

This paper is in *Humean Moral Philosophy and Contemporary Psychology*, edited by Philip Reed and Rico Vitz (Routledge), pp. 263-86, 2018.

Hume on Moral Motivation

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Abstract

Hume recognizes that there are different types of human motivation that play a role in the moral life. When Hume argues at T 3.1.1.5-6 that morality does not originate in reason alone by citing morality's motivational influence, he is relying only on the motivational influence of explicitly moral thoughts. This narrow focus is appropriate because at T 3.1.1.5-6 he is arguing against rationalist claims about the nature of explicitly moral thoughts. But in his own positive account, Hume explicates several other motives, such as: the motives of others we approve of that do not involve explicitly moral thoughts, the motives we develop when we approve of others, and the motives we have to garner others' approval of ourselves. Recent empirical work in moral psychology supports much of what Hume says about moral motivation.

HUME ON MORAL MOTIVATION

It is well-known that in *Treatise* 3.1.1 Hume argues that morality has a motivational influence that reason alone lacks. But it has been surprisingly difficult to identify exactly what kind of motivation Hume has in mind in 3.1.1 and how to connect it with the many other things he says about morality.¹ The key, I argue here, is to see that throughout his work Hume

discusses several different kinds of moral motivation, and that in 3.1.1 he is relying on only one of them.

In Part 1 I describe three kinds of motivation that are central to Hume's account of morality. In Part 2 I use contemporary work in moral psychology to elucidate those different kinds of moral motivation. In Part 3 I argue that in the anti-rationalist argument of *Treatise* 3.1.1 Hume relies on only one kind of moral motivation. In Part 4 I answer an objection and expand on the expansiveness of Humean moral motivation.

1. Three kinds of moral motivation

Hume discusses at least three things we can call moral motivation.² Let us call these: [1] virtuous trait motivation, [2] approval-of-another motivation, and [3] approval-of-self motivation.

Virtuous trait motivation is motivation based in an agent's trait that observers approve of and that is "different from the regard to the virtue of the action" (T 3.2.1.4). One example of such a trait is parental concern (T 3.2.1.5). A parent with such a trait is motivated to nurture her child not because she thinks it is morally required of her but simply because she cares for her child. The thought — "I am morally required to nurture my child" or "It is virtuous to nurture one's own child" — need not play a role in this motivation of the parent. Another example is benevolence for the distressed and afflicted, in those cases in which a person has a motive to help others that gains none of its force from her consciously thinking that such help is virtuous or morally obligatory (T 3.2.1.6). A third example is friendship, in those cases in which a person treats her friends with love and respect because she cares about them and not because she has formulated the thought that virtue or morality requires that she treat her friends in any particular way (T 3.3.3.5). Gratitude is yet another example (T 3.2.1.8). As we shall discuss in Part 4, a person motivated by parental concern, benevolence, friendship, or gratitude may *also* be motivated by an explicitly moral motive. But then again, she may not. The point is that these traits are sources of motivation that do not implicate in the mind of the person motivated any explicitly moral content (even if that person may also have another kind of motive that does involve explicitly moral content).

There is a sense in which it might seem more accurate to call this kind of motivation *non-moral* motivation, since the trait that issues in such motivation is essentially distinct from thoughts about what is morally required or virtuous.³ The sense in which such motivation may be called *moral*, nonetheless, is that one's acting from this kind of motivation is what leads observers to judge one to be virtuous (see T 3.1.2.11). Virtuous trait motivation, as I have labeled it, is the motivation a person is thought to act from when her conduct elicits from observers the pleasure of approbation, even while the person being observed may herself have no conscious "regard to the virtue" of her conduct.

Let us now turn to a different class of motives that are part of Hume's account of morality. Hume believes that when we feel approval for someone who has acted from a virtuous trait we develop good will towards her; this leads to either the motivation to treat her positively (when we are in a position to benefit her) or the wish that her well-being be promoted (when we are not in a position to benefit her ourselves). When we feel disapproval for someone who has acted from a vicious trait we develop ill will towards her; this leads either to the motivation to treat her negatively or the wish that her well-being is in some way thwarted. These motives we have towards people we approve or disapprove of constitute the second kind of Humean moral motivation: *approval-of-another motivation*.

When we feel love or hatred for someone, we develop the motive to promote her happiness or misery (T 2.2.6.3-6). Humean approval and disapproval cause love and hatred, or perhaps are kinds of love and hatred (T 3.1.2.5; 3.3.1.3; 3.3.1.31). So if I approve of a person I will be motivated to promote her happiness, and if I disapprove of a person I will be motivated to promote her misery (at least in those cases in which I am in a position to affect her well-being; in those cases in which I cannot affect her well-being, this tendency will manifest in the wish that her well-being be promoted or thwarted). As Hume writes, "As to the good or ill desert of virtue or vice, 'tis an evident consequence of the sentiments of pleasure [of approval] or uneasiness [of disapproval]. These sentiments produce love or hate; and love or hatred, by the original constitution of human passion, is attended with benevolence or anger; that is, with a desire of making happy the person we love, and miserable the person we hate" (T 3.3.1.31; see also 3.3.4.1).

Hume refers to the positive motivational effect of approval-of-another in his discussion of "dexterity in business." He writes:

Here is a man, who is not remarkably defective in his social qualities; but what principally recommends him is his dexterity in business, by which he has extricated himself from the greatest difficulties, and conducted the most delicate affairs with a singular address and prudence. I find an esteem for him immediately to arise in me; His company is a satisfaction to me; and before I have any farther acquaintance with him, I wou'd rather do him a service than another, whose character is in every other respect equal, but is deficient in that particular. (T 3.3.1.25)

The crucial bit here is the claim that I would rather do a service for a person with a certain character trait than for a person without it. Hume takes this to be evidence that the trait is a virtue, and that's because Hume holds that judging someone virtuous leads to a desire to benefit him. Hume has the same kind of motivational influence in mind when discussing the merely verbal nature of the distinction between qualities traditionally thought of as virtues, such as courage and kindness, and natural abilities, such as wit and memory. Even if we choose to “refuse to natural abilities the title of virtues,” Hume writes, “we must allow, that they procure the love and esteem of mankind; that they give a new luster to the other virtues; and that a man possess'd of them is much more intitled to our good-will and services, than one entirely void of them” (T 3.3.4.2). When I admire someone, I develop more “good-will” toward him than I do toward those I don't admire. I become more inclined to do him good “services.” Because of this similarity — because the motivational response observers have toward someone who possesses certain natural abilities is the same as the motivational response they have toward someone who possesses traits that are clearly virtues — it makes sense to assimilate natural abilities and virtues.

The third kind of Humean moral motivation — *approval-of-self motivation* — is the motivation a person has to avoid doing things that will make her think she herself has acted viciously and to pursue doing things that will make her think she herself has acted virtuously. A person with this kind of motivation (in contrast to virtuous trait motivation) is motivated to perform a virtuous action “from a certain sense of duty,” or “out of regard to its moral obligation” (T 3.2.1.8).⁴ This person will have the conscious thought that if she acted in a certain way she would be acting viciously, contrary to duty, in violation of her obligations. And that consciously moral thought will give rise in her to the motive not to perform the action. She will have a motive to avoid acting in a certain way because she thinks that if she

does act in that way she will be in the state of mind of thinking that she has done something wrong.

Such a person might consider picking up a wallet she has seen drop out of someone's bag and pocketing the money. But then she thinks that keeping the money would be wrong — that if she were to keep the money rather than return it she would think she has acted viciously. She also thinks that returning the money would be right — that if she were to return the money rather than keep it she would think she has acted virtuously. And these consciously moral thoughts give rise in her to a motive to avoid keeping the money and pursue returning it. The “motive to virtue” such a person has is based on her “antipathy to treachery and roguery” (EPM 9.2.23).

Kant describes a person who has a motive to benefit those in need that is not based in “sympathy with the fate of others” but comes “simply from duty” (*Groundwork*, 11-12). Bernard Williams describes a person who has a motive to save his wife from drowning (rather than two strangers) that is based on the thought that such an action is morally permissible (*Moral Luck*, 18). Williams and Kant have conflicting attitudes toward this kind of motivation, a disagreement we will bring Hume into contact with at the end of Part 4. The point I wish to make at this stage is just that Hume thinks this kind of consciously moral motive, the kind of motive Kant exalts and Williams contemns, does exist. Some people do sometimes develop motives as a result of consciously moral thoughts — thoughts whose content includes notions of duty, morality, virtue, obligation, what ought to be done, and the like.⁵

2. Contemporary work on motivation

Recent psychological research helps elucidate the different kinds of Humean moral motivation.

Humean approval-of-another motivation is positive motivation towards those one approves of and negative motivation towards those one disapproves of. Algoe and Haidt (2009) support the first half of that view: people develop positive motives towards those they approve of. Algoe and Haidt studied the motivational influences of our “emotional response[s] to witnessing acts of virtue or moral beauty” (“Witnessing excellence in action,” 106). These responses are based in what they call the “other-praising emotions” of elevation, gratitude, and admiration. Algoe and Haidt found that when observers experience

these other-praising emotions, they develop positive attitudes towards the people who elicited them. Other-praising emotions “had an effect on how much the participant would be ‘willing to associate with’ the person in the future” (“Witnessing excellence in action,” 112). People who felt other-praising emotions became “motivated to build a relationship with the prestigious person to maximize their ability to learn further, and to share in the prestige” (“Witnessing excellence in action,” 107). Importantly, the positive motives elicited by other-praising emotions go beyond the positive responses that result from pleasurable feelings in general. “The sharpest contrast ... between the other-praising emotions and joy [which is elicited by something unrelated to the virtue of another person] was that all three other-praising emotions produced frequent free-response reports of ‘positive relationship’ motivations (67% for elevation, 74% for gratitude, and 81% for admiration, versus 30% for joy). In other words, the other-praising emotions motivate people to do things that create or strengthen relationships, particularly with virtuous or skillful people” (“Witnessing excellence in action,” 123). Such findings point to the phenomena Hume has in mind when he says that the “company” of someone I esteem “is a satisfaction to me; and before I have any farther acquaintance with him, I wou’d rather do him a service than another, whose character is in every other respect equal, but is deficient in that particular” (T 3.3.1.25; see also 3.3.4.2).

The other half of approval-of-another motivation is the motive to treat negatively those one disapproves of. Like the positive motivation, this negative motivation follows directly from Hume’s view of love and hatred, approval and disapproval. “[H]atred produces a desire of the misery and an aversion to the happiness of the person hated” (T 2.2.6.3). “[V]ice and the power of producing ... hatred” are “equivalent” (T 3.3.1.3). Thus, toward those we disapprove of we wish “ill desert” (T 3.3.1.31). Studies of third-party responses to norm violations verify this part of Hume’s view. Third parties — people whose own welfare is not affected — develop negative motivation toward those they deem to have violated moral norms. Fessler and Navarette (2004) found that third parties develop “a desire to avoid regularly interacting with others who engage in [violations of anti-incest norms] and a desire to prevent others from engaging in such actions and to punish those who do” (“Third-party attitudes,” 282). Fehr and Fischbacher (2004) found that “a large percentage of subjects are willing to enforce distribution and cooperation norms even though they incur costs and reap no economic benefit from their sanctions and even though

they have not been directly harmed by the norm violation” (“Third-party punishment,” 85). Sober and Wilson (1998) propose an evolutionary explanation for our desire of punishment of this sort (*Unto Others*, 142-9).

Let us turn now to a distinction that clarifies Humean moral motivation in general and approval-of-self motivation in particular. The distinction, which Baumeister et al. elucidate in a 2007 review article, is between two kinds of motivational influence a passion can have: direct and indirect.⁶

A passion has direct motivational influence when the agent occurrently experiences it and when that occurrent experience of the passion pushes the agent to do something. You suddenly find yourself in physical danger; you experience the physiological symptoms of fear; you instinctively shrink from the source of the danger. Someone does something that enrages you; you are overwhelmed by a feeling of fury; you lash out, striking at the offending party. “Fear makes you flee, anger makes you fight, and so forth” (Baumeister et al., “How emotion shapes behavior,” 168).

A passion with indirect motivational influence is a state the agent is *not* occurrently experiencing. A passion has indirect motivational influence when it is a state that the agent anticipates she might experience, and when that anticipation motivates her either to avoid or to pursue that emotional state. While direct motivation is a kind of pushing from a state the agent is experiencing in the present, indirect motivation is a kind of pulling from a state the agent anticipates experiencing in the future.

Here’s how pride can motivate indirectly.⁷ In the past a person performed an action that won her praise and led her to feel pride. Now a comparable situation has arisen. The person wishes to win praise and feel pride. So she is motivated to perform a similar action. Guilt can motivate indirectly in a similar way. In the past a person performed an action that caused distress to her friends and led her to feel guilty. Now a comparable situation has arisen. The person wishes to avoid causing distress to her friends and guilt to herself. So she is motivated to avoid the action she performed in the past. As Baumeister et al. explain, “People are strongly motivated to avoid emotional upset and/or to seek out positive emotions.... Ample evidence shows that people make choices and change their behavior on the basis of anticipated emotions, such as to avoid guilt or regret... Anticipated emotion may be more important than felt emotion. For example, that is why guilt can be a powerful guide to behavior even for someone who rarely feels guilty, simply because that person

anticipates the potential guilt and therefore takes steps to prevent it” (“How emotion shapes behavior,” 196). A leading role in an explanation of a person’s motivational state can be her anticipation of experiencing a passion rather than her occurrent experience of it.

Hume is aware of the distinction between indirect or anticipatory and direct or occurrent motivational influence. He says that the will is often influenced by thoughts about how to pursue certain future states and avoid other future states. “The mind . . . tends to unite itself with the good, and to avoid the evil, tho’ they be conceiv’d merely in idea, and be consider’d as to exist in any future period of time” (T 2.3.9.2). “The will exerts itself, when either the good or the absence of the evil may be attain’d by any action of the mind or body” (T 3.2.9.7). This is indirect or anticipatory motivation, motivation to pursue or avoid a state one is not presently experiencing. But that is not the only kind of motivation Hume recognizes. He points out, as well, that some passions have direct or occurrent motivational influence — that we have some motives that are explained not by our desire or aversion for any future states but by the occurrent shove a passion gives us.⁸ He thus contrasts the anticipatory motives with motives that “arise from a natural impulse or instinct, which is perfectly unaccountable. Of this kind is the desire of punishment to our enemies, and of happiness to our friends; hunger, lust, and a few other bodily appetites. These passions, properly speaking, produce good and evil, and proceed not from them, like the other affections” (T 2.3.9.8). The distinction between indirect and direct motivational influence — between passions whose motivational influence comes from an agent’s anticipation of them, and passions whose motivational influence comes from an agent’s occurrently experiencing them — is what Hume means to capture when he contrasts motives to attain future goods that are “conceive’d merely in idea” and motives that “arise from a natural impulse.”⁹

On which side of the direct/occurrent–vs–indirect/anticipatory distinction do Hume’s three kinds of moral motivation fall? Given what Hume says about love, it’s natural to interpret approval-of-another motivation as occurrent. For love’s motivational influence is occurrent. “The passions of love and hatred are always follow’d by, or rather conjoin’d with benevolence and anger. . . [L]ove and hatred are not completed within themselves, nor rest in that emotion, which they produce, but carry the mind to something farther. Love is always follow’d by a desire of the happiness of the person below’d,” (T 2.2.6.3). A person’s present experience of love is what explains her desire for the happiness of her beloved. It’s not as though the person is motivated to do something because she thinks it will cause her

to feel love in the future. Approval causes, or is a kind of, love (T 3.3.1.3). So it seems natural to think that our approval of someone is an occurrent pleasurable sentiment that produces in us a motive to benefit that person. It's not as though the relevant motive is a motive to cause oneself to experience the sentiment of approval at a "future period of time." It is the occurrent experience of the sentiment that causes the motive, not the other way around.

What of virtuous trait motivation? Do virtuous traits have a motivational influence that is occurrent or anticipatory? This question is not something that Hume address, nor is it particularly important for anything we will go on to discuss. But I will say that it seems to me that the best answer is that some virtuous traits motivate occurrently and some motivate anticipatorily. Virtues of compassion are based in passions that Hume probably would have thought motivate occurrently. Virtues of prudence are based in passions that Hume probably would have thought motivate by anticipation.

What is central to our topic is the question of whether approval-of-self has occurrent or anticipatory motivational influence. I believe the best interpretation of Hume is that his approval-of-self motivation is anticipatory. A person motivated by approval-of-self will have experienced self-approval when she's acted certain ways in the past, and self-disapproval when she's acted other ways in the past. When she is faced with a comparable situation in the present, she will anticipate that acting in the first way will produce self-approval and that acting in the second way will produce self-disapproval. She will, consequently, be motivated to act in the first way rather than the second. This motive is not explained by her having occurrent experience of approval or disapproval. She is not occurrently experiencing either of those things before she acts. The motive develops, rather, out of the anticipation of experiencing approval or disapproval. Such an interpretation makes sense of Hume's statement that a "considerable motive to virtue ... [is] antipathy to treachery and roguery" (EPM 9.2.23). A person moved by this kind of consideration, at the moment she decides to act, is not occurrently feeling antipathy to her own treachery and roguery. She is, rather, motivated to avoid acting in a certain way by the anticipatory thought that if she were to act in that way she would feel self-disapproval — just as a person is motivated to avoid touching a hot pan by the anticipatory thought that if she were to touch it she would feel pain.

Baumeister et al. tell us that guilt "may be a useful guide to behavior even if strong guilt is rarely felt" ("How emotion shapes behavior," 189), and that "[g]uilt can exert a strong effect

on behavior even if people rarely feel guilty, simply because people learn what will make them feel guilty and the change their behavior so as to avoid guilt” (“How emotion shapes behavior,” 193). Hume’s “ingenuous natures” are just such kinds of people, those whose behavior is often motivated by thoughts about how to avoid the painful feeling of self-disapproval. Such people may also be moved by anticipatory thoughts about what will produce “a pleasing consciousness or remembrance ... of having done our part towards mankind and society” (EPM 9.2.21). That is, they are motivated to act in certain ways because they think that doing so will produce the pleasurable feeling of self-approval, just as a person is moved to take a bite of cake not because she is occurrently experiencing the pleasurable taste of chocolate but because she anticipates that she will have that pleasurable experience if she takes a bite.

3. Moral Motivation in T 3.1.1

At T 3.1.1.5-6, Hume argues against the view that morality originates in reason by claiming that morality has a motivational influence that reason lacks. When making this argument, what kind of motivational influence does Hume have in mind: virtuous trait, approval-of-another, or approval-of-self? In this section, I will argue that he has in mind approval-of-self motivation. When Hume says at T 3.1.1.6 that “morals ... have an influence on the actions and affections,” he has in mind situations in which a person is motivated to avoid doing something because she has the anticipatory thought that if she were to do it she would come to think she has acted viciously, and motivated to do something because she has the anticipatory thought that if she does it she will come to think she has acted virtuously.

Of the three kinds of moral motivation, we can quickly eliminate approval-of-another motivation as being what Hume has in mind at T 3.1.1.5-6. Approval-of-another motivation is motivation to promote the happiness of a person we have observed acting virtuously. But Hume bases his argument on the claim that “common experience ... informs us, that men are often govern’d by their duties, and are deter’d from some actions by the opinion of injustice, and impell’d to others by that of obligation.” Hume is not pointing here to the effect on someone of observing another person act virtuously. He is pointing to the motivation someone has to do her duty herself.

The same claim of Hume’s — “that men are often govern’d by their duties, and are deter’d from some actions by the opinion of injustice, and impell’d to others by that of

obligation” — precludes interpreting the anti-rationalist motivation argument as being based in virtuous trait motivation. An essential feature of virtuous trait motivation is that it is independent of conscious, explicitly moral thoughts. It is motivation to perform an action that is *distinct from* “a regard to the virtue of that action” (T 3.2.1.4). But at T 3.1.1.5-6 Hume is discussing an agent’s “opinion of injustice,” her thoughts about her “duties” and “obligation.” He is talking about “that multitude of rules and precepts, with which all moralists abound.” This is explicitly moral stuff. Throughout T 3.1.1, moreover, Hume intends to oppose a rationalist account of our explicitly moral thoughts. Hume’s rationalist opponents (he tells us) are those who have maintained that reason alone is the basis of our thoughts about the “distinction betwixt moral good and evil,” about “moral deformity,” about what is “allow’d to be vicious” (T 3.1.1.10, 22, 24, and 26). What Hume argues is that such thoughts — thoughts with explicitly moral content — do not come from reason alone. And he makes that argument by claiming that such explicitly moral thoughts have a motivational influence that reason alone does not.

The reasons for thinking that at T 3.1.1.5-6 Hume does not have in mind virtuous trait motivation or approval-of-another motivation are also reasons for thinking that Hume does have in mind approval-of-self motivation. For approval-of-self motivation is our motivation to perform acts that we think our duty demands and to avoid acts we think our duty forbids. It is our motivation to do what we explicitly represent to ourselves as being morally right and to avoid doing what we explicitly represent to ourselves as being morally wrong.

Another reason to interpret T 3.1.1.5-6 as concerned with approval-of-self motivation is that approval-of-self motivation is anticipatory rather than occurrent. As we have seen, Hume describes the moral motivation he has in mind in this section by saying that “men are ... deter’d from some actions by the opinion of injustice, and impell’d to others by that of obligation,” which is just what we would expect from someone talking about anticipatory motivation. When an agent has the thought that if she were to perform an action she would think she had done something unjust, she is deterred from performing that action. When an agent has the thought that if she were to perform an action she would think she had fulfilled her obligation, she is impelled to perform it.

The anticipatory reading fits the general picture of motivation that forms the backdrop of Hume’s motivation argument. At T 3.1.1.8, Hume refers to his previous claims

in “Of the influencing motives of the will,” where he discusses the following kind of motivation: “’Tis obvious, that when we have the prospect of pain or pleasure from any object, we feel a consequent emotion of aversion or propensity, and are carry’d to avoid or embrace what will give us this uneasiness or satisfaction... ’Tis from the prospect of pain or pleasure that the aversion or propensity arises towards any object” (T 2.3.3.3). We are motivated to perform actions, Hume tells us here, by the “prospect of pain or pleasure.” If I think touching a hot pan will cause me pain I will be motivated not to touch the pan. I am not, of course, occurrently experiencing the painful impression of touching a hot pan. I am acting, rather, to avoid that impression. This kind of motive is anticipatory: it depends on the agent’s anticipation of the experience of future states. Hume describes the same anticipatory motivation when discussing the will a few sections later: “The will exerts itself, when either the good or the absence of the evil may be attain’d by any action of the mind or body” (T 2.3.9). We are motivated to act in certain ways because of what “may be attain’d” by doing so.

An anticipatory reading of the motivation argument also accords with the passage in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* that is most similar to the motivation argument of T 3.1.1.5-6, “Appendix I: Concerning Moral Sentiment,” where Hume argues against moral rationalism by pointing to “the ultimate ends of human action” and “motives to action.” People perform actions, Hume tells us in the Appendix passage, because they think those actions will enable them to achieve their ultimate ends. Hume’s first example of an ultimate end is health. He writes, “Ask a man *why he uses exercise*; he will answer, *because he desires to keep his health*. If you then enquire, *why he desires health*, he will readily reply, *because sickness is painful*. If you push your enquiries farther, and desire a reason *why he hates pain*, it is impossible he can ever give any. This is an ultimate end, and is never referred to any other object” (EPM App. 1, 18). This is an anticipatory account of the motivational influence of health. The prospect of the pleasure of feeling healthy in the future — and, perhaps more saliently, the prospect of the pain of feeling sick — motivates a person to exercise in the present. We explain a person’s motive to exercise by pointing to her anticipation that exercising now will enable her to avoid the painful experience of feeling sick in the future. After giving the example of health as an ultimate end, Hume maintains that virtue is an ultimate end in just the same way. “Now as virtue is an end, and is desirable on its own account, without fee and reward, merely for the immediate satisfaction which it conveys; it is requisite that there should be

some sentiment which it touches, some internal taste or feeling, or whatever you may please to call it, which distinguishes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other” (EPM App. 1, 20). Having virtue as an end explains a person’s motivations — is an answer to the question of why someone does something — in the same way having health as an end is. The anticipation of the experience of thinking that I’ve failed to do my duty gives rise in me to a motive to do my duty in the same way that the anticipation of having the experience of feeling sick gives rise in me to a motive to exercise.

This anticipatory reading of the motivation argument holds that agents are motivated to do what garners self-approval and to avoid what garners self-disapproval. These agents will, of course, be in some occurrent state. What is the occurrent state of an agent with that kind of anticipatory motivation? The anticipatory reading is neutral on that question. There are several plausible options for what the occurrent state can be. All the options include in the occurrent state the agent’s belief that if she performs that action she will in the future experience self-disapproval. The differences between the options concern what, if anything, has to be added to that ‘self-disapproval belief’.¹⁰ According to Pigden (2009) and Owen (2016), nothing needs to be added; the self-disapproval belief can be the entirety of the occurrent state of the agent who is motivated to avoid an action. (This position does not conflict with the claim that reason alone does not motivate, according to Pigden and Owen, because the self-disapproval belief does not come from reason alone). According to Sayre-McCord (1997), Karlsson (2006) and Radcliffe (2012), the occurrent state will be the self-disapproval belief combined with the agent’s passionate nature. According to Harrison (1976) and Stroud (1977), the occurrent state will be the self-disapproval belief combined with the agent’s standing general desire to avoid pain. According to Cohon (2008), the occurrent state will be the self-disapproval belief combined with a desire that has been caused by that belief. (This position does not conflict with the claim that reason alone does not motivate, according to Cohon, because causality is intransitive: that a belief causes a desire and that that desire causes a motive does not entail that the belief causes the motive). Each of those positions on the occurrent state of the motivated agent has interpretative strengths.¹¹ But we do not need to decide between them in order to understand the motivation argument at T 3.1.1.5-6. For the motivation argument is based on anticipatory motivational influence, and that argument works against rationalism regardless of which position we take on occurrent motivation.¹² This might seem surprising, as much of the

scholarly literature on Hume on moral motivation is concerned precisely with occurrent motivation — i.e., with the question of the nature of the occurrent experience that moves a person to act. But if the anticipatory reading is correct, then that question about occurrent motivation is beside the point for the argument of T 3.1.1.5-6.

Let me explain now why, if the anticipatory reading of the motivation argument is correct, the question of occurrent motivation is irrelevant to T 3.1.1.5-6.

Consider three kinds of states an agent can anticipate experiencing.

1. Anticipated states that an agent will have a motive to avoid regardless of whatever other goals she has; i.e., states we can conclude the agent will have a motive to avoid even if we know nothing else about what she anticipates experiencing. An explanation of an agent's possessing a motive to avoid this kind of state does not need to cite any other goals the agent has. The experience of being severely burned is an example. I can conclude that if you think an action will cause you to experience burning, you will have a motive to avoid that action without having to know anything else about your goals or what other states you might anticipate.
2. Anticipated states that an agent will have a motive to pursue regardless of whatever other goals she has; i.e., states of mind we can conclude the agent will have a motive to pursue even if we know nothing else about what she anticipates experiencing. An explanation of an agent's possessing a motive to pursue this kind of state does not need to cite any other goals the agent has. The experience of eating something delicious is an example. I can conclude that if you think an action will cause you to experience deliciousness, you will have a motive to pursue that action without having to know anything else about your goals or what other states you might anticipate.
3. Anticipated states that an agent will have a motive to pursue or avoid only because she has other goals or anticipates other states; i.e., states we cannot conclude the agent will have a motive to pursue or avoid unless we know something else about her goals or other states she anticipates. An adequate explanation of an agent's possessing a motive to avoid or pursue this kind of state *will* need to cite other goals or states the agent anticipates.

On the anticipatory reading, the first step of the motivation argument claims that the state of thinking that you have acted viciously is an instance of 1, and the state of thinking that you have acted virtuously is an instance of 2. The first step claims that if I know nothing about

your goals or other states you anticipate except that you anticipate that performing a certain action will put you in the state of thinking that you have done something vicious, I can conclude that you will have a motive to avoid that action. And if I know nothing about your goals or other states you anticipate except that you anticipate that performing a certain action will put you in the state of thinking that you have done something virtuous, I can conclude that you will have a motive to perform that action. According to the anticipatory reading of the first step of the motivation argument, common experience informs us that human beings have motives to avoid doing what they think is vicious as consistently as they have motives to avoid touching things that they think will burn them, and they have motives to pursue doing what they think is virtuous as consistently as they have motives to eat what they think is delicious. That someone thinks acting in a certain way will lead her to think she has acted viciously is as good an explanation of her having a motive to avoid acting that way as someone's thinking that touching a pan will cause her to experience burning is an explanation of her possessing a motive to avoid touching the pan.

The second step of the motivation argument claims that anticipations of mental states that come from reason alone are instances of 3. That is, an agent will have a motive to pursue a purely rational mental state only if she also has some other goal — only if there are other (non-purely rational) mental states she also anticipates experiencing. An adequate explanation of an agent's possessing a motive to pursue any purely rational mental state will have to include claims about other goals of the agent or states she expects to experience. There are two kinds of purely rational mental states that this second step applies to:

- 3a. Purely rational mental states based in “demonstration” or “the abstract relations of our ideas,” and
- 3b. Purely rational mental states based in “probability” or “relations of objects, of which experience only gives us information.”

An example of the first sort of rational mental state (“demonstration”) is the conclusion you draw from performing a mathematical operation. You will anticipate, for instance, that if you multiply 1,583 by 209 you will be in the mental state of having a belief about what the product of those two numbers is. But your anticipating that you will be in that mental state (having a belief about what 1,583 times 209 is) if you perform a certain action (multiplying the two numbers together) does not on its own tell us whether you will have a motive to perform that action of multiplication. Your anticipation of that mental state does not

produce in you a motive to perform the action in the same way that your anticipation of pain produces in you a motive to avoid touching a hot pan (see T 2.3.10.2-4). If you have the motive to multiply 1,583 by 209, we will not be able to explain that motive of yours simply by pointing out that performing that action will produce in you the mental state of believing what the product of those two numbers is. The explanation of why you are motivated to perform that multiplicative action will have to include something else about other goals or states you anticipate being in — such as that knowing the product of those two numbers will earn you a better grade on a test, or enable you to figure out how to price an item to turn a profit, or help you build a bridge.

An example of the second sort of anticipated state that comes from reason alone (“probability”) is the conclusion about dandelion growth one can come to from carefully observing the numbers of dandelions in several different fields. Let us say that a person believes that if she engages in weeks of such careful observation, she will be in a mental state of believing that dandelions grow best under one kind of condition rather than another. From the fact that she thinks that weeks of careful observation will produce in her this belief about dandelion growth, can we draw any conclusions about this person’s motivations? No. If someone is motivated to engage in weeks of careful observation so she can arrive at a belief about dandelion growth, we will be able to explain that motivation only by also referring to some other goal or mental state she anticipates experiencing (see T 2.3.10.5). We will also have to refer, say, to the person’s desire to grow dandelions (because she has the goal of making dandelion wine) or her desire to eradicate dandelions (because she has the goal of cultivating putting greens). The prospect of merely holding a belief about dandelion growth is not a mental state that on its own explains a person’s motives. That explanation will have to include something about other goals or states the person expects to experience.

According to Hume at T 2.3.3.2, the anticipation of an affective state has a motivational influence that the anticipation of a purely rational state does not have. If an agent believes that doing something will produce in her an affectively painful or pleasurable mental state, we do not need to know anything about other states she anticipates in order to infer that she will have some motivation to avoid or pursue it. But if a person believes that doing something will produce in her a purely rational state of mind, we *do* need to know something about other states she anticipates in order to infer anything about her motives.

According to Hume at T 3.1.1.5, if a person believes that doing something will lead her to think she's done something vicious, we can infer that she will have some motivation to avoid doing it. Anticipation of the mental state of thinking that she's done something vicious can explain her possessing a motive without the need to attribute to her any other goals or anticipations of other states. According to Hume at T 3.1.1.6, therefore, anticipation of the mental state of thinking that she's done something vicious must be anticipation of an affective state and not anticipation of a purely rational state. And this anti-rationalist conclusion follows regardless of whether the occurrent cause of her motivation involves only a belief about future self-disapproval (as Owen and Pigden argue), or a belief about future self-disapproval plus a standing general desire for pleasure (Harrison and Stroud), or a belief about future self-disapproval and her passionate nature (Sayre-McCord, Karlsson, Radcliffe), or a belief about future self-disapproval and a newly-arisen but causally non-transitive aversion (Cohon), etc.

Here's a metaphoric way of putting the point that the anticipatory reading of Hume's motivation argument can work independently of views about the occurrent state of an agent who is motivated to avoid the state of thinking she's acted viciously. Black Box 1 has a certain kind of slab in it. Whenever BB1 is placed near metal shavings, the shavings move towards it. Black Box 2 has a different kind of slab in it. When BB2 is placed near metal shavings, the shavings do not move. Black Box 3 has a slab in it and we are trying to figure out whether that slab is of the same kind as the one in BB1 or the one in BB2. We find that whenever BB3 is placed near metal shavings the shavings move towards it. We can therefore conclude that the slab in BB3 is the same kind as the slab in BB1 and not the same kind as the slab in BB2. And our conclusion that slab 3 is like slab 1 and not like slab 2 is justified regardless of the causal explanation of how certain kinds of slab attract metal shavings. Our conclusion can be consistent with multiple competing explanations of the occurrent causal forces at work. Now to make the explicit: Movements of the metal shavings are a person's motives to produce in herself future mental states. The slab in BB1 is an affective mental state the person could experience, and which on its own attracts a person to try to produce it. The slab in BB2 is a rational mental state the person could experience, and which on its own does not attract a person to try to produce it. The slab in BB3 is the mental state of thinking one's done something vicious or virtuous, which on its

own attracts a person to try to produce it, which it turn gives us reason to think it's an affective rather than a rational mental state.

A further consideration in favor of the anticipatory reading of the motivation argument is the argument's context. Hume doesn't delve into any views of occurrent motivation in T 3.1.1. He introduces his argument by saying that all the reader needs to know of Books 1 and 2 of the *Treatise* is the distinction between impressions and ideas (see "Advertisement" to Book 3 and T 3.1.1.2-3; see also 3.1.2.1). That Hume makes explicit that distinction fits with the anticipatory reading because on the anticipatory reading the motivation argument is based precisely on the view that if a perception has an anticipatory motivational influence it must be an impression and not an idea.¹³

4. Objection: wrong motive

I have argued that Hume's motivation argument is based on approval-of-self motivation. In this section I address an objection: that this reading takes the motivation argument to be based on a motive that Hume himself dismisses as unsound, second-rate, or anomalous.¹⁴

The main text for this objection is T 3.2.1.9, where Hume distinguishes two different motives a person can have for performing a virtuous action. One motive is a "regard to the virtue" of the action. The other motive is a trait distinct from regard to the virtue of actions. Hume says "that no action can be virtuous, or morally good, unless there be in human nature some motive to produce it, distinct from the sense of its morality," and that while in some cases an action may be performed "merely out of regard to its moral obligation, yet still this presupposes in human nature some distinct principles, which are capable of producing the action, and whose moral beauty renders the action meritorious" (T 3.2.1.7-8). Examples of people who act out of a "regard to virtue" are a dutiful father who lacks parental affection for his children and "hate[s] himself" as a result (T 3.2.1.8), and the beneficiary of a kindness who repays his benefactor without feeling any true gratefulness. That these people act from explicitly moral motives seems to be abnormal and non-admirable. What would be normal and admirable is for a father to act from a feeling of true parental concern and for a friend to show gratitude out of feeling of true gratefulness. The anticipatory reading takes the motivation argument to be based on explicitly moral motivation. But in T 3.1.1 Hume is making a point about the motivation of typical, admirable folks, not abnormal, non-admirable ones. Therefore, according to this objection,

in T 3.1.1 Hume must have in mind a kind of motivation other than the explicitly moral motive the anticipatory reading attributes to him.

This objection misfires because it conflates the lack of one kind of motive (a non-explicitly moral motivate based on a virtuous trait) with the presence of another kind of motive (an explicitly moral motive based on a regard to virtue). As Reed explains, “Hume allows virtuous actions to have all sorts of motives... Hume observes an array of motives that might jointly compel virtuous action and he hardly does this disapprovingly” (Reed 142; see also 136-7).¹⁵

Imagine you see someone in distress by the side of the road and you are motivated to stop and help. You could have two kinds of motives to stop and help: [1] a motive that essentially involves representing to yourself a particular course of action as virtuous or morally required, a motive that essentially involves explicitly moral thoughts, and [2] a motive that does not involve any thoughts with explicit moral content, a motive you could have even if you are not explicitly representing to yourself anything as being virtuous or morally required. Your non-explicitly moral motive to stop and help is a motive based on your feeling of compassion for the person. You could have this motive even if you had no thoughts about what is morally required, even if it never consciously occurred to you that you *morally ought* to stop and help. But you could also have an explicitly moral motive to stop and help, a motive to stop and help because you consciously think that doing so is morally required. Hume’s point in 3.2.1.9 is that humans must have had non-explicitly moral motives prior to their having explicitly moral motives — that the former must pre-date the latter, that the latter could never have come into existence without the former, that the former come chronologically *first*. But he does not deny the existence of explicitly moral motives. He maintains, rather, that explicitly moral motives play a common and significant role in our moral lives. The “very equity and merit” of the observance of the laws of justice is our “real or universal motive” for the observance of those laws (T 3.2.1.17; see also 3.2.2.27).¹⁶ His point is just that such a motive arrives later. “It will, perhaps, be said, that my regard to justice, and abhorrence of villainy and knavery, are sufficient reasons for me, if I have the least grain of honesty, or sense of duty and obligation. And this answer, no doubt, is just and satisfactory to man in his civiliz’d state, and when train’d up according to a certain discipline and education” (T 3.2.1.9). It will perhaps be said, Hume is telling us here, that one’s regard to virtue will on its own constitute a motive for one to perform an action that

one believes is morally required, and this explanation is perfectly apt for people like us, who have been reared and live in civilized societies. It is just this kind of phenomena — of (civilized) people often being motivated to perform actions because they represent those actions to themselves as morally required — that the anticipatory reading claims Hume has in mind when stating the first premise of the motivation argument. Indeed, Hume’s examples of chronologically later motives are a “regard to virtue” and a “regard to justice.” And it is exactly these motives — of being “deter’d from some actions by the opinion of injustice, and impell’d to others by that of obligation” — that Hume cites in his motivation argument, which is compelling evidence that at T 3.1.1.5-6 Hume has in mind explicitly moral motives.

At T 3.2.1.8 Hume describes a situation in which a person performs an action simply because he thinks it is morally required — a situation in which someone “may perform an action merely out of regard to its moral obligation.” And this may seem to be problematic for the anticipatory reading, as Hume’s point at T 3.2.1.8 is that there is something anomalous and inferior about a person who is motivated to virtuous action only by “the sense of morality or duty.” Such a person, Hume tells us, is “devoid” of the “virtuous motive or principle” that is “common in human nature” and “may hate himself upon that account,” leading him to try “to disguise to himself, as much as possible, his want of it.” Given that Hume seems to think there is something anomalous and inferior about this person’s motivation — something that is cause for him to “hate himself” and to try to “disguise” his true motivation — it might seem problematic to take Hume to be referring to just that kind of motivation when, at T 3.1.1.5-6, he says that “men are often govern’d by their duties.” But actually it is not problematic at all. And that’s because the anomalous and inferior feature of the person Hume is describing is *not* that he’s motivated by a regard to the obligatoriness of an action. It is “just and satisfactory” to attribute such motivation to people in societies such as ours. The anomalous and inferior feature of the person of T 3.2.1.8 is that his regard to obligatoriness is his *only* motive to perform virtuous actions. Normal people will be motivated to perform virtuous actions when they come to think that they are morally required. But normal people will commonly possess another motive to perform those actions as well. A normal person may be motivated to express gratitude toward a benefactor not merely because she thinks it is the morally right thing to do but also because she really feels grateful. A normal father may be motivated to care for his children

not merely because it is his duty but also because he cares for them. The person Hume describes at T 3.2.1.8 is anomalous and inferior because he lacks the latter motivation, not because he possesses the former.

That Hume thinks there is nothing amiss about having these multiple motives to virtue — explicitly moral and non-explicitly moral — is evident from passages at the end of both the *Enquiry* and the *Treatise*. Here is the passage from the final section of the *Enquiry* (I've added the numbers).

[1] [T]he immediate feeling of benevolence and friendship, humanity and kindness, is sweet, smooth, tender, and agreeable, independent of all fortune and accidents. [2] These virtues are besides attended with a pleasing consciousness or remembrance, and keep us in humour with ourselves as well as others; while we retain the agreeable reflection of having done our part towards mankind and society. [3] And though all men show a jealousy of our success in the pursuit of avarice and ambition; yet are we almost sure of their good-will and good-wishes, so long as we persevere in the paths of virtue, and employ ourselves in the execution of generous plans and purposes. What other passion is there where we shall find so many advantages united; [1] an agreeable sentiment, [2] a pleasing consciousness, [3] a good reputation? (EPM 9.2.21)

Hume tells us here that there are three different but converging reasons a person will be happier if she is virtuous. [1] The affections that are virtuous (e.g. “humanity and kindness”) are themselves pleasant. [2] If one is virtuous one will feel the pleasure of approval toward oneself (i.e. one will have “a pleasing consciousness” and a good “humour with [oneself]”). [3] Virtue will secure a “good reputation” and elicit the “good-will and good-wishes” of others. [1] concerns virtuous trait motivation. [3] concerns one’s motive to have others feel approval for one.¹⁷ And [2] concerns explicitly moral approval-of-self motivation. There is no suggestion here that [2] is any less legitimate than [1] or [3] — no suggestion that being moved by [2] is occasion for regret or recrimination. Indeed, two paragraphs later, when responding to the sensible knave, Hume dilates on the importance of the “considerable motive” to virtue that is that the desire to think oneself virtuous (EPM 9.2.5).

In the final paragraph of the *Treatise*, Hume makes the same point about the influence of explicitly moral and non-explicitly moral motives. He writes (again, with numbers added),

Who indeed does not feel an accession of alacrity in his pursuits of knowledge and ability of every kind, when he considers, that besides [1] the advantage, which immediately result from these acquisitions, they also give him [2] a new lustre in the eyes of mankind, and are universally attended with esteem and approbation? And who can think any advantages of fortune a sufficient compensation for the least breach of the social virtues, when he considers, that not only his character with regard to others, but also [3] his peace and inward satisfaction entirely depend upon his strict observance of them; and that a mind will never be able to bear its own survey, that has been wanting in its part to mankind and society?

Here too we find three different but converging reasons to be virtuous: [1] the advantages that immediately result from virtuous traits, [2] luster in the eyes of others that results from esteem, approbation and regard, and [3] the peace and inward satisfaction that result from one's own awareness that one has observed the social virtues and done one's part to mankind and society. Hume presents all three as equally copacetic.

Note the contrast between Hume's multifarious account of our moral motivations and the monistic views Kant and Williams advance. Kant disdains all motives other than a regard to the obligatoriness of an action, dismissing as morally irrelevant reasons based on emotional attachments and concerns that have no explicitly moral content. Williams disdains motivation based on explicitly moral thoughts, disparaging as interpersonally destructive reasons based on obligation rather than emotional attachment and concern. Hume explains why people have both kinds of motives, and he doesn't seem to think there is any reason to denigrate or regret either.¹⁸

Hume recognizes that there are different types of human motivation that play a role in the moral life. When Hume argues at T 3.1.1.5-6 that morality does not originate in reason alone by citing morality's motivational influence, he is relying only on the motivational influence of explicitly moral thoughts. This narrow focus is appropriate because at T 3.1.1.5-6 he is arguing against rationalist claims about the nature of explicitly moral thoughts. But in his own positive account, Hume explicates several other motives, such as: the motives of others we approve of that do not involve explicitly moral thoughts, the motives we develop when we approve of others, and the motives we have to garner others' approval of

ourselves. Recent empirical work in moral psychology supports much of what Hume says about these motives.

The key to understanding Hume on moral motivation (and much else besides) is to see that he is a fox, not a hedgehog. He is less concerned with bringing everything together under a single organizing master idea than with explaining a wide array of different phenomena where he finds them. And given the vast and varied terrain of human motivation and moral thinking, a foxy approach to this subject (and many others besides) might very well be best.

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¹ Illustrative examples of a number of the interpretative difficulties, with plentiful connections to current meta-ethical debates, can be found in the following essays in the Pigden-edited anthology *Hume on Motivation and Virtue*: Joyce, “Expressivism, motivation internalism, and Hume”; Lo, “Is Hume inconsistent?”; Oddie, “Experiences of value”; Pigden, “If not non-cognitivism then what?”; Sandis, “Hume and the debate on ‘motivating reasons’”; and Smith, “The motivation argument for non-cognitivism.” For an overview of contemporary issues related to Hume on moral motivation, see Tiberius, *Moral Psychology*, 29-107.

² The motives we are speaking of here may not actually produce any action, for the agent may have other, countervailing motives that override the motives we are speaking of here. When I say someone has a motive to do something, I mean that if that person had no other motives, she would do it. But because the person may have other motives, it does not imply that the person will actually do it.

³ See Brown, “Is Hume an internalist?,” 79.

⁴ Philip Reed has suggested a distinction between performing an action from a sense of duty, and performing an action because one believes doing so will cause one not to disapprove of oneself. As I explain in Part 3, I believe that for Hume this is a distinction without a difference. On the reading of Hume I argue for below, acting from the sense of duty just is acting from thoughts about what will produce approval and disapproval.

⁵ A fourth kind of motivation that can be called ‘moral motivation’ is the desire to garner the approval of others. Hume mentions the desire to garner others’ approval at T 3.3.6.6 and EPM 9.2.21. We desire that others approve of us at least in part because when people approve of someone, they develop positive motivation towards her — which is the phenomenon I have called *approval-of-another* motivation.

⁶ See also Baumann, Cialdini & Kenrick, “Altruism as hedonism”; Tangney, Stuewig & Mashek, “Moral emotions and moral behavior,” 347; and Nelissen, “Fear and Guilt,” 79).

⁷ I discuss Hume’s view of the motivational influence of pride and humility in Gill, *Humean Moral Pluralism*, 63-68.

⁸ Pleasure and pain can motivate in both anticipatory and occurrent ways. When I see the stove is hot, I am motivated to avoid touching it because I anticipate that touching it will cause me pain. When I touch the hot stove, I am motivated to remove my hand because I am occurrently experiencing pain. For discussion of how pleasure and pain can motivate occurrently, see Cohon (2010), 202-204.

⁹ Baumeister et al.’s distinction between direct and indirect motivation and Hume’s distinction between direct and indirect passions do not track each other. Humean love, for instance, is an indirect passion, but Hume thinks it produces motivation in a way that Baumeister et al. would label ‘direct.’

¹⁰ Baumeister et al. suggest that the occurrent state involves some kind of “twinge” that reflects painful or pleasurable past experiences and that has a kind of immediate, automatic motivational effect (“How emotion shapes behavior,” 169, 173, 174, 189, 190, 195).

¹¹ I believe the anticipatory reading I present is consistent with all of the positions just described on the agent’s occurrent state. Much of what I say about the anticipatory reading is similar to points made in Karlsson (“Reason, passion, and the influencing motives of the will”), Cohon (*Hume’s Morality*), Radcliffe (“The inertness of reason”), and Owen (“Reason,

belief and the passions”). My position is different in that I think these points of similarity about what the agent expects are all that is needed to explain Hume’s motivation argument, while others seem to think that that argument will not work unless we include in it a position on the occurrent cause of the agent’s motivation.

¹² I say here that the “argument works,” but what I actually mean to show is that there is good reason to think *Hume thought* such an argument works — that the anticipatory interpretation makes sense of why Hume thought he had a strong argument against the rationalists at T 3.1.1.5-6. I myself am far from confident that the motivational aspect of morality is incompatible with a rationalist view of morality.

¹³ At T 1.3.10, Hume discusses the “influence of belief,” explaining how certain ideas (i.e., beliefs) have “the power of actuating the will” (T 1.3.10.3). What he is describing there is the *occurrent* motivating influence of certain beliefs — i.e., how it is that holding a belief about what will produce in us pleasure or pain can have a direct motivating influence. He does not say there that beliefs have an *anticipatory* motivating influence — i.e., he does not say that the prospect of holding a belief we currently do not hold has on its own indirect motivating influence. And all the second premise of the anti-rationalist argument at T 3.1.1.5-6 requires is the claim that beliefs lack anticipatory influence. (T 1.3.10.3 seems to me to be strong evidence for Pigden and Owen’s interpretation of Hume on occurrent motivation.)

¹⁴ Versions of this objection can be found in: Brown, “Is Hume an internalist?,” 81; Korsgaard, “Kant’s analysis of obligation,” 317; see also Baron, “Morality as a back-up system,” and Darwall, “Motive and obligation in Hume’s ethics.”

¹⁵ Similar views can be found in Coleman (“Hume’s internalism”), Abramson (“Two portraits”), and Cohon (*Hume’s Morality*).

¹⁶ Reed points out that there is an important distinction to be drawn here between motivation of the natural virtues and motivation of the artificial virtues (138-143). According to Reed’s interpretation of Hume, to instantiate a natural virtue a person must be motivated by a motive other than the regard to virtue (although it’s okay to be motivated by a regard to virtue as well), while to instantiate an artificial virtue it is enough to be motivated by a regard to virtue (because there is no original motive to an artificial virtue). My main point is that if a person thinks performing an act is virtuous/vicious, she will have a motive to perform/avoid it. This applies to thoughts about both the artificial and the natural virtues (which is consistent with Reed’s point that it is only the natural virtues that require another, non-explicitly moral motive in order for the agent to be fully virtuous).

¹⁷ This is the fourth kind of moral motivation I discuss in footnote 5.

¹⁸ Pigden gives a penetrating and more expansive account of the kind of view I attribute to Hume here, as well as connecting these issues to contemporary debates about internalism and externalism (“If not non-cognitivism then what?,” 88-90). Reed also develops an elucidating comparison between Hume’s views on moral motivation and Williams’s virtue theory (“Motivating Hume’s natural virtues,” 143-4).