Lecture III:
Moral Reflection

In the previous two lectures I have defended the view that both our reasoning and the more important cases of our intention-formation and carrying out of our intentions, even when only one person is currently doing the reasoning or the intending, or the carrying out, require a commons of the mind, the back-ground and often the foreground existence of essentially many-person reasonings, intentions, and actions. Of special interest to us who pride ourselves on our capacity for reflection are reasonings, intendings, and actings not merely displaying our mutual dependence but also directed on that very interdependence itself, that is to say, our reasonings, resolutions, and resolute actions concerning what is right and wrong, morally acceptable and morally unacceptable, in our social customs, interpersonal relations, and individual habits, actions, and reactions.

The word "morality" itself declares that mores, our customs of coexisting, constitute morality's main subject matter. The natural law tradition in moral philosophy saw this very clearly, even if, in many of its versions, it took the creature's mode of coexisting with the divine creator to be the most important moral relationship, and did not usually see this as a case of mutual dependence. The reflexivity that is exhibited when mutually dependent reasoners and intenders turn their attention onto their mutual dependence was not, indeed, a feature of moral reflection that struck the natural lawyers—those who reacted against them, such as Shaftesbury and Hume, and saw morality's source to lie in our capacity for fellow feeling and for reflexive feelings about our feelings, are the ones who first
emphasized the connection between normativity and reflexivity, a connection Kant adapted for his special version of natural law, a law of freedom, for his version of morality as a law, for and by the likes of us, and recognized by the likes of us, with our combination of reason, imagination, inclination, passion, and will.

It is a disputed question whether Kant can be said to have taken either the mode of recognition or the main subject matter of morality to be anything displaying mutual dependence, any commons of the mind. His formulation of right action as acting on maxims one can will as laws in some system of second nature, acting as members of a kingdom of ends, seems to make community pretty central to morality, but it is at best unclear how much actual commingling with others in any actual system of customs has to occur, according to Kant, for any single moral agent to find out what counts as such morally proper action, in some concrete situation. Kant usually writes as if moral deliberation goes on in a single head, or its noumenal analogue. And the respect one moral agent is to show any other seems to be more a matter of drawing away than of drawing close enough for dialogue and collective decision making. Nor do Kant's political recommendations (or rather his accommodations to the authoritarian culture in which he was writing) make him much of a hero of the democratic, or indeed of the republican, tradition. That moral reasoning should not be displayed by Kant as essentially interpersonal is odd, given that he took theoretical reason to be thoroughly dialogic: "For reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens, of whom each one must be permitted to express without let or hindrance, his [or her?] objections or even his veto" (Critique of Pure Reason, A739, B767). Still, even this fine proclamation's main point is to insist on a certain autonomy for each individual reasoner.

Those, like Hume, who did explicitly claim that an individual's judgment did not count as a moral one unless the individual judger had good and so suitably informed reason to expect other judges to concur, and who did take explicitly moral judgments to concern *mores*, not just a single person's perfection-seeking endeavors, appealed to sentiment, not reason or will, as the source of moral judgment. Was this because they took there to be a commons of the mind with respect to passions and sentiments, more obviously than there was with respect to other mental capacities? There is a sense in which they did take a common human nature to guarantee common basic desires and a common repertoire of emotions evoked by a common set of causes, but this shared nature does not give a commons of the mind in the sense that I have been using that phrase. As Kant emphasized, having the same sorts of desires as others have can generate conflict, not any common feeling. "What my brother wants, that I want too" sets the stage for dispute, not for brotherhood or fellowship, especially when it is revenge on the other that each of us wants. Dispute, of course, is something that I can engage in only if, for some "us," "we" engage in it. Feelings of rivalry, envy, jealousy, enmity are indeed social emotions, in the sense that we need others, and others displaying the relevant complementary emotions, for such emotions to be even possibilities for us. Still, this sort of unsocial sociability seems too negative a basis for morality, if morality is to establish or endorse some sort of cooperative and nonviolent plan of coexistence. These other-dependent emotions may help to set the problem morality is supposed to solve, but they themselves can scarcely be enough to provide the solution.

Hume, of course, relies on our capacity for imaginative understanding and sympathetic sharing of each other's emotions, not just on a common human repertoire of emotions, as one prerequisite for the moral sentiment. His account of sympathy assumes that each passion begins, as it were, self-contained in a single person, but is capable of being duplicated in other persons, in some conditions, and needs to be thus duplicated, if its original owner is to sustain it for any length of time. So if my sister has the ambition to rule Milan, I may come to want her to succeed, and if no one sympathizes with her ambition, it will, in theory, wither in her. Hume's account of sympathetic passions makes them supportive ones, ones which duplicate not just the type and intentional object of another's
passion, as copycat passions or contagious panic fear do, but also duplicate the person-reference of the original passion, so that my sympathetic ambition will be not the desire that I rule Milan, but that my sister come to do so, possibly with some help from me.

This account seems to assume a sort of intrinsic individual-ism of passions, and then to supplement it with an account of a mechanism by which secondary passions, in the sense of ones that second someone else's passions, get added to the original set. The parallel account for reason would be if one supposed that each person comes to be a reasoner all by herself, then comes occasionally to echo others' reasonings, and sometimes to support them by affirming their arguments. Such an individualist version of reason, I have argued, is less plausible than a social view, which takes reasoning together to be the standard sort of reasoning, and the first sort experienced by each reasoner. The greater plausibility of the social view rests in large part on the skilled character of the activity of reasoning, and the standards of success that must be acknowledged, for it to count as reasoning. Similarly for intending—the close conceptual connection between intention, socially recognized competence, and accountability was the main support for the claim that there is, with respect to our capacity for intention, a commons of the mind. But with desiring, loving, hating, fearing, fuming with anger, rejoicing, and sorrowing, no skills and no standards of success seem to be involved. They seem too basic, too primitive, for this normative sort of account to make much sense. Of course we do criticize some loves, hates, fears, angers, joys, and sorrows as irrational or unintelligible, but, as Descartes put it, however depraved or unrealistic one acknowledges one's desires to be, they can be genuine desires, for all that. As Hume put it, passions are original existences, complete in themselves, and what he meant by that famous claim included the Cartesian point that they are not, for their very existence, like beliefs answerable to standards of truth and falsity. Nor are they, like intentions, answerable to standards of 'rectitude'. Should all our standards be shared standards, then this means that a person's passions, insofar as they are original existences, can more truly be said to be all her own than can her reasonings and her intentions.

But this individual ownership of one's passions, and passions' status as "original existences," should not be understood to deny either some cultural influence on them or some responsibility for them. Hume, who says they are "original existences," and in well-known texts says they cannot be reasonable or unreasonable, thinks that they are the proper objects of moral evaluation, and is even willing to say that some cases of, say anger, are passions that a "reasonable" person would not feel. (His example here is anger at deserved punishment [T, 350].) Some anger "rises up to cruelty" (T, 605) and is therefore to be criticized; some angers are more criticizable than others, despite the fact that "when I am angry, I am actually possest with the passion" (T, 415). Not only are the particular passions felt by individuals the possible objects of moral evaluation, but for Hume passions, motives, and other "principles in the mind and temper" are its main objects, while actions, "external performances," are morally evaluated only as "signs" of the inner motives that produced the actions.

Hume shows some awareness of the fact that cultures present individuals with better and worse versions of the basic human passions, available for their cultivation. In the History of England, he frequently expresses horror at "barbaric" cultures where brutal forms of revenge were tolerated, and welcomes the more "civilised" and less cruel variants of official anger displayed by enlightened magistrates, where the desire for revenge that Aristotle takes to be part and parcel of anger gets sublimated into less hurtful forms. Hume keeps "a desire of the misery" (T, 367) of the person we are angry with as virtually anger's essence, but the "misery" we want for the one whom we perceive to have harmed us, and so are angry at, may range from the cruel revenges exacted by Bishop Odo on Queen Elgiva,51 through the discomfort of one who suspects he is

51. See Hume's account of this in History of England, chap. 2.
saturize in a novel, to the contrition of the one who begs our pardon. As Myles Burnyeat has pointed out, we today are not restricted to Homeric anger, indeed few of us might admit to ever feeling or wanting anything like what Homer presents Achilles as feeling and wanting, when he was angry. Centuries of Christian condemnation of returning evil for evil, including such things as Butler's sermons on resentment and on forgiveness, have effectively emasculated the desire that most of us will admit to, when angry at anyone. Or perhaps not just what Kant called the fact of Christianity reformed anger, but also commonsense reflection on, even anger at, the endless replication of retaliatory strikes when anger is left in its barbaric 'natural' Homeric form, what Butler aptly termed

52. A recent book by Louise de Salvo has the title Conceived with Malice: Literature as Revenge (New York: Penguin Books, 1995). Philosophy teachers who keep up with the novels written by their colleagues and former students are familiar with this form of revenge.

53. Myles Burnyeat, "Anger and Revenge," a talk given to the University of Pitts-burgh intrafaculty colloquium, October 1995. Burnyeat drew attention to the fact that the O.E.D. in 1885 defines anger simply as "a feeling against someone."

54. Immanuel Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, bk. 4, pt. 1, sec. 1, "The Christian Religion as a Natural Religion," where he writes that for the foundation of a universal visible church of the "true" moral religion to be founded, not merely the concepts of pure reason (des reichen Vernunftbegriffs) are needed, but also "ein Faktum." Earlier he had referred to the true moral religion of Christianity (as distinguished from any mere "eslesiastical faith" which demands acceptance of dogmas and imposes statutory rites and duties) as a matter of historical fact in his own time, 'wenn die wahre Religion einmal da ist' ("General Observation" at the end of book 2). It should now be noted that Kant does not take this true religion to have given up the idea that its just God is an avenger of disobedience to His law. On the contrary, he goes to extraordinary lengths to show how, since it would be inappropriate to punish the reformed sinner for what his earlier unreformed will chose to do, yet unjust also to let it go unpunished, the punishment must lie in the pain and difficulty of the act of reform itself, which is to be "als `das Absterben alten Menschen`" (book 2, first section, "Dificulties"). The need for something more than contrition, the need that it be a painful self-crucifying turn away from the wrong, is still seen to be there, in the offended "Moral Governor." The "Geheimnis der Genugtuung" is not that crucifixion is required as "satisfaction" to a God offended by human sin, but that one such crucifixion, and that of an innocent scapegoat, is enough. What is an "unerreichbares Geheimnis" is not the form of "satisfaction" demanded, but that one could take another's place as maker of this grisly payment for sin. ("General Observation" at end of third book.) So Kant's version of divine anger and vengeance within the limits of "blossen Vernunft" does not set a very good example, by Butler's standards, for human anger at offense. Compare Hume on divine punishment, in "Of the Immortality of the Soul": "Punishment according to our conceptions, should bear some proportion to the offence. Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man?"

takes contrivance, time, and effort to get a verdict. Precisely because moral agreement is not easy, and is not automatic, given morality's passional sources, must the goal of such agreement be explicitly recognized, and fussed about. Rationalists might think that it went without saying that we could all reach agreeing moral judgments if we all used our reason. Sentimentalists could not let it go without saying.  

Rationalists of course did not necessarily achieve agreement in their moral judgments, even with other rationalists. The universality of moral reason was more a slogan than a reality, just as the moral consensus of the members of Hume's "party of humankind" is also more aim than achievement. But it is in some ways easier to recognize that agreement is a moral task, not a God-or-Nature-given certainty, if one has a clear recognition that the roots of our moral disagreements are the very passions and partial sympathies that are the roots of morality itself, both of the problem it tries to solve and of its competing attempted solutions.

The hedonic passional roots of morality, on the Humean story, do however have some features that predispose us to a modest degree of harmony and agreement. If Hume is right about us, our tendency to have sympathy with another's feelings and opinions is one of our most basic tendencies, and this is interfered with only when special conditions encourage us to "compare" our well being with that of the other, and resent any inferiority. Even though this sympathy is biased in favor of

56. Some of them also saw a danger that reliance on reason might threaten rather than undergird morality, since the paradigm of practical reasoning can be seen as self-interested calculation. Rousseau writes in the Discourse on Inequality, "Reason is what engenders egocentrism, and reflection strengthens it. Reason is what turns man in upon himself: Reason is what separates him and moves him to say in secret, at the sight of a suffering man, 'Perish if you will; I am safe and sound.' . . . Savage man does not have this admirable talent, and for lack of wisdom and reason he is always seen thoughtlessly giving in to the first sentiment of humanity" (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Basic Political Writings, trans. and ed. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Publishing, 1987).


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proceeding" would indeed be absurd, if nature had chosen to disassociate love from good will, or the causes of humility from those of hatred. This, for the naturalist, shows nothing about deep metaphysical necessities, any more than the fact that there is what we recognize as order in the physical universe shows that there must be a cosmic designer. For how would passionate beings who need others to second their evaluations, and need their cooperation, have persisted in existence, generation after generation, unless there were the correspondence Hume is pointing to? Any in whom the correspondence failed would be very disadvantaged for survival, mating, and child care, just as any who did not find order in the universe they are part of, and so were not tempted by the argument from design, would have a hard time managing in their environment, and so be in a sense defective. 61

Hume speaks of our being guided by "a kind of presensation; which tells us what will operate on others by what we feel immediately in ourselves" (T, 332). Without such a fairly reliable pre-sensation, and without our trust in it, we would be hopelessly at sea in our dealings with one another, having to treat each new person as a new self-contained species, with a nature all its own. However strong and well developed our individual reasoning powers, and even if reason were complete in each individual and not dependent on reasoning together (which, in any case, would be most unlikely to occur if our wishes and preferences were a mystery to each other), we would have very great difficulty predicting how any other would respond to any overture we might make. We do, in our dealings with members of any already familiar species, including our own, expect previously unencountered members to behave in the same general way, and show the same general fears, desires, and hesitations as its conspecifics. 60

We could not have a "species being," in Marx's sense, that is a typical way of responding to and selectively cooperating and competing with each other, had we not a human nature in Hume's sense, that is a fairly uniform range of desires and emotions. 61 Because it is roughly uniform, then it is not unreason-able of us to think that, subject to verification or correction by listening to what others say about how they feel, we can tell what will operate on others by what we feel immediately in our-


60. Once when offering food to semitame squirrels, who were willing to approach close enough to take food from my hand, but otherwise cautious and as it were respectful towards me, I had the disconcerting experience of being treated by a very young and inexperience d squirrel as if I were either a tree, or its mother—I am not sure what it took me as, when, attacked by an older squirrel who wanted all the food, it leaped into my arms for sanctuary. Such unsquirrel-like behavior disconcerted me, precisely because there was a reliable squirrel norm of behavior, from which this case was a deviation. With our human conspecifics too, there are occasional deviations from the fairly dependable norm, the norm, for example, that young children do not cleave to strangers. I was almost as disconcerted as in the squirrel episode when recently, as I boarded the elevator in the Cathedral of Learning in the University of Pittsburgh, a child of ten or so, who was a member of a large group of school children about to begin a guided tour of Nationality Rooms on the first floor, detached himself from the group and said to me "Please, please, take me with you!" I was not quick enough to offer any response before the elevator closed and left, so I have no idea whether what he wanted was to get to the top of the building, or simply to escape the guided tour, or who knows what. But my jaw dropped, as it did when the baby squirrel landed in my bosom. That we are unprepared for such strange encounters shows us how prepared we are for the normal case, and how much we depend on the general truths we have learned about how squirrels and human beings typically behave.

61. We must, however, allow for cultural variations in what is deemed acceptable in the way of satisfaction and expression of these desires and emotions. Lust is fairly easily recognizable across cultural barriers, but some of its expressions can astound the traveler. It may not be disagreeable, as Hume says in his essay "Of Polygamy and Divorces," to consider what Hume terms "Asiatic manners" in these matters, in particular two of my educative encounters with men of Asia Minor, which I select from other interesting foreign encounters because of the Humean connection. On a visit to Istanbul, my husband and I acquired the company of a young bank worker met, suitably enough, in the palace seraglio. He insisted on accompanying us as a guide on our exploration of the city, claiming that he wanted to improve his English. He then seized any brief opportunity to manhandle me, on the staircases of Rumeli Hisar, behind statues in the archeological museum, etc., until we managed to shake him. The presence of an accompanying husband, it seemed, was no deterrent, perhaps even an added incentive. We encountered another Turk with interesting amorous enterprise towards foreigners when we shared a launch with some local high-school teachers from Antalya, to visit the ruins of Pharselis. The teachers dived and speared fish, which we grilled and ate for lunch on the beach. One of them, with some ceremony and eloquent eye language, passed me the eye of the largest fish, as the tastiest morsel. Politeness prevented me from refusing this unwelcome gift, but my acceptance may have meant more than I realized. For on the return journey this man proposed that he come the next afternoon to our beach hotel, and that I earlier dispatch my husband on a long swim out to sea. These encounters add to my appreciation of Hume's report, in the polygamy essay, of the observation of Mehemet Effendi, Turkish ambassador in France: "We Turks are great simpletons in comparison with the Christians. We are at the expense and trouble of keeping a seraglio, each in his own house: But you ease yourselves of this burden, and have your seraglio in your friends' houses."


60. Once when offering food to semitame squirrels, who were willing to approach close enough to take food from my hand, but otherwise cautious and as it were respectful towards me, I had the disconcerting experience of being treated by a very young and
selves. And because we do have a species being in Marx's sense, our human nature in Hume's sense shows the sort of correspondence or coordination in feelings which he, in the *Treatise*, took to be brute fortunate fact, albeit a fact that dictates what we count as virtues and as vices or defects.\(^1\)

This "correspondence" to some extent holds for our indestructible moral feelings, as well as for our simpler sorts of feelings, those that we may believe to have some analogues in other higher animals. We *do* suppose that our outrage at injustice, our horror at extreme cruelty, will be at least intelligible to others, and probably shared by most. Could we find no one to agree with us in finding some particular treatment outrageously unfair, no one to "second" our disapproval of, say, the navy officer who refused to lead women in combat, or the cadets who cheered when the first woman admitted to the Citadel in Charleston withdrew after one week, we would be nonplussed, and lose confidence in our judgment. There may well be only one just man, but not only one who recognizes his justice. But, as such cases demonstrate, we will not find anything like a consensus. The officer reportedly refused on what he saw to be moral conscientious grounds to lead women in combat, and the cadets saw themselves to have a right to single-sex training. The naval officer's biblical morality, he believed, forbade putting women into combat roles. And we do not expect him to be alone in his judgment on this issue. As far as I know he is not recorded as finding the same moral obnoxiousness in subjecting women to what their male officers subjected them to in the Tailhook affair, but that was a more traditional and time-honored role for women. Women traditionally could be, and often were, the attacked, but not the armed attackers. Occasional anomalous heroines such as a Holofernes-beheading Judith may be tolerable, on biblical morality, but not large numbers of uniformed women doing the official killing.

Our shared human nature does not guarantee our agreement on moral matters, especially on what counts as injustice. But our shared human nature guarantees that we will think in terms such as "violation of human rights," "injustice," "inhumane," "breaking faith," "cruelty," and condemn what we think fits these categories, even when we do not all agree on what counts as cases of them. We cannot be expected always to agree on what is unjust, or cruel. For one reason, our species-nature, and its historical and cultural variations, including our differing customs of moral upbringing, plays a dominant role in the genesis of our moral feelings. Our moral feelings initially are the product of the very mores that, at a later stage, they evaluate and sometimes condemn. But the condemnation is usually partial, not a complete repudiation of our moral heritage.

This cultural dependence is shown also in such simpler matters as our taste in foods. That some human beings enjoy eating dogflesh and some are disgusted at the thought, that horseflesh is by some prized as a delicacy and by others rejected in indignation (if offered as horsemeat, rather than just as goulash or stew), that some can eat and enjoy pork and others are sickened by its smell, all these are obviously cultural variations, matters of habituation, not of innate differences. But the cultural variation of moral reaction is more interesting than this, and less predictable in its manifestations. For we do not simply continue in the moral ways we were trained in our youth to go in. We are much more likely to depart from those ways than we are from our learned eating habits of acceptance and rejection, although moral reflection can alter these too, as the rise of vegetarianism on moral grounds makes evident. This is, of course, because moral ways are ways of judging behavior, and so have intrinsic potential to be turned on themselves. They are not always found to bear their own survey. For any one person who is true to the morality she was trained in, in childhood, there will be

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\(^1\) Philippa Foot, in "Does Moral Subjectivism Rest on a Mistake?" takes Hume to be one of the mistaken subjectivists, but he can equally plausibly be seen to be in agreement with Foot's brand of naturalism in ethics. His demand that nothing count as a virtue unless it is the norm not the exception in human nature, a point he makes (T 483) while explaining what justice is and why it is a virtue, is in line with Foot's views. See my "Natural Virtues and Natural Vices," *Social Philosophy and Policy 8*, Ethics, Politics, and Human Nature (autumn 1990): 24-34.
at least one who has rebelled against some parts of it, become critical of them, and moved on to other supposedly superior standards of judgment. As Hume began but certainly did not end with the Calvinist version of the "Whole Duty of Man,"63 so most of us end not quite where we began. And yet we are not content just to agree to differ with our parents and grand-parents who trained us—typically we do want to retain "the love and approbation" of that small segment of mankind who trained us in the ways from which we have departed. As Hume well knew, and went out of his way to emphasize, "we are most uneasy under the contempt of persons who are both related to us by blood and contiguous in place" (T, 322). If we fail to convert our elders to our more enlightened ways, we will likely place ourselves at a distance from them. Yet the young Hume returned from France to his pious mother at Ninewells, and the older Hume could not fully break with his minister friends in Edinburgh. Distancing is a temporary and unsatisfactory measure. The admittedly difficult aim has to be moral agreement, or, at the very least, some prospect of it, as the outcome of "conversing together on reasonable terms."

The hope of agreement is not vain, if the disagreeing parties to some extent share a common moral vocabulary, some common sources for their moral ideas and feelings, and a willingness to listen to each other. No moral innovation, however radical, sprang out of nowhere, and much moral reform comes about by internal criticism of an older moral order. Some comes from comparing and contrasting different cultures—from moral travel, as it were. M But the capability for seeing internal tensions and inconsistencies within, say, a Christian but slave-owning culture, or a culture which regularly intones its belief that all human persons are created equal, yet denies equal basic rights to the female half of its population, is never isolated in solitary individuals. What one reformer sees or hears (since often it is listening to victims that sparks the reformist flame), is there to see and hear, and can be seen and heard by others. The pull of piety to the old ways, the faith of the fathers, will always be strongly felt by some, and reasonably felt, since those ways are the departure point for whatever new path is taken, and something in the old values will usually be what makes possible the very criticisms that the moral reformer makes. Reform, not revolution, is the normal mode of moral change.

It is to be expected that some will resist any change, and that some innovators will be unwilling to acknowledge their debts to the culture they hope to reform. Some will be more unwilling than others to enter imaginatively or experimentally into the mores of other cultures, to listen to their spokespersons, to do any moral travel before settling in some voluntarily accepted homeland, some set of values they are content to live by. But as we all first learned from others what is deemed morally accept-able, and what is not, so we all need others to test, confirm, challenge, and amend any moral innovations we may ourselves propose along the way. It is vital that our moral evaluations be done in conversation in which the listening is as important as the speaking, rather than in soliloquy accompanied by overconfidence in one's ability to imagine oneself in others' shoes. It is just as vital that these evaluative conversations be carried out on reasonable terms, as regards the chance to speak and be listened to. It is only reasonable that those who have only recently been included should get more of the speaking time than those who have long held the floor, but equally reasonable that the time

63. The Whole Duty of Man: Necessary for all Families (anon., printed by R. Norton for Robert Pawler, at the Sign of the Bible, Chancery Lane, London, 1684) had included, in its list of breaches of duty, various breaches of the duty of humility and such other sins as "eating too much," "heightening of lust by pampering the body," "not labouring to subdue it by Fasting, and other Severities," and "not assigning any Set or Solemn time for Humiliation and Confession, or too seldom." Hume is opposing not merely the "monks" when he denotes "Celibacy, fasting penance, mortification, self denial, humility, silence, solitude" to vices, but the Calvinists who had preached to him, and the other Protestant divines whose tracts he had been given as a child to help him learn to recognize vice. But there are very many of the duties listed in The Whole Duty of Man that Hume includes in his catalogue, and that repeat those listed in Cicero's Offices, which he told Hutcheson was his preferred source book on morals. "Not loving peace," and "going to law on slight occasion," as well as theft, ingratitude, lying, malice, and oppression are all condemned in the Whole Duty, and Hume would have little quarrel with these disapprobations.

64. I have explored the value of such travel in "The Virtues of Resident Alienation," Nomos 34, Virtue (New York University Press, 1992), pp. 291-308.
during which this reasonable reverse discrimination is practiced be limited, and yield in due time to something more like equal time. As far as women's voices in the moral conversation in this culture and this profession goes, I think that we still need to listen considerably longer to battered wives than to battering husbands, to the victims rather than the perpetrators and condoners of sexual harassment. But not only women are attentive to, and speak on behalf of, the victims of these social ills. We are, I think, approaching the point when, as women philosophers, we can be content with, indeed rejoice in, equal terms in the philosophical conversation. Women in general are now full participants in the moral conversation in our culture. But there are particular groups, such as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, resident aliens, and especially women members of all these groups, from whom we have not yet heard nearly enough in either the philosophical or the public debate. If the moral and the moral-philosophical conversation is to continue in the most reasonable way, extra time will be given to voices from such groups.

Moral evaluation of individual behavior, of individual character, of social practices, and of what Hume called "national characters," draws on almost all our collective human resources, and so is the most complex of our collective capacities, needing input from all groups among us. It presupposes the capacity for simpler sorts of preferences and evaluations, those based simply on shared pleasure and shared tastes and desires, such as the normal human preference for firm rather than mushy, tasty rather than bland, apples, and for smiling rather than frowning human faces. It presupposes the imaginative capacity to put oneself in others' places, and the willingness to be corrected by those in such places when one's imaginative version of what it is like to be in them turns out to be fanciful. It presupposes the reason that can trace consequences and discern inconsistencies,

65. The right to speak on behalf of some group of which one is not a member does, of course, have to be earned. This point is forcefully made by Laurence Thomas in "Moral Deference," The Philosophical Forum 34, nos. 1–3 (fall–spring 1992–93): 233–50.

the memory that can learn from past experience, the trust and trustworthiness that enables learning from others' testimony and recorded experience, and it presupposes the capacity to take part in our practices of calling for and giving an account of what we are doing. I see no good reason to single out one of these many premodern roots of morality as more fundamental than the others, so tend to find any account of morality that plays up one of them at the expense of all the others an oversimplified account. Many such oversimplified accounts can charitably be construed as corrections of earlier simplifications in a different direction—for Shaftesbury or Hume to stress sentiment, pleasure, and sympathy was understandable, given that people like Clarke were overemphasizing an intellectualist version of reason. For Kant to stress rational will, and the capacity for self-command, was also understandable, given that Wolff was overemphasizing intellect, and that Hume might be read as underemphasizing will. But a study of the history of ethics, as well as reflection on what we actually do expect of moral evaluators, should make us suspicious of any account of our moral capacities that leaves out what any moral theorist has ever said was morality's main source (and I include those who saw religion as its source). The history of ethics serves as a virtual commons of the moral philosopher's mind. Single voices there respond to and contradict other single voices, and each voice has some partial truth to tell.

Still, it does seem to me that those philosophers who took a broad rather than a narrow view of what moral evaluation evaluates, and those who had inclusive rather than exclusive accounts of what capacities are exercised in this evaluation, speak a little more truth than the others. And those who made

67. Clarke's overemphasis may be excusable if he was, as Jerome B. Schneewind suggests in "Voluntarism and the Foundations of Ethics," (Presidential Address to the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, December 1995), reacting against extreme forms of voluntarism in ethics, which saw God's arbitrary will as the source of moral norms, and deference to that powerful will as the whole of virtue.
68. According to Schneewind, in his Presidential Address, we can also see Kant's emphasis on rational will as an emphasis on rational will, a correction of Crusius as much as of Wolff. My own understanding of Kant's relation to his philosophical predecessors owes much to Schneewind's two-volume anthology, Moral Philosophy, from Montaigne to Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
reflexivity the special feature that transforms the exercise of any capacity, or any combination of capacities, from a premoral into a moral manifestation of our mental powers surely got something important right. This would mean that, insofar as morality is concerned with trust, or with accountability for our actions, or with recognition of our beauties or uglinesses of individual character, it will itself exhibit some meta-trust and meta-distrust, meta-accountability, and meta-taste in characters—as moral evaluators we will show trust and distrust in our ways of encouraging or discouraging particular forms of trust; we will assume accountability for our procedures of holding to account and our procedures of training people to be accountable; we will supervise the supervisors and keep scores on the scorekeepers; we will consider the beauty or ugliness of our recognitions of relative attractiveness in character; and so on. We will consider whether our customs of encouraging and discouraging trust, our procedures of supervising and holding to account, of teaching accountability, and of recognizing character, themselves pass muster.

One of the attractions of the Humean view that moral approbation is a reflective variant of pleasure is the broad scope therefore granted to that approbation. We take pleasure or displeasure in an enormous range of things, and even when we narrow down to the pleasure we take in one another as persons, as possessors of what Hume calls "characters," there is still a large range—we approve or disapprove both of individual and of group character, both of thoughtless habits and of calculated policy, both of action and of reaction. Our evaluative reactions to all these aspects of ourselves, both as individuals and in our group formations, help to determine our friendships, our elective affinities, our emigrations and immigrations, the whole range of our loves and hates. For these to be moral evaluations, an extra step has to be taken, beyond that needed for stable mutual intelligible likes and dislikes of persons and communities. Hume calls it the taking up of an especially general point of view, from which all these lower-level habits, likings, dislikings, policies towards people, sets of rights and duties, habits of trusting and distrusting, come into view, and can be impartially surveyed, by surveyors who converse together on reasonable terms with one another about the judgments they are forming, and about the particular sort of "agreeability" or "utility" they find in the customs that get their approval. And of course these reasonings, sentiments, and procedures by which the moral judging gets done themselves implicitly ask for some seal of approval; they too should be able to "bear their own survey."

Hume calls it a "sentiment" that pronounces the final moral judgment, if indeed anything counts as final in this process of judging, including the judging of both judges and standards of judgment, at indefinitely many levels. But there are so many constraints operating on this supposed sentiment which yields moral verdicts that it is impossible to say whether it is best called a feeling, a conclusion of evaluative reason, or even a determination of the will. Unless the proper point of view is intentionally taken up, whatever is seen will not count as moral vision, nor any judgment guided by it count as moral judgment. So intention plays its part in yielding the judgment, as well as frequently being the object of that judgment. The process leading up to moral judgment often requires "that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be drawn, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained" (E, 173), so reasoning is definitely incorporated in moral reflection, on Hume's version of it. Calling it a "sentiment" that pronounces the final verdict (when anything does, since often moral reflection is inconclusive) at least acknowledges the mixed cognitive-conative-affective nature of the whole operation, since sentiments are anything but raw feels—they are very definitely culturally "cooked" ones, and tradition, reason, sympathy, and controlled reflection do the cooking.

There is no particular point in disputing whether the reflexivity characteristic of moral deliberation derives from the poten-

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69. As animals, we are just as omnivorous when pleasure-seeking as when curiosity-prone or food-seeking. And the very fact of omnivorosity gives us a choice that less omnivorous animals do not have, when it comes to restriction, or indulging preferences, reflective or otherwise, for some forms of pleasure over others, some sorts of knowledge over others, some eating habits over others.
tial reflexivity of reason, or intention, or pleasure and passion, since all of these can display reflexivity, and, when they do, transform, by the act of reflection, what is reflected upon. Whether the original reasoning, intention, pleasure, or displeasure gets endorsed or negatively criticized by its own survey, it typically will not survive unchanged. If endorsed, it will be not merely strengthened but altered in quality; if rejected it will either wither away, or, if it does not, it will be different—it will survive as diffident reasoning, as merely half-hearted intention (or, alternatively, as defiant will), as guilty or self-disgusted pleasure, or as anger angry at its own occurrence, and so as transfigured anger. What Kant called the critical or disciplinary vocation of reason is not a vocation really restricted to "reason alone," as a purely cognitive capacity. The germs of it are found also in our affective and conative capacities, with their potential for reflexivity and self-criticism. It may indeed be significant that Kant, after proclaiming this endlessly critical and self-critical duty of reason, and its need for "dialectical debate," moves smoothly on to talk of the "Gesinnungen" (which can be translated "sentiments") that are expressed, sincerely or insincerely, in such debate. There is no significant disagreement between a philosopher (Kant?) who takes moral reflection to employ a practical version of a social self-critical as well as inclination-criticizing reflective "reason," contributions to whose dialectical debate can be termed expression of "sentiments," and one, such as I take Hume in his philosophical writings to have been, who takes moral reflection to consist in a conversation on reasonable terms between persons who have exercised their capacity for extensive sympathy as well as for reasoning, and who have taken up a point of view designed to give the reasonable hope of agreement on "standards of merit and demerit" in human characters, a conversation whose endpoint, when one is reached on a particular matter, is termed an expression of "sentiment." There may indeed be important moral disagreements between Hume and Kant on such matters as suicide, and the desirability of various degrees of control of natural inclinations, but there does not seem to be a very large substan-

five difference of opinion about the process that counts as moral reflection. At most their disagreement there is one of where the emphasis needs to be put, and that may well be a matter where, as each would agree, the best place for the emphasis (on sentiment, on reason, on will) depends on the stage of debate. At the stage we are at, the reason versus sentiment disagreement is less pressing than, say, the disagreement over assisted suicide and abortion. If philosophers who more or less agreed on method can so sharply disagree on actual moral issues, as Hume and Kant do on suicide, then our chances of reaching agreement on issues, when we do not all agree about method, seem very slight. Attempts such as that of Rawls to separate out areas where agreement is more likely (consensus about a conception of justice, about a just constitution, about what comprehensive moral views are reasonable, about which of them are more reasonable) can be seen to be continuations of Hume's project of aiming at a conversation on reasonable terms, and of the dialectical debate of Kant's critical reason, sobered by the thought that it may be only by agreeing to restrict our agenda that we have any hope of agreement.

Alas, one of the most recalcitrant disagreements may be on how precisely we should limit the agenda of different forums of reason, and about what we should do in the face of this disagreement. Kant and Hume may have agreed more easily at the higher methodological moral levels than at lower levels where concrete moral issues are addressed, or at least have arrived at reasonable terms on which their philosophical disagreements could be discussed, but it is not so clear that those with the comprehensive views of the "moral majority," or of the Roman Catholic minority, can agree with Rawls and other liberals about the distinction between agreement on the justice that is the first virtue of institutions in the basic structure of our society, and agreement on how it is right for individuals to live their lives. Rawls writes that "Political liberalism counts many familiar

and traditional doctrines—religion, philosophical, and moral—as reasonable, even though we could not seriously entertain them for ourselves, when we think they give excessive weight to some values and fail to allow for the significance of others.” In a footnote he adds that doctrines that we, as members of some part of the background culture, regard as unreasonable or untrue we may correctly see as reasonable, for the purposes of political liberalism.71 At a later point he considers “the troubled question of abortion,” and finds that political values, as political liberalism sees them, support the right to first trimester abortion, that indeed it can be ”cruel and oppressive” to deny it or limit it to cases of pregnancy resulting from rape or incest.72 Suppose that someone, in her comprehensive moral view, finds that abortion is wrong, indeed is the grave wrong of murder. Can she possibly still be a political liberal, and believe that it is reasonable for the state to allow it, and that comprehensive moral views allowing it are, as inputs into an overlapping consensus, reasonable?73 Or would her comprehensive moral doctrine necessarily be seen by the liberal to ”run afoul of public reason,” so have to count as unreasonable? It seems to be at least in part a moral question whether a person could with integrity maintain ”I believe all abortion to be the grave wrong of murder, a violation of the rights of the fetus, but I will defend your constitutional right to choose it.” It is one thing to disagree utterly with what a person says and yet defend their right to say it, another to condemn what they do as murder, yet defend their right to do it. Whether we should properly compartmentalize our moral reasoning into the ”political” and the ”comprehensive” is itself a moral matter, and it is not obvious to everyone that, to have a conversation on reasonable terms about this matter, the first step should be to restrict our agenda.

Kant writes (of reason, not of moral let alone political reason) that, should reason ”limit freedom of criticism by any prohibitions, it must harm itself. . . . Nothing is so sacred, that it may be exempted from this searching examination” ( Critique of Pure Reason, A739, B767). Kant adds that this open-ended examination by reason should not be seen as threatening, since the examiners are not powerful judges but merely fellow citizens, fellow reasoners. Should our reflection about the proper relation between agenda-restricted political decision making, concerned with settling how we will coerce each other, and more open-ended moral reasoning itself be restricted, or is it more reasonable to hold nothing, including liberalism, sacred? We must think beyond the restrictions of political reason if we are to reason about how exactly the limits of the political should be drawn. Our hopes of agreeing about this seem at present as faint as our hopes of agreeing about suicide or abortion. Moral reflection, as a social capacity, is still in its infancy, with many rough corners still to be rubbed smooth. A commons of the mind is by no means assured, where morality and political morality is concerned. Yet we cannot renounce the project of trying to establish such a commons. Patience, faith, and trust, not knowledge and full assurance, are needed if moral reflection is to perpetuate itself, while still holding fast to its goal of moral agreement.

72. Ibid., p. 243, n. 32.
73. The woman who was ”Roe,” in Roe v. Wade, seems to be at present trying to combine the view that abortion, including the abortion she had wanted, is wrong (so working with right-to-life groups to dissuade other women from abortion), with the view that the law should leave the choice to individual women.

74. Rawls speaks of ”comprehensive views,” but open-ended critical moral reasoning denies itself the comfort of thinking that it has ever answered all questions, so the comprehensiveness of any view can at best extend to the questions it raises, not to the presumed finality of its answers.