

PAUL RUSSELL

10 “Hume’s Lengthy Digression”: Free Will in the *Treatise*

David Hume’s views on the subject of free will are among the most influential contributions to this long-disputed topic. Throughout the twentieth century, and into this century, Hume has been widely regarded as having presented the classic defense of the compatibilist position, the view that freedom and responsibility are consistent with determinism. Most of Hume’s core arguments on this issue are found in the Sections entitled “Of liberty and necessity,” first presented in Book 2 of *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) and then in his *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (1748). Although the general position in both these works is much the same, there are some significant points of difference relating to the way in which the core position is presented and also in the specific range of arguments covered. The focus of my concerns in this essay will not, however, lie with the relationship between the *Treatise* and the first *Enquiry* versions of “Of liberty and necessity.” My discussion will center on the contrast between two alternative interpretations of Hume’s views on this subject, with particular reference to the version presented in the *Treatise*. It will be my particular concern to explain and defend the naturalistic as against the classical compatibilist account and to explain the general significance of the naturalistic account for the contemporary debate.

I. SPONTANEITY, INDIFFERENCE AND THE LOGIC OF LIBERTY

The interpretation of Hume on free will that has been established for the past century or more is the classical compatibilist account, which places Hume at the heart of a tradition of empiricist-compatibilist thinking that stretches from Hobbes, through Hume, on to Mill, Russell, Schlick, and Ayer.¹ Classical compatibilists believe, with libertarians, that we need some adequate theory of what free action is, where this is understood as providing the relevant conditions of moral agency and responsibility. Compatibilists, however, reject the view that free action requires the falsity of determinism or that an action cannot be both free and causally

necessitated by antecedent conditions. According to the classical compatibilist strategy, not only is freedom compatible with causal determinism, but the absence of causation and necessity would make free and responsible action impossible. A free action is an action caused by the agent, whereas an unfree action is caused by some other, external cause. Whether an action is free or not depends on the *type* of cause, not on whether it was caused or necessitated. An uncaused action would be entirely capricious and random and could not be attributed to any agent, much less interpreted as a free and responsible act. So construed, the classical compatibilist strategy involves an attempt to explain and describe the *logic* of our *concepts* relating to issues of freedom and determinism. It is primarily concerned with conceptual issues rather than with any empirical investigations into our human moral psychology. On the classical interpretation, this is how Hume's core arguments should be understood.

The very title "Of liberty and necessity" makes plain that the two key ideas in play are "liberty" (freedom) and "necessity" (causation and determinism). Although Hume emphasizes the point in his *Abstract* of the *Treatise* that his "reasoning puts the whole [free-will] controversy in a new light, by giving a new definition of necessity" (Abs. 34, SBN 661), the classical interpretation nevertheless places heavy weight on the significance of his views on the nature of *liberty* as the appropriate basis for explaining Hume's position on this subject. Hume, it is claimed, is generally following the same strategy that was pursued by Hobbes, and that strategy turns largely on a distinction between two kinds of liberty.² Hume's views on liberty, however, vary between the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*.

In the *Treatise* Hume distinguishes between two kinds of liberty.

Few are capable of distinguishing betwixt the liberty of *spontaneity*, as it is call'd in the schools, and the liberty of *indifference*; betwixt that which is oppos'd to violence, and that which means a negation of necessity and causes. The first is even the most common sense of the word; and as 'tis only that species of liberty, which it concerns us to preserve, our thoughts have been principally turn'd towards it, and have almost universally confounded it with the other. (T 2.3.2.1, SBN 407–8)

Liberty of spontaneity involves an agent's being able to act according to her own willings and desires, unhindered by external obstacles that might constrain or restrict her conduct (e.g., the walls or bars of a prison [T 2.3.1.17, SBN 406]). A liberty of this kind does not imply an absence of causation and necessity, unless we incorrectly assume that what is caused is somehow compelled or forced to occur. In the *Enquiry* Hume drops the distinction between two kinds of liberty and instead provides

an account of what he calls “hypothetical liberty” (EHU 8.23, SBN 95). A liberty of this kind involves “a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may.” Hume goes on to claim that this sort of hypothetical liberty is “universally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a prisoner and in chains” (ibid.). Although Hume is committed to the existence of both liberty of spontaneity and hypothetical liberty, they are not the same. More specifically, a person may enjoy liberty of spontaneity and be able to act according to the determinations of her own will but nevertheless lack hypothetical liberty because, if she chose otherwise, her action might be obstructed (e.g., as with a person who chooses to remain in a room but could not leave if she chose to because the door is locked).

The variation between the *Treatise* and the first *Enquiry* accounts of liberty also reflect a variation in the way Hume presents his overall strategy and position in these two works. In the *Treatise* Hume tends to identify liberty with indifference rather than spontaneity and even suggests “that liberty and chance are synonymous” (T 2.3.2.8, SBN 412; cf. T 2.3.1.18, SBN 407; but see also EHU 8.25, SBN 96). For this reason he presents his arguments as aiming to show that liberty, so understood (*qua* indifference), is, if not contradictory, “directly contrary to experience” (T 2.3.1.18, SBN 407). In placing emphasis on this negative task of refuting “the doctrine of liberty or chance” (T 2.3.2.7, SBN 412), Hume is happy to present himself as coming down firmly on the side of “the doctrine of necessity” (T 2.3.2.3, SBN 409), which he is careful to define in a way that avoids any confusion between causation and compulsion or force (as is explained in more detail below). In the *Enquiry*, on the other hand, Hume strikes a more balanced note and presents his position as not so much a refutation of “the doctrine of liberty” or “free-will” (T 2.3.1.18, SBN 407; cf. T 2.1.10.5, SBN 312), but rather as a “reconciling project with regard to the question of liberty and necessity” (EHU 8.23, SBN 95; although even in the *Enquiry* his references to liberty are not uniformly to spontaneity). Having noted these differences, it is important not to exaggerate them. In the *Treatise* Hume makes clear that liberty of spontaneity is “the most common sense of the word” and the “only . . . species of liberty, which it concerns us to preserve” (T 2.3.2.1, SBN 407–8). It is evident, therefore, that there is also a “reconciling project” implicit in the *Treatise* and that his arguments against “the doctrine of liberty” remain tightly focused on liberty of indifference.

For Hume, the original or interesting part of his contribution to free will is not the claim that liberty should be understood in terms of spontaneity as opposed to indifference. On the contrary, he is very clear, in both the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*, that the primary obstacle

to resolving this controversy is securing a proper definition or understanding of what we mean by *necessity* (T 2.3.1.18, 2.3.2.4, SBN 407, 409–10; see also EHU 8.1–3, 8.21–25, SBN 80–81, 92–96). According to Hume there are "two particulars, which we are to consider as essential to necessity, viz. the constant union and the inference of the mind; and wherever we discover these we must acknowledge a necessity" (T 2.3.1.4, SBN 400). To explain this, he begins with a description of causation and necessity as we observe it in "the operations of external bodies" (T 2.3.1.3, SBN 399) or in "the actions of matter" (Abs. 34, SBN 661). Here we find "not the least traces of indifference or liberty," and we can see that "[e]very object is determin'd by an absolute fate" (T 2.3.1.3, SBN 400). What this means, as Hume has explained at length in Book 1 of the *Treatise*, is that we discover that there exist constant conjunctions of objects whereby resembling objects of one kind are uniformly followed by resembling objects of another kind (e.g., Xs are uniformly followed by Ys). (See, in particular, T 1.3; Abs. 8–9, 24–26, SBN 649–50, 655–57; and also EHU 4 and 7.) When we experience regularities of this sort, we are able to draw relevant inferences, and we deem objects of the first kind causes and those of the second kind their effects.

What is crucial to Hume's account is that we can discover no further "*ultimate connexion*" (T 1.3.6.11, SBN 91) between cause and effect beyond our experience of their regular union. There is no perceived or known power or energy in a cause such that we could draw any inference to its effect or by which the cause compels or forces its effect to occur (T 1.3.12.20, 1.3.14.4–7, SBN 139, 157–59). Nevertheless, on the basis of our experience of regularities or constant conjunctions of objects, the mind, on the appearance of the first object, naturally draws an inference to that of the other (T 1.3.14.20–22, 31, SBN 164–66, 169–70; cp. EHU 7.28–29, SBN 75–77). In other words, our experience of regularities serves as the basis upon which we can draw inferences to the existence of an object on the appearance of another. According to Hume, then, all that we find of causation and necessity in bodies or matter is this conjunction of like objects along with the inference of the mind from one to the other. The relevant question, therefore, is do we find similar features in the operations of human action?

Our experience, Hume maintains, proves that "our actions have a constant union with our motives, tempers, and circumstances" and that we draw relevant inferences from one to the other on this basis (T 2.3.1.4, SBN 401). Although there are some apparent irregularities in both the natural and the moral realms, this is entirely due to the influence of contrary or concealed causes of which we are ignorant (T 2.3.1.11–12, SBN 403–4; cf. EHU 8.15, SBN 88).

[T]he *union* betwixt motives and actions has the same constancy, as that in any natural operations, so its influence on the understanding is also the same, in *determining* us to infer the existence of one from that of another. If this shall appear, there is no known circumstance, that enters into the connexion and production of the actions of matter, that is not to be found in all the operations of the mind; and consequently we cannot, without a manifest absurdity, attribute necessity to the one, and refuse it to the other. (T 2.3.1.14, SBN 404)

The relevant evidence that Hume cites for this claim comes, in the first place, from the regularities we observe in human society, where class, sex, occupation, age, and other such factors are seen to be reliably correlated with different motives and conduct (T 2.3.1.5–10, SBN 401–3). Regularities of this kind make it possible for us to draw the sorts of inferences that are needed for human social life, such as in all our reasoning concerning business, politics, war, and so on (T 2.3.1.15, SBN 405; EHU 8.17–18, SBN 89–90). In the absence of necessity, so understood, we could not survive or live together.

Hume goes on to argue that not only is this sort of necessity essential to human society, but it is also “essential to religion and morality” (T 2.3.2.5, SBN 410), because of its relevance to the foundations of responsibility and punishment. Human laws depend on the support of rewards and punishments for their enforcement. If these motives had no uniform and reliable influence on conduct, then law and society would be impossible (*ibid.*; cp. EHU 8.28, SBN 97–98; see also T 3.3.4.4, SBN 609). Moreover, whether we consider human or divine rewards and punishments, the justice of such practices depends on the fact that the agent has produced or brought about these actions through her own will. The “doctrine of liberty or chance,” however, would remove this connection between agent and action and so no one could be properly held accountable for their conduct (T 2.3.2.6, SBN 411). It is, therefore, “only upon the principles of necessity, that a person acquires any merit or demerit from his actions, however the common opinion may incline to the contrary” (*ibid.*; EHU 8.31, SBN 99). On this (classical) reading, Hume is simply restating the familiar view about the need for necessity (determinism) to support a generally forward-looking, utilitarian theory of moral responsibility and punishment.³

Hume’s observations on this subject make clear that although necessity is essential to all merit and demerit, the opposite is often asserted. The principal explanation for this resistance to “the doctrine of necessity” is found, according to Hume, in confusion about the nature of necessity as we discover it in *matter*.⁴ Although in ordinary life we all rely upon and reason upon the principles of necessity, there may well be some reluctance to call this union and inference necessity.

But as long as the meaning is understood, I hope the word can do no harm... I may be mistaken in asserting, that we have no idea of any other connexion in the actions of body... But sure I am, I ascribe nothing to the actions of the mind, but what must readily be allow’d of... I do not ascribe to the will that unintelligible necessity, which is suppos’d to lie in matter. But I ascribe to matter, that intelligible quality, call it necessity or not, which the most rigorous orthodoxy does or must allow to belong to the will. I change, therefore, nothing in the receiv’d systems, with regard to the will, but only with regard to material objects. (T 2.3.2.4, SBN 410; cp. EHU 8.22, SBN 93–94)

The illusion that we are aware of some further power or energy in matter, whereby causes somehow compel or force their effects to occur, is the fundamental source of confusion on this issue. It is this that encourages us to reject the suggestion that our actions are subject to necessity on the ground that this would imply some kind of violence or constraint – something that would be incompatible with liberty of spontaneity. When confusions of this sort are removed, all that remains is the verbal quibble about using the term *necessity* – which is not itself a substantial point of disagreement.⁵

Hume provides another explanation for our resistance to the doctrine of necessity, which has to do with “a false sensation or experience even of the liberty of indifference” (T 2.3.2.2, SBN 408, Hume’s emphasis; cp. EHU 8.22n18, SBN 94n). He describes this “false sensation” in these terms:

The necessity of any action, whether of matter or of the mind, is not properly a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being, who may consider the action, and consists in the determination of his thought to infer its existence from some preceding objects: As liberty or chance, on the other hand, is nothing but the want of that determination, and a certain looseness, which we feel in passing or not passing from the idea of one to that of the other. Now we may observe, that tho’ in reflecting on human actions we seldom feel such a looseness or indifference, yet it very commonly happens, that in performing the actions themselves we are sensible of something like it... We feel that our actions are subject to our will on most occasions, and imagine we feel that the will itself is subject to nothing. (T 2.3.2.2, SBN 408)

The difference between reflecting on and performing actions, in other words, corresponds to the difference in the stance of the spectator and the agent. From the agent’s perspective we may experience an “indifference” that suggests the relevant uniformity and inference are absent, but spectators can, nevertheless, reliably infer our actions from our motives and character. For this reason, although we may in these circumstances find it hard to accept that “we were govern’d by necessity, and that ‘twas utterly impossible for us to have acted otherwise” (T 2.3.2.1, SBN 407), the spectator’s point of view reveals this to be an illusion or “false

sensation." It is this deception in our experience of acting, along with our further confusions and mistaken suppositions concerning the nature of necessity (as it exists in matter), that largely account for "the prevalence of the doctrine of liberty [of indifference]" (ibid.).

One further explanation that Hume provides in this context is the influence of religion, which has been, he suggests, "very unnecessarily interested in this question" (T 2.3.2.3, SBN 409). In taking up this issue, Hume alludes to irreligious objectives that are fundamental to his core concerns throughout the *Treatise* – and, indeed, central to his whole philosophy. In this context, however, I will only briefly consider the irreligious aspect of Hume's aims and objectives.⁶ First, although Hume suggests that the doctrine of necessity "is not only innocent, but even advantageous to religion and morality" (ibid.), he nevertheless goes on to point out that even if this doctrine had "dangerous consequences," this circumstance would not show that it was false.⁷ Second, and more importantly, in the *Enquiry* Hume notes that while the doctrine of necessity is "absolutely essential" to morality (EHU 8.26, SBN 97), it *does* present intractable philosophical problems for religion (i.e., it is not as "innocent" as his remarks in the *Treatise* suggest). The most basic problem is that, given the doctrine of necessity, we can trace the origin of the whole causal series – including all evil action and conduct – back to God (EHU 8.32, SBN 99–100). Although he considers various ways in which the orthodox may try to evade these difficulties, he finds none of them convincing. The theist is left facing the following dilemma:

And we must therefore conclude, either that [human actions] are not criminal, or that the Deity, not man, is accountable for them. (EHU 8.32, SBN 100)

Hume rejects the first alternative on the ground that the distinction between virtue and vice depends on our natural sentiments and cannot be denied or rejected on the basis of "any philosophical theory or speculation whatsoever" (EHU 8.35, SBN 103). On the other hand, it seems impossible to deny that God is "the author of sin and moral turpitude" once we grant that we can trace the causal origins of all our actions back to him (EHU 8.36, 32, SBN 103, 99–100). Clearly, then, as Hume openly acknowledges in the *Enquiry*, the doctrine of necessity is far from "innocent" with respect to its implications for religion, contrary to what he suggests in the *Treatise*. Moreover, there is no reason to suppose that he was unaware of this when he wrote and published the *Treatise*.⁸

The account of Hume's views on free will provided so far suggests that it is Hume's primary concern in his discussion in "Of liberty and necessity" to defend an account of moral freedom understood in terms of liberty of spontaneity. Our tendency to confuse this form of liberty with indifference is rooted, he suggests, in confusion concerning the

nature of causation and necessity. On this reading, Hume advances on Hobbes's distinction between two the kinds of liberty by supplementing it with his own insights relating to the nature of necessity and by showing that in the absence of necessity, understood in terms of uniformity and inference, no agent would be suitably connected with her actions whereby we could make sense of our attributions of merit or demerit.⁹ All of this is generally consistent with the views subsequently advanced by other classical compatibilists following in Hume's footsteps (viz., Mill, Russell, Schlick, and Ayer, et al.). Suffice it to say that if this is a fair and full account of Hume's position, then it is liable to all the familiar criticisms leveled against classical compatibilism, most of which are very familiar and need not be reviewed and rehearsed in this context.¹⁰ For our present purposes, what matters is to ask to what extent does the classical account adequately capture Hume's views and strategy on this subject?

2. THE NECESSITY OF MORAL SENTIMENT

When Hume came to present his views on liberty and necessity afresh in the first *Enquiry*, he positioned his discussion of this topic immediately after the Sections discussing necessity. This is not surprising because he had already indicated in the *Abstract* that "this reasoning puts the whole controversy in a new light, by giving a new definition of necessity." But this leaves us with a puzzle: Why did Hume originally present his discussion of liberty and necessity in "Of the Passions," Book 2 of the *Treatise*? In his highly influential study, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, Norman Kemp Smith describes the placement "Of liberty and necessity" as a "lengthy digression" in the context of Book 2 (1941: 161). Kemp Smith suggests that the "proper location of the two sections is not that of the *Treatise*, namely, as bearing on the treatment of the passions, but, as is recognised in the arrangement of the *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, in immediate sequence upon the section *Of the idea of necessary connexion*" (1941: 433). It is certainly true that on the classical interpretation Hume's discussion of free will at T 2.3.1–2 has little or nothing to do with the passions. On the naturalistic reading, however, there is an intimate and significant relationship between Hume's views on free will and his preceding discussion of the passions – in particular, his account of the mechanism of the indirect passions of pride and humility, and love and hate (T 2.1 and 2.2).

The key to the naturalistic interpretation, and the way in which it differs from the classical account, rests with Hume's claims that necessity is essential to morality and that liberty of indifference would make morality impossible (T 2.3.2.5–7, SBN 410–12). Hume's claim that necessity is essential to morality runs parallel to his claim that necessity is also

essential to social life (T 2.3.1.8–15, SBN 401–5). For people to be able to live in society, they must be able to infer the actions of others from their motives and characters. In the opposite direction, we must also be able to infer character from action, because without this, Hume maintains, no one could be held responsible and morality would be impossible. To understand the thrust of Hume's argument here we need to get a clearer picture of what it is to be *held* responsible on Hume's account – a picture that is very different from anything suggested by the (forward-looking, utilitarian-oriented) classical interpretation. Holding a person responsible is, for Hume, a matter of regarding a person as an object of the moral sentiments of approval and disapproval. Approval and disapproval are “nothing but a fainter and more imperceptible love or hatred” (T 3.3.5.1, SBN 614). More specifically, approval and disapproval are calm forms of love and hatred, which are themselves indirect passions. To understand the relevance of necessity for the conditions of holding a person responsible, we must, therefore, also understand the workings of the “regular mechanism” of the indirect passions (DP 6.19).

In his discussion of love and hatred Hume writes:

One of these suppositions, *viz.* that the cause of love and hatred must be related to a person or thinking being, in order to produce these passions, is not only probable, but too evident to be contested. Virtue and vice, when consider'd in the abstract ... excite no degree of love or hatred, esteem or contempt towards those, who have no relation to them. (T 2.2.1.7, SBN 331)

Our virtues and vices are not the only causes of love and hatred, as our wealth and property, family and social relations, and bodily qualities and attributes may also generate love or hate (T 2.1.2.5, 2.1.7.1–5, SBN 279, 294–96; DP 2.14–33). It is, nevertheless, our virtues and vices, understood as pleasurable or painful qualities of mind, that are “the most obvious causes of these passions” (T 2.1.7.2, SBN 295; cp. T 3.1.2.5, SBN 473; and also T 3.3.1.3, SBN 574–75). In this way, virtue and vice, by means of the general mechanism of the indirect passions, give rise to that “faint and imperceptible” form of love and hatred that constitutes the moral sentiments, which are essential to all our ascriptions of moral responsibility.

Hume makes clear that it is not actions, as such, that give rise to our moral sentiments, but rather our more enduring or persisting character traits (T 2.2.3.4, SBN 348–49; and also T 3.3.1.4–5, SBN 575). The crucial passage in his discussion “Of liberty and necessity” is the following:

Actions are by their very nature temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some cause in the characters and disposition of the person, who perform'd them, they infix not themselves upon him, and can neither redound to his honour, if good, nor infamy, if evil. The action itself may be blameable... But the person is not responsible for it; and as it proceeded from nothing in him, that is

durable or constant, and leaves nothing of that nature behind it, 'tis impossible he can, upon its account, become the object of punishment or vengeance. (T 2.3.2.6, SBN 411; cf. EHU 8.29, SBN 98; see also T 3.3.1.4, SBN 575)

Further on, in Book 3, Hume expands on these remarks:

'Tis evident, that when we praise any actions, we regard only the motives that produc'd them, and consider the actions as signs or indications of certain principles in the mind and temper. The external performance has no merit. We must look within to find the moral quality. This we cannot do directly; and therefore fix our attention on actions, as on external signs. But these actions are still consider'd as signs; and the ultimate object of our praise and approbation is the motive, that produc'd them. (T 3.2.1.2, SBN 477; cf. T 3.2.1.8, SBN 479; EHU 8.31, SBN 99)

In these two passages Hume is making two distinct but related points. First, he maintains that “action,” considered as an “external performance” without any reference to the motive or intention that produced it, is not itself of moral concern. It is, rather, the “internal” cause of the action that arouses our moral sentiments. It is these aspects of action that inform us about the mind and moral character of the agent. Second, the moral qualities of an agent that arouse our moral sentiments must be “durable or constant” – they cannot be “temporary and perishing” in the way actions are. This second condition on the generation of moral sentiment is itself a particular instance of the more general observation that Hume has made earlier in Book 2: that the relationship between the quality or feature that gives rise to the indirect passions (i.e., its cause) and the person who is the object of the passion must not be “casual [or] inconstant” (T 2.1.6.7, SBN 293). It is, however, the first point that is especially important for our present purpose of understanding why necessity is essential to morality.

In order to know anyone’s motives and character, we require inference from her actions to her motives and character (T 2.1.11.3, 3.3.1.7, SBN 317, 576). Without knowledge of her character no sentiment of approbation or blame would be aroused in us. Without inferences moving in this direction – from action to character (as opposed to from character to actions) – no one would be an object of praise or blame and, hence, no one would be regarded as morally responsible. In these circumstances, praising and blaming would be psychologically impossible. Along the same lines, external violence – like liberty of indifference – also makes it impossible to regard someone as an object of praise or blame. When an action is produced by causes external to the agent, we are led away from the agent’s character. Clearly, then, actions that are either uncaused or caused by external factors cannot render an agent responsible, not because it would be unreasonable to hold the person responsible, but rather because it would be *psychologically impossible* to hold the person

responsible, where this stance is understood in terms of the operation of the moral sentiments. It is in this way that Hume brings his observations concerning the operation of the indirect passions to bear on his claim that necessity is essential to morality and, in particular, to our attitudes and practices associated with responsibility and punishment.

It is evident, in light of this alternative account of Hume's arguments, that the nature of his compatibilist strategy is significantly misrepresented by the classical interpretation. Hume's arguments purporting to show that necessity is essential to morality are intimately connected with his discussion of the indirect passions and the specific mechanism that generates the moral sentiments. Whereas the classical interpretation construes his arguments as conceptual or logical in nature, the naturalistic interpretation presents Hume as concerned to *describe* the circumstances under which people are *felt* to be responsible. So interpreted, Hume's arguments constitute a contribution to descriptive moral psychology and should be considered an important part of his wider program to "introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects" (which is the subtitle of the *Treatise*).

In response to the naturalistic account of Hume's strategy as it concerns the free will problem, it may be said that the moral psychology involved, with its focus on the production of moral sentiment, is no longer of contemporary interest and that the classical interpretation is philosophically a more fertile way of reading Hume on this topic. However, the opposite is true. From a contemporary perspective, classical compatibilism seems too crude an account of both freedom and moral responsibility, and very few philosophers would still press the claim that incompatibilist prejudices can be explained simply in terms of confusion about necessity arising from a conflation between causation and compulsion. Hume's concern with the role and relevance of moral sentiment for our understanding of the free will problem, by contrast, anticipates several key features of P. F. Strawson's highly influential contribution to the contemporary debate. Strawson's "Freedom and Resentment" (hereafter, "FR") is arguably the most important and influential paper concerning the free will problem published in the second half of the twentieth century.¹¹ Perhaps the most striking affinity between the approaches taken by both Hume and Strawson is their shared appeal to the role of moral sentiments or reactive attitudes as a way of discrediting any supposed sceptical threat arising from the thesis of determinism.

According to Strawson, both classical compatibilists (who he refers to as "optimists") and libertarians (who he refers to as "pessimists," because they suppose that determinism threatens moral responsibility) make a similar mistake of "over-intellectualizing the facts" by seeking to provide some sort of "external 'rational' justification" for moral

responsibility (FR 81). The classical compatibilist does this on the basis of a "one-eyed utilitarianism," whereas the libertarian, seeing that something vital is missing from the classical compatibilist account, tries to plug the gap with "contra causal freedom" – which Strawson describes as "a pitiful intellectualist trinket" (ibid.). By focusing attention on the importance of reactive attitudes or moral sentiments in this context, Strawson hopes to find some middle ground whereby he can "reconcile" the two opposing camps. Our reactive attitudes or moral sentiments, Strawson maintains, should be understood in terms of our natural human emotional responses to the attitudes and intentions that human beings manifest toward each other. We expect and demand some degree of good will and due regard, and we feel gratitude or resentment depending on whether or not this is shown to us (FR 66–67). Granted that these emotions are part of our essential human makeup and are naturally triggered or aroused in relevant circumstances, it is still important to recognize that they are in some measure under rational control and that we can "modify or mollify" them in light of relevant considerations (FR 68).

There are two kinds of considerations that Strawson distinguishes that may require us to amend or withdraw our reactive attitudes. First, there are considerations that we may describe as exemptions, where we judge that an individual is not an appropriate or suitable target of any reactive attitudes. These are cases in which a person may be viewed as "psychologically abnormal" or "morally underdeveloped" (FR 69; and also 71–72). On the other hand, even where exemptions of this sort do not apply, ordinary considerations about excuses may nevertheless require us to alter or change our particular reactive attitudes as directed toward some individual (FR 68). Considerations of this kind include cases in which an agent acts accidentally or in ignorance or was subject to physical force of some kind. Where these considerations apply we may come to recognize that the conduct in question, properly interpreted, does not lack the degree of good will or due regard that we may demand. Even if some injury has occurred, no malice or lack of regard has been shown to us. However, the crucial point for Strawson is that, although our reactive attitudes may well be modified or withdrawn in these circumstances, there is no question of us altogether abandoning or suspending our reactive attitudes (FR 71–73). In particular, there is nothing about the thesis of determinism that implies that either exemptions or excuses, as Strawson has described them, apply or hold universally (FR 70–71). Moreover, and more controversially, Strawson also maintains that even if determinism did provide some "theoretical" basis for drawing this sceptical conclusion, any such policy is "for us as we are, practically inconceivable" (FR 71). In other words, according to Strawson our natural commitment

to the fabric of moral sentiment insulates us from any possible global sceptical threat to the whole fabric of moral responsibility based on theoretical worries about the implications of determinism.

Although both the interpretation of Strawson's naturalistic strategy and the various ways it relates to Hume's (similar) strategy are too complex to cover here in all their detail, the crucial point for our present purposes is to make clear where Hume stands with respect to the differences between classical compatibilism (Strawson's "optimism") and the alternative approach that Strawson has advanced. Whereas the classical interpretation would present Hume as an obvious and prominent *target* of Strawson's criticisms, the naturalistic interpretation presents Hume as broadly anticipating the key features of Strawson's approach – most importantly, his understanding of moral responsibility with reference to the role of moral sentiment. For both Hume and Strawson, moral responsibility, and the way in which it is related to issues of freedom and determinism, has to be explained and described with reference to the relevant psychological facts about our human emotions and the circumstances under which they are aroused or inhibited. This naturalistic approach, which is fundamental to Hume's entire program, constitutes its principal contemporary interest and significance.

3. BEYOND "THE MORALITY SYSTEM"

One of the most important philosophical differences between the classical and naturalistic interpretations, as they have been outlined above, concerns the relationship between freedom and moral responsibility. On the classical interpretation, this relation is simple: responsibility may be analyzed directly in terms of free action. That is, an agent is responsible for her action when it is performed freely, by way of her own willings and desires. (This simple view may be further refined by reference to the efficaciousness of rewards and punishments.) Where classical compatibilists differ from incompatibilists is that they reject the suggestion that free, responsible action requires indeterminism and some further form of "contra causal" or "metaphysical" freedom.¹² They are both agreed, nevertheless, that responsibility is essentially a matter of free action. On the naturalistic interpretation, however, Hume rejects this doctrine, which we may call "voluntarism."

As we have already noted, Hume thinks it is a matter of "the utmost importance" for moral philosophy that an action be indicative of durable qualities of mind if a person is to be held accountable for it (T 3.3.1.5, SBN 575). This claim is part of Hume's more general claim that our indirect passions (including our moral sentiments) are aroused and sustained only when the pleasurable or painful qualities concerned (e.g., the virtues and

vices) stand in a durable or constant relation with the person who is their object. In the case of actions, which are "temporary and perishing," no such lasting relation is involved unless the action is suitably tied to character traits of some kind (T 2.3.2.6, SBN 411). We may, however, be able to infer a person's character through some medium other than her voluntary, intentional actions. A person may, for example, reveal her character through her "wishes and sentiments," gestures, mannerisms, carriage, and countenance, even though this is not done voluntarily and is not intentional (T 3.3.1.5, 2.1.11.3, SBN 575, 317; EHU 8.9, 15, SBN 85, 88). In these circumstances we may still find such mental qualities pleasant or painful, and they will, accordingly, generate moral sentiments in us. It is, therefore, a basic mistake, in light of the naturalistic interpretation, to read Hume as committed to the simple (voluntarist) understanding of the relationship between freedom and responsibility. While it is true that neither uncaused action nor action produced by causes external to the agent's willings and desires can arouse our moral sentiments, it is also true that our moral sentiments may be aroused through channels other than voluntary, intentional action.

This point should not be dismissed or set aside as an arcane point of scholarship or a mere curiosity of Hume's system. On the contrary, what these observations bring to light is the way in which Hume rejects central features of what Bernard Williams has described as "the morality system" (1985: ch. 10). Williams's (hostile) account of the morality system is layered and multifaceted and generally defies easy summary. There are, however, core features that he identifies and regards as especially problematic. In the first place, there is a special notion of moral obligation or duty, which is fundamental. Flowing from this concept of obligation are other key concepts, such as right and wrong, and blame and retributive punishment. Although the morality system takes various forms, and it is not simply a philosophical theory, it is still true that Kantian ethics represents the morality system in its "purest, deepest" form (1985: 174). For our purposes, what matters here is that Hume's views on free will, and on morality more generally, should not be forced into the restrictive, narrow framework of the morality system. Whereas the classical interpretation encourages such a view, the naturalistic interpretation suggests that it is mistaken.

When we attempt to understand moral responsibility in terms of obligations, as laid down by rules, principles, or laws (where violations constitute a wrong that is liable to punishment), the notions of choice, will, and voluntariness also become salient and essential to making sense of this aspect of moral life. The classical interpretation fits this model nicely and, indeed, does its best to accommodate it. Even within the

naturalistic program, as recently revived by Strawson, there are efforts to reconstruct and amend this approach employing only the materials provided by the morality system.¹³ Suffice it to say, however, that the apparatus that Hume provides takes us in a very different direction. Hume's account does not focus on choice and action, as such, but rather on virtues and vices understood as pleasurable and painful (and enduring) qualities of mind. While Hume allows that for the purposes of law and punishment the voluntary/involuntary distinction is of great importance, he explicitly denies that this should serve as the relevant basis for identifying the boundaries of praise and blame or moral responsibility.¹⁴

One reason the morality system places great weight on the importance of voluntariness in providing the relevant boundary for moral responsibility is that one of its central aims or ambitions is to establish that "morality" – and moral responsibility in particular – somehow "transcends luck" (Williams 1985: 195) and ensures that blame is allocated in a way that is "ultimately fair" (Williams 1985: 194). Despite the challenges this poses, compatibilists have generally tried to satisfy these demands of the morality system by way of offering a variety of arguments to show that compatibilist commitments do not render us vulnerable to the play of fate or luck in our moral lives.¹⁵ Hume makes no effort to go along with these ambitions and aims. For example, Hume makes very clear, especially in the *Treatise*, that although our qualities of character may typically be *expressed* by means of our voluntary and intentional conduct, our character is not *acquired* through our own choices or decisions. This issue is addressed in the context of Hume's discussion of our natural abilities, where Hume says that it is "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 3.3.4.3, SBN 608). Our will has no more influence over our moral virtues, including our natural abilities, than it does over our "bodily endowments" (T 3.3.4.1, SBN 606). In the final analysis, it is Hume's view that just as every body or material object "is determin'd by an absolute fate to a certain degree and direction of its motion, and can no more depart from that precise line, in which it moves, than it can convert itself into an angel, or spirit, or any superior substance" (T 2.3.1.3, SBN 400), so too our conduct and character is subject to an "absolute fate" as understood in terms of the inescapable "bonds of necessity" (T 2.3.2.2, SBN 408). For Hume, as for Williams, there is no reason to suppose that morality somehow "transcends luck" or that the allocation of praise and blame is in any way "ultimately fair." In this Hume perhaps shares more with the ancient Greeks than he does with moderns who embrace the aspirations of the morality system.¹⁶

There remains, however, a significant gap in Hume's scheme as we have so far described it. This is a gap that can also be found in Strawson's similar naturalistic account of the conditions of freedom and moral responsibility. Even if we eschew the aims of the morality system, any credible naturalistic theory of moral responsibility needs to be able to provide some account of the sorts of moral capacity involved in exempting conditions, whereby we deem some individuals and not others appropriate targets of moral sentiments or reactive attitudes. On the face of it, what Hume has to say on this issue is sorely inadequate. Hume treats it as an ultimate, inexplicable fact about our moral sentiments that they are always directed at people, either ourselves or others. It is simply a fact, to be observed and described, that the relevant feelings and attitudes are aroused by "mental qualities" – virtues and vices – and are targeted at the individuals these qualities belong or attach to. Clearly, however, this account leaves us unable to say why some people are *not* appropriate objects of moral sentiments (e.g., children, the insane, and so on). In general, then, Hume provides us with no adequate or clear account of the nature of the moral capacities required for a person to be deemed an appropriate object of moral sentiment. Strawson's effort to deal with this problem in "Freedom and Resentment" is not a great improvement on this. Although Strawson recognizes the need to be able to identify those who are "incapacitated" and those who are not, he simply categorizes the incapacitated as either "abnormal" or "immature," in contrast with ordinary, mature adults (FR 69–73, 75–76).¹⁷ One reason this gap in the naturalistic program is especially problematic is that it leaves the field open to the incompatibilist to argue that the relevant moral capacities must include a capacity for categorical or "contra causal" freedom of some kind.¹⁸ The situation is, however, not entirely dire for the naturalist approach because there are several proposals for dealing with this gap in the theory.

One proposal that is prominent in current compatibilist literature is to develop some general theory of reason-responsiveness or rational self-control. According to accounts of this kind, responsible agents need to have control over their actions, where this involves performing "those actions intentionally, while possessing the relevant sorts of normative competence: the general ability to grasp moral requirements and to govern one's conduct by the light of them" (Wallace 1994: 86).¹⁹ Although theories of this kind face their own challenges and objections from incompatibilists, they do serve to plug a large gap in naturalistic approaches to the free will problem. However, in describing moral capacity directly in terms of rational self-control over action, theories of this kind provide an understanding of moral responsibility that is not entirely consistent with Hume's own account.

There are two considerations that suggest that Hume's theory should not be understood in terms of rational self-control models as generally presented. First, rational self-control may be explained in terms of specifically Kantian conceptions of practical reason and moral agency, as they are on Wallace's account.²⁰ Moreover, even if these specific commitments are avoided, as they may on other models, theories of this kind are still action-based interpretations of our ascriptions of moral responsibility, with a narrow focus on intentions and voluntariness ("quality of will") as the relevant basis of moral evaluation. This is, as we have noted, one way in which Hume plainly diverges from "the morality system" and the voluntarist doctrine associated with it. For Hume, our moral capacities do not relate only to our choices and intentions but must also engage wider patterns and dispositions of feeling, desire, and character. The scope of the ethical should not be reduced or narrowed to concern with (fleeting and momentary) acts of will modeled after legal paradigms but should comprehend a larger and more diverse set of propensities and abilities that make up our moral character.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, although Hume does not provide any substantial or robust theory of moral capacity, it is possible to find, within the resources of his philosophy, material that suggests a rather less "rationalistic" understanding of moral capacity. More specifically, it may be argued that there is an intimate relationship between virtue and moral sense, where this is understood in terms of our general capacity to feel and direct moral sentiments at both ourselves and others. Hume points out, for example, that children acquire the artificial virtues, involving the conventions of justice, not only by way of learning their advantages, but also by learning to feel the relevant moral sentiments when these conventions are violated (T 3.2.2.26, SBN 500–1). The mechanism of the moral sentiments both cultivates and maintains the artificial virtues. Hume has less to say about the role of moral sentiment in relation to the natural virtues, but similar observations would seem to apply. As children grow up and mature, they become increasingly aware that their qualities of character affect both others and themselves and that these will inevitably give rise to moral sentiments in the people they will deal with. This entire process of becoming aware of the moral sentiments of others and "surveying ourselves as we appear to others" (T 3.3.1.26, SBN 589; T 3.3.1.8, 3.3.1.30, 3.3.6.6, SBN 576–77, 591, 620; EPM 9.10, App. 4.3, SBN 276, 314) surely serves to develop the natural as well as the artificial virtues. Along these lines, Hume maintains that this disposition to "survey ourselves" and seek our own "peace and satisfaction" is the "surest guardian of every virtue" (EPM 9.10, SBN 276). Any person who entirely lacks this disposition will be shameless

and will inevitably lack all the virtues that depend on moral reflection for their development and stability.

If this conjecture regarding the intimate or internal relationship between virtue and moral sense is correct, then it does much to explain and account for the range of exemptions that are required in this area. Hume's understanding of the operation of moral sentiment is not simply a matter of enjoying pleasant and painful feelings of a peculiar kind (T 3.1.2.4, SBN 472). On the contrary, the moral evaluation of character involves the activity of both reason and sentiment. The sort of intellectual activities required include not only learning from experience the specific pleasant and painful tendencies of certain kinds of character and conduct, as well as the ability to distinguish accurately among them, but also the ability to evaluate character and conduct from "some *steady* and *general* points of view" (T 3.3.1.15, SBN 581–82; EPM 5.41–42, SBN 227–28). Clearly, then, insofar as the cultivation and stability of virtue depends on moral sense, it also requires the intellectual qualities and capacities involved in the exercise of moral sense. Given this, an animal, an infant, or an insane person will lack the ability to perform the intellectual tasks involved in the production of moral sentiment. We cannot, therefore, expect virtues that are dependent on these abilities and intellectual activities to be manifest in individuals who lack them or when they are damaged or underdeveloped.

Interpreting Hume in these terms not only goes a long way to filling what looks to be a large gap in his naturalistic program, but it also avoids distorting his own wider ethical commitments by imposing a narrower, rationalistic conception of moral capacity on his naturalistic framework. Beyond this, interpreting moral capacity in these more sentimentalist terms is both philosophically and psychologically more satisfying and plausible. On an account of this kind, there exists a close and essential relationship between being responsible, where this is understood in terms of *being* an appropriate target of moral sentiments or reactive attitudes, and being able to *hold* oneself and others responsible, where this is understood as the ability to experience and entertain moral sentiments. It is a merit of Hume's system, so interpreted, that it avoids "over-intellectualizing" not only what is involved in holding a person responsible, but also what is involved in being a responsible agent.²¹

4. TWO PRESENTATIONS, TWO INTERPRETATIONS

In the introduction to this essay I indicated that my principal concern would be not to compare and contrast the *Treatise* and *Enquiry* versions of "Of liberty and necessity," but rather to compare and assess the opposing classical and naturalistic interpretations, with a view to

defending the naturalistic interpretation and explaining its contemporary interest. Having given attention to these issues, it may, nevertheless, be appropriate to say something about the relationship between these two interpretations and the two versions of "Of liberty and necessity." It would not be correct to suggest that whereas the naturalistic interpretation can be derived from the *Treatise*, the classical interpretation sits more comfortably with the first *Enquiry*. This cannot be right, because the naturalistic interpretation suggests that *both* versions should be read in terms of the naturalistic interpretation. There is, however, something to be said for the claim that the first *Enquiry* version does *lend itself* to the classical interpretation.

As I have already mentioned, the *Treatise* and first *Enquiry* versions of "Of liberty and necessity" differ in where they are placed in their respective works. Whereas the discussion in the *Enquiry* is placed immediately after an extended analysis of our ideas of causation and necessity, the *Treatise* version is placed immediately following the discussion of the indirect passions, within Book 2 on the passions. There can be no doubt that the *Enquiry* format lends itself to the classical interpretation because the linkage with the wider theory of the passions and moral evaluation is entirely obscured, if not altogether severed. The difficulties here do not, however, rest exclusively with the first *Enquiry* version. It is not possible to appreciate Hume's arguments in *either* version of "Of liberty and necessity" if they are read as self-contained Sections or contributions needing no reference to other elements in Hume's system. Reading Hume on "free will" in this way inevitably distorts the arguments he is advancing in these Sections. The particular problem with the *Enquiry* version is that unless one turns back to the *Treatise* or refers (ahead) to the second *Enquiry* and *Dissertation on the Passions*, the relevance of what Hume has to say about liberty and necessity to the operation of the moral sentiments will be entirely lost. Although it may be true that Hume's discussion of moral responsibility in the *Enquiry* version of "Of liberty and necessity" (EHU 8) is "too brief and sketchy to give full satisfaction" (Botterill 2002: 299), this cannot be said of the *Treatise* discussion unless his discussion is severed from all its layered connections with other Sections and passages in the *Treatise* – which clearly it should not.²²

One of the relative virtues of the *Enquiry* version is that it includes an extended discussion of the problems that "the doctrine of necessity" presents for religion, which makes it easier to identify the irreligious significance of Hume's views on free will. As already indicated, Hume's fundamental intentions throughout the *Treatise* – and, indeed, throughout his entire philosophy – are best understood as essentially irreligious in nature (and both his scepticism and naturalism are themselves guided

by these more basic aims and objectives). This more general observation also applies to Hume's specific contributions on free will, which are, in both the *Treatise* and *Enquiry* versions, laden with irreligious significance. Appreciating this point should encourage us to avoid two methodological errors when approaching Hume's philosophy with a view to the relationship between the *Treatise* and the *Enquiries*. First, it is a mistake to overlook either the *Treatise* or the *Enquiries* as a proper basis for understanding Hume's philosophical intentions and the way they evolved. It is not possible to fully appreciate the *Treatise* or the *Enquiries* without some mutual reference. One obvious reason for this is that each of these works contains important passages and discussions missing in its counterpart, and each has its distinctive way of presenting shared themes and arguments. Second, and no less important, the *Treatise* remains Hume's fundamental work not only because it lays the foundations for his entire philosophical program, but also because, unlike the *Enquiries*, it presents Hume's philosophical system as more or less a whole, complete in itself. It is a mistake, therefore, not to give priority to the *Treatise* as his primary work that is most representative of his fundamental philosophical commitments and concerns. This is, as has been argued, especially important for appreciating and understanding what he has to say on a topic such as free will or "liberty and necessity."

I do not, however, want to close this discussion on the question of the relative merits of the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry* contributions (which is not an especially interesting or important debate unless one denies that both works deserve full and careful consideration). What is of central importance remains our assessment of the relative merits of the classical and naturalistic interpretations. It has been argued that the naturalistic interpretation properly captures Hume's core strategy, which involves essential reference to the role of moral sentiment in explaining why necessity is essential to morality – an issue that lies at the heart of Hume's position on the free will controversy. Beyond this, it has also been argued that, unlike the classical interpretation, the naturalistic interpretation brings to full and proper light where the contemporary interest and value of Hume's contribution lies. It rests, as we have seen, not only with its relevance to the efforts of P. F. Strawson and others to revive and defend the naturalistic strategy, but also, more radically, with Hume's anticipation of the critique of "the morality system" as it relates to the free will problem. An appreciation of these facets of Hume's thought on the problem of free will serves as a forceful example of the way in which issues of interpretation must be *fused* with any credible critical study of Hume's philosophy and its contemporary relevance.

NOTES

1. See, e.g., Hospers 1961: 140; Berlin 1969: xv; Glover 1970: 50n1; Davidson 1980: 63; Penelhum 1993: 129–32. See also Honderich 2002: 109–10, which provides a useful summary of some of the common points in the classical compatibilist position as generally understood.
2. Stroud 1977: 144–46, 153.
3. For more recent statements of this view see, for example, Schlick 1966 (1939) and Smart 1970 (1961).
4. Although Hume considers our experience of matter as the most likely source of our idea of power or force, he also considers, and rejects, the “Cartesian” suggestion that the source of this idea comes from God’s activity in the world (T 1.3.14.8–11, SBN 159–61; Abs. 26, SBN 656; cf. EHU 7.21–25, SBN 69–73). After publishing Books 1 and 2 (in 1739), Hume came to consider the mind or will as a third possible source of our idea of power and also rejected it (T 1.3.14.12, SBN 632; Abs. 26, SBN 656; EHU 7.9–20, SBN 64–69).
5. Although the verbal nature of the debate, understood in these terms, is noted in the *Treatise*, it is more strongly emphasized in the first *Enquiry* (EHU 8.1–3, SBN 80–81). It is a mistake, however, to conclude from this that Hume is somehow dismissive or cavalier about the difficulties involved. See, e.g., Flew 1961: 156–58.
6. A full account of Hume’s fundamental irreligious intentions in the *Treatise* is provided in Russell 2008. On the particular relevance of Hume’s irreligious aims and intentions for his discussion of free will, see Russell 1995: ch. 11 and Russell 2008: ch. 16.
7. Compare Hume’s similar observation concerning the existence of God and a future state, as discussed in the first *Enquiry* (EHU 11.28–30, SBN 147–48).
8. It is entirely possible that the passages in the *Enquiry* directly concerning religion (EHU 8.32–36, SBN 99–103) were among those that were “castrated” from the *Treatise* prior to its publication (HL 1:25; HL 1:106, 111).
9. It may be argued that any effort to combine the (classical) empiricist-compatibilist strategy with the regularity theory of causation is problematic. More specifically, a regularity theory of causation, while it may avoid worries about compulsion or constraint involved in the causal relation, is nevertheless an ontologically insufficient basis on which to ground the requirement that agents must be suitably connected or linked with action for them to be held responsible. On this criticism, see Russell 1988 and also Russell 1995: ch. 3.
10. See Russell 1995: ch. 1 for a brief review of these criticisms.
11. Strawson 2013 (1962). A number of important papers responding to Strawson’s “Freedom and Resentment” can be found in McKenna and Russell 2008.
12. Some libertarians deny, of course, that they require any (“spooky”) commitments of this kind. See, e.g., Kane 1996.
13. Wallace 1994: 39–40, 64–65.
14. Hume’s specific argument to this effect is presented in a context in which he defends the claim that our natural abilities (e.g., wit, intelligence, imagination, etc.) must also be deemed moral virtues or vices for which we are liable to praise and blame. We might well reject this specific claim concerning the

status of our natural abilities but still accept Hume's scepticism about the voluntary/involuntary distinction serving as the relevant boundary for moral responsibility. For a more detailed discussion of this, see Russell 1995: ch. 7 and also Russell 2013: 105–8.

15. See, e.g., Dennett 1984 for an assortment of arguments along these lines.
16. We might describe Hume's system, in this respect, as being a form of "Calvinism without God." (The same phrase was used by Eduard Bernstein to describe orthodox Marxism.)
17. In fairness to Strawson, it may be argued that he does provide some insight into the range of capacities involved. See, e.g., FR 75, where Strawson discusses the importance of "moral sense"; and also FR 77–78, where he describes aspects of moral development that are also relevant. Nevertheless, his remarks on this important issue are very slight.
18. On the significance of this vulnerability for Strawson's position, see Russell 1992.
19. Cp. Wallace 1994: 157–61, 181–85. See also Fischer and Ravizza 1998 for a similar theory.
20. Wallace 1994: 12–17.
21. See Russell 2004; and also Russell 2011 for further discussion of this issue in relation to the contemporary debate.
22. Botterill goes on to suggest that what Hume "was after was not a detailed account, but the basic necessary condition for responsibility," which is "that a person can only be responsible for what he does if his doing it is the result of an intentional state that can be attributed to him" (2002: 299). Botterill argues that this is "the essence of Hume's reconciling position on liberty and necessity" (*ibid.*). I have already argued that it is a mistake to read Hume as claiming that we are responsible only for our intentional, voluntary actions. I have also argued that if agents are to be held responsible for intentional actions, it is crucial on Hume's account that the actions be tied to (enduring) character traits, as otherwise no moral sentiments would be generated. To this we may add that Hume's most complete remarks about intention are found in the *Treatise*, in the context of his discussion of love and hate (T 2.2.3), and have no adequate counterpart in the *Enquiries*. On this see Russell 1995: 110–15.