Philosophy and Religious Studies Publications

Philosophy and Religious Studies

11-2014

A Hegelian Critique of Desire Based Reasons

Kate Padgett-Walsh

Iowa State University, kpadwa@iastate.edu

A Hegelian Critique of Desire Based Reasons

Abstract

This paper approaches Humean accounts of desire from a perspective relatively unexplored in contemporary moral theory, namely Hegel's ethical thought. I contend that Hegel's treatment of desire is, ultimately, somewhat more Humean than Hegel himself recognized. But Hegel also goes further than contemporary Humeans in recognizing the sociality of the normative domain, and this difference has important implications for the Humean thesis of desire-based reasons (DBR). I develop a Hegelian critique of DBR and conclude by outlining a distinctively Hegelian approach to understanding the normative import of desire.

Disciplines

Philosophy

Comments

A Hegelian Critique of Desire-Based Reasons

Abstract: This paper approaches Humean accounts of desire from a perspective relatively unexplored in contemporary moral theory, namely Hegel's ethical thought. I contend that Hegel's treatment of desire is, ultimately, somewhat more Humean than Hegel himself recognized. But Hegel also goes further than contemporary Humeans in recognizing the sociality of the normative domain, and this difference has important implications for the Humean thesis of desire-based reasons (DBR). I develop a Hegelian critique of DBR and conclude by outlining a distinctively Hegelian approach to understanding the normative import of desire.

Hegel is famously critical of Kant's claim that pure reason alone can legislate for the will. The question I take up in this paper is whether this criticism places Hegel in philosophical territory that is today occupied by contemporary Humean moral theorists. If deliberation does not involve radically stepping back from everything empirical about ourselves, then must normative claims, specifically reasons for action, have their source in desires? This question is of vital importance for attempts to construct a distinctively Hegelian perspective on contemporary moral questions. In what follows, I develop a Hegelian response to two distinct Humean claims about reasons and desires. This response converges with motivational Humeanism but rejects the normative Humean thesis of desire-based reasons. I conclude by sketching a Hegelian alternative that emphasizes the intersubjectivity of the normative domain.

Contemporary Receptions of Hume

It sometimes seems that desires are forces operating upon us, pushing and pulling us in conflicting ways. But unruly as they sometimes may be, Hume thinks that moral theory should not treat desires as alien forces to be subdued by reason. Instead, he contends, if we observe how desire and reason combine to bring about action, we find that desires play an essential role in moving us to act.[1] Agents must take an interest in what they do, or they will not do anything at all. This may seem

1

like a trivial point, but it is one that Hume thinks rationalist views obscure. Hume's contention is that desires are not just an unfortunate side effect of the fact that we are all empirical as well as rational beings; desire is instead indispensable to action.

Hume's account of the necessity of desire is one that subsequent thinkers have found compelling. Motivational Humeanism is the view that desires provide a necessary animating force behind both actions and normative claims. Donald Davidson, for example, offers a primarily explanatory account of the connection between desires and reasons for action. He proposes that reasons "rationalize" actions in the sense that they explain why actions appear rational to agents given their particular desires and beliefs.[2] It is significant, however, that Davidson does not address the question of what counts as a genuinely good or normative reason. Instead, he limits himself to explaining what happens when an agent acts on something she takes to be a reason. But are all reasons *good* reasons? This is the question addressed by normative Humeanism. Consider Mark Schroeder's recent work.[3] He proposes that all desires generate normative reasons just in virtue of being desires. On this view, reasons rationalize actions in a sense that is much stronger than Davidson proposes. Reasons, then, do not just explain why an action *appears* rational to an agent; instead, reasons also show that an action actually *is* rational in light of one's wants and interests.

The distinction between normative and motivational Humeanism is important to keep in mind as we turn to consider a Hegelian response to Humean accounts of desire.[4] Motivational Humeanism claims only that desires condition actions and normative judgments. Normative Humeanism makes the much stronger claim that all reasons are based in desires as such.

The Necessity of Desire

Hegel's writings contain no direct response to Hume's account of the necessity of desire. And scholars have only rarely considered the possibility that Hegelian and Humean thought might

2

intersect in interesting ways.[5] This is perhaps because Hegel regarded Hume as only a minor thinker. Hume's thought, he told his students, is ultimately "more historically remarkable than it itself deserves; its historical peculiarity consists just in its having provided the starting point for Kant's philosophy."[6]

However Hegel's treatment of desire converges in interesting ways with the Humean thesis of the necessity of desire. Like Hume, Hegel is critical of overly rationalist approaches to ethics. Hegel is specifically critical of Kant's view that moral judgments can only be grounded in reasoning that has been purified of all empirical content. What would ultimately be left, Hegel asks, if we really could step back and deliberate independently from everything concrete about ourselves, from the desires, projects, relationships and shared practices that are central to who we actually are? Kant's insistence upon pure and utterly formal reasoning would strip deliberation of any vantage point, Hegel contends, leaving only an "'I' that is totally empty; merely a point."[7] The result of "pure reflection" would thus be a mere "indeterminacy," a "pure negativity." [8] Pure reason is, alone, too formal and abstract to be action-guiding. And if we try to deliberate by radically distancing ourselves from who we actually are, Hegel charges, we lose the very tools for discriminating between moral and immoral actions.

Hegel develops this objection at length in his famous empty formalism critique.[9] On its face, the critique is concerned with showing that the universal law formulation of the categorical imperative fails to provide a meaningful test for maxims. Hegel's claim that any maxim whatsoever could pass the test of universalization has been criticized for its (mis)reading of the formula of universal law.[10] A more interesting question, however, is whether the categorical imperative is really a purely formal principle as Kant contends. This, Sally Sedgwick has recently argued, is the deeper point contained in Hegel's critique.[11] The Hegelian charge is that Kant inadvertently sneaks content into his principle in the form of background assumptions about how we reason and what we value.

3

Whether Hegel can show that the categorical imperative fails to be purely formal is a question I will not attempt to resolve here. Instead, I simply note that Hegel agrees with Hume about the need for a less rationalist approach to ethics, one that recognizes the necessity of desire. Whereas Hume is critical of moral rationalism generally, Hegel is more specifically critical of the Kantian insistence on purely formal reasoning. Despite this great difference, however, both Hegel and Hume are driven by their critiques of moral rationalism to argue for the necessity of desire. As Hegel puts it, "aims, principles, etc., have a place in our thoughts…but not yet in the sphere of reality….The motive power that puts them in operation, and gives them determinate existence, is the need, instinct, inclination and passion of man."[12] Desires are not incidental to deliberation; rather, our judgments and actions are conditioned by actual wants and interests.

Hegel's claim is that our actions always depend upon motivations that Kant regards as impure: "all activity is founded on some need."[13] More specifically, the view is that desires provide a necessary mechanism for translating thoughts into action.[14] In order put abstract principles into practice, we must identify concrete courses of action that can give reality to those principles. Such proposed actions have determinate ends; what they aim at is tangible and specific, unlike the principles they instantiate. And those determinate ends appeal to us not just because they reflect the principles in question, but also because of our particular wants and interests.

The Hegelian contention is that we neither deliberate upon nor put maxims into action without focusing them through the lens of desire. Actual wants and interests shape both deliberation and behavior in essential ways. As Hegel puts it, "when I actually act, I am conscious of an other, an actuality that is at hand; I have a determinate end and fulfill a determinate duty. There is something in it that is other than pure duty."[15] The "other" is a particular motivation that translates one's principles into a specific course of action. To illustrate, consider that the desires associated with particular friendships are central to determining how to act toward one's friends. Friendships center

on shared interests, values, and experiences that are specific to the individuals involved. Each has a unique history that informs the feelings and motivations of the friends. If one were to ignore all of this rich detail, then it would be impossible to determine how to actually treat one's actual friends. Hegel would not disagree with Michael Stocker's claim that care and concern ought to motivate behavior toward friends, e.g. when visiting a sick friend in the hospital.[16] But Hegel's further claim is that whether to visit, how long to stay, whether to bring flowers, etc. all depend in part upon the actual wants and interests of the two friends. It may be more appropriate, for example, to visit close friends than casual acquaintances when they are hospitalized. And the desire to visit a sick friend must often be weighed against other needs and concerns that are specific to the individuals involved.

On this view, desires are not at the periphery of moral reasoning, but rather central to both formulating and reflecting upon proposals for action. And what counts as normative for someone is partly conditioned by his or her actual motives. All agents possess, as Hegel puts it, the "right of satisfaction."[17] The suggestion is not that everyone is entitled to get whatever they want, an outcome would be impossible as well as morally fraught. Rather, the notion of the right of satisfaction is Hegel's way of introducing the condition that normative claims, i.e. claims about what is right, be capable of motivating the agents to whom they legitimately apply. In order to genuinely count as such, reasons for action must connect with one's actual interests rather than just being imposed from outside.

But does morality not demand sometimes that we, as Hegel puts it, "do with repugnance what duty commands?"[18] Hegel regards this question as a red herring. As Kant concedes, even if it is conceivable that pure reason alone could move us to act, experience provides good grounds for skepticism that it ever actually does so.[19] In most if not all cases of action we are motivated by desires, and this is true whether or not our actions are also based upon abstract moral principles. Moreover, all agents wish, as Hegel puts it, that our views and ideas "should be developed into act

and existence…I wish to assert my personality in connection with it [the action]; I wish to be satisfied by its execution."[20] We all want to accomplish things, whether or not what we want to accomplish has moral worth. We cannot escape our desires, Hegel concludes, and inaction would be the price of trying to.

Hegel returns to this idea in his critique of the Romantic ideal of the "beautiful soul," an individual who is so pure of heart that he is moved by only the most deeply authentic of motives, rather than by base or common desires. If one really were to insist upon such a degree of purity, Hegel charges, one would never in fact do anything at all.[21] Actions require being motivated by the concrete and messy ends provided by actual desires, and in order to really keep one's actions free from such impurities, we would have to refrain from acting altogether. The ideal of the beautiful soul is thus ultimately that of a hypocrite, a moralist who claims to occupy high moral ground but who in fact never does anything because every actual course of action would require compromising his purity.

Hegel's treatment of desire thus shares unexpected two points of convergence with motivation Humean accounts: first, it is driven by a critique of moral rationalism; second, it proposes that actions and normative claims are conditioned by desires. This second point of convergence is especially significant because it means that Hegel is, like Hume, an internalist about normative authority.[22] Internalism is the view that normative claims, in order to legitimately count as such, must be capable of motivating the actual agents to whom they apply. As Hegel puts it, normative claims can have no authority unless it is possible to genuinely attach the "predicate 'mine'" to the actions that they enjoin.[23] In other words, we must be capable of recognizing as such the normative claims that genuinely apply to us, and so normative authority cannot be legitimately imposed from outside, irrespective of a person's actual interests. Hegel and Hume converge upon this view because they both argue, in different ways, for the necessity of desire.

6

Critiquing Desire-Based Reasons

I have argued that the thesis of the necessity of desire also plays an important role in Hegel's ethical thought, even though Hegel's arguments are quite different from those offered in favor of motivational Humeanism. But how, then, might Hegel respond to the normative Humean claim that desires, as such, give us normative reasons for action? According to the contemporary thesis of desire-based reasons (DBR), all reasons for action are based in desires, where the term 'desire' denotes the members of an individual's subjective set of motivations. In this section, I develop a Hegelian critique of two versions of DBR.

Bernard Williams offers a relatively weak version of DBR. He proposes that agents have normative reasons to act in ways that satisfy their aims whenever those aims are not unreasonable in the sense of being based upon false beliefs.[24] Agents do not simply have reasons to act in whatever ways they are motivated; rather, the truth of the beliefs on which a real reason is based distinguishes it from other considerations that could merely explain action. That an action is rational in this sense, Williams contends, is precisely what it means for someone to have a normative reason to act in some way. He illustrates by way of a potentially troubling example.[25] If an abusive spouse were to thoroughly examine all the beliefs upon which his abusive desires were based, it is conceivable that he might find none that were false. Harboring no illusions, the man simply enjoys beating his wife. If such a man existed, Williams contends, we would have to conclude that he has normative reasons to be abusive because doing so is rational relative to his desires. However, Williams also stipulates that it is in the nature of abusive desires that they are always based upon false beliefs. This allows Williams to treat the example as purely hypothetical; abusive desires never actually generate normative reasons because, on his view, those desires are always unsound.

7

In contrast, Mark Schroeder's recent and stronger version of DBR eliminates the epistemic condition imposed by Williams. The upshot is that any individual with a cruel or abusive desire, for instance, thereby possesses reason to be cruel or abusive, just in virtue of possessing the relevant desire. The field of reasons is broad and vast, Schroeder maintains, expansive enough to contain reasons to be kind but also reasons to be abusive. Moreover, Schroeder contends, the entirety of the normative domain is based in and can be reduced to desires because reasons are the basic normative unit from which all other normative claims are built. It follows that it may well be right or obligatory, all things considered, for some people to be cruel and abusive.

Hegel, as we have seen, does regard desire as essential to normative claims. However, I will argue, Hegel would nonetheless reject DBR. We can see this by considering his objections to post-Kantian attempts to ground normative claims in desires as such. At the heart of those objections is a focus on what Hegel calls the "content" of desires.[26] The content of a desire is the thing that is desired, i.e. the end toward which the desire is directed. Agent A has desires $D1$, $D2$, …Dn. Taken together, these desires form what Bernard Williams has termed A's 'subjective motivational set,' a set which includes projects and commitments and interests as well as feelings, wants, and needs. Hegel points out that if desires *just as such* give us normative reasons, then the contents of those desires, i.e. the ends to which they are directed, are normatively irrelevant.[27] And why should we think that all desires have normative authority, irrespective of their content? There must be something that confers this authority on desires as such.

Perhaps the status of being subjectively 'mine' is supposed to lend normative authority to feelings and desires. This is an idea that Hegel encountered in the work of some of his contemporaries. One prominent post-Kantian moral theory advocated an "ethics of conscience," according to which each individual's conscience is a uniquely authoritative source of insight into how to act. But is every individual's conscience always correct in its judgments, i.e. is every

8

conscience always "true?" If we are to rely on the voice of conscience, then we need to be able to determine whether what conscience "declares to be good is also actually good."[28] But how are we do that if conscience is proclaimed to be the definitive judge of right and wrong? Hegel contends that this approach undermines the very idea of normative authority.[29] If what is decisive is that *my* conscience tells me to act in some way, then it is immaterial how *my* conscience arrived at its judgment. In other words, if the content of what conscience tells me to do does not bear on whether or not I ought to listen to the voice of conscience, then there is nothing that we can say about good reasons beyond pointing to the fact of conscience.[30] But is the voice of conscience always right? Why should it be considered a source of normative authority? These are questions that Hegel thinks the ethics of conscience leaves unanswered.

Another prominent post-Kantian approach advocated what we might today describe as an ethics of authenticity. The Romantics were critical of Kant for treating emotions and desires as inherently alien forces to be suppressed by pure reason. Some responded by arguing that our actions ought to express our authentic individuality, in particular our feelings and desires. Hegel was sympathetic with the Romantic criticism of Kant. But he also objected to their proposed alternative: that whatever "wells up from each individual's heart, emotion and enthusiasm" is right and good, just because it comes from the heart.[31] What, Hegel asks, makes the heart just as such normatively authoritative? Feelings and desires do sometimes lead us astray, tempting us to act against our better judgment. Why then should the search for reasons bottom out in appeals to facts about what we want and feel? The *content* of our desires is, then, beside the point, since it is supposed to be just in virtue of wanting something that one has a good reason to pursue it. Reasons, then, seem to just be describing facts about us rather than providing genuine normative support for our actions.[32] Such an approach, Hegel charges, reduces normative authority to an "empty" concept.[33] It is empty in the

sense that it does not have any application: if so-called normative claims just describe facts about us, then they are not really normative at all.

What do Hegel's critiques of his contemporaries reveal about how he might respond to normative Humeanism? Whereas Hume objects to moral theories that depend upon supposed facts about human nature and/or God, Hegel objects to theories that depend upon facts about the contents of one's subjective motivational set. In both cases, the criticism is that an 'is' is taken to have normative authority even though it is unclear why the 'is' should have that authority. Those who might read the Hegelian account as conventionalist take it to be advocating the view that *just because* we hold certain identities and are committed to certain social practices, these motivations and identities give us normative reasons. But this sort of conventionalism is rejected by Hegel because it fails to show how such motivations and identities are justified.[34]

Recall that the idea that reasons rationalize actions relative to desires is central to contemporary Humean views. But reasons rationalize actions only up to a certain point, namely until we reach facts about how we feel and what we want. The Hegelian argument is that if we stop looking for reasons beyond a set of psychological facts, then we can never really know whether our reasons are good reasons. To respond by asserting that these are facts about *me* and so they give *me* reasons does not help.[35] Why should others acknowledge the normativity of our reasons and view them as justifying, rather than just explaining, actions?

Or put slightly differently, the original Humean argument for why reason cannot evaluate desire is only a negative one: the faculty of reason has limited powers.[36] But this does not amount to a justification for thinking that that feelings or desires give us normative reasons. It may be the case that we often think that our desires give us good reasons for acting, but this does not show that desires as such are normatively authoritative.

10

This objection gains new relevance when applied to DBR. In Hegelian terms, what is problematic about DBR is that it treats the fact of subjective desire as normatively authoritative. DBR thus disregards the intersubjectivity of the normative domain. Why should anyone recognize as legitimately authoritative a reason that is ultimately based only in another person's desires? In what sense are such reasons really normative at all? These are questions that proponents of DBR fail to adequately address. Williams does stipulate that the condition of epistemic soundness lends normative authority to desires. But he does not argue for this claim, and it remains unclear why should we treat all epistemically sound desires as normatively authoritative, rather than just descriptive. Schroeder is similarly circumspect. He is explicitly skeptical that any argument can demonstrate the truth of DBR.[37] The view can be defended from Kantian critiques, he maintains, but no argument will ever show that reasons are really based in desires as such. But absent any such justification, why should anyone regard a desire as in any way justifying another person's behavior?

The Hegelian objection becomes pressing in light of the domestic abuse example. Surely proponents of DBR do not mean to suggest that victims of domestic violence ought to regard their abuse as in any way validated or legitimized by the desires of their abusers. But if not, then in what sense could abusers, as DBR implies, potentially have normative reasons for their behavior? The authority of such reasons (and indeed, all reasons) apparently extends no further than individuals who possess the relevant desires. And while such reasons might help to explain people's behavior, they do not thereby serve to ground and validate those actions in the eyes of others. DBR implies, then, that the normative domain is fundamentally fragmented rather than shared. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that there is no single normative domain at all. Instead, there are seven billion such domains, each created by one person's unique set of desires. And although the reasons contained within each domain may in some cases overlap, they do not hold *between* persons. They lack intersubjective authority.

11

Rather than attributing normative authority to desires as such, the Hegelian proposal is that the normative status of desires depends upon how they reflect and contribute to a shared space of reasons. The normative domain is fundamentally intersubjective rather than based in facts about individual desires as such. This is not to say that people's reasons are always identical, but rather that normative authority depends upon more than any one person's thoughts or desires. Together, agents create and sustain a space of reasons that is essentially shared rather than created by the inner faculties of individual agents. And this space is itself a collective achievement. It is the result of generations and generations of human beings who have worked together to construct and revise our understanding of the considerations that weigh for and against actions.

An architectural metaphor helps to explain this idea. A building's structure defines the space within it, a space that is shared by those who work or live there. It is divided into many different rooms, the configuration of which may be more or less radically revised at a later date. And the building itself can always be enlarged by future additions or reduced by closing off or removing sections. But the building's actual structure and configuration at any given moment frames the decisions and activities of those who jointly occupy it. Decisions about how the rooms ought to be used, for example, cannot be separated from consideration of the spaces that are actually available and how those spaces have already come to be utilized. The building's structure and configuration thus creates a shared framework or field of reference for the deliberation and action of those within.

The normative domain, on this view, is likewise the product of an ongoing process of construction and revision. No consideration counts as a reason independently of an actual space of reasons in which one is embedded. But that space is not static; rather, it is constantly and progressively evolving through our interactions with one another.[38] This is because we are deeply social beings. From the moment of birth, we are already participants in a normatively rich social

12

world. Our faculties develop as they do because of how we are situated within this world, a world in which normative claims are already exchanged and evaluated. Both our reasoning and desiring are molded and shaped by our social context, and not just in shallow ways. What we value and how we think very much reflect the actual relationships, practices, and institutions in which we are embedded.

Consider that, even at the level of basic wants, social context very much shapes what we find interesting and valuable.[39] Like other animals we have physical needs for food, water, warmth, sex, etc. But the specific content of our desires depends in part upon how we are situated in relation to others. For example, desires for food and drink are heavily influenced by one's culture and background, as travelers often discover. And the traits that one desires in a romantic partner depend in many ways upon the prior relationships that one has experienced and observed, as well as other social influences.

All motivations thus have a distinctively "social character," Hegel contends, meaning that they take on their specific content in part through our participation in the social world.[40] But reflection and deliberation, he further argues, have just as much of a social character as desire. There is no unchanging ideal of reflection and deliberation that could determine what we ought to do, independent of the social context. This is a point that Hegel makes repeatedly, arguing that such a conception of our faculties depends upon an implausibly thin conception of the individual as isolated from the social world.[41] What is lost is a fuller account of humans as beings whose thinking is shaped by participation in actual relationships, practices, and institutions. We reflect as we do not just because our brains have a certain makeup, but also because we have together learned to deliberate in certain ways and not in others, to take certain kinds of considerations as salient and not others. Reflection is itself a social practice that reflects our shared understandings of who we are and what beings like us are capable of achieving.

13

On this view, desires present us not with reasons, but with the question: Do I have reason to act as my desire directs me? Answering this question involves not just examining one's epistemic condition (as Williams proposes), but also reflecting on the broader social world in which one is embedded. What is the status of the relationships, practices, and institutions that shape one's desires? And how might acting upon one's desires contribute to the further realization of societal goods and human flourishing? These are the sorts of questions to ask when considering whether we have reasons to act upon our desires.

Let us revisit the example of domestic abuse. Recall that proponents of DBR maintain that abusers can have normative reasons for being abusive just in virtue of possessing abusive desires. The Hegelian contention, in contrast, is that we must here look beyond the fact of desire in order to evaluate underlying social conditions. Many perpetrators of domestic violence, for instance, have themselves been victims of such violence. Their abusive desires are shaped by a model of intimacy in which one uses violence and intimidation to control another. Other abusers were never victims, but nonetheless develop abusive desires in response to other social conditions. There is a strong link, for instance, between domestic violence and unemployment because economic insecurity exacerbates feelings that motivate such violence. Properly reflecting upon abusive desires requires examining these root sources. It also involves reflecting upon the impacts of our behavior. What kinds of relationships, practices, and institutions are expressed and perpetuated by acting upon abusive desires? Domestic violence is at odds with the health and well-being of victims, but it also breeds a culture of violence and, in many cases, sexism. It damages otherwise loving relationships, feeds inequality, and perpetuates a cycle of violence upon future generations. These are the rich sorts of considerations, not the desire's mere status as such, that are central to determining one's reasons.

To reflect in this sense is to engage with one's desires more fully, to see them as both constituted by and helping to constitute the rich social world in which one is embedded. Hegel describes such reflection as a process that "transforms" desires into more than just subjective facts about us.[42] Instead of falling back upon the fact of desire, such reflection seeks to understand the role that desires play in the shared normative space that we inhabit. And it does so even while acknowledging that future generations may one day evaluate those desires differently and perhaps better than ourselves.

Conclusion

I have sketched a Hegelian alternative to the contemporary thesis that reasons are based in desires. Hegel's account of desire does intersect in interesting ways with motivational Humeanism. Yet, Hegel's account is also embedded within his broader argument that the normative domain is fundamentally intersubjective. The Hegelian contention is that no consideration counts as a reason for someone independent of the actual normative framework in which they are embedded. And that framework is a collective achievement, the ever-developing result of our attempts to construct and revise the shared space of reasons.

---

[1] See Hume (2000), 2.3.3.1-2.3.3.4.
[2] See Davidson (1963).
[3] See especially Schroeder (2007).
[4] See pp. 19-20 of Scanlon (2000) and Smith (1987).
[5] The rare exceptions are Westphal (1998) and Berry (1982).
[6] Hegel (1996), pp. 275-281. See also §39, §47, §50 and §53 of Hegel (1991a).
[7] Hegel (1991b), §4.
[8] Hegel (1991b), §5.
[9] See Hegel (1975), 73-84.
[10] See especially Korsgaard (1985) and pp. 156-158 of Wood (1990).
[11] See especially Sedgwick (2012).
[12] Hegel (1956), p. 22.
[13] Hegel (1986), p. 234.
[14] See especially Hegel (1991b), § 133 ff.
[15] Hegel (1979), §637.
[16] Stocker (1976).
[17] Hegel (1991b), §121.

[18] Hegel (1991b), §124.

[19] See 4:407 of Kant (1997).

[20] Hegel (1956), p. 22.

[21] Hegel (1979), §637.

[22] For further discussion of Hegelian internalism, see [citation removed for blind review].

[23] Hegel (1991b), §115

[24] See especially Williams (1981).

[25] See Williams (1995), pp. 41.

[26] Hegel (1991a), §471

[27] See §474 and §507-512 of Hegel (1986).

[28] Hegel (1991b), §137R

[29] See Hegel (1979), §645.

[30] See Hegel (1979), §644.

[31] Hegel (1991b), pp. 15-17

[32] This problem becomes especially visible, Hegel thinks, when we consider the Romantic notion of irony. Socrates used irony to pursue truth; it was only the views of the Sophists that he treated ironically. The Romantics, in contrast, treat the very ideas of truth and right with irony. Each agent, according to Romanticism, "wills and resolves in a particular way but may equally well will and resolve otherwise" (Hegel (1991b), §140R).

[33] Hegel (1991b), §140R

[34] See especially §316A of Hegel (1991b).

[35] See also Hegel (1991a), p. 53.

[36] See also Millgram (1995).

[37] See especially p. 197 of Schroeder (2007).

[38] The Hegelian contention is that the history of ideas reveals a progressive development and refinement of the space of reasons. Within every normative framework, flaws eventually emerge as agents. In response, agents jointly revise their frameworks over time. This progressive pattern of development provides a special kind of rationale for each resulting normative framework, namely that it builds and improves upon previous frameworks. This idea is prominent throughout Hegel's writings, but especially in his famous discussion of lordship and bondage. See §178-196 of Hegel (1979), as well as pp. 30-33 and 54-87 of Pippin (2010). See also p. 20 of Hegel (1991b) and §436-437 of Hegel (1979).

[39] See especially Hegel (1991b), §190-194.

[40] Hegel (1991b), §192A.

[41] See especially Hegel (1979), §639ff and Hegel (1991b), §147ff.

[42] Hegel (1991b), §19.

Works Cited

Berry, Christopher. *Hume, Hegel and Human Nature* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982)

Davidson, Donald. "Actions, Reasons and Causes," *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 60, No. 23 (Nov. 7, 1963), pp. 685-700

G.W.F. Hegel. *Vorlesungen Über Die Geschichte Der Philosophie III*, vol. 20 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996)
-----*Encyclopaedia Logic,* trans. W.A. Suchtig, T.F. Geraets and H.S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991a)
-----*Enzyklopaedie der philosophischen Wissenschaften II*, vo. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986)
-----*Natural Law*, trans. T.M. Knox (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975)
-----*Phenomenology of Spirit* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1979)
-----*The Philosophy of History* (New York: Dover, 1956)
-----*Philosophy of Right*, edited by Allen W. Wood, translated by H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991b)
-----*Vorlesungen Über Die Philosophie Der Religion II. Bd 17* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986)

Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature* (Oxford University Press, 2000)
-----*Enquiry Concerning the Principals of Morals* (Oxford University Press, 1998)

Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. by Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

Korsgaard, Christine. "Kant's Formula of Universal Law," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 66, no. 1-2 (1985), 24-47

Millgram, Elijah. "Was Hume a Humean?" *Hume Studies*, 21:1, April 1995, pp. 75-93

Pippin, Robert. *Hegel on Self-Consciousness: Desire and Death in the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Princeton University Press, 2010)

Rawls, John. *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy* (Harvard University Press, 2000)

Scanlon, T.M. *What We Owe to Each Other* (Belknap Press, 2000)

Schroeder, Mark. *Slaves of the Passions* (Oxford University Press, 2007)

Sedgwick, Sally. "Hegel on the Empty Formalism of Kant's Categorical Imperative," *A Companion to Hegel*, eds. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 265-80

Smith, Michael. "The Humean Theory of Motivation," *Mind,* Vol. 96, No. 381 (Jan. 1987), pp. 36-61.

Stocker, Michael. "The Schizophrenia of Modern Moral Theories," *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 73, No. 14 (Aug. 12, 1976), pp. 453-465

Westphal, Kenneth. "Hegel and Hume on Perception and Concept-Empiricism," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Volume 36, Number 1, January 1998, 99-123

Williams, Bernard. "Internal and External Reasons," reprinted in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 101-113
-----"Internal Reasons and the Obscurity of Blame," reprinted in *Making Sense of Humanity* (Cambridge University Press, 1995)

Wood, Allen. *Hegel's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 156-158