

us. At the very basis of his theory, Hobbes speaks the language of natural jurisprudence, Hume clearly does not.

Haakonssen also believes that Hutcheson is a moral realist. It is interesting to note that Dugald Stewart regarded the moral theory of his Scottish compatriot as subjective. It might have been interesting to discuss this point in some detail. If Hutcheson is a moral realist, and Reid, Stewart and others are also moral realists, then there seem to be at least too very different types of moral realism. Alternatively, one might argue that Hutcheson was not a moral realist at all.

This review can only offer a glimpse of Haakonssen's densely argued chapters, which are masterpieces of scholarly learning. He convincingly shows that we must distinguish between a duty-based and a rights-based version of natural jurisprudence, and that these two conceptions significantly shaped the debates about moral philosophy in Scotland. His book undoubtedly is a significant contribution to our understanding of the Scottish Enlightenment and its impact on Britain and America.

Institut für Philosophie  
Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg  
Postfach 4120  
D-39016 Magdeburg  
Germany

HEINER F. KLEMME

*Sorting Out Ethics*, by R. M. Hare. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Pp. ix + 191. H/b £19.99, P/b £11.99.

*Sorting Out Ethics* is a curiously constructed book. Neither a monograph nor a collection of independent papers, it includes a series of five lectures that Hare gave in 1991, two papers already in print elsewhere, and one chapter of previously unpublished teaching material. As Hare explains in his disarmingly frank preface, he had hoped to incorporate the five lectures, along with some other material, "into a full-length book giving my considered views on ethical theory", but this project was "defeated by a series of strokes, which rendered me incapable ... of thinking book-length thoughts" (p. v). Some compromises had to be made, resulting in the present volume.

Hare aims for the first two chapters to give an overview of his approach to moral philosophy, promising that the opening chapter, "Philosophy of Language in Ethics"—a revised version of his contribution to the 1996 *Handbuch Sprachphilosophie*—"gives a conspectus of my entire thinking" (p. v). In it, Hare claims that philosophy of language can make a "crucial contribution" to moral philosophy by clarifying the meanings of moral words and, hence, by shedding light on the logical rules that govern moral arguments (p. 1). This tack naturally leads Hare into a sketch of the prescriptivity of moral judgments (pp. 10ff); in an especially helpful passage (pp. 16–17), he sharply distinguishes prescriptivism and emotivism (with which the former is closely

linked and sometimes, to its detriment, confused). Then Hare outlines the other key feature of moral judgments, their universalizability (pp. 19ff). Towards the end of the chapter, he acknowledges, and tries to dispel, the suspicion that his method involves some kind of "conjuring trick" in which one produces "a substantial moral rabbit out of a logical hat" (p. 24).

The second chapter, by far the shortest of the book, is the introduction to a course Hare used to teach (p. v). It's "A Defence of the Enterprise"—the enterprise being moral philosophy, as Hare conceives of it—against objectors who say that Hare's preoccupation with moral language impedes the study of *substantive* moral questions. After rehearsing some of the arguments of the first chapter (about how the study of moral words can shed light on moral arguments), Hare asserts that moral philosophy is "the logical study of the language of morals" (p. 39) and that "the moral philosopher's distinctive contribution to the discussion of the substantive moral questions is the investigation of the words and concepts, and thus the logic, that are being employed" (pp. 39–40). But the clarity Hare achieves on this point eludes him earlier in the chapter as well as throughout the first; as an overview of Hare's approach to moral philosophy, these chapters are best read in concert with some of the other synoptic papers Hare has written over the years, such as "The Structure of Ethics and Morals" (first published in his 1989 collection *Essays in Ethical Theory*).

In the next five chapters, which form the "core of the book" (p. v), Hare offers "A Taxonomy of Ethical Theories." He begins by characterizing the things to be sorted: ethical theories, as Hare uses the term, are not theories that address substantive moral questions (such theories are *moral* theories—see p. 44); rather, they are "theor[ies] about the meaning and logical properties of the moral words" (p. 45; see also pp. 43–44). And the taxonomic method Hare outlines is both "a priori", in that the resulting structure will include "not merely what species of ethical theory there have been, but what theories there *could* be", and "exhaustive", in that "at the end of the day we should have a complete classification of possible ethical theories, with a demonstration that these were the only possible ones" (p. 47). (Unfortunately, Hare later equivocates in his use of the term "complete", characterizing his classification as *not* complete because "further subdivisions" may be incorporated into it (p. 117; see also p. 97); but this admission does not bear on his earlier claim to completeness as exhaustiveness.)

The first and broadest distinction Hare makes separates *descriptivist* theories from *non-descriptivist* theories. Whether a theory is descriptivist or not is, according to Hare, a function of what it says the meanings of moral statements are determined by. A theory that affirms that "moral statements get their meanings in just the same way as ordinary factual statements" (p. 48)—that is, that "Meanings of moral statements are wholly determined by syntax and truth conditions" (p. 42, see also pp. 48, 51, 52, 54–55, 63, and 116)—is descriptivist; while any theory denying this—insisting that "there is an extra

bit of input that goes into the making of a moral statement which is not present in the making of an ordinary purely descriptive statement" (p. 52)—is non-descriptivist. Hare goes on to show that descriptivist theories (so defined) are inadequate because they mistake cases of disagreement over substantive moral issues for cases of disagreement over the meanings of moral words (pp. 52–55 and 58–60).

In chapters 4 and 5, Hare divides descriptivist theories into *naturalist* ones and *intuitionist* ones, depending on whether they affirm or deny that "Truth conditions of moral statements are non-moral properties" (p. 42; see also pp. 64, 65, 82, and 83). He sets out "to show that both these kinds of descriptivism ... collapse into relativism" (p. 65; see also, for example, pp. 68, 76, 81, 91, 101, and 134), but the sustained argument he gives (pp. 66–76) includes the additional assumption that naturalists ascertain the truth conditions of moral statements by "examining the linguistic usage of native speakers of the language" (p. 66; see also pp. 75 and 91). In reply to the objection that his argument fails to touch those naturalists who eschew this methodological commitment (Bentham might be an example), Hare just says that his argument is "perfectly general" (p. 76) and that for any naturalist, "the same difficulties will arise as before" (p. 77). But he does not substantiate this assertion; nor, for that matter, does he defend another of his tendentious assumptions: that intuitionists ascertain the truth conditions of moral statements through "a consensus of like-minded people" (p. 87; see also p. 92). In the end, his attempt to portray descriptivists as relativists is inconclusive; indeed he probably could have discredited descriptivism more convincingly by simply elaborating the more modest claim—ably established in the third chapter (pp. 52–55) and briefly reiterated in these chapters (pp. 68 and 91–92)—that descriptivist theories are inadequate because they systematically misdescribe moral disagreements as merely verbal disagreements.

In chapters six and seven, Hare returns to the more familiar territory of non-descriptivist theories. He begins with a critique of *emotivism*, concluding that its "one serious fault" is that it disallows "rational moral argument about fundamental moral questions" (p. 117). In fact, so decisive is this flaw that Hare sets up as emotivism's distinguishing feature that it implies that "Moral statements are not governed by logic" (p. 42). After an interesting interlude in which Hare outlines six "requirements for an adequate ethical theory" (p. 42) and argues that naturalism, intuitionism, and emotivism all fail to satisfy more than half of them (pp. 118–25), he turns to his favoured variety of ethical theories, *rationalistic non-descriptivism*. This includes, of course, his own "universal prescriptivism" (p. 42), whose essential features Hare then summarizes.

The eighth and final chapter of the book, "Could Kant Have Been a Utilitarian?", reprints a paper first published in *Utilitas* in 1993. Hare argues that although a great gulf is thought to separate utilitarianism and Kantianism, they have actually have significant common ground in the injunction to take

everyone's ends as seriously as one's own (p. 151). Indeed, Hare claims in an earlier chapter of the book that "If the two doctrines are sympathetically formulated, they are in agreement" (p. 26). What kept *Kant* from being a utilitarian, Hare says, was his insistence on shoehorning his theory into the framework of moral views with which his "rigorous puritanical upbringing had imbued him" (p. 148), along with his belief that "maxims have to be very simple" (p. 154). But Hare neglects to show how the absence of these influences would have left Kant in the thrall of utilitarianism: in particular, how Kant could ever have endorsed the trade-offs between individuals' well-being that utilitarianism is notorious for tolerating and, especially, requiring.

It is hard to reflect on *Sorting Out Ethics* without lamenting the fact that it does not extend the series of unified, free-standing, and increasingly sophisticated accounts of ethics that Hare began in 1952 with *The Language of Morals*, continued in 1963 with *Freedom and Reason*, and concluded (it now seems) in 1981 with *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method, and Point*. Indeed the ambiguity of its very title—is this "sorting out" going to be a comprehensive culmination, or mainly just an exercise in classification?—makes the book itself a standing reminder of what it could have been. Still, its three parts—the two essays on moral philosophy, the survey of ethical theories, and the paper on Kant—do have a surprising unity, at least in the context of Hare's body of work. For Hare's thought has long been characterized by a distinctive and deliberate approach to moral philosophy, one rooted in a study of moral language and with acknowledged debts to Kant; and this book essentially offers commentaries on these important themes (as well as a sixteen-page, purportedly complete, bibliography of Hare's writings). And given the enormous cumulative impact over the years of Hare's long campaign for his views, what *Sorting Out Ethics* also offers is a new vantage point from which to better understand some of the most influential ideas of recent moral philosophy.

Department of Philosophy  
1001 Cathedral of Learning  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
USA

BEN EGGLESTON

*Causal Asymmetries*, by Daniel M. Hausman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pp. xv + 300. H/b 37.50.

One of the problems with studying causation is that there are so many different paradigms within which to do it. There are, for example, counterfactual theories, "process" theories, statistical theories, and agency theories. The different kinds of theory often appear to have radically different conceptions not only of what causation is, but also of what sorts of philosophical questions are important and how one ought to go about answering those questions—to the