimate way in which, in Hume's view, the feeling essential to belief 'modif[ies] the conception' (T 625) of what is believed. Hume frequently compares volitions to commands (T 623, 629, 632; EHU 48, 64, 65, 67, 68). He also, not surprisingly, denies them truth values: because they are not capable of 'an agreement or disagreement either to the _real_ relations of ideas, or to _real_ existence and matter of fact' it is 'impossible ... they can be pronounced either true or false' (T 458; compare T 415).

Locke's volitions are thoughts, not feelings; and they have their own contents and objects. '[T]he proper and only object of the _will_', he writes, 'is some action of ours' (E 258); in forming a volition one

'wills to number', say, or 'wills to walk' (C 405). Locke never says as much, but his overall theory is best read as requiring volitions to be thoughts without truth values. He contrasts '<u>Will</u>' or 'the Power of Volition' with 'Understanding' or 'the Power of Thinking' (E 128). Since '<u>Volition</u>' is as much a '<u>Mode</u> ... <u>of</u> <u>thinking</u>' as is '<u>Reasoning</u>' or '<u>Judging</u>' (E 227), however, the contrast is most plausibly taken as one between thoughts that do and thoughts that do not purport to represent the way the world is. Locke's distinction, to be examined below, between volitions and 'last judgements of the understanding' suggests the same reading. So, too, does his likening of volitions to commands (C 327), orders (E 246, 284), decrees (C 328; E 283, 284) and directions (E 246, 282). Far more emphatically than does Hume, Locke contrasts volitions with desires and, more generally, the passions. The difference of stress is not surprising: Lockean desires and passions, just as Humean ones, are feelings; but Lockean volitions, once again, are thoughts.

On the central question whether volitions are thoughts or distinct impressions Locke is, surely, right. As Bruce Aune has convincingly argued,[3] there are three reasons to reject Hume's view: introspectively speaking, the purported distinct impressions seem to be fictions; they appear to be causally unnecessary adjuncts to voluntary movements; and it is difficult to see how their presence or absence could bear on the morally significant distinction between the voluntary and the involuntary. This is not to deny that certain feelings or sensations are characteristic of voluntary action, at least in certain settings. Hume writes of a feeling of '<u>nisus</u>, or strong endeavor' (E 67n). But as Hume himself notes this feeling must not be identified with volition: it is only felt when we 'exert our force' in the face of

resistance, whereas 'in common thinking and motion ... the effect follows immediately upon the will, without any exertion or summoning up of force' (E 67n). Such feelings, it seems, are better viewed as effects of volitions, or of volitions in the face of difficulty.[4]

Lockean volitions are immune to Anne's objections. Indeed, as our subsequent discussion will suggest, there is good reason to think that Lockean volitions are necessary both for a causal analysis of voluntary motion and for the making of the voluntary/involuntary distinction. Additionally, Lockean volitions have what is in the present context an especially interesting property: they are much better suited than are Hume's volitions to the possession of certain characteristics that both Locke and Hume assign to volitions. Less misleading than Hume, Locke can write of the objects of volition. More illuminatingly than Hume, he can construe volitions as analogous to commands. Having done that, of course, he has a straightforward way to articulate the idea that volitions do not take truth values. Hume's ostensible reason for this claim is that volitions are impressions, not ideas or thoughts. It is far preferable, however, to recognize that some thoughts do, while some do not, take truth values. It's a matter, in John Searle's words, of the 'direction of fit'.[5] Cognitive thoughts (as we may call them) purport to fit the world, and thus may be assessed as true or false; the point of conative thoughts is, roughly, that the world fit them. Cognitive thoughts are analogous to commands. One might hope to shed some light on this cognitive/conative contrast by introducing distinctions of functional role or functional location. I shall have something to say of this below. Here it is enough to recall Hume's claim

that volitions are 'propense and averse motions of the mind' (T 574).

Of course this last is a feature that, in Hume's view, volitions share with the direct passions, and thus with desires. As we have seen, Hume stresses the similarities between desire and volition while insisting (at least usually) that they not be identified. More emphatically than Hume, Locke insists on the differences. What are we to say here?

Locke and Hume are agreed that desires are introspectible feelings, not thoughts. For Hume, they are included in the class of 'impressions of reflection' (T 275) or 'secondary impressions' (T 275) or 'passions'. As such they are indefinable (T 277). And, like volitions, they fail to take truth values: 'A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence, and contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification' (T 415; compare T 458). For Locke, desire is 'an <u>uneasiness</u> of the Mind for want of some absent good' (E 251). Despite the reference to an absent good Locke's considered view seems to be that the felt uneasiness constitutes the desire; the thought of an absent good is (we shall see this more clearly below) a thought attended by a felt uneasiness, which is to say a desire. Insofar as they construe desires as introspectible feelings both Locke and Hume are, I take it, obviously mistaken. As with volitions, so here: one must view desires as thoughts; and if there are feelings characteristic of desires they are best understood as effects of those desires.

The belief that desires are feelings while volitions are thoughts is not, then, a good reason for Locke's insisting on the differences between desire and volition. He is right to insist on differences nonetheless. That they differ is, to him, plain: 'the

Will is perfectly distinguished from Desire, which in the very same Action may have a quite contrary tendency from that which our Wills [sic] sets us upon' (E 250). In the Correspondence he elaborates on the differences. '[D]esire', he says, 'is directed to the agreeable, but Will is directed only to our actions and terminates there' (C 327). Desire is an 'operation ... of the soul ... whereby it longs for something'; it is 'a passion moved by an absent good' (C 327). Volition is an 'operation ... of the soul ... whereby it determines or commands that something must be done' (C 327-328); it is 'an act of the will or of the soul exercising command over the operative powers of a man' (C 327). The differences, clearly, are differences of content and of functional role. (For the case of desire, of course, the content is, strictly speaking, the content of the evaluative thought that, in Locke's view, generates the desire.) In addition, Locke holds that we are 'capable but of one determination of the will to one action at once' (E 254; compare E 265); at a given time we may, by contrast, have competing desires with respect to an action (C 405). On the main point Hume appears to agree:

> DESIRE arises from good consider'd simply, and AVERSION is deriv'd from evil. The WILL exerts itself, when either the good or the absence of the evil may be attain'd by any action of the mind or body. (T 439)

Hume is mistaken insofar as he assimilates volition to desire on the ground that each is an impression or feeling, for this, as I have suggested, is to misconstrue each. He is nonetheless right to insist, as against Locke, that they are importantly similar. To see why this is so, we must turn to the question of practical reasoning.

3. For both Locke and Hume, volitions are products of practical reasonings. For Hume they are, in every case, effects of such reasoning. The 'two principal parts [of the mind] ... which are requisite in all its actions', he says, are 'the affections and understanding' (T 493). And Treatise II iii 3, which contains the bare bones of a theory of practical reasoning, is Hume's opening attempt to specify the 'particular causes' for 'all actions of the will' or, more explicitly, 'what these causes are, and how they operate' (T 412). Locke's account of practical reasoning differs substantially, as we shall see, from Hume's, but he too appears to think that, in every case, volitions are effects of practical reasoning. Even the countless adventitious actions we perform (those not 'thought on or proposed to the Will, 'till the time they are to be done' (E 246) require reasoning though 'the Consideration be ... short, the Thought ... quick' (E 246; compare C 410). '[E]very Man', Locke writes, 'is put under a necessity by his constitution, as an intelligent Being, to be determined in willing by his own Thought and Judgment, what is best for him to do' (E 264). The 'Thought and Judgment' here in question is, I take it, what Locke elsewhere calls 'the last judgement of the understanding' (C 411), a judgment that is itself the product of practical reasoning, that causes volitions, and that is a prerequisite to the occurrence of volition. We find Locke writing to van Limborch of

> ...that judgement which in every volition immediately precedes Volition: which is in reality the last judgement, whether it has been well pondered and recast by mature deliberation, or is extemporaneous and sprung from a sudden impulse; and equally determines the will, whether or not it is in accordance with reason (C 411).

Are volitions <u>conclusions</u> to practical reasonings? Taken strictly, Hume's view of volitions implies that they cannot be: they are feelings of a particular kind, not thoughts. For the same reason Humean desires, if taken strictly, cannot function as premises in practical reasonings. Indeed if Hume is taken strictly at his word about desire and volition it is difficult to see how those complexes of desire, belief and volition that he wants to construe as bits of practical reasoning could count as reasonings at all. Still, Hume does have the notion of accompanying thoughts whose contents specify, 'the immediate object of volition' or the object of desire. And he is quite cognizant of the relations of content that obtain among the pertinent thoughts when one's beliefs and desires give rise to volition. In effect he softens his official doctrine of volition and desire when, acknowledging the intelligible linkages, he describes mechanics as 'the art of regulating the motions of bodies <u>to some design'd end or purpose</u>' (T 414), describes actions as 'perform'd with a certain design or intention' (T 475) or with 'knowledge and design' (T 349), and remarks that one 'will[s] the performance of certain actions as means of obtaining any desir'd good' (T 417). It is in this vein that he writes: 'The WILL exerts itself, when either the good or the absence of the evil may be attain'd by any action of the mind or body' (T 439).

Taking this softening of doctrine seriously, let us sketch a <u>quasi</u>-Humean picture of practical reasoning and volition. Volitions are conative thoughts directing specific present actions, and are both effects of and conclusions to pieces of practical reasoning. The premises in such reasonings comprise various of one's desires (themselves to be construed as conative thoughts) and one's beliefs. Within this

framework, one's desires, beliefs and volitions differ both in content and in functional role. One's beliefs, as cognitive thoughts, purport to represent the way the world is, what its causal properties are, what one's present situation is, and so on. One's desires set possible goals for action, represent actions or states of affairs as desirable in some or other respect, and thus provide an impetus to action. In forming a volition one both concludes one's reasoning and sets oneself to act. Volitions, it will be recalled, Hume likens to commands.

This quasi-Humean picture can accommodate the motivational features of feelings. It can accommodate the possibility that one's desires be accompanied by (be causes of) states of feeling and emotion, and can allow the degree of emotional excitation involved to play some causal role in the transition from competing desires to the volitions that emerge. It can do this while denying that the causal efficacy of desires is straightforwardly a function of the degree of emotional excitation they involve. This quasi-Humean picture, that is to say, can usefully emend Hume's views about the relation of desire to feelings while acknowledging his distinction between the strength and the violence of desires (as of other passions) (T 417-419). It can do so while acknowledging Hume's insistence both that it is 'evident passions influence not the will in proportion to their violence' (T 418) and that, 'notwithstanding this, 'tis certain, that when we wou'd govern a man, and push him to any action, 'twill commonly be better policy to work upon the violent than the calm passions' (T 419). This relatively complex account of the role of feeling is clearly superior, I take it, to the account, described below, that Locke offers.

By appropriating the Lockean claim that volitions are thoughts, and by construing desires (here running counter to Locke) in a similar way, this quasi-Humean theory meets the obvious requirement that, in cases of practical reasoning leading to volition, there must be suitable relations of content among the many constituent psychological states and events. The theory insists, nonetheless, on a sharp distinction between the roles of desire and volition, on the one hand, and of belief, on the other, a distinction so central to Hume's theories both of mind and of morals. At the same time it makes plain that desires and volitions, while deeply akin, are also deeply different. (A recognition of this fact, I suggest, lies behind Hume's apparent vacillations on the question whether volitions are passions.) Desires and volitions are, equally, conative thoughts: each has a 'direction of fit' quite different from that of belief; each has a link to action that belief does not have; and (associated with this) each is truth-value-less. To speak metaphorically, each moves the agent to action, or inclines him to move, and does not simply capacitate him for action by showing him that action is possible or how it is to be accomplished. Both desire and volition, Hume writes, are 'immediate effects of pain and pleasure' (T 399).[6] In the quasi-Humean theory one's desires, where concerned with pain or pleasure, represent prospective pleasures as to be secured, prospective pains as to be avoided. In forming volitions one initiates the steps judged necessary, here and now, to secure these objectives. If one thinks of desires as analogous to major premises in (Aristotelian) practical syllogisms, volitions, viewed as conclusions, must share with them that fundamental feature that sets them apart from beliefs.

Yet desires and volitions must differ, as (major) premises differ from conclusions.

Locke's account of practical reasoning and volition differs from Hume's and from the quasi-Humean theory, in two striking ways. For Locke, the conclusion to a bit of practical reasoning is not a volition but something mentioned in passing earlier, a 'last judgement of the understanding'. Such judgments, which are operations of the understanding, not of the will, are psychological primitives to be distinguished both from the evaluative and non-evaluative beliefs that give rise to them, and from the volitions (operations of the will) to which they, in turn, give rise. Locke argues many times that the volition to Ø follows ineluctably upon the 'last judgement of the understanding' that Øing is for the best, here and now. He also argues that there cannot be a volition to Ø without an antecedent 'last judgement of the understanding' to the effect that Øing is for the best, here and now. He insists, however, that the 'last judgement of the understanding' and the volition are distinguishable primitives. Things are not set out so plainly in the earlier editions of the _Essay_; but they are put quite plainly in the letters to van Limborch and thus in the fifth-edition emendations to _Essay II xxi_. But let us let Locke speak for himself.

In the _Essay_ he distinguishes 'the Judgement of the Understanding' from 'the determination of the _Will_', while remarking that 'the determination of the _Will_ immediately follows the Judgment of the Understanding' (E 283). He writes of the mind's 'last judgment of the Good or Evil, that is thought to attend its Choice' and claims that we are 'determined by ... the last result of our own Minds, judging of the good or evil of any action' (E 264). More plainly: 'every Man is put under a necessity by his constitution, as an

intelligent Being, to be determined in _willing_ by his own Thought and Judgment, what is best for him to do' (E 264). In the _Correspondence_ he is quite explicit: 'an action of willing this or that always follows a judgement of the understanding by which a man judges this to be better for here and now' (C 410); 'every single volition is always preceded by some judgement of the understanding about the thing to be done, and ... that judgement that immediately precedes the volition or act of willing is ... the last judgement of the understanding' (C 411). In a passage cited earlier he distinguishes, while insisting upon the mutual dependence of, last judgment and volition: he writes of

> ...that judgement which in every volition immediately precedes Volition; which is in reality the last judgement, whether it has been well pondered and recast by mature deliberation, or is extemporaneous and sprung from a sudden impulse; and equally determines the will, whether or not it is in accordance with reason (C 411).

Clearly the understanding's last judgment need not be a sound one; but it is needed, in Locke's view, if volitions, thus actions, are to take place.

The postulated last judgments of the understanding are just that, judgments. More precisely, they are judgments of comparative value with respect to options currently available to the agent. In reaching a last judgment the agent 'judges [something] to be good' (E 271), makes a 'judgement of the understanding about the thing to be done' (C 411), judges 'what is best for him to do' (E 264), judges, for example, 'which is best, _viz_. to do, or forbear' (E 283), 'judges this to be better for here and now' (C 410). Volitions, though thoughts, are commands rather than judgments. Locke contrasts 'the decree of the

Will' with 'the Thought and Judgment of the Understanding' (E 283). In forming a volition, he writes, the soul 'determines or commands that something must be done' (C 327-328). For Locke it is one thing to judge something to be for the best, here and now, another to will to do it.

A second way in which Locke's view differs from Hume's, or from the quasi-Humean theory described above, is in the extent of the role assigned to the understanding in practical reasoning. Locke's last judgments, those just prior to volitions, are judgments of the understanding. So, too, are the other constituents in a piece of practical reasoning. Most importantly, the major premises, as we may say, are contributed by the understanding, not by the will (nor, for that matter, by the affections). Locke writes of our having 'opportunity to examine, view, and judge, of the good or evil of what we are going to do' (E 263), of the '*good*, the *greater good*, ... apprehended and acknowledged to be so' (E 253), of 'views of good, as it appears in Contemplation greater or less to the understanding' (E 255), of 'the judgement we make ... of any absent good' (E 272), of 'the wrong judgements Men make of future Good and Evil' (E 272), of 'measures of good and evil' being either 'false and fallacious' or 'true and right' (E 271). The language throughout is that of judgment and understanding. The evaluative judgments in question, just as the last judgments of the understanding, are cognitive thoughts properly assessable as true or false. In practical reasoning, on this account, one moves from a combination of *factual* beliefs (causal beliefs, mathematical ones, and the like) and *evaluative* beliefs (including moral beliefs) to the so-called last judgment of the understanding. This last, in turn, leads to volition.

How are evaluative beliefs (which are thoughts) and desires (which are not) related to one another? It is difficult to be quite clear on Locke's views here, but the following seems a fair rendering. One may judge an object good while having no desire for it (E 253, 259, 268, 283). One may judge one object better than another yet not desire the former more than the latter (E 253, 255, 268, 283). Still, it is only when evaluative beliefs are accompanied by desire (or felt uneasiness) that they have an effect on one's conduct (E 252, 256, 263, 282-283).[7] And in general it is the intensity of felt desire (or degree of felt uneasiness) that determines what one does (E 250-251, 256, 263). 'Good and Evil', Locke writes, 'present and absent, 'tis true, work upon the mind: But that which immediately determines the Will, from time to time, to every voluntary action, is the uneasiness of desire, fixed on some absent good' (E 252). It is 'this uneasiness, that determines the Will to the successive voluntary actions, whereof the greatest part of our Lives is made up' (E252). Again: 'it seems to me evident, that the will, or power of setting us upon one action in preference to all other, is determin'd in us, by uneasiness' (E 256). Yet again: 'That which in the train of our voluntary actions determines the Will to any change of operation, is some present uneasiness, which is, or at least is always accompanied with that of Desire' (E 282-283). Locke poses the question 'what it is that determines the Will in regard to our Actions?' (E 250). His answer? It is 'not, as is generally supposed, the greater good in view: But some (and for the most part the most pressing) uneasiness a Man is at present under' (E 250-251). The position seems to be that what conclusion one reaches in a piece of practical reasoning (what last judgment of the understanding one forms) is a function not exclusively

of the value one takes one's alternatives to possess but also of the (perhaps independently varying) degrees of uneasiness associated with those judgments of value. One's desires are causally pertinent adjuncts to one's evaluative and factual beliefs, and may work their own, possibly wayward, influence on the practical conclusions one reaches. This is not, of course, to deny that, in favorable cases, degree of uneasiness may correspond to judgment of relative value. In such a case a man's 'own *desire* [is] guided by his own Judgment' (E 283).

Locke nowhere *argues* explicitly for his distinction between a last judgment of the understanding and a volition. Rather, he *employs* the distinction in his efforts to block van Limborch's repeated efforts to introduce a stronger notion of free action than Locke is prepared to admit. One may conjecture that it was Locke's allegiance to two divergent intuitions -- that volitions are akin to commands, that evaluation is a matter of judgment -- that suggested the distinction to him. He had, after all, to give *some* account of the interaction of the understanding and the will in practical reasoning. Whatever Locke's own warrant for his distinction, however, the distinction is one that ought to be made. To see this, it is useful to look briefly at Donald Davidson's discussion of practical reasoning and of weakness of will.

As Davidson has convincingly argued,[8] one must think of practical reasoning as involving a transition from a set of *prima facie* judgments of comparative value (*e.g*. 'That *x* is a refraining from fornication and *y* is an act of fornication *prima facie* makes *x* better than *y*' and 'That *x* is a refraining from pleasure and *y* is a securing of pleasure *prima facie* makes *y* better than *x*'), and a set of appropriate non-

evaluative judgments (*e.g.* '*a* is a refraining from fornication and *b* is an act of fornication' and '*a* is a refraining from pleasure and *b* is a securing of pleasure'), to a set of interim *prima facie* conclusions, and then to a final *prima facie* judgment of the form: The relevant considerations known to me make a *prima facie* better than *b*. (As Davidson points out, this final *prima facie* judgment does not follow logically from what has gone before.) For practical reasoning to issue in action, however, the reasoner must proceed from this final *prima facie* judgment to an unconditional judgment, say the judgment that *a* is better than *b*. (This unconditional judgment is, of course, not entailed by the final *prima facie* judgment in question.) A reasoner who reached this unconditional judgment would, Davidson says, do *a* if he does either *a* or *b* intentionally. Davidson appears to identify these unconditional practical judgments with intentions.[9] And, as he points out, it is clear that on the proposed account of practical reasoning incontinence is possible. An incontinent person is one who acts intentionally but counter to his own best judgment. In our example, the agent's best judgment is represented by the final *prima facie* judgment, and his intentional action by the subsequent unconditional judgment. By contrast the incontinent man's unconditional judgment is, say, '*b* is better than *a*'. But there is no contradiction in the incontinent man's holding (though it is irrational of him to hold) both 'the relevant considerations known to me make *a* *prima facie* better than *b*' and '*b* is better than *a*'. The key to solving the problem of incontinence, Davidson suggests, is to make a sharp contrast between 'conditional (*prima facie*) evaluative judgments and evaluative judgments *sans* phrase'.[10]

I have no wish to suggest that Locke anticipated Davidson. He did, however, (and far more explicitly than did Hume) take cognizance of the complexities involved in practical reasoning, including in particular the facts that it involves selection among competing considerations and that these considerations are expressible in judgments of comparative value (E 263-264, 265, 267, 283; C 405, 410, 411). His volitions have a functional location similar to that of Davidson's intentions. And, most significantly in the present connection, his last judgments of the understanding are comparative judgments of value (as we saw above) and have a functional position similar to that of Davidson's final _prima facie_ judgments.

Locke has good reasons, which is to say reasons akin to some of Davidson's reasons, for distinguishing last judgments from volitions. Oddly enough, however, he cannot avail himself of Davidson's characterization of or solution to the problem of incontinence. To be sure, Locke adverts to the problem of weakness of will when he examines the links between evaluative belief and desire (E 253-254). But he in effect denies that a man can act intentionally yet against his own (then) best judgment. In Locke's view, volition follows ineluctably from the last judgment of the understanding: 'in all the particular actions that ... [a man] _wills_, he does, and necessarily does will that, which he then judges to be good' (E 270-271; compare C 408, 410, 411). Here the evidence seems to be on Davidson's side.

Insofar as he distinguishes last judgments from volitions Locke's theory is superior to Hume's. It does not follow, however, that he is right to portray these last judgments as judgments _of the understanding_. Here we come to the deepest of divisions between Locke

and Hume on the nature of practical reasoning. Locke thinks of one's evaluations, including one's moral evaluations, in terms of cognitive states possessed of truth or falsity. Hume argues strenuously that to do so is to misconstrue the character of action explanations and to render unfathomable the acknowledged practical character of morality. Provided one thinks of this along _quasi_-Humean lines (in the sense introduced above) Hume's theory is, I suggest, here superior to Locke's. I cannot defend this suggestion here: the subject is far too large, and the argument needed for the suggestion's support is far too tortuous. Three brief points, bearing directly on the concerns of this paper, must, however, be noted. (1) An adequate working out of the quasi-Humean theory sketched earlier would require showing its ability to introduce _conative_ thoughts, distinct from volitions, to play a functional role analogous to that of Locke's last judgments of the understanding and of Davidson's final _prima facie_ evaluations. It is far from obvious that the quasi-Humean theory would run into difficulties here. (2) In any event a Lockean theory must, surely, do something to allay one's misgivings about the requisite transitions from last judgments of the understanding to commands of the will. That one can have such a transition from cognition to command requires defence. In Davidson's theory, both final _prima facie_ judgment and unconditional judgment (or intention) are evaluative judgments that have to do with _a_'s being better than _b_. In our imagined quasi-Humean theory, both the counterpart to Locke's last judgment, and the volition, would be conative thoughts. In Locke's theory one is left simply with a brute intersection of the understanding and the will. (3) Of course, if Locke's last judgments are, for the reason suggested, better viewed as _conative_ thoughts one has

compelling reason, from the perspective of a theory of practical reasoning, to side with Hume, not with Locke, on the characterization of the evaluations, including moral evaluations, with which one begins deliberation.

We have concentrated on the links between practical reasoning and volition. Before leaving this subject, however, it is well to notice what Hume, at least, says of intentions. In some contexts he describes the products of practical reasoning not as volitions but as intentions. And, though he does not do so uniformly, he tends to distinguish intention or resolution from volition. When distinguishing them he appeals to temporal considerations: resolution and intention pertain to the future; volition concerns the present. '[T]he will', he writes, 'has an influence only on present actions' and does not 'regard ... some future time' (T 516; compare T 574); in the case of 'intentions and resolutions' there is a temporal 'distance from the final determination' (T 536). There is thus room for the notion that one might attempt to 'fortify that resolution' (T 382). Despite this difference, however, Hume stresses a common feature: each concerns the performance of a particular action. My intention concerns, for example, an 'action, which I am to perform a twelve-month hence' (T 536); likewise my 'willing' pertains to my 'present actions' (T 516). Apparently Hume holds that whether one's practical reasoning results in a volition or an intention depends on the time of appropriate action relative to the time of one's deliberation. He could simplify matters by treating volitions as a species of intentions, _viz_. the here-and-now ones.[11] There are, however, no unequivocal indications that he is inclined to take this line. (Here I ignore the fact that, in all likelihood, Humean intentions, like volitions, are, strictly speaking, impressions, not thoughts.)

Locke says practically nothing on the topic. His word 'intention' has a quite special sense having nothing to do with our present concerns: 'When the mind with great earnestness, and of choice, fixes its view on any _Idea_, considers it on all sides, and will not be called off by the ordinary sollicitation of other _Ideas_, it is that we call _Intention_, or _Study_' (E 227; compare E 228, 650). More to the point, but unfortunately undeveloped, is his casual description of the drunkard who 'sees, and acknowledges ... [the greater good], and in the intervals of his drinking hours, will take resolutions to pursue the greater good' (E 253).

4. Locke and Hume differ importantly in their views about the scope of volition, or about the range of effects that volitions may produce. They appear, however, to agree in the main on their general characterizations of the relationship between a volition and its effects.

Each takes the relationship to be a causal one; and Hume, at least, insists that it is to be discovered only inductively. '[T]he will being here consider'd as a cause', Hume writes, 'has no more a discoverable connexion with its effects, than any material cause has with its proper effect' (T 632; compare T 173). In the _Abstract_ he writes: 'When we consider our will or volition _a priori_, abstracting from experience, we should never be able to infer any effect from it' (A 23; compare EHU 164). In the first _Enquiry_ (EHU 64-69) he adduces several considerations in support of this thesis for the cases both of bodily and of mental actions. For Locke, too, volitions are causes: 'all our voluntary Motions ... are produced in us only by the free Action or Thought of our own Minds' (E 629). 'My right Hand writes', he says, 'whilst my left Hand

is still: What causes rest in one, and motion in the other? Nothing but my Will, a Thought of my Mind' (E 629; compare E 241, 244, 248). How are the particular causal connections to be ascertained? Locke is content merely to remark that we have 'but imperfect Ideas of the Operations of our Minds, and of the Beginning of Motion or Thought how the Mind produces either of them in us' (E 682).

Of the case of bodily actions Hume writes:

> [T]he immediate object of power in voluntary motion, is not the member itself which is moved, but certain muscles, and nerves, and animal spirits, and, perhaps, something still more minute and more unknown, through which the motion is successively propogated, ere it reach the member itself whose motion is the immediate object of volition.... Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourselves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced: This event produces another, equally unknown: Till at last, through a long succession, the desired event is produced. (EHU 66)

This passage reveals three especially interesting elements in Hume's view of volitions. First, there is an internal connection (the expression is not Hume's) between a volition and certain effects of special interest, an internal connection between 'the immediate object of volition' and 'the desired event [that] is produced'. This connection does not obtain between the volition and certain other of its effects, including all its unknown physiological effects. The content of a volition [12] incorporates a specification of a certain event, which event is, for certain standard cases at any rate, in fact an effect of that volition. When one wills to move one's arm one's volition makes reference to the movement of one's arm; it does not likewise make

reference to those physiological events (also effects of the volition) that subserve the arm's moving. Let us call the effect a volition specifies in this way its upshot.

In Hume's example, it is the agent's knowledge that determines what from the volition's many effects counts as the volition's upshot. The agent knows nothing of the physiological events in question but is assumed, I take it, to have the movement of his arm in mind. One can have as object of one's volitions, one can in the central sense do, only what one can and does represent as occurring. Thus it is that Hume, when introducing volitions, writes of our 'knowingly giv[ing] rise to any new motion of our body, or new perception of our mind' (T 399). Insofar as one is not cognizant in this way of the effects of one's volitions one acts 'ignorantly and casually' (T 412); such effects of volitions are 'involuntary and accidental' (T 350).

Hume appears also to have a notion of basic actions, or of acting, to use Harman's phrase, 'in the normal simple way'.[13] '[N]ature', Hume writes, 'has taught us the use of our limbs, without giving us the knowledge of the muscles and nerves, by which they are actuated' (EHU 55). In Hume's example the agent moves his arm while knowing nothing about how he does it. The movement of his arm is 'the immediate object of volition' (my emphasis): it is not brought about by the bringing about of something else, where that something else is itself an object of volition. We shall see the theoretical significance of this as we proceed.

Locke nowhere, so far as I can tell, explicitly introduces a notion of basic actions, or of the immediate object of a volition. Without making anything of it, he does evince an awareness of the

internal connection noted between a volition and its upshot. When one 'wills to number' the volition 'terminates in computation'; when one 'wills to walk' it terminates in 'the movement of the feet' (C 405). He recognizes, with Hume, the role of the agent's knowledge: '<u>Volition</u>, 'tis plain, is an Act of the Mind knowingly exerting that Dominion it takes it self to have over any part of the Man' (E 241). And he draws the appropriate implication: 'whatsoever action is performed without such a thought of the mind is called <u>Involuntary</u>' (E 236).

Both Locke and Hume have the concept of ineffective volitions with respect to what are, clearly, cases of action performed 'in the normal simple way'. Hume remarks that a 'man, suddenly struck with palsy in the leg or arm, or who had newly lost those members, frequently endeavors, at first to move them, and employ them in their usual offices' (EHU 66). Here the individual forms volitions of the arm-moving or leg-moving kind (he is said 'to command such limbs' (EHU 66)) but the subserving mechanisms fail to work and so the volitions fail to produce their normal upshots. Hume's cases are those of recent amputation, or of sudden palsy; he is apparently thinking of cases where the agent, at the time for acting, fails to realize that the movement of a limb is not within his power. This suggests that were the amputee fully cognizant of the loss of his limb and the palsied or paralyzed person aware of the loss of control over his arm neither would be capable of forming the volitions that, without this knowledge, each forms. Believing oneself capable of acting in a certain way is a necessary condition for forming a volition so to act.

Locke is explicit on the first point: 'I readily recognize ineffective volition', he writes to van Limborch, 'as when a paralytic wills to move his

palsied hand; I grant that that volition is ineffective and without result' (C 404). Indeed he alludes to the particularly interesting case of 'sudden Palsy' (E 284). And he is explicit, where Hume is not, on the requirement that forming a volition to Ø requires one's having a belief that Øing is within one's power. 'For the <u>will</u> being the power of directing our operative faculties to some action, for some end, cannot at any time be moved towards what is judg'd at that time unattainable: That would be to suppose an intelligent being designedly to act for an end, only to lose its labour' (E 257-258). In volition the mind exerts 'that Dominion it takes it self to have over any part of the Man' (E 241); it 'endeavours to give rise, continuation, or stop to any Action, which it takes to be in its power' (E 250; compare E 245). It is tempting, in fact, to take the requirement of such a belief as a feature distinguishing volition from desire: one may form a volition to Ø only if one believes oneself capable of Øing, but one may desire to Ø even though one knows that one cannot. Locke may seem to deny this difference for he writes: '<u>Desire</u> also is stopp'd or abated by the Opinion of the impossibility or unattainableness of the good propos'd, as far as the uneasiness is cured or allay'd by that consideration' (E 231). But the clause beginning 'as far as' is clearly designed to suggest special circumstances. No such qualifications are introduced for the case of volitions.

Gilbert Harman contends (and he appears to be right in this) that intentions are self-referential. 'The intention to do A', he argues, 'is the intention that, because of that very intention, it is guaranteed that one will do A'.[14] A 'positive intention', he says, is 'a self-referential conception that something is going to happen as a result of that very

conception.'[15] As I suggested earlier, however, Lockean and Humean volitions are indistinguishable from here-and-now intentions. Would either Locke or Hume take them to be self-referential in Harman's way? There is no sign of such a doctrine in Hume but Locke, perhaps, has a glimmer of it: '_Volition_, or _Willing_, is an act of the Mind directing its thought to the production of any Action, and thereby exerting its power to produce it' (E 248); '_Volition_ is nothing, but that particular determination of the mind, whereby, barely by a thought, the mind endeavours to give rise, continuation, or stop to any Action' (E 250).

Locke and Hume appear to agree, then, in the main, in their characterizations of the relationship between a volition and its upshot. What, then, of the scope of volitions? Each takes it that both bodily actions, such as raising one's arm, and mental actions, such as pursuing a mathematical problem in one's head, are within the scope of volition. Hume distinguishes, among voluntary actions, those that occur '_when we knowingly give rise to any new motion of our body_' from those that occur when we knowingly give rise to any '_new perception of our mind_' (T 399; compare T 632, EHU 64, A 21). Locke writes that 'we find in our selves a _Power_ to begin or forbear, continue or end several actions of our minds, and motions of our Bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or as it were commanding the doing or not doing such or such a particular action' (E 236; compare E 129, 237, 239, and C 327, 403). The two appear not to differ on the empirical question just what scope volition has in the case of bodily action. Not surprisingly Hume's remark that 'the will [has] an influence over the tongue and fingers, not over the heart or liver' (EHU 65) echoes Locke's claim that a 'Man's Heart beats, and the Blood circulates, which 'tis not in his Power by any Thought

or Volition to stop' (E 239). (The claims have, obviously, only to do with basic actions.) The two differ, however, on the question what control the will has over what goes on in one's mind. That is to say, they differ about what kinds of mental actions are possible basic actions, actions performed in the normal simple way.

Hume is restrictive. Passions and desires (presumably also sensations) cannot be immediate objects of volition: they 'depend ... not on the will, nor can be commanded at pleasure' (EHU 48; compare T 517). One has, of course, some measure of indirect control here; one can put oneself in circumstances that one believes will generate or eliminate, dampen or encourage, certain sentiments. Even so, 'our authority over our sentiments and passions is much weaker than that over our ideas' (EHU 68). Imagining and thinking are possible immediate objects of volition, things one can do in the normal simple way. 'The mind', Hume writes, 'has the command over all its ideas, and can separate, unite, mix, and vary them, as it pleases' (T 623-624; compare T 140, 629; EHU 19, 68). We may, he says, 'voluntarily turn our thoughts to any object, and raise up its image in the fancy' (EHU 71). And he describes a situation in which 'by an act or command of our will, we raise up a new idea, fix the mind to the contemplation of it, turn it on all sides, and at last dismiss it for some other idea, when we think we have surveyed it with sufficient accuracy' (EHU 67). This is not, of course, to deny the possibility of having thoughts or images running through one's head willy-nilly. Whatever be the case with what one thinks _about_, however, what one believes or judges true is not within one's direct control: 'belief consists merely in a certain feeling or sentiment; in something, that depends not on the will, but must arise from certain

determinate causes and principles, of which we are not masters' (T 624; compare EHU 48). I defer the question of indirect control over belief until later.

One cannot, in the direct way here in question, alter one's abilities or change one's character. Indeed, one's ability to exercise even indirect control over one's qualities of mind is severely limited. 'Moral virtues' such as 'constancy, fortitude, magnanimity' are 'equally involuntary and necessary, with the qualities of the judgment and imagination' (T 608). Indeed one

> might say the same, in some degree, of the others [the other moral virtues]; it being almost impossible for the mind to change its character in any considerable article, or cure itself of a passionate or splenetic temper, when they are natural to it (T 608).

How much indirect control one has is, of course, an empirical question, but the following rough generalization holds true: so-called natural abilities 'are almost invariable by any art or industry'; so-called moral qualities, 'or at least, the actions, that proceed from them, may be chang'd by the motives of rewards and punishments, praise and blame' (T 609). There is some scope, then, for one's own efforts at altering one's proclivities.

Locke appears to allow far greater scope to the will. He allows the will some control over what one believes or judges true. He writes of the voluntary suspension of the securing of desire. He defends the possibility of one's choosing one's goals. These apparent departures from Hume's restrictive position are, I think, defensible only insofar as they are simply complications of the Humean model. The complications are, however, well worth making.

What, first, of belief? What, more precisely, of judging something true and thus coming to believe

it? According to Locke there are many situations in which one is constrained to judge true what one does judge true. A man's knowledge, he says, 'depends not on his Will': 'all that is _voluntary_ in our Knowledge, is the _employing_, or with-holding any of _our Faculties_ from this or that sort of Objects, and a more, or less accurate survey of them: But they being employ'd, _our Will hath no Power to determine the Knowledge of the Mind_' (E 650-651). The same holds for cases not of knowledge but of what Locke calls 'Assurance' (E 662): in them a man '_can scarce refuse his Assent_' (E 716); in them 'Assent is no more in our Power than Knowledge' (E 717). There are, however, situations in which one's assent is not constrained by the evidence: in them 'Assent, Suspense, or Dissent are ... voluntary Actions' (E 716). Where a man's assent is not constrained he may 'perhaps, content himself with the Proofs he has, if they favour the Opinion that suits with his Inclination, or Interest, and so stop from farther search' (E 717). The suggestion, I take it, is that in such cases one may choose to believe what one wants to believe.

As Hume could well insist, however, one must distinguish judging that _p_ from (as we may say) taking _p_ as true. Each is a mental episode distinguishable both from saying that _p_ and from whatever mental disposition one may acquire either by judging that _p_ or by taking _p_ as true. Judging that _p_ involves believing that _p_. But taking _p_ as true, it seems, does not. One may take _p_ as true for the sake of a bet, say, or when adopting one of several hypotheses for investigation. One may feel required to call a halt to inquiry (one has, after all, to get on to other things) and so one may take as true that which best suits one's interests or inclinations. These are things one may do but, provided they are not confounded with judging that _p_

(thus believing that p), the fact that one may do them goes no way towards showing that one has direct control over one's beliefs, or that judging that p are possible basic actions.

This is not to deny that one who merely takes a proposition as true may come eventually, without the acquisition of additional evidence, to find himself believing that proposition (and thus prepared to judge that proposition true). Hume, I should think, would be happy to recognize such vagrant workings of the mind. Indeed he could acknowledge the following possibility: one knows of such vagrant workings of the mind and, wanting to believe a given proposition that one does not now believe, one begins by taking that proposition as true. In this and more obvious other ways some measure of indirect control over one's beliefs may be introduced. Presumably it is indirect control of belief that Hume has in mind when he makes the carefully contrastive claim that 'actions are more voluntary than our judgments' (T 609). To admit a measure of indirect control is not, however, to countenance belief or judgment as an immediate object of volition.

A rather different case is that of the voluntary suspension of the securing of desire. According to Locke one has (in some circumstances) 'a power to suspend the prosecution of this or that desire' (E 263), 'a power to suspend any particular desire, and keep it from determining the will, and engaging us in action' (E 266; compare E 267, E 270 and C 411). This is not, of course, a power not to follow the last judgment of one's understanding: in Locke's view one has no such power. To see what Locke intends we must think of the present case in terms of his general account of volition and practical reasoning.

The suspending in question must itself be a product of volition (and thus of a last judgment of the understanding). The upshot of the volition in question (a higher-order volition) is, presumably, a state of affairs such that the desire in question does not, at least then and there, lead via practical reasoning to volition, thus to action. The higher-order volition must itself be prompted by some motive, some combination of evaluative belief and desire. Locke is explicit enough about the (higher-order) motive he has in mind: it is provided by 'the necessity of prefering and pursuing true happiness as our greatest good' (E 266), by the 'pursuit of our happiness' (E 264). The case, then, is one in which, to better secure our happiness, we inhibit the operation of some or other of our evaluative beliefs and desires until such time as we are confident that their implementation will be genuinely to our interest. So Locke writes of '<u>standing still</u>, where we are not sufficiently assured of the way' (E 266; compare E 279), thus of providing ourselves with 'opportunity to examine, view, and judge, of the good or evil of what we are going to do' (E 263; compare E 265, 267). There obviously are circumstances in which one is not thus free to suspend the prosecution of one's desires. It may happen, Locke writes, that 'extreme disturbance ... possesses our whole Mind, as when the pain of the Rack, an impetuous <u>uneasiness</u>, as of Love, Anger, or any other violent Passion, running away with us, allows us not the liberty of thought, and we are not Masters enough of our own Minds to consider thoroughly, and examine fairly' (E 267-268). Still, some men, some of the time, are capable of such self-mastery. Of course the result of one's careful deliberations may well be the reinstatement of the desires whose prosecution one had, for the time, suspended.

Now Hume might well differ from Locke in his estimation of the extent to which agents are free to implement such higher-order volitions, or of the likelihood that they will be moved, by the relevant higher-order motives, to form such higher-order volitions. I can, however, see no reason to think Hume must deny Locke's main thesis, one I take to be correct, about the possibility of directly suspending the prosecution of desire. To allow the suspending of the prosecution of desire is, of course, a quite different matter from treating desires, or their acquisition, as basic actions, as possible immediate objects of the will.

As we have seen, Locke holds that the degrees of the felt uneasiness of one's desires may not match, or correspond to, the value assignments one makes in the associated judgments of comparative value. He also holds that degree of uneasiness determines what one settles on in one's last judgment, thus in one's volition. '<u>[G]ood</u>, the <u>greater good</u>, though apprehended and acknowledged to be so, does not determine the <u>will</u>, until our desire, raised proportionably to it, makes us <u>uneasy</u> in the want of it' (E 253); but 'the <u>greater visible good</u> does not always raise Men's <u>desires</u> in proportion to the greatness, it appears, and is acknowledged to have' (E 260; compare E 252, 255, 256).

Against this background Locke introduces an especially interesting aspect of some cases in which one voluntarily suspends the prosecution of some desire. Even though one <u>judges</u> that certain situations are preferable to others, one's <u>desires</u> (one's present felt uneasiness) may push in just the opposite direction. This, Locke seems to think, is especially likely to occur when what is judged better is some remote absent good. But one has reason to ensure, if

one can, a match, a correspondence, between judgment and desire: one is, after all, concerned with one's genuine happiness, and one knows, we may assume, the critical role played by one's desires in the generation of action. Locke suggests that some people, some of the time, can secure this match by careful reflection on what they judge of value. They suspend the prosecution of their desires precisely in order to employ the tactic of careful reflection and thus, if possible, secure the looked-for correspondence of relative evaluation and relative causal efficacy. In this vein Locke writes that 'by a due consideration and examining any good proposed, it is in our power, to raise our desires, in a due proportion to the value of that good, whereby in its turn, and place, it may come to work upon the <u>will</u>, and be pursued' (E 262). A man has the power 'by the contemplation of remote, and future good, to raise in himself desires of them strong enough to counter-balance the uneasiness' of present lesser goods (E 272).

Presumably Hume would differ from Locke in his assessment of the likelihood that, by reflecting on what one values, one may bring about a greater correlation between the relative values one assigns to things and the varying degrees of causal efficacy that those assignings of value (those evaluations) possess. (In thinking this through he would, I take it, have to move in the direction of a <u>quasi</u>-Humean theory.) And he would, of course, reject the assumption that one deals with evaluative <u>judgments</u> or <u>beliefs</u>. Since the suggested control over one's desires is quite clearly indirect, however, Hume could have no overwhelming reason to object on the main point.

In at least one passage in the correspondence with van Limborch, Locke appears to think that one's evaluative <u>judgments</u> may themselves be under one's

direct voluntary control, and so be possible immediate objects of volition. He writes:

> A man is directed to an absent good or end. When many goods, not subordinate to, or consistent with, one another, are present to the understanding at the same time, a man, neglecting the others, proposes one to himself as an end, that is, as a thing to be pursued, this he does voluntarily and so far the will is directed to that action of the mind by which he proposes to himself one thing as an end in preference to the rest, and it terminates in that action in the same way as it terminates in computation when he wills to number or in movement of the feet when he wills to walk. (C 405)

It is not clear whether the evaluative judgments in question are those that function as premises in one's practical reasonings or, quite differently, are last judgments of the understanding. In either case, however, the objections raised earlier to the idea of direct voluntary control over one's <u>non</u>-evaluative beliefs and judgments apply here as well. One has perhaps some measure of indirect control over the acquisition of one's evaluative beliefs; and one may, for some special reason or other, take a given evaluative proposition as true. Each of these is, however, quite a different matter from voluntarily and directly judging an evaluative proposition to be true. (The same is true, of course, if for Locke's evaluative judgments one substitutes the conative evaluative thoughts that the quasi-Humean theory acknowledges.)

There is, then, little to be said for Locke's notion of 'chusing ...a remote Good as an end to be pursued' (E 270) unless that is just a misleading way of saying simply, and quite neutrally, that one reaches a last judgment or forms a pertinent volition. But what of volitions themselves? Are they possible immediate objects of volition, and so items under one's

direct voluntary control? Locke insists that '<u>Liberty is not an Idea belonging to Volition</u>' (E 238), where liberty is 'the power a Man has to do or forbear any particular Action, according as its doing or forbearance has the actual preference in the Mind, which is the same thing as to say, according as he himself <u>wills</u> it' (E 241). This strongly suggests, though it does not by itself entail, a rejection of the idea that volitions may take other volitions as their immediate objects. To make liberty involve being free to will what one wills is, however, absurd: either one gets an infinite regress or one fails to solve the supposed problem that led to the suggestion. '[T]o make a Man free after this manner', Locke says, 'by making the Action of <u>willing</u> to depend on his <u>Will</u> there must be another antecedent <u>Will</u>, to determine the Acts of this <u>Will</u>, and another to determine that, and so <u>in infinitum</u>: For where-ever one stops, the Actions of the last <u>Will</u> cannot be free' (E 245).[16] For Locke, then, there can be no theoretical point to the introduction of volitions as immediate objects of other volitions.

On the question whether volitions may be immdiate objects of other volitions Hume is, so far as I can make out, utterly silent.[17]

5. At this point one wants to put a number of pressing questions to both Locke and Hume concerning the relations between volitions and action. Are volitions themselves actions? Are the upshots of volitions actions? Are the immediate objects of volitions to be understood as actions? One wants also, of course, to know just how a doctrine of volitions is to be employed in an account of the conditions for responsibility, and for freedom, in human action. Most importantly, is a

doctrine of volitions essential to a satisfactory account of these conditions? An attempt to answer, or to discover Locke's and Hume's answers to, these and like questions must, however, be deferred.[18] To have got to the point of posing the questions in a determinate way is to have gone, for the present, far enough.[19]

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1. All page references to Locke and to Hume will be given within parentheses in the text, according to the following convention:

   T: David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge; 2nd edition with text revised by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford 1978).

   EHU: David Hume, Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge; 3rd edition with text revised by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford 1975).

   A: David Hume, An Abstract of a Treatise of Human Nature, ed. J.M. Keynes and P. Straffa (Cambridge 1938).

   E: John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. P.H. Nidditch (Oxford 1975).

   C: E.S. de Beer (ed.), The Correspondence of John Locke, Vol. VII (Oxford 1982).

   Unless otherwise indicated, all emphases within quotations are Locke's and Hume's. In quoting from the Correspondence I have used de Beers' translations of the Latin originals.

2. According to Terence Penelhum, Hume takes volitions to be, not merely to be like, (direct) passions. See his Hume (London 1975), 114. While noting Hume's vacillation on the question, I make a case for the reading proposed in the text in

'Hume's Volitions' in Vincent Hope (ed.), *Philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh 1984).

3. Bruce Aune, *Reason and Action* (Dordrecht 1975) 50-51.

4. For a similar approach to Hume's theory of the passions see my 'Emotion and Thought in Hume's *Treatise*', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume I (1974) 53-71.

5. J.R. Searle, 'What is an Intentional State?' *Mind* 88 (1979) 74-92.

6. This is not an assertion of psychological hedonism. Hume's point -- the stress should be placed on 'immediate' -- is to contrast the 'direct' passions with such 'indirect' passions as pride and humility, love and hatred. That Hume is not a psychological hedonist is clear from T 439 and EHU 301.

7. Locke twice expresses, without explaining, a note of qualification. At E 256-257 he writes: 'the *will seldom* orders any action, nor is there any voluntary action performed, without some desire accompanying it' (my emphasis on 'seldom'). At *C* 327 he writes: 'Will *rarely* acts unless Desire leads' (my emphasis).

8. Donald Davidson, 'How is Weakness of the Will Possible?' *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford 1980) 21-42. See also his 'Intending' *Essays on Actions and Events*, especially 97f.

9. 'Intending', 99.

10. 'How is Weakness of the Will Possible?,' 40.

11. Had he done so his position could be viewed as adumbrating, in an important respect, claims made by Aune, as well as by Wilfrid Sellars, 'Thought and Action' in Keith Lehrer (ed.), *Freedom and Determinism* (New York 1966) 105-139, and Gilbert Harman, 'Practical Reasoning' *The Review of Metaphysics* 29 (1975-1976) 431-463. Had he done so he might also have undercut the familiar objection that it is inappropriate to introduce terms of art, such as 'volition', in a philosophical analysis of mental phenomena.

12. Here, and in what follows, I allow Humean volitions (and desires) to have their own contents

and objects. This quasi-Humean softening of Hume's unhappy official doctrine that volitions (and desires) are distinct impressions is, of course, compatible with much else that Hume says of both.

13. Harman, 443.

14. Harman, 441.

15. Harman, 448.

16. This passage, quoted from editions 1-3 (there are minor variations in the fourth edition), is omitted in the fifth edition of the *Essay*, but it links with a claim made a few pages on in the fifth edition: those who 'can make a Question of it ['whether a Man can *will*, what he *wills*'], must suppose one Will to determine the Acts of another, and another to determine that; and so on *in infinitum*' (E 247).

17. When discussing promising Hume argues that to 'will the volition ... is plainly absurd and impossible' (T 518n). In context, however, what Hume is objecting to is the thesis that a volition might have *itself* both as object and upshot.

18. I attempt to determine Hume's answers to the questions about volition and action in 'Hume's Volitions'.

19. My research for this paper has been supported by University of Kansas General Research Fund Grant #3287-20-0038.