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Abstract: Do the moral sentiments move us to act, according to Hume? And if so, how? Hume famously deploys the claim that moral *evaluations* move us to act to show that they are not derived from reason alone. Presumably, moral evaluations move us because (as Hume sees it) they are, or are the product of, moral sentiments. So, it would seem that moral approval and disapproval are or produce motives to action. This raises three interconnected interpretive questions. First, on Hume's account, we are moved to do many virtuous actions *not* by the sentiments of approval and disapproval, but by other sentiments, such as gratitude and parental love; so when and how do the moral sentiments themselves provide motives to act morally? The second question arises as a result of a position I defend here, that the moral sentiments are best understood as Humean indirect affections. Hume says that the four main indirect passions (pride, humility, love and hatred) do not directly move us to act. The second question, then, is whether their status as indirect affections nonetheless allows moral approval and disapproval to be or provide motives. Finally, if we make a natural assumption about how Hume thinks belief about future pleasure is connected to the desire to obtain it (I call it the signpost assumption), it turns out that the mechanisms for producing motives that most naturally come to mind are ones that are equally available to reason alone. This introduces the third question: given the constraints Hume imposes on the nature of the moral sentiments, is there a way in which they can move us to act that is not also a way in which reason alone does? I argue that, given the signpost assumption, while Hume has greatly constrained his options, his

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moral sentiments do have one very limited way of moving us to act that is not available to reason alone. However, there are reasons to doubt that Hume endorses the signpost assumption. Without it, our moral evaluations have a far greater capacity to produce motives to act. One important objection arises; but this problem can be solved by rejecting a further assumption about what counts as being produced by reason alone.

There is considerable evidence that Hume thinks the moral sentiments (approval and disapproval) move us to action, at least in some circumstances. For one thing, he relies on the premise that moral *evaluations* move us to action to argue that moral evaluations are not derived from reason alone, in his most famous anti-rationalist argument. Presumably, this capacity of moral evaluations can be explained by the fact that (as Hume sees it) such evaluations are, or are the product of, moral *sentiments*. But this raises three interconnected interpretive questions. First, on Hume's account, much virtuous behavior is traceable to motives other than the sentiments of approval and disapproval; so when and how do the moral sentiments themselves provide motives to do what morality requires? Second, the moral sentiments are best understood as Humean indirect affections, as I shall argue; but Hume says that the four main indirect passions (pride, humility, love and hatred) do not directly move us to act. So can the moral sentiments do so? In addition, the mechanisms for doing this that most naturally come to mind would leave the moral sentiments no better off than reason alone in their ability to produce actions. Given the constraints Hume imposes on the nature of the moral sentiments—and this is the third issue—is there a way in which approval and disapproval can move us to act that is not also a way in which reason alone does so?

I will first examine the answers that are possible if we adopt a particular interpretation of Hume's position about the connection between belief about future pleasure and the desire to obtain it, which I call the signpost assumption. I shall argue that if we make this assumption, then while Hume leaves himself few options in this regard, the moral sentiments, as he understands them, do have one, extremely modest and limited, way of moving us to act that is not available to reason alone.

Then I will consider the consequences of giving up the signpost assumption. Doing so makes the problem far more tractable: moral sentiments and other indirect affections all produce motives to act in a wide range of circumstances, in a way not available to reason alone. An objection threatens to show that the new interpretation does not in fact help—that it provides a way of generating motives that is the work of reason alone after all. What lies behind the objection, however, is a second assumption often made in interpreting Hume's moral psychology, one there are reasons to give up. If we do, the problem of how the moral sentiments can produce motives dissolves.[1]

1. The Anti-rationalist Argument about Motives

A number of passages show that Hume believes the moral sentiments either move us themselves, or cause passions that in turn move us, to act in accordance with virtue or duty.[2] Here I will discuss only the most important one, in Book 3, part 1, section 1 of his *Treatise of Human Nature*, where he famously argues that moral *evaluations* ("morals," "morality," "moral distinctions") move us to act, but reason alone (or of itself) cannot, and therefore our moral evaluations are not the products of reason alone.[3] Call this the anti-rationalist argument. (Hume makes other arguments against the moral rationalists, of course, some of which are of great importance, but only this one is relevant here.) What concerns us is not the conclusion of the anti-rationalist argument, but the premises Hume requires in order to establish it. One of them is that "Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions" (T 3.1.1.6; SBN 457), or, as he also puts it, "The merit and demerit of actions frequently contradict and sometimes controul our natural propensities" (T 3.1.1.10; SBN 458). The other premise is that reason of itself cannot do this. Since our moral evaluations, as Hume goes on to argue, are based on the moral sentiments (and according to some interpretations, just *are* the moral sentiments), he presumably thinks it is the moral sentiments that provide those motives to action that reason alone cannot provide.

Exactly what does Hume think "moral distinctions" do in the production of intentional action? He supports this premise with just three remarks. First, if morality had no influence on passions and actions, there would be no point in inculcating it; but (he seems to imply) there is a point to inculcating morality, so it does have some influence. Second, morality is studied by practical rather than speculative philosophy, because it is believed to influence our passions and actions and go beyond "the calm and indolent judgments of the understanding" (T 3.1.1.5; SBN 457). Third, common experience shows us that "men are often govern'd by their duties, and are deter'd from some actions by the opinion of injustice, and impell'd to others by that of obligation" (ibid.).

These remarks show that on Hume's view, at least some people are moved to act by their opinions about the morality or immorality of actions, and *what* they are moved to do by these opinions is to fulfill what they take to be their duties.[4] This is a very modest claim. Not only is it compatible with frequent failure to act as we judge we should (as a result of weakness of will or even a considered choice of something we know to be bad), but it is compatible with some individuals being utterly unmoved by morality at any time, even though they form moral opinions. (Whether this is compatible with Hume's full theory of ethics is another issue.) The only thesis Hume defends here is that morality is such as to move some people on many occasions to act as they think duty requires. He does not argue here that everyone is moved to act by every sincere moral judgment she makes. And he does

not explain *how* moral judgments produce motives when they do: whether they themselves are motives to action, or cause passions that produce action, or direct existing passions, or work on us in some other way.[5]

Furthermore, Hume does not say here that moral opinions (or the moral sentiments) are what move agents to perform all or most or even the typical virtuous actions. It is compatible with his position in T 3.1.1 that most virtuous actions should be the product of other motives, and not of the agent's moral approval and disapproval. This is important. Hume famously claims in T 3.2.1 that for every type of virtuous action there is a non-moral motive (one distinct from moral approval or disapproval) present in human beings, a motive toward which we feel the moral sentiment of approval. But this is compatible with his claim about the influence of moral evaluations. It may be that *most* virtuous actions arise from such motives as friendship, lenity, gratitude, parental love, and (on some interpretations) enlightened self-interest or commitment to a policy of conforming to rules of property, but nonetheless, moral approval might also have a capacity to produce motives.[6]

However, Hume needs more than this if the anti-rationalist argument is to be sound.[7] For in the surrounding paragraphs he grants certain powers to reason. He says that reason can "have an influence on our conduct. . . . Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it; or when it discovers the connexion of causes and effects, so as to afford us means of exerting any passion" (T 3.1.1.12; SBN 459). Reason, by making us suppose "a pain or pleasure to lie in an object" (T 3.1.1.12; SBN 459–60), can excite a passion.[8] Thus reason informs us of the existence of *pain or pleasure* to be had in an object, and this excites (or activates) the passions of which pain and pleasure are the proper objects.

In Book 2 of the *Treatise* Hume gives his taxonomy of the passions or affections (the emotions, we would say today) and some analysis of them. In T 2.3.9.2 (SBN 438) and T 2.3.9.8 (SBN 439), he lists the passions he categorizes as "direct"; these include desire and aversion, grief and joy, hope and fear, and also some instincts such as hunger, lust, the desire that good come to those we love (called "benevolence" in T 2.2.6) and misery to those we hate (called "anger," ibid., or "resentment," T 2.3.3.8; SBN 417). The direct passions in the first group (that is, those other than the instincts) arise in us, he says, when we pay attention to "good and evil, or in other words, pain and pleasure." When we come to T 3.1.1, he says that reason of itself can inform us of opportunities to obtain pleasure or avoid pain; and in this way it can serve as "the mediate cause of an action, by prompting, or by directing a passion" (T 3.1.1.16; SBN 462). The passion so directed will thus be one of these direct passions that arise upon consideration of pain or pleasure. As Hume says in Book 2, once these direct passions arise, "[t]he 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 2.3.9.7; SBN 439). Thus reason plays a role in the production of action

by informing us of what will afford us pleasure or pain, which gives direction to our desire for the pleasure or aversion to the pain; and this in turn moves us to act.

Call a belief that some object is a potential source of pleasure or pain a *hedonic belief*. I mean by this simply a causal belief that X will or may provide pleasure or pain, perhaps under certain conditions, a belief *about* (the prospect of) pleasure or pain. I will assume, in the first two-thirds of this paper, that on Hume's view, when we come to have a hedonic belief, that hedonic belief never causes a *new* desire or aversion, but only directs a desire for pleasure or aversion to pain that exists independently of the belief. Call this assumption the *signpost assumption* (a hedonic belief is just a directional signpost).[9] Adopting the signpost assumption lets us postpone certain interpretive controversies until later.[10]

It is no surprise that on Hume's view reason has the directive role in action described above. But it shows something important about the kind of motive that moral distinctions must be able to produce if the anti-rationalist argument is to be sound. For suppose that the moral sentiment moves us to act (when it does) in the following way. I reflect on a possible future action of mine and judge it to be my duty. Moral self-approval is a pleasure, and moral self-disapproval a pain or uneasiness (T 3.1.2). Consequently, I expect that, if I fulfill my duty, I shall feel that particular species of pleasure; and if I neglect it I shall feel that species of pain. These expectations move me to fulfill my duty. Now, presumably, at the moment when I judge that telling the truth tomorrow is my duty (for example), in forming or holding that opinion I feel a moral sentiment; at least, many interpreters think this is Hume's view. But note the role of this occurrence of a moral sentiment: it informs me about the (no doubt more intense) pleasure or pain to come tomorrow if I do or do not tell the truth; and my general desire for pleasure and aversion to pain move me to tell the truth when the time comes. Thus the moral sentiment I feel when I make a moral judgment that something is my duty (if I do feel a sentiment) is at most a kind of *preview* of what will come should I fulfill or violate that duty later on. It is not, and does not provide, the impulse to act. That comes from my general desire for pleasure.

It may seem that what I have described is a paradigmatic case of a moral sentiment itself motivating action. The self-approval that I expect to feel later moves me to act now, doesn't it? However, Hume's conception of what we today call motivation to act is causal: my motive (or motivation) to act is something in my mind that causes my action. A cause, of course, always precedes its effect. Consequently, Hume cannot say that tomorrow's (anticipated) self-approval motivates me, or is my motive for acting, today, for it is not present in the mind prior to the action and so is not its cause. If it were not for the signpost assumption, we might suppose that the expectation of future self-approval (which is simply a belief about cause and effect with a particular content) by itself produces a new desire, and that is the motive of action. But the signpost assumption rules this out. So the actual

motive of my action can only be some direct passion that I already have. Presumably it is my general desire for pleasure, which is present all along and is directed to its object by the hedonic belief about self-approval.[11]

If this is how the moral sentiment moves us to act, then it does nothing that reason alone (or of itself) cannot do. The moral sentiment, on this account, *directs* a passion whose existence in the mind is not caused by our moral evaluation of the prospective action. For the moral sentiment does not cause us to want future pleasure; we want that in any case. The moral sentiment merely points out one way to obtain pleasure, namely, by fulfilling our duty; and our other passions do the rest. Just as reason can guide us to pick a delicious fruit by informing us of the gustatory pleasure to be had from it, and thus can direct our already-present desire for future pleasure, the moral sentiment can guide us to do our duty by informing us of the pleasure of moral self-approval to be had from it, and similarly direct our desire for future pleasure. If it is Hume's view that our moral judgments of prospective actions are themselves sentiments, their status as sentiments plays no role in the future production of those actions. Moral judgments do no more to provide an impulse to act than does any ordinary hedonic belief—which is to say, nothing. The impulse comes from elsewhere.

If all Hume meant by saying that morals produce or prevent actions (as he does in the first premise of the anti-rationalist argument) was that moral judgments direct our general desire for pleasure and aversion to pain, then the second premise of that argument, that reason of itself *cannot* produce or prevent actions, would be false; for by his own account, reason can do as much. Reason informs us that this or that action is a cause of pleasure or pain, and this belief directs our existing desire or aversion. Or rather, if this is what he means in the first premise by the phrase 'can produce or prevent passions and actions,' either he means the same in the premise about reason, and it is false, or he means something different by it and equivocates, making the argument invalid. Thus it is fairly clear that this causal mechanism, the directing of an existing, general desire for pleasure or aversion to pain, is not what Hume has in mind either in saying that moral evaluations can produce actions or that reason alone cannot. He must mean that moral distinctions (and so moral sentiments) produce and prevent actions in some *other* way, some way that is perhaps more direct than this or more exclusively dependent upon the moral sentiments themselves—a way that involves, perhaps, the presence or the production of a *new* direct passion rather than simply the directing of an existing passion not of the moral sentiment's making. Hume never says "moral distinctions *alone*," or "*of themselves*" produce passions and actions in his many statements of his premise about the motive power of morals. But if the argument is not to be hopeless, he must intend some such qualifier.[12] Reason influences action by directing existing desires; morals must influence action by somehow causing new desires.

2. Classifying the Moral Sentiments

But *can* moral approval and disapproval move people to act in a way in which reason alone cannot? That depends on what kinds of affections the moral sentiments are.

In his taxonomy of the passions, Hume first divides the passions into those he calls direct (already mentioned) and those he calls indirect.[13] Once he has delineated their defining causes and effects, direct and indirect passions can be distinguished by the fact that the direct ones arise quite simply from pleasure and pain, while the indirect passions are caused in a complex manner involving a double relation of impressions and ideas. But that is not what led Hume to make this novel categorization at the outset. Rather, what he claims initially differentiates these two types of passions is that those in one group have a cause distinct from their object, while those in the other group do not. By 'the object of a passion' Hume appears to mean, roughly, its intentional object. The cause of pride or love, which are indirect passions, is, according to Hume, a pleasing quality of some item closely connected to oneself or another; but the object of pride or love (what the passions are about, or that on which they ultimately focus our attention) is oneself (in the case of pride) or the other individual (in the case of love) as a whole person. Consequently, in coming to feel pride or love, we shift our attention from the cause of the passion (which for Hume may be the beauty of a house that I own) to the intentional object of the passion, a person. This shift of attention that results in a feeling *about a person* is characteristic of the passions Hume calls indirect. The direct passions of course have objects (one desires something or fears something), but the very same item that causes the direct passion is also the focus of our attention when we feel it; there is no separate object. If I fear falling, what causes my fear is that I may fall, and the object of my fear is that I may fall. By contrast, if I love someone, the cause of my love may be his virtue, or good looks, or sparkling wit, or even his wealth or power, but the object of my love is the person himself. Indeed, each indirect passion, in taking such an object, constitutes a kind of positive or negative evaluation of the person in question.[14] Hume never says explicitly that the moral sentiments are either direct or indirect. But given their provenance, I shall argue, they could only be indirect.

We come to feel the moral sentiments through the workings of sympathy, a psychological mechanism that transfers feelings from one person to another. (Sympathy plays a role in a number of other sorts of communication of emotions as well, quite apart from the causation of moral sentiments.) Very briefly, here is how sympathy produces our moral sentiments, for Hume. You observe someone's suffering, for example an old woman who endures poverty. Sympathy communicates that suffering to you and you feel distress. Now you learn that some other person has caused her ordeal, for example an investment-broker-turned-pyramid-

schemer who defrauded her of her retirement savings and left her penniless. And you recognize that the person who caused the suffering did so because he has a certain character trait: in this case, dishonesty (perhaps also callousness). At this point your feeling of uneasiness, which was caused in you by your contemplation of the victim, is directed to the broker's dishonesty, and, once it is filtered through the common point of view,[15] it becomes moral disapproval of the broker.

The cause of your moral disapproval is the old woman's suffering. But the object of your moral disapproval, what it is directed toward and what you attend to when you feel it, is the broker. The cause is, of course, not just the woman's suffering, but her suffering understood as having been caused by the villainous broker; but that is still different from the intentional object of the moral disapproval, which is the broker himself, or his dishonest character. The moral sentiment is clearly "a passion plac'd betwixt two ideas, of which the one produces it, and the other is produc'd by it" (T 2.1.2.4; SBN 278), as Hume says of pride. Its cause is distinct from its object, and it shifts our attention from the cause to the object. Thus the moral sentiment is indirect. Furthermore, it is a person-evaluating sentiment in the way that pride, humility, love and hatred are. Unlike desire, the moral sentiment does not direct our attention to any pleasure or pain that we observers may attain, but rather, it assesses a person.[16]

Now, Hume does not seem to hold that all passions can move us to act. The direct passions are the main human motives. Some of these, as we saw, are (or arise from) instincts. The rest of the direct passions (desire and aversion, fear and hope, sorrow and joy) are responses we feel to awareness of pleasure or pain, either at present or in prospect. *All* the direct passions are motives to the will. So if the moral sentiments were *direct* passions, they could themselves be motives, which would clearly distinguish them from reason alone.

But we have seen that the moral sentiments are indirect affections. So there is a problem. In his lengthy discussions of the four main indirect passions (pride, humility or shame, love or admiration, and hatred), Hume asserts that by their own natures these four passions do not actuate the will—they are not themselves motives. This is not surprising, since Hume's account of motivation to action is largely hedonistic: aside from responding to the instincts, the will is engaged only when we seek pleasure or pain; and these four indirect passions are not urges to pursue pleasure or pain, but rather favorable or unfavorable evaluations of persons. Hume says that even love and hatred do not themselves activate the will without intermediary. But he thinks that "by the original constitution of the mind," love causes benevolence and hatred causes anger (T 2.2.6.6; SBN 368). And those two instinctive passions are direct and *are* motives to the will. However, pride and humility are not similarly linked with any instinctive direct passions. Hume calls pride and humility "pure emotions in the soul, unattended with any desire, and not immediately exciting us to action" (T 2.2.6.3; SBN 367).[17]

Hume does not say that *no* indirect passion whatsoever can, of itself, cause action. But as we have seen, he says that pride and humility cannot, and on his account of love and hatred, those passions do not cause action without intermediary, but rather cause another, direct passion that does so. Furthermore, he never offers an example in which any indirect passion is itself the proximal cause of action. This strongly suggests that Hume thinks no indirect passion is itself a motive. So the moral sentiment, being an indirect passion, is not, *itself*, a motive to act. It may, however, *cause* some specific sort of direct passion that moves people to do their duty, a direct passion that, moreover, is not a product of reason alone.[18]

One possibility, suggested by Dorothy Coleman, is that there is in Hume's system another instinct, which is linked with the moral sentiment just as benevolence and anger are linked with love and hatred. The details of Coleman's reconstruction are ingenious, but I do not see any textual evidence for such an instinct.[19]

3. How the Moral Sentiment Provides a Motive not Available to Reason Alone, Given the Signpost Assumption

We need another explanation of how it is that the moral sentiments, though they are indirect, can move us to act in a way that reason cannot.

The indirect passions are all either pleasant or painful. And this suggests two options for the production of motives. First, a person may foresee that she will experience a pleasant or painful indirect passion in the future if she behaves a certain way, and her already-present desire for pleasure can move her, as a result, to act to obtain the pleasant indirect passion or avoid the unpleasant one. If she predicts that should she fail at some task, she will feel humiliated, for example, then her present aversion to pain may move her to strive very hard to succeed at the task. Surely, according to Hume, any kind of pleasure or pain in prospect works on the mind to produce a motive in roughly this way. If I can act to garner the pleasure of tasting a delicious fruit, I can surely act to garner the pleasure of pride or avoid the pain of humiliation in the future by taking suitable steps now. Hume may seem to rule this out in saying that pride and humility are "unattended with any desire," but he could not do so without doing violence to his whole theory of the direct passions. Most likely by this remark he just means that there is no desire that is uniquely linked to pride and humility as such. If there is such a thing as the desire for pleasure in general, by contrast, *it* is directed toward pleasures of every sort, and so, of course, to the pleasures of the pleasing indirect passions. But it is clear that *this* capacity to move us makes the indirect passions no better off than reason alone. Both can direct the desire for pleasure and aversion to pain that we already have and produce action that way. So while it is true that the moral sentiments, as indirect passions, can also do this, it does not solve the problem.

The hedonic quality of the indirect affections, including the moral sentiments, enables them to move us to act in a second way, and this one is not available to reason alone. In Book 1 Hume says that "Nature has implanted in the human mind a perception . . . of pain and pleasure, as the chief spring and moving principle of all its actions" (T 1.3.10.2; SBN 118). But pain and pleasure may appear in the mind either as impressions (occurrent experiences) or as ideas (fainter representations of these), with very different effects on action. Unlike the mere ideas of pain and pleasure, "impressions always actuate the soul, and that in the highest degree" (T 1.3.10.2; SBN 118). That is, felt, occurrent pain or pleasure provides a motive. It causes a new desire or aversion, which moves us to act. To act how? Presumably, to prolong that pleasure or to stop that pain. Occurrent pleasure does not merely inform us of what may happen in the future; it has an inherent attractiveness that generates a new impulse. The four main indirect passions, we know, are pleasant or painful while we are feeling them, as are moral approval and disapproval. So these feelings too "actuate the soul in the highest degree." Just because of their occurrent hedonic quality, they move us to try to prolong or stop them. Now, on some (perhaps all) occasions when I assess my own action to be in accordance with or contrary to duty, in making this evaluation I experience occurrent approval or disapproval. On such occasions, this pleasure causes me to want to prolong it, or this uneasiness causes me to want to stop it. And in some situations, an effective way to prolong the pleasure of self-approval or put a stop to self-disapproval is to fulfill my duty, or refrain from a wrongful action. For example, I feel disapproval at the thought of my own lying in the next moment, and I want this discomfort to stop; so I satisfy that desire by choosing not to lie now. I tell the truth and my uneasiness is relieved. Thus a motivating desire springs directly from the pleasure or uneasiness of the moral sentiment, causing me to act as duty requires. On this account, the moral evaluation is not a mere preview of future pain or pleasure, but a present pain or pleasure that causes a new motivating passion.

This way of producing a motive to act plainly is not available to reason alone. For reasoning of itself is neither pleasant nor painful. An occurrent pleasure or pain can actuate the soul; it does not need to direct some desire or aversion that we had in any case. But reason of itself cannot; it needs something more if it is to produce action. That "something more" may be an already-present desire or aversion, as we have supposed, or some other phenomenon. What it is depends upon matters of interpretation we shall turn to in the next section.

In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* Hume offers what looks like a reprise of the anti-rationalist argument we examined earlier. He says:

> Reason, being cool and disengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulse received from appetite or inclination, by showing us the means of attaining happiness or avoiding misery: Taste [which gives the

> sentiments of . . . vice and virtue], *as it gives pleasure or pain*, and thereby *constitutes* happiness or misery, becomes a motive to action, and is the first spring or impulse to desire and volition. (App. 1.21; SBN 294, my emphasis)[20]

It is the hedonic character of the moral sentiments that gives them a power to move us to act; this is what they have that reason alone does not. Reason can direct our appetites so that we attain happiness, but the moral sentiments, *while they are felt*, in part constitute our happiness, and so cause new desires that cause action, at least some of the time.

There will, of course, be many occasions on which I feel moral approval or disapproval yet this pleasure or pain does not move me to do my duty, because fulfilling a duty of mine will not prolong or stop it. For example, I disapprove of the characters of some people who are now dead, but fulfilling my own obligations will not end this uneasiness. And there will be many occasions on which I am moved to act well, and even to act in a way that manifests a virtue that I have, yet the moral sentiment plays no role in moving me to act. (I may be moved by friendship or compassion, and I may not even think about whether my action is morally virtuous or vicious.) There will also be many occasions on which I do my duty primarily from my desire to avoid *future* pain, including the pangs of future self-disapproval. My concern that my mind be able to "bear its own survey" when I reflect on my character, which Hume describes in T 3.3.6.6 (SBN 620), might well be a manifestation of my independent aversion to pain in general; and so in acting to satisfy it, I may be moved by *that* aversion, which is guided by my reason, and not by the moral sentiment itself.

But there are some simple cases in which we feel moral approval, and it—that very pleasure—directly prompts us to do what it approves. Only a few of our morally good actions are produced this way. But that is all Hume needs to confirm his claim that the moral sentiments have a power to produce passions and actions that reason alone does not have.

It is hard to distinguish this way of being directly moved by the moral sentiments from the manner in which a moral evaluation merely provides a preview of future pleasure or pain and so directs our general desire for pleasure or aversion to pain in the future. One may wonder whether an agent's experience would really be different in these two cases. But there is a crucial difference in principle. Or so we must claim, if we wish to preserve the signpost assumption and also to maintain the present understanding of the moral sentiments as indirect affections.

We have identified one way in which the moral sentiments can produce motives, a way not available to reason alone. As we have seen, this mechanism is responsible for only a few of the many virtuous actions we perform. And from the sound of it, it operates fairly rarely: it works only when we can spontaneously act

to prolong or interrupt an occurrent moral sentiment. Yet Hume talks of people being moved by the opinion of obligation as though it is a frequent and routine occurrence.[21] So, while this way of generating a motive yields a solution to Hume's logical problem, it may not satisfy us as a complete account of how the moral sentiments produce motives to act.

4. Giving Up the Signpost Assumption about Hedonic Beliefs

Recall the signpost assumption, the thesis that hedonic beliefs cause no new motivating passions but merely direct existing passions such as our general desire for pleasure and general aversion to pain. This assumption plays a role in generating the problem we have so far attempted to solve, of how, for Hume, the moral sentiments produce motives to action in a way that reason alone does not.

We should note, however, that there is textual evidence that the signpost assumption expresses a view to which Hume does not in fact subscribe. Rather, he holds that a *belief* that an object has pleasure or pain in store for me operates on my passions and will in just the same way as does an occurrent feeling of pleasure or pain. A number of passages support this interpretation (T. 1.1.2.1; SBN 8, certain natural readings of T 2.3.3.3; SBN 414 and T 2.3.9.7; SBN 439), especially Hume's account of the effects on the will of felt and imagined pleasure and pain in "Of the influence of belief" (T 1.3.10). We already saw that "pain and pleasure have two ways of making their appearance in the mind. . . . They may either appear in impression to the actual feeling and experience, or only in idea, as at present when I mention them," and that "Impressions always actuate the soul, and that in the highest degree; but 'tis not every idea which has the same effect"(T 1.3.10.3; SBN 119–20). Thus not all, but *some* mere ideas of pain or pleasure do "actuate the soul." Hume goes on,

> Tho' an idle fiction has no efficacy, yet we find by experience, that the *ideas* of those [pleasures and pains], which we *believe* either are or will be existent, produce in a lesser degree the same effect with those *impressions*, which are immediately present to the senses and perception. The effect, then, of belief, is to raise up a simple idea to an equality with our impressions, and bestow on it a like influence on the passions. (T 1.3.10.3; SBN 119, my emphasis)

Here Hume says that if I believe that pleasure or pain is to be had from a certain source, this belief (this believed idea) has the same effect on me as an occurrent feeling of pleasure or pain, similarly causing me to desire what will give me the expected pleasure or to be averse to what will give me the expected pain. A felt sensation and a belief that a sensation is in store for me have "a like influence."

So the hedonic belief does not, in fact, direct some desire or aversion that is there already, but sparks a new one.[22]

Indeed, there is reason to think that there *is* no standing desire for pleasure according to Hume's theory of the mind, since for Hume, who lacks any notion of unconscious desires, a standing desire would have to be a constant felt impression, and most of the time we feel no such thing. But if there is no standing desire for pleasure in general and no standing aversion to pain in general, there is nothing for the hedonic belief to direct when it comes into the mind. A signpost cannot provide direction to a passion that is not there.

So it is advisable to abandon the signpost assumption about hedonic beliefs. Suppose that in fact, on Hume's view, beliefs that an object has pleasure or pain in store for me affect my passions in precisely the same way as does an occurrent feeling of pleasure or pain, by igniting a new desire or aversion.

This does not imply that there are no beliefs that act merely as signposts directing desires and aversions that are already there. Imagine that I come to believe that a fruit on a tree will be delicious, and this hedonic belief causes me to want to enjoy that fruit. From experience I also form a further belief: if I climb a ladder and pluck the fruit, I will be able to satisfy my desire. *This* causal belief is just a signpost: it merely directs a desire I already have to the means to its satisfaction. However, the point here is that not all beliefs play that role. The belief that the fruit would be enjoyable to eat gives rise to a *new* desire.

This slightly, but significantly, alters the account of one of the ways in which the indirect passions move us to act. If I fear I will feel humiliated should I fail at some task, and this moves me to avoid that pain by striving hard to succeed, what happens is not that my general aversion to pain is directed to a more specific (and new) object. Rather, my belief that failure will give me the discomfort of shame causes me to feel a new aversion to failure, and this new aversion moves me to try to succeed. It is a small difference, but it has important repercussions.

Remember that the moral sentiments are indirect passions. One consequence of this altered interpretation is that beliefs about future moral self-evaluations, of themselves, can produce motives in just the same way that, as I have proposed, occurrent moral sentiments produce motives. I argued in the previous section that the occurrent moral sentiment I feel at a given moment, which is itself a pleasure (for example), sparks a new desire that this pleasure continue, one which may move me to act here and now. But if the belief that some item is a potential source of *future* pleasure works on my passions in the same way as an occurrent pleasure, then that hedonic belief, too, triggers a new desire in me that can move me to act; and the action need not be one to prolong a present sensation, but may instead be one to obtain a new sensation in the more distant future.

This gives the moral sentiments a far broader and more uniform power to produce motives: they do so by means of our beliefs about them. While this power

still derives from the sentiments' hedonic character, it extends far beyond their power as occurrent feelings at the moments when we have them. A belief that my prospective action of telling the truth would give me a pleasant glow of moral self-approval can, of itself, generate a desire to tell the truth whenever the time comes to do so. Thus I can be moved to fulfill my obligation not merely at the very moment when I feel a flush of moral approval for the prospective action and wish to prolong it, but even when I am not experiencing that sentiment at all. If I expect to feel the pleasure of moral self-approval as a result of telling the truth next month, or next year, this hedonic belief can spark a desire to tell the truth next month or next year just as effectively as an occurrent feeling of approval can spark a desire to prolong the feeling by acting well right now. (An interesting consequence of this is that if any moral judgments are not themselves tokens of the moral sentiments, there is still a way to account for their special influence on action.) The desire to get pleasure by doing my duty that springs into being when I realize that some obligatory action will yield me moral self-approval in the future is not the result of reason directing a general desire that was already present. The desire is the direct product of the believed idea of future moral self-approval. Consequently, beliefs about our moral sentiments do not merely point out means to fulfill desires and aversions we had in any case. So when I survey my whole character and judge it to have defects, and I realize that if I do not reform myself I will feel disapproval the next time I engage in such reflection, I am moved to correct my character not by the general aversion to pain, but by a desire sparked directly by my moral reflection. Moral sentiments thus not only have much greater scope to produce motives to action, but do so in the same way in a greater variety of circumstances, if we replace the signpost assumption with the account of the influence of hedonic belief in *Treatise* 1.3.10.

I have argued elsewhere, on other grounds, against the signpost assumption as an interpretation of Hume;[23] so I take this as one more point in favor of abandoning it. The signpost assumption made it quite hard to find any way in which the moral sentiments or the moral evaluations based on them can produce motives to act that reason cannot produce. The mode of operation it allowed was extremely limited and would occur only rarely, leaving most of our ethical behavior to be explained in other ways. Once we are rid of the signpost assumption, the moral sentiments we feel and the resulting evaluations we make of our own behavior are not mere signposts to direct our background desires but are actual causes of new desires. The problem of how the moral sentiments yield motives is easily solved.

However, an objection threatens. Once we grant that hedonic beliefs, including beliefs that there are moral sentiments in store for us, spark new desires that move us to act, we may wonder about the source of hedonic beliefs. Many readers of Hume's moral psychology assume that beliefs (or many types of beliefs) are for Hume the products of reason alone; and they also assume that anything produced

directly by a belief that is itself a product of reason alone is, therefore, also a product of reason alone. And this would put our interpretation into difficulty. The belief that something in my environment holds pleasure or pain in store for me is a belief I acquire by a process of cause-and-effect (that is, inductive) reasoning, so it is plausible to claim that it is a product of reason alone; and my belief that should I fulfill my duty, I would feel the pleasure of self-approval, is a belief of this type, and so also a product of reason alone. The objection claims that if such a belief were in turn to ignite a new desire or aversion, this new motivating passion would *also* be the product of reason alone; for no desire of independent origin would be involved in its production.[24] If a hedonic belief is itself the product of reason alone, and it ignites a new desire or aversion in just the same way as does an occurrent sensation of pleasure or pain, then (so the objection goes) the motivating desire that the belief ignites is *also* the product of reason alone. In that case, it seems, reason alone can do whatever the moral sentiment can do in this regard; in fact, what the moral sentiment accomplishes in producing a desire or aversion just *is* the work of reason alone. That is, when moral evaluations give rise to desires that move us to act, what really happens is that reason alone gives rise to those desires. And once more the premises of the anti-rationalist argument are undermined. So it seems we have not found a way in which moral sentiments can move us to act that is different from the way in which reason alone does so (though in a rather different sense from the one we considered above).

The solution to this problem, however, is to question the additional interpretive assumption on which the objection is founded, that for Hume whatever is produced by a belief is produced by reason alone. There are many grounds for doubting that this is Hume's position. First, he does not say this. Second, it is not certain that Hume thinks beliefs about the availability of pleasures and pains are themselves products of reason *alone* in the first place; another factor may be involved in their causation. This would leave the objector with no grounds on which to claim that the *effects* of such beliefs are produced by reason alone.[25] Third, even if such beliefs *are* products of reason alone (as well they may be), it does not follow that the further causal consequences produced by such beliefs are also, themselves, the products of reason alone, and there is no evidence that Hume thought it did follow. Hume distinguishes between the immediate and the "mediate" products of reason, and he appears to think that the mediated effects, those further effects generated in turn by the direct products of reason, are not produced by reason *alone*. To attribute to Hume the assumption that if A alone is the cause of B and B is the cause of C, therefore A alone is the cause of C, is to attribute to him, without textual evidence, a fallacious bit of reasoning, which we should be very reluctant to do.[26] Finally, there is evidence that on Hume's view, while a belief about upcoming pleasure or pain does often ignite a new desire or aversion, the sparking of that desire or aversion is never the work of reason alone,

because of what reason alone is. It can be argued that, for Hume, reason alone is merely *reasoning*—that is, *inference*, which he understands as making comparisons between ideas and detecting relations between them, a process whose product can never be anything other than a believed idea. If that is the case, then to say that something is produced by reason alone is to say that it is the believed conclusion of inference and so is an idea rather than an impression. No desire or aversion is an idea, and none is produced by inference. Therefore, *no* desire or aversion is the product of reason alone, even if it is brought into being by a belief that is itself a product of inference.[27]

Given all these considerations, we should reject the assumption that for Hume every causal product of a belief (even of a reason-generated belief) is itself a product of reason alone. If we do, the objection has no force. When a belief about available pleasure or pain causes a new desire or aversion—a new passion that moves us to act to obtain or avoid the predicted pleasure or pain—this motive is not generated by reason alone. So when the moral sentiments influence our behavior by means of our expectations of (that is, beliefs about) self-approval and self-disapproval in the future, this is not the work of reason alone.

We have seen that without the signpost assumption, we do not need to appeal to any background desire for pleasure or background aversion to pain to explain how hedonic beliefs generate actions; rather, many motives arise anew in response to the relevant hedonic beliefs, including desires to behave virtuously or in accord with our duty. (Indeed, there is little reason to attribute to Hume the strange doctrine that when we act to get particular sorts of pleasures, we are driven by a constant desire for pleasure as such, as if we thought of each particular pleasant object as a means to satiate this single generic desire.) So coming to want moral self-approval or to fear moral self-disapproval for a particular deed or misdeed is not a matter of directing what is already there; it is not an instance of means-end reasoning in this sense but, rather, the acquiring of a new end. And as is always the case for Hume, acquiring this or any end is the result of sentiment and not of reason alone. In this case it is the result of moral sentiment. And without the assumption that every product of a belief is a product of reason alone, we are not threatened with the objection that these new motives are perforce the products of reason alone after all.

Thus when we reject these two interpretive assumptions we dissolve our original problem. The difficulty of explaining how the moral sentiments could move us in a way that reason alone cannot has proven to be an artifact of these unsupported interpretive assumptions. Without them, there is no difficulty in explaining how the moral sentiments produce motives, even though those sentiments are indirect and not themselves urges to do or get anything. The moral sentiments move us to act in a very ordinary way: given their nature as pleasant and painful sentiments, the expectation of feeling them in the future stimulates

in us new impulses to act. It is a way not available to reason alone, because reason alone does not engender new impulses.[28]

NOTES

1 References to the *Treatise* are to David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), hereafter cited in text as "T" followed by Book, part, section, and paragraph numbers; and to *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), hereafter cited in text as "SBN" followed by page number. References to the *Enquiry* are to David Hume, *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (hereafter "EPM"), ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), hereafter cited in text by section and paragraph, and to *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), hereafter "SBN" followed by page number. 'App.' stands for Appendix.

2 Below I discuss in detail the passages in T 3.1.1 that show this. Hume is also emphatic in T 3.2.1.8; SBN 479, where he says that at times "the sense of morality or duty" produces an action "without any other motive"; and at T 3.2.1.9; SBN 479, where the "regard to justice, and abhorrence of villainy and knavery" (the moral approval of justice and disapproval of injustice) move civilized people to pay their debts. There are other passages scattered throughout the *Treatise of Human Nature* and the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (e.g., EPM, App. 1.21; SBN 294). For example, Hume calls the moral sentiments motives while admitting that they are relatively weak motives and do not always win out against our interested affections, though by implication they sometimes do (T 3.3.1.18; SBN 583).

According to some interpreters, once the conventions that make possible the artificial virtues are established, and the dispositions to conform to them have earned moral approval, it is a form of the moral sentiment that is the virtuous motive of *all* action that exhibits these virtues; which means a great many actions are produced by moral approval and disapproval. But other interpreters deny this. Here I leave this issue aside.

3 I think Hume repeats more or less the same argument three or perhaps four times in T 3.1.1: first at 3.1.1.6 (SBN 457), then at 3.1.1.10 (SBN 458, first a brief sketch, then a fuller statement), and finally in a compressed recapitulation at 3.1.1.16 (SBN 462–63). There is also an argument in Appendix 1 of the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* that could be construed as a version of this argument (App. 1.21), though the context is somewhat different; I discuss that passage separately below.

4 According to Hume, it is a duty for human beings to have a certain motivating passion or disposition (such as love of one's children) provided the moral sentiment approves our having it and disapproves our lacking it, and an action is a duty when it is the sort of action whose usual motive is a passion or disposition that it is our duty to possess. See T. 3.2.1.5; SBN 478 and T 3.2.1.9; SBN 479.

5 Here I do not propose to consider the broader question whether Hume is a moral judgment internalist, though many commentators who write about whether the moral sentiment is a motive take this as their topic. Moral judgment internalism is understood variously but usually as a stronger position than the one that Hume defends in T 3.1.1, namely, that, of necessity, on every occasion on which anyone sincerely judges that some action of hers would be morally obligatory, she has a motive to perform it. The classic articulation of moral judgment internalism can be found in W. D. Falk, "'Ought' and Motivation," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 48 (1947–48): 492–510. Its best-known early defense is in William Frankena, "Obligation and Motivation in Recent Moral Philosophy," in *Essays in Moral Philosophy*, ed. A. I. Melden, (Seattle: Univ of Washington Press, 1958), 40–81. Stephen Darwall introduces this precise term (to distinguish the view from other theses also called "internalism") in *Impartial Reason* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 51–61. Many others have written about it since, both on its own and in connection with Hume. This may or may not be Hume's considered view in the end, but it is not what he says in T 3.1.1 in support of the premise of his anti-rationalist argument, and it is more than he needs to make that argument sound.

6 Dorothy Coleman ("Hume's Internalism," *Hume Studies* 18 [1992]: 331–48) nicely explains how Hume's claim in T. 3.2.1.7 (SBN 479) that "*no action can be virtuous, or morally good, unless there be in human nature some motive to produce it, distinct from the sense of its morality*" (Hume's emphasis) is compatible with there being occasions on which the sense of morals moves people to fulfill their duties. Kate Abramson ("Two Portraits of the Humean Moral Agent," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 83 [2002]: 301–34) cleanly dispenses with the claim that Hume's insistence on the weakness of the moral sentiments shows that he does not think them able to provide motives at all (302–03), and gives a general account of how his "spectator view" of ethical evaluation can be reconciled with his claims that moral evaluations move us to act.

7 It may not be sound for other reasons, of course. But let us see what the logic of the argument commits him to saying specifically about the motivating power of moral evaluations and, hence, of the moral sentiments.

8 This suggests that reason creates a new passion, which would fly in the face of Hume's arguments in T 2.3.3 that reason alone cannot produce any passion, but never mind that. For now, suppose that by 'excite' here he means something like activate or enliven or give focus to an already-existent passion.

9 This position is attributed to Hume implicitly by Jonathan Harrison, *Hume's Moral Epistemology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 5; and more explicitly by Barry Stroud, *Hume* (London: Routledge, 1997), chapter 7, and Francis Snare, *Morals, Motivation and Convention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), chapters 2–5, and no doubt by others. In discussion I have found that it is a common assumption to make in understanding Hume's moral psychology.

10 So I assume first that the passion that is engaged when we learn that something has pleasure or pain in store for us is an existing desire for pleasure or aversion to pain, and I claim that, whatever may be the origin of that desire and of that aversion, according to Hume they are not the products of reason alone. I take up an alternative interpretation as well in part 4 of this paper.

11 I thank Michael Gill for showing me the need to explain this point so as to clarify the problem I take up in this article.

12 Charlotte Brown, in her "Is Hume an Internalist?" (*Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26 [1988]: 69–87) argues that Hume is inconsistent. As she reads Hume, he claims in his anti-rationalist arguments that moral evaluations move us directly or of themselves, but in fact the moral sentiments move us, when they do, by means of our desire for happiness. On this and related matters, see also Brown, "From Spectator to Agent: Hume's Theory of Obligation," *Hume Studies* 20 (1994): 19–36.

13 Hume may also think that besides the *passions* (which are violent), there are other affections, those that are characteristically calm, that lie outside this binary division, and at one point he seems to include the moral sentiments ("the sense of beauty and deformity in action," T 2.1.1.3; SBN 276) among those others. (See Louis E. Loeb, "Hume's Moral Sentiments and the Structure of the *Treatise*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 15 [1977]: 395–403.) But Hume is rather equivocal as to whether the distinction between calm and violent affections is to be taken seriously. In any case, he may think there is a distinction to be made between direct and indirect calm affections as well; in which case, even if the moral sentiments are, strictly speaking, neither direct nor indirect *passions*, they may be direct or indirect calm affections. And the question whether they fit the pattern of the direct or the indirect passions is worth asking.

14 Space limitations require me to compress this argument and omit both discussion of opposing interpretations and consideration of the plausibility of Hume's view, so construed. For a full discussion, see my "Hume's Indirect Passions," in *A Companion to Hume*, ed. Elizabeth S. Radcliffe (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 159–184.

15 The common or general point of view is a perspective we adopt in order to compensate for the fact that our sympathy with others operates differently depending upon how close we are to the other person in space or time and the degree to which we resemble him in such respects as nationality and language. In adopting the common point of view we disregard our current geographical and historical position and imagine ourselves close to each of those who feel the impact of the person's character, and thus we come to share all their feelings. What we feel as a result is what becomes or gives rise to our moral sentiment about that individual's character.

16 For a more thorough defense of these claims, see my "Hume's Indirect Passions." In addition, as many commentators note, Hume does say late in the *Treatise* that "our approbation or blame . . . is nothing but a fainter and more imperceptible love or hatred" (T 3.3.5.1; SBN 614). Others who argue that the moral sentiments are indirect passions, but on other grounds than mine, are (most prominently) Páll Árdal, *Passion and Value in Hume's Treatise* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1966), and also Coleman, "Hume's Internalism."

17 The same sentence occurs in the *Dissertation on the Passions* 3.6. See *David Hume: A Dissertation on the Passions; The Natural History of Religion*, ed. Tom Beauchamp, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of David Hume (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 18–19.

18 Although the moral sentiments are indirect affections, I do not claim that they are identical to pride, humility, love, or hatred (which are not the only indirect passions, for Hume, though they are the ones to which he pays the most extensive attention). As

Elizabeth Radcliffe pointed out to me in discussion, it is possible that the moral sentiments might be distinct indirect affections that, unlike those four, *are* capable of being motives in their own right. Although Hume usually treats pity and malice as direct passions similar to benevolence and anger (e.g. at T 2.2.9.3; SBN 382), Radcliffe pointed out that at first he lists pity and malice as indirect passions (T 2.1.1.4; SBN 277), yet at later points describes each of them as a desire that can produce action (T 2.2.8.12; SBN 377 and T 2.2.9.3; SBN 382). If the moral sentiments were like that, it would solve the problem handily. But Hume does not offer such an account of the moral sentiments, and those sentiments have features in common with pride, humility, love and hatred (such as being assessments of persons rather than urges to get pleasure or avoid pain) that suggest Hume would deny that they are motives as well. So here I take on a more daunting task, trying to make sense of how the moral sentiments might produce motives to action even if they themselves are not motives.

19 Coleman proposes that the moral sentiments are fainter and more imperceptible forms of love and hatred prompted by reflecting on qualities of mind generally, rather than by reflecting on the particular qualities of others, as ordinary love and hatred are. Just as ordinary love and hatred are causally joined with benevolence and anger, by the original constitution of the mind but not as a conceptual matter, Coleman argues, moral approval and disapproval are joined to some other specialized desires. Presumably, these are desires that move us to do what is approved and refrain from what is disapproved. Thus the moral sentiments cause their own motivating passions rather than merely making use of some desire not of their making, such as the desire for pleasure or happiness, which is a singular strength of Coleman's interpretation.

This interpretation, however, requires us to postulate an instinct that Hume never mentions, which is a substantial extrapolation from the text. Furthermore, love and hatred, according to Hume, are always directed at another person, never at oneself; which makes it hard to figure out how this interpretation would account for the self-disapproval that Hume says induces an ungrateful man to perform grateful actions from a sense of duty (T 3.2.1.9; SBN 479). Coleman does not say that for Hume the moral sentiment is a fainter form of pride or humility, because Hume is explicit that there is no specialized desire that can be traced to either of these. Yet most of the time when a moral sentiment moves someone to act, the sentiment in question would presumably be self-approval or self-disapproval, which cannot be forms of love or hatred.

20 In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* Hume confines his anti-rationalist arguments to Appendix 1, and he makes no use of his theory of the passions. But I think the passage opens a window on what he may have meant in the *Treatise*.

21 Thanks to Michael Gill for pointing this out.

22 I give a more detailed argument for this position in *Hume's Morality: Feeling and Fabrication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 40–49. The interpretation draws on the work of Annette C. Baier, who points out that for Hume hedonic beliefs actuate the will and argues that they influence our passions, though she does not say explicitly that such beliefs cause entirely new passions (*A Progress of Sentiments* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991], 158–59); and on ideas to be found in my "Is Hume a Noncognitivist in the Motivation Argument?" (*Philosophical Studies* 85 [1997]: 251–66) and in Ingmar Persson, "Hume—Not a 'Humean' about Motivation" (*History of Philosophy Quarterly* 14 [1997]: 189–206. It is endorsed by Mikael Karlsson ("Cognition,

Desire, and Motivation: 'Humean' and 'non-Humean' Considerations," *SATS—Nordic Journal of Philosophy* 2 [2001]: 36–37) and Nicholas Sturgeon ("Moral Skepticism and Moral Naturalism in Hume's *Treatise*," *Hume Studies* 27 [2001]: 3–83. I owe to Karlsson the apt phrase "[an object or action] has pleasure in store" for someone.

23 See *Hume's Morality*, chapter 2, where I discuss the Background Impulse interpretation of Hume's position on the production of motivating passions.

24 This will raise red flags for many who are familiar with Hume's moral psychology, since it is Hume's position that *reason* alone cannot produce any passion or action, and this is widely thought to imply that no *belief* can cause a new passion. For our present purposes, though, there is a different, more specific problem with the interpretation we are discussing. We should set aside the general issue for present purposes. I address it at length in *Hume's Morality*.

25 I include this point for completeness, because it reminds us of an important issue. It is a mistake to assume that for Hume every belief is the product of reason alone. For example, it may be argued that for Hume at least some perceptual beliefs are not. So there is room to argue that hedonic beliefs are not either. However, I do not take this approach here. In my arguments above and going forward I grant that beliefs about what will cause one's own pleasure or pain are ordinary products of causal reasoning, analogous to beliefs about what causes thunder or pneumonia, and so products of (probable) reason alone to the same degree that those beliefs are (if indeed they are).

26 There are many counter-examples that reveal the fallacy. Here is one: the virus alone caused the illness; the illness caused boredom; therefore the virus alone caused boredom. I take this from my "Is Hume a Noncognitivist in the Motivation Argument?"

27 I argue for the third point and the final interpretation in far greater detail in *Hume's Morality*, chapter 3.

28 I am grateful to Michael Gill, Nathan Powers, the participants in the Creighton Club Conference of 2010, and an audience at the 38th International Hume Society Conference in Edinburgh, U.K., in July 2011 for helpful comments on and discussion of an earlier draft of sections 1–3 of this paper. I thank the audience at a Cornell University colloquium and the Reading Group in Moral Philosophy at the University of South Carolina for very fruitful discussions of an earlier version of the full paper. I am sure I have not adequately addressed all of their concerns, but I have certainly tried.