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Passions, Affections, Sentiments: Taxonomy & Terminology

“But here (my Friend!) you must not expect that I shou’d draw you up a formal
Scheme of the Passions, or pretend to shew you their Genealogy and Relation; how
they are interwoven with one another, or interfere with our Happiness and Interest.”

1. Why Taxonomy and Terminology?

Next to all the other interesting philosophical questions that can be raised about
the passions, issues of taxonomy and terminology may seem like poor stepchildren:
scrawny, dull, and even if they perform necessary work, best kept out of sight. And
“passionate taxonomy and terminology” sounds oxymoronic. But classifications of the
passions change dramatically over time in ways that can be difficult to trace or foresee,
and the reasons that make them tricky to track also make them particularly intriguing
philosophical topics. In the intellectual bookkeeping of contemporary philosophy, the
emotions inhabit only the margins of epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. Even in fields
where their location is secure, as in the philosophy of mind, they tend to confound basic
categories, appearing both cognitions and feelings, both subject to standards of
appropriateness and incorrigible, even both mental and bodily. In dealing with their
transgressive status, our decisions about how to taxonomize the emotions are fraught with
downstream consequences we may be unable to foresee. Turning to the history of
philosophy, we find the family of emotions – comprising pathē [παθη], perturbations,
passions, affects, affections and sentiments – at play in many surprising areas. Proper
classification can help us understand what links, for instance, ontology to practical reason
or politics, while particular choices of terminology and schemes of categorization allow us to trace intellectual affiliations and allegiances.

But eighteenth-century accounts pose a problem, for they contain relatively little material for cataloguing the passions, either individually or collectively. Earlier authors delighted in “Tables” (Coeffeteau, 1621), “Natural Histories” (Charleton, 1674, reprinted 1701), “Characters” (La Chambre, 1640-62, translated 1649), and multiple “Treatises” (e.g., Reynolds, 1640). Robert Burton’s remarkable Anatomy of Melancholy (first edition 1621) played with alternative classifications (e.g., 2001: 258), and the short play Pathomachia: or, The battle of affections, which appeared in 1630, devoted itself to sorting family groups among the passions. The codifying urge extended to the study of the passions itself: both Bacon and Hobbes specify locations for knowledge of the “affections” and “passions” within their divisions of the sciences, although they do not confine it to those places.¹ Yet compared to the hive of previous taxonomic activity, the definitions offered by eighteenth-century authors appear only casual, their lists paltry and their classifications loosely organized. What we should make of this shift in approach is not obvious. It does not seem to signal any reduction in the philosophical importance of the passions: Hutcheson wrote an entire work on them, An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense (first edition 1742); Hume devoted the second book of his Treatise to the passions (first edition 1739) and later included a “Dissertation on the Passions” among his Four Dissertations of 1757; Adam Smith likewise produced the tome The Theory of Moral Sentiments in 1759. Perhaps the need for detailed taxonomies waned just because the passions longer

¹For Bacon’s classification, see Kusukawa (2002: esp. 69); Hobbes gives a division of the science in Leviathan IX. For an overview, see Schmitter (2011a).
sat uncomfortably at the margins of several distinct discussions; in eighteenth-century philosophy, their place was assured.

Another striking feature of eighteenth-century treatments is how little taxonomic machinery was borrowed from earlier accounts. Rather than shoehorning their accounts into old classifications, authors of the period invented new categories, yoked terminology from other areas to discussions of the passions, and developed concepts that were no more than embryonic in the thought of their predecessors. Again, this may reflect the centrality of the passions and sentiments to philosophical psychology in general, more particularly to moral psychology, and especially to the distinctive psychologies developed by the theorists of moral and other senses. On the view of such theorists, our passions and sentiments are characteristic and indispensable bits of psychological machinery, as fundamental to our thinking as sense-perceptions and rather more important to our practical reasoning. Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume and others took our affective states to be perceptive responses and “reflections,” and understood our higher-order perceptions as typically affective states. With a genuinely novel approach to the psychology of the passions, eighteenth-century authors were forced to devise an equally novel conceptual framework, and so they introduced new terminology, most prominently, “affect” and “sentiment,” and new principles of division, most notably, that between self- and other-directed passions. They did not, of course, pull their terminology and classificatory apparatus out of thin air; there are continuities with other uses and with what went before. But there is a real break even with trends at the end of the seventeenth century. The change is perhaps most noticeable with Shaftesbury, whose account of our responses to value-laden qualities of the world and our “reflection” on those responses
sparked the development of theories of multiple moral and aesthetic senses. Shaftesbury himself deployed available vocabulary, using “passion,” and even more, “affection” to describe our affective responses. Later, “sentiment” gained popularity. Such terms of art were often introduced with little fanfare, and their meaning remained flexible, even mutable, throughout the period. The hope here is that tracing the lineage of such terminology and related taxonomies will make some sense of these under-explained choices.

2. Sources and Influences:

To appreciate just how groundbreaking eighteenth-century approaches were, we should bear in mind the sort of taxonomic options available at the start of the period. Many seventeenth-century authors demonstrated their intellectual commitments simply by the number of passions they catalogued. Writers from early in the century often volunteered a list of eleven passions, an enumeration stemming from Aristotle, though often attributed to Aquinas. A further division separated love, hate, desire, aversion, joy and sadness from hope, despair, fear, daring and anger: the former are the “concupiscible” passions directed simply to good or evil, the latter the “irascible” passions arising when we face impediment or difficulty. Because of its alliance with Scholasticism, this classification steadily lost ground over the course of the seventeenth century. The division into concupiscible and irascible passions barely registered among major eighteenth-century philosophical authors, and few adopted the full list of eleven, although the enumeration of six passions derived from the concupiscible remained

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2Two who do mention it are Richard Fiddes (1724: 236), and Hutcheson, who rehearses the taxonomies of the ancients and schoolmen (2007: 29).
popular. Hutcheson borrows it for his _Essay_, where he credits Malebranche; it seems to have spread from there (see, e.g., Bethune, 1770).

Another taxonomy derived from the Stoics, largely through Cicero’s _Tusculan Disputations_; it recognized four basic passions – pain or sadness, fear, desire, and pleasure – and three affective states of the wise person, corresponding to the last three – watchfulness or caution, wish and joy. Again, the basic differentia is the good or evil at which the passion is directed, to which the Stoics added considerations of temporality (present or future). Although this taxonomy previously dominated the philosophical landscape, it had fallen out of favor by the early eighteenth century. Hutcheson combines it with the concupiscible and irascible passions, when he identifies classes of passions as “such as pursue some apparent good . . . [as] passionate Desires or Cupidity; such as tend to ward off evil . . . [as] Fears, or Anger; such as arise upon obtaining what was desired or the escaping evil, are turbulent Joys; and what arise upon the loss of good, or the befalling of evil, Sorrows” (2007: 30, see also 2002: 55). Hume uses the Stoic classification in naming the direct passions at the end of Book II of his _Treatise_ (1978: 438; cf. Fieser, 1992: 7) and begins his _Dissertation on the Passions_ with a variation on the list (1826: 196). Other Stoic views seem to have remained influential, particularly their identification of the passions with evaluative judgments measuring the supposed worth of their objects and their view of passions as involving “perturbations.” Indeed, some eighteenth-century authors reserved “passion,” or specified a class of passions, for emotions that cause agitation; most notably, Hutcheson severs the violent “passions” from the calm “affections” he favors (2007: 29, 38). His preference for the latter recalls the Stoic ideal of _apatheia_, the state of being unmoved and free from passions, as well as
the similar Epicurean ideal of *ataraxia*, a kind of tranquility. Hutcheson argues that the difference between calm and violent is the real basis for opposing reason to passion (2002: 175), a position reiterated by Hume (1978: 417-8). The distinction, as well as the partiality for calm affections, influenced many later writers, such as John Bethune (1770: 17) and the anonymous author of the *Mirror of Human Nature* (1775: 5).

A very different kind of categorization descended from Descartes, who identified six primitive passions, of which the first was the “neutral” passion of wonder [Fr: *admiration*]. Descartes’s influence pervaded British philosophy of the later seventeenth century, especially after the 1650 translation of his *Passions of the Soul* (e.g., More, 1690: 43), but waned in the eighteenth century. For instance, Adam Smith discusses the sentiment of “admiration” (1982: 20); however, unlike Descartes, he goes on to distinguish the moral sentiment of approving admiration from mere wonder. *The Mirror of Human Nature* borrows more straightforwardly from Cartesian wonder (1775: 7), as well as adopting Descartes’s account of generosity as a form of wondering self-esteem (1775: 8). Even so, it only cites Descartes as an authority on the physical underpinnings of the passions (1775: 32). But if Descartes’s reputation faded, Malebranche’s importance spread, making him perhaps second only to Hobbes among seventeenth-century influences on eighteenth-century philosophy. ³ A translation of his *De la Recherche de la Vérité* appeared in 1694-5, and another in 1700, while Malebranchean accounts of love were championed by such authors as John Norris and Mary Astell (1695; reprinted in 1705 and 1730). Malebranche looms particularly large over Hutcheson’s *Essay*, which like the *Recherche*, concerns itself with the correction and

governing of the passions. Hutcheson recommends reading Malebranche to “whoever would see subtile Divisions of those Sensations” (2002: 31n.), and uses Malebranche to divide between “spiritual affections” (2002: 50-1) and “passions” (2002: 55, 63).

Although Hume does not discuss Malebranche specifically on the passions, other authors follow Hutcheson’s lead: Smith mentions Malebranche (1982: 157), and Bethune appeals to him for a list of “spiritual affections” (1770: 65). Even where he is not mentioned by name, Malebranche served as a major conduit for neo-Augustinian views about the fundamental role of love in shaping our impulses and passions, and thus helped to promote the recognition of benevolent affects, those “natural, kindly or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good of the public” (Shaftesbury, 2001b: 57). Malebranche’s influence here merged with that of the Cambridge Platonists, particularly Ralph Cudworth and Henry More, whose conception of our “boniform faculty” elevated the tendency toward benevolence to an in-built component of the human soul.

Shaftesbury adopted their view, generalizing it as a criterion for individual merit.

The importance of such sociable other-directed passions and affections to eighteenth-century authors may help explain why Hobbes was probably the most-cited seventeenth-century source on the passions: he provided a mark. Although berating him as a proponent of selfishness seems a misreading, Hobbes came to be associated with Mandeville for the alleged crime of reducing all our benevolent impulses to self-interest.

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4 Even so, some commentators argue that Hume’s account of the passions shows influence from Malebranche; see Jones (1982), James (2005), Harris (2009: 140-3), and Schmitter (2011b).

5 Unlike many early seventeenth-century authors, neither self-interest, nor self-love figures prominently in any of Hobbes’s enumerations of the passions. Much more important is “glory,” which can motivate us in ways that conflict with our duty of self-preservation; on this, see Schmitter (2011a).
This too may rest on some misunderstanding of Mandeville, but it seems to have gained currency through Hutcheson’s defense of Shaftesburian positions against Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees*. By Hutcheson’s reckoning, both Hobbes and Mandeville were equally guilty of the “Epicurean” vice of denying anything other than the appearance of benevolence; Hutcheson bemoaned the view “revived by Mr. Hobbes, and followed by many better Writers: ‘That all the Desires of the human Mind, nay of all thinking Natures, are reducible to Self–Love, or Desire of private Happiness” (2002: 134). Like Hutcheson, Butler counts Hobbes among those who explain “away all particular affections, and [represent] the whole of life as nothing but one continued exercise of self-love” (1897: 191). Smith echoes their assessment in placing Hobbes at the head of “those who account for the principle of approbation from self-love,” and making Mandeville his follower (1982: 315), although he takes Mandeville’s system to be the more pernicious in doing away with the very distinction between virtue and vice (1982: 308). By the end of the century, it seems to have been commonplace to group Hobbes and Mandeville together for reducing all compassion to a “selfish principle” (Bethune, 1770: 69).

Eighteenth-century theorists of the passions and affections drew from other sources besides the obviously philosophic ones: the long tradition of rhetoric offered various alternative taxonomies for the passions, and both rhetoric and medicine lent such concepts as “sympathy” to philosophy. But even when the major philosophers of the period appropriated previous terms and classifications, they typically located them in novel psychologies that altered their contents and gave them new roles in our moral and social life. The psychologies of the moral sense theorists were particularly important in this regard; in pioneering accounts of a multitude of reflected, internal senses,
Shaftesbury and Hutcheson required new taxonomies for the passions, affections and sentiments, taxonomies often adopted by later writers (e.g., Bethune, 1770: 14). Indeed, the very notion of reflection prompted a rethinking of the relation between such internal senses and the external senses, most famously in Hume’s distinction between our “original” impressions of sense and the “secondary” impressions of reflexion, a term of art covering our passions, sentiments, and “tastes.”

3. The Vocabulary of “Passions,” “Affections” and “Sentiments”:

The double-sided relation to the past, from which theorists borrowed much and then put it to utterly new uses, is reflected in the preferred vocabulary for discussing our emotional states. Some terms had an already established usage: most notably, “passion,” which descended from a common Latin translation for the Greek *pathos*, and had received new popularity through the works of Descartes, Hobbes and other seventeenth-century authors, particularly for describing our emotions as they were received from bodily causes and events. “Affection” too had been a common choice in the seventeenth century: like “passion,” it had a broad metaphysical sense indicating a property, quality or attribute, as well as being used more specifically for mental events. This sense appears in the eighteenth century, but eighteenth-century authors also tended to use it both as a synonym for passion in general and to specify a class of passion-related states, those that were refined, kindly, or simply directed toward other persons. Not least among the general terms was “sentiment,” which appeared so prominently in writings of the period that it lead to brand-names in moral psychology (“sentimentalism”) and for literary styles and genres, as in Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*. “Sentiment”
had been in circulation long before the eighteenth century, but typically indicated an opinion or judgment; more rarely, it designated a sensible feeling or quality. Shaftesbury helps himself to the word a handful of times, usually in apposition to a “thought,” or judgment of approbation or disapprobation (2001b: 17, 62, 136). Because of his moral sense account of reflection, “sentiments” thus become both the objects of moral judgment and what enable genuinely moral judging (2001b: 17-18). Hutcheson sometimes uses the term casually to pick out perceptions belonging to moral, aesthetic and other senses (e.g., 2004: 10, 25, 95, 154). But this is scant preparation for the emergence of “sentiment” as a full term of art, first in Book III of Hume’s Treatise and most remarkably in Smith’s Theory of Moral Sentiments. This bit of nomenclature, particularly as it came to be tied to notions of taste, sense and sensibility, was as much an eighteenth-century innovation as the spinning jenny, although by the end of the century, it sometimes seemed merely a bit of old-fashioned fustian (e.g., Wollestonecraft, 1792: 11, 152).

31 Passions and Affections:

The ancient term “passion” was familiar to eighteenth-century writers, and so could be used to name a general kind. Shaftesbury, for instance, sometimes uses it indifferently and interchangeably with other general terms (e.g., 2001a: 76, 2001b: 166, 232). But his preferred term by far is “affection.” Excessive “passions” are often contrasted with proper affections (e.g., 2001b: 21, 52), and he talks at some length about “unnatural passions” (e.g., 2001b: 93-6), but rarely mentions natural ones. His most

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6It could even mean an objective sensible quality: the Oxford English Dictionary cites a text of c. 1400 praising wine “of a noble sentement.” Note that the spelling changes to match the cognate French [“sentiment”] towards the beginning of the eighteenth century.

7Such distinctive uses appear mostly in the Inquir, which uses terminology, as its editor remarks, which “is not quite consistent; refinements are added later” (2004: xiv).
common generic term for an emotive perception is “affection.” But along with a distinctive term, Shaftesbury offers a distinctive account of such affections: not only do we sense ordinarily perceptible primary and secondary qualities, such as shape and color, we can also sense various value-laden, emergent qualities, such as beauty and goodness. Sensing such properties is equivalent to bearing an “affection” toward those properties. An affection is simply a sensory reception, which includes an evaluative component as part of its qualitative character. We humans are able to sense such sensory receptions, affections and passions, whether our own or others’, because we have the ability for reflection, which give us “an another kind of affection towards those very affections themselves, which have been already felt” (2001b: 16).

Other authors use the term “passion” even more restrictively than Shaftesbury (e.g., Clarke, 1711: 15-6, 1897: 13). For Samuel Clarke, “passion” stands in broad contrast to reason as a cause for our actions (e.g., 1711: 17-9). Passions and “partial affections” provide an alternative source of motivation; under some circumstances, such passionate motives can compete with and overwhelm our rational ones, with unhappy consequences for virtue and even prudence (1897: 14, 1711: 17). Later authors show similar patterns of terminology. James Beattie, for instance, judges that colloquial use restricts “passion” to anger and especially agitated emotions, and consigns the original, “proper” sense of the term to specialized religious jargon (1790: 235-6). The tenacity of such distinctions may show that Clarke’s style of moral rationalism had more lasting effects on language than on opinion.

“Passion” is also a common term in Mandeville’s works, and curiously enough, shares some of the same flavor found in Clarke: passions are irrational (1988a: 49;
1988b: 7, 119), yet also motivate our actions (1988a: 184). But Mandeville paints the
broad strokes of our nature very differently from Clarke: a human is “a compound of
various Passions, that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern him
by turns, whether he will or no.” (1988a: 39). Passions appear fixed points in our
constitution, stubbornly resistant to tutelage or change, although their expressions may
vary (1988b: 91). Moreover, Mandeville offers little alternative to his notion of passion.
He occasionally uses “affection,” either simply to mean liking (for children, or our own
species), or in its ontological sense as a modification or determination (1988a: 162),
whereas “sentiment” typically means an opinion, particularly an evaluative one.

Hutcheson’s Inquiry talks of both passions and affections, sometimes indifferently
(2004: 101, 110). But he tends to prefer “affection,” especially when dealing with moral
appraisal, and the objects of the moral sense (2004: 10, 101), while reserving “passion”
for sudden, uneasy or ephemeral movements and motives, which vie with our sociable
impulses (2004: 105, 111, 159). Later works distinguish sharply between passions and
the calm motions of the will, or affections, a distinction marked in the very title of the
Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections. Hutcheson there
declares that “we denote by the Affection or Passion” those “Perceptions of Pleasure or
Pain . . . raised by . . . our Reflection upon, or Apprehension of” the present or future
existence of the object” (2002: 30). But he proceeds to specify his wording exactly:

When the word Passion is imagined to denote any thing different from the
Affections, it includes, beside the Desire or Aversion, . . . a confused
Sensation either of Pleasure or Pain, occasioned or attended by some violent
bodily Motions, which keeps the Mind much employed upon the present
Affair, to the exclusion of every thing else . . . (2002: 30-1).

The *Institutio* makes the same distinction (2007: 29), particularly identifying passions as
turbulent or violent motions *[motus perturbati sive passions]* (2007: 8). So, the difference
in terminology also marks a distinction in kind between the calm and the violent reflected
sensations, a distinction both criticized and borrowed by Hume (see below). This
terminological distinction makes Hutcheson’s usage similar to Mandeville’s
understanding of our passions, although Hutcheson’s inclusion of our calm, and
particularly our benevolent affections puts their views at loggerheads. Although he does
not carve out a special space for affection as Hutcheson does, Henry Home, Lord Kames
also takes them to be calm, and the term to signify “a settled bent of mind toward a
particular being or thing, [which] occupies a middle place between disposition on the one
hand, and passion on the other” (2005b: 741).

3.2 Passions and Sentiments in Hume and Smith:

Although previous authors sometimes applied “sentiment” to particular emotions
(making it at least grammatically analogous to passion and affection), Hume inaugurates
a new use when he declares in the *Treatise* that “morals and criticism regard our tastes
and sentiments” (1978: xix). Hume does not, however, trumpet his altered use, and
indeed, continues to use “sentiment” in the common sense of “opinion” or “view”
throughout the work. But there is a telling ambiguity even in many of those uses, and
Hume offers hints that he is shifting meaning as early as Book I; for one, he explains that
we are unable to reflect so thoroughly on the fallibility of our rational faculties as to fall
into a total “skepticism with respect to reason” because “this effort of thought disturbs the
operation of our \textit{sentiments}, on which the belief depends” (1978: 185, my emphasis).

Here “sentiment” marks something more basic and explanatory even than a belief or an idea. Similar uses surface elsewhere when he treats the inadequacies of the understanding, and ideational operations more generally, for explaining our psychological responses (e.g., 1978: 193, 205, 271). But talk of sentiment really comes into its own in Book III, where Hume sets out to show that “our reasonings concerning \textit{morals} will corroborate whatever has been said concerning the \textit{understanding} and the \textit{passions}” (1978: 455). This Book begins by drawing from the earlier distinction between impressions and ideas to broach the ongoing debate about the origin of our moral distinctions (1978: 456). Against rationalist accounts, Hume insists “morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions” (1978: 457). Sentiments take center-stage with his positive thesis that discovering a moral “fact” requires turning “reflexion into [one’s] own breast [to . . .] find a sentiment” (1978: 468-9). In short, what enables us to make moral distinctions is “an internal sense, or . . . some \textit{sentiment}” (1978: 466), or as he later puts it, “some impression or \textit{sentiment},” belonging to the moral sense (1978: 470, my emphases).  

Why does Hume not simply use “passion” in these sections? The considerations he adduces to show that our moral distinctions rest on impressions of reflection are just

\footnote{Although the passages from \textit{Treatise} 466-470 are the first unequivocal appearances of “sentiment” as a term of art (see also 1978: xix), the passages in Books I and II cited above may already seem to reflect the specialized meaning of Book III (see also e.g., 1978: 103, 148, 185, 205, and 1978: 316-19, 322, 339, 358, 439). The earlier books are also littered with phrases such as “sentiments or passions” (1978: 318, 205, 270; see also 365) where the conjunctions are used ambiguously either in apposition (to indicate equivalence or membership in a genus) or as alternatives. Hume may have hoped to accustom his readers to thinking of various tricky phenomena in terms of “sentiment” before announcing the positive thesis of Book III.}
those applied to the passions in Book II of the *Treatise*, and as the passages cited above illustrate, he begins Book III by speaking of passions. But he then switches to a specialized use of “sentiment” without commenting on his introduction of this new sense. We are left with a real puzzle about the switch in terminology. We can note several features marking the preferential use of “sentiments” over “passions:” affective responses called “sentiments” are decidedly calm, have some sort of judgment-like character, and are subject to cultivation and correction. Conversely, sentiments can indicate opinions that have an evaluative component and that are “felt,” as well as “judged.” These are features shared with the French cognate *sentiment* (see Jones, 2009: 430). As the entry in the 1694 *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française* shows, the French term comprised a variety of meanings: a sense-impression, or the faculty of receiving sense-impressions; some kind of mental or soul state, particularly those that involve a received change, or a disposition for evaluation; last, a view, opinion, or judgment, particularly in the sense of evaluation (1694: 461). Several of those uses surface in a widely acknowledged influence on Hume: Abbé Dubos’s notion of “sentiment” for the internal sense for beauty (Jones, 2009: 423). These similarities suggest that Hume may simply have borrowed from contemporary French cognates, assuming they would be familiar to his audience. But his refusal to announce that he is crafting a novel bit of nomenclature should caution us against exaggerating the technical precision of the term. Indeed, many of Hume’s novel uses of “sentiment” seem merely to emphasize a particular function of the usual passions rather than a different class of mental entity: for instance, “sentiment” sometimes appears when he is most concerned with the receptive character of a perception (e.g., 1978: 466),

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9See also the seventeenth-century change to the French spelling from the older English “sentement.”
and “passion” when considering the “original existences” that motivate our thought or behavior, or govern our character (1978: 399-454, see also 1978: 271, cf. Rorty, 1993: 171-2).

Because “sentiment” often does appear to have a specialized sense, several commentators have taken Hume’s terminology to mark a general classification of the reflective impressions as they are divided into the calm and violent, direct and indirect (Kemp-Smith, 1966: 167-8; Árdal, 1966: 109-47, Loeb, 1977: passim). For instance, Páll Árdal suggests that the moral sentiments fall under the category of indirect passions, since they are species of love and hate for persons (1966: 110ff., cf. Rorty, 1993: 173). This view is disputed by Louis Loeb, who argues forcefully that the beginning of Book II offers a canonical classification, in which the impressions of reflexion split into calm “sentiments” and violent passions, which in turn branch into direct and indirect passions (1977: 396, cf. 1978: 275-6; see also Fieser, 1992: 11-12). Loeb’s classification maps neatly onto the structure of the Treatise’s three Books, and receives textual support from the crucial passages at the beginning of Book II. Nonetheless, the passages on Treatise 276 that Loeb cites do not seem to tell decisively in favor of any particular classification. Although the text there identifies “those other impressions properly called passions” as violent, Hume clearly has Hutcheson’s distinction in mind. And while he declares that he will “here take advantage” of the distinction, he also describes it as “far from exact” and even “vulgar and specious,” an assessment he repeats elsewhere (see

\[10\]In correspondence, Amélie Rorty suggests that this is the distinguishing use of “emotion,” on which more follows below.

\[11\]Indeed, Treatise 275 seems to use “passion” as a general term for the “secondary, or reflective impressions,” (cf. also 1978: 78), unless “emotion” is meant to contrast with “passion” (cf. 1978: 16, 33).
letter of 10 January 1743; 1932: 46). It seems likely that the sharp division at Treatise 276 simply separates the calm impressions of reflexion from the Hutchensonian passions, and so commits Hume to no general classification, much less one used consistently throughout his work. Indeed, Book II itself uses “sentiment” in a number of ways that belie Loeb’s proposed classification, e.g., in characterizing the “sentiment of pride, which is an indirect passion” (1978: 439). In short, any assumption that there is a consistent classification runs into serious problems with Hume’s apparently erratic usage of the terms in question, as well as the tenor of the account at the beginning of Book II, which is much more casual than that of seventeenth-century taxonomies, or even Hume’s later Dissertation on the Passions.12

But even if the terminology of “sentiment” does not mark a branching point in a general classificatory scheme, it does gain a distinctive flavor through the course of Hume’s work. Because Hume tends to use “sentiment” when speaking of what gives us our sense for beauty or morality (and occasionally even politics), sentiments appear to have more cognitive content, and to be more corrigible, as well as more communicable, than “passions.” These features are connected: although we do not simply find either aesthetic or moral values as properties in objects, our sentiments arise as responses to objects in such a way that we tend to attribute evaluative qualities to them, “gilding or staining” the objects “with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment (1975b: 294). For this reason our responses take the form of a judgment; they also assume a public

12Because I do not think there is sufficient reason to assume that Hume proposes a consistent classification, I do not find other aspects of Loeb’s case to be completely convincing; for instance, the argument against Årdal at Loeb, 1977: 397-8, seems to assume that it is safe to generalize from what Hume says about the mechanism that explains the force of some direct passions to generate a category.
character, open to assessment by others. In order to fashion such publicly accessible, judgment-like and “objective” responses, we must subject our private and particularized reactions to “some steady and general point of view” (1978: 581-2), that is, we must correct them through sympathetic reflection on general rules. Adjusting and amending them so allows us to achieve felt responses that nonetheless stem from a privileged standpoint, one that counts as impartial and appropriate, and that conforms to how others (should) respond. As such, sentiments appear calm, and have been cultivated into genuine “tastes.” This is why the sentiments practice what Amélie Rorty describes as “double entry book-keeping: they are motivating passions, yet they are also sound well-formed general cognitive attitudes” (1993: 173, also 171).

Hume’s later works attribute further singular qualities to the sentiments. For instance, “Of the Study of History” characterizes the cognitive advantage the historian enjoys as the ability to form an appropriately “lively sentiment” instead of either the “violence of [the] passion” of a man of business, or the “general abstract view” of the philosopher “in his closet” (1987: 568). Not only does Hume consult his own sentiments in his practice as an historian, he assesses the characters he describes by tracing the interplay of their passions, desires, sentiments and simple zeal: “sentiments of shame, duty, honour” are devices that regulate civilized societies and counterbalance “motives, derived from private advantage” (1983a: 493), while “proper sentiment, and decency” can constrain “love of pleasure” (1983b: 189). Sentiments can be “enlarged” and paired with the “cool reflection of a legislator” (1983a: 460), or infused with civilized “delicacy” (1983b: 539). Hume’s vocabulary is not always consistent (compare, e.g., the Dissertation on the Passions, 1826: 205, 209), but when he makes deliberate choices
among available terms, several tendencies emerge. The essay “Of Eloquence,” for instance, explicitly distinguishes between “passions . . . of a very stubborn and intractable nature” and “the sentiments and understanding, which are easily varied by education and example” (1987: 97-8). The formulation here recalls the early essay “Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion,” which contrasts a disposition to intense passions with the “delicacy of sentiment” arising from cultivated taste. The latter provides many of the benefits, but is “higher and more refined” than mere susceptibility to passions, while also being capable of development and judicious exercise (1987: 5-7). Sentiments sometimes seem to exercise executive functions, rather as magistrates direct movements within a commonwealth; for instance, a well-written tragedy deploys the “sentiments of beauty” to convert the impulse of melancholy passions into pleasure (1987: 220, cf. 528). Hume’s later moral theory seems to introduce yet another twist to the governing operations of sentiment: in explaining how “the notion of morals implies some sentiment common to all mankind,” the Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals insists that it requires “some sentiment, so universal and comprehensive, as to extend to all mankind,” which Hume finds in the “sentiment of humanity here insisted on” (1975b: 272). This “sentiment of humanity” is contrasted with other “strong sentiments of desire and aversion, affection and hatred” produced by “passions,” but which are insufficient to be “the foundation of any general system and established theory of blame or approbation” (1975b: 272, cf. Taylor, 2009). Here Hume also reformulates the declarations in the Treatise about the relation between “passion” and “reason” to emphasize that “reason and sentiment concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions” (1975b: 172; cf. Clayton, 1753: 6).
The tenor Hume gives to “sentiment” may offer some guidance to Smith’s similar expressions. Smith is almost as reticent as Hume in accounting for his choices of vocabulary, although the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* record the off-handed remark that “sentiments” are “moral observations” (1985: 58). But this is little help for deciphering the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which speaks of both “sentiments of beauty” and “moral sentiments” (1982: 200). That work puts sentiments in service to a moral sense theory that finds the origin of the basic distinction between approbation and disapprobation in “immediate sense and feeling” (1982: 320). Smith sometimes groups sentiments with “passions” and “affections,” or “feelings” in general (cf. 1982: 17, 18-9, 56, 71), but he also occasionally reserves the term specifically for feelings of approbation or disapprobation, particularly those directed at other persons and *their* feelings of approbation and disapprobation, understood in “the relation which they stand in to the cause which excites them” (1982: 18). Smith considers it natural, indeed appropriate and urgent, to ask whether the feelings in question conform to those of other people and to the situation that prompted them (cf., e.g., 1982: 122). For this reason, he argues at length that such sentiments are subject to a normative appraisal of their “propriety,” as measured by “the sentiments of the real or supposed [impartial] spectator of our conduct” (1982:145; cf. McKenna, 2006: 90). As such, Smith introduces an even more normative and cognitive element into his understanding of “sentiments” than Hume does. Unlike Hume, he speaks of “natural sentiments,” those that have not been refined (or corrupted) by education, custom, or fashion (e.g., 1982: 91), as establishing a standard for evaluation. Moreover, when he turns to considering alternative systems of morality (e.g., Hobbesian, Epicurean, etc.), he tends to rely on neutral terms, such as “affection,” or

In contrast to Hume’s and Smith’s works, Kames’s *Elements of Criticism* is refreshingly forthright about its vocabulary, declaring “every thought prompted by passion is termed a sentiment” (2005a: 311). The work is a particularly valuable resource for terminology, since Kames struggles to give fairly specific accounts of what he clearly takes to be general usage. Indeed, his account of “sentiment” captures many aspects of Hume’s and Smith’s verbal practice already noted (cf., e.g., Smith, 1985: 75). On Kames’s interpretation, sentiments are cognitive entities, articulating and expressing the qualities of passions, and distinguished from perceptions, internal consciousness, and opinions (2005b: 741). And like Hume and Smith, he appeals to the “delicacy of taste” and “of feeling” as what moderates violent passions and selfish affections (2005a: 16), a point he uses in touting the social and political benefits of the fine arts (2005a: 3). Still, we need to exercise caution in taking his accounts as representative: not only is he atypical in attempting a precise catalogue, he clearly turns it to his own purposes in campaigning for the value of developing aesthetic sentiments. A generation later, Mary Wollestonecraft bemoans how the upbringing of women, much like that of the idle rich, puts them “more under the influence of sentiments than passions” (1792: 49, cf. 152). At the heart of the complaint is the objectionable, gendered associations taken on by “sentiment.” Valorizing “susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste” is a lure to weakness, against which Wollestonecraft exhorts women to “acquire strength, both of mind and body” (1792: 11). “Sentiment” also strikes her as highly
sexualized, “a softer phrase for sensuality (1792: 41, 61). Nonetheless, her distaste appears to be a reaction primarily to a kind of “sentimental” style (1792: 152), which does not prevent her from sometimes using the word in neutral, or even favorable senses (e.g., 1792: 9, 56). Moreover, although she takes passions to be signs of an enlarged imagination and force of character, she denies that they should dominate our psyche: we should not fall prey to mere sentiment, but human development also requires struggling with our passions (1792: 14, 21, 29).

3.3 Emotions, Feelings and Other Terms in Kames

Unlike his contemporaries, Kames also gives specialized senses to “emotion” and “feeling,” which help to clarify “passion”: “of all the feelings raised in us by external objects, those only of the eye and the ear are honoured with the name of passion or emotion” (2005a: 32). He later clarifies that they are internal feelings, which we experience passively “as in the heart” (2005b: 730). The full flavor of Kames’s gloss appears when, after much deliberation, he distinguishes passion from emotion, deciding “an internal motion or agitation of the mind, when it passeth away without desire, is denominated an emotion: when desire follows, the motion or agitation is denominated a passion” (2005a: 36-7). Although he thereby takes the conventional view that attributes motivational force to the passions, Kames here assumes a classificatory scheme that both distinguishes and links passions, appetites and emotions: “the cause of a passion is . . . that being or thing, which, by raising desire, converts an emotion into a passion” (2005a: 38). Emotions belong in the same genus as passions, distinguished both by the absence of desires and by the absence of objects: “an emotion, on the other hand, being in its nature quiescent, and merely a passive feeling, must have a cause; but cannot be said,
properly speaking, to have an object” (2005a: 38).³ Kames thus describes a psychological state not previously recognized among philosophers, something free-floating and directionless, akin to a mood. Like passions, such emotions remain species of “feeling,” which Kames considers a general term “signifying that internal act by which we are made conscious of our pleasures and our pains . . .”, or in a less proper sense, “a general term for all our passions and emotions, and for all our other pleasures and pains” (2005b: 731-2).

For most eighteenth-century authors, however, “emotion” lacked a specialized psychological sense, and often simply indicated any kind of agitation or perturbation. Clarke used it to indicate the violence of a passion: instructing us that the best way to govern the passions is to guard against the “first emotions of passion rising up in opposition to reason” (1711: 3). Even at the end of the century, Wollestonecraft sometimes uses it so, as in the metaphor of “the wild emotions that agitate a reed over which every passing breeze has power” (1792: 27, but cf. 12, 16). Unlike sentiments, such “emotions” appear non-cognitive and not truth-apt. And despite Kames’s treatment of “feeling” as the generic term for internal (and even external) sensations (2005b: 731), many authors also treated “feeling” as similarly non-cognitive. Indeed, Thomas Reid gives it a proto-emotivist spin in critically recounting Hume’s and Smith’s views:

Moral Approbation or Disapprobation is not an Act of the Judgement, which, like all acts of judgment, must be true or false, it is only a certain Feeling,

³ Although Hume too distinguishes between reflective impressions that have distinct causes and objects and those that do not, calling the former indirect passions and the latter direct passions, his reasons for doing so are different: the causes of direct passions are also their objects; whereas, for Kames, emotions lack objects.
which, from the constitution of human nature, arises upon contemplating
certain characters of qualities of mind coolly and impartially (1788: 409-410).

4. Reflection:

A striking feature of Hume’s treatment of the passions and sentiments is that he
identifies them as “impressions of reflection” (Alanen, 2005: 118). But Hume is not the
first to appeal to reflection to explain the passions. The most general notion of reflection
can be found in Locke, who introduces reflection as a source of “internal” experience, a
form of receptive perception comparable to sense-perception, but subsequent to it (Essay
II.1.4). Locke conceives of this experience simply as introspection, a turning of attention
inwards to observe the operations of the mind. As such, it enables observation of our
mental states, but plays no real constitutive role for the passions. In contrast, many later
writers use reflection to distinguish a special set of passionate perceptions from other
perceptions; it particularly attracts those who, following Shaftesbury, attribute our
capacity for such passions and affections to distinctive internal senses. Whereas the
external senses are in the business of registering qualities such as the shape and color of
objects, Shaftesbury considers the internal senses to be sensitive to value-laden, emergent
qualities, which are disclosed by evaluative passions and affections. Along with this
sensitivity, we humans also have a meta-ability to reflect on the perceptions delivered by
the internal senses:

the affections of pity, kindness, gratitude and their contraries, being brought
into the mind by reflection, become objects. So that, by means of this
reflected sense, there arises another kind of affection towards those very
affections themselves, which have been already felt, and are now become the subject of a new liking or dislike (1999: 172).

Reflection brings affections into the mind as objects for further affections and passions; it thereby empowers our moral sense by providing both the source of our moral judgments and their objects. Affections in general supply motives for animal action, but it is only the motives of creatures capable of reflecting on their own motives that are the proper targets of moral evaluation. The measures of their worth, in turn, are higher-level affections. Thus, moral judgments require reflected affections directed toward the affections of a creature capable of reflecting on its affections (2001b: 16-8). Since those affections provide motives for action, the operation of reflection explains how our characters, understood as dispositions for affections and actions, become objects for us and subject to moral evaluation. But reflection plays only a causal role in his account, albeit a double one, by providing epistemic access to the proper objects and by putting us within the purview of moral judgment as creatures responsive to moral qualities. Nonetheless, Shaftesbury holds that those moral qualities are inherent to the world in such a way as to be truth-makers for moral judgments (2001b: 19, 64; cf. Gill, 2000). So, despite the new uses he finds for it, he keeps Locke’s notion of reflection as a perceptual faculty purely receptive for its content.

Hutcheson’s concept of reflection moves a bit further from the Lockean model. Hutcheson maintains that our moral judgments bottom out in specific kinds of emotions, and that those emotions are perceptions belonging to the “moral sense.” The moral sense is posterior to other sense modalities, for it requires reflection on them, but it is more than merely receptive: as a distinct reflective modality, it constitutes an ampliative response.
The same can be said of “affections” or “passions” in general; they are reflective on simpler perceptions, and as reflections, show an increased temporal scope (2002: 30). Reflection thus makes the difference between immediate sensations and broader affections (or passions). It also enables such affections and passions to exercise motivating force. For neither reason, nor mere sensation constitutes a spur to action; affections introduce the extra, more-than-merely-receptive element that moves us to act. Nonetheless, Hutcheson still keeps much of the Lockean view of reflection as introspective perception, distinguished from external perception mainly by taking internal objects. Distinguishing between “reflex acts upon external sensations” and “an inward power of perception” (2002: 5), Hutcheson takes the latter to be what constitutes the reflective operation of the inner senses. As genuine senses, they remain “determination[s] of our mind to receive ideas independently of our will, and to have perceptions of pleasure and pain” (2002: 17). At the same time, Hutcheson sometimes combines what seems like a reflex operation with this “inward power of perception” to charge reflection with tasks that might traditionally be played by such cognitive operations as “abstraction,” e.g., in discovering “the universal Concomitant Ideas which may attend any Idea whatsoever” (Essay 16n†).

Hume distances himself from the Lockean and Shaftesburian view of reflection by decisively announcing that there is no property straightforwardly in the world that constitutes moral or aesthetic qualities and that our sentiments detect. Registering such qualities requires us to look inward: “turn [our] reflexion into [our] own breast, and find a sentiment . . .” (1978: 468-9). Insisting that our sentiments go beyond the merely receptive is a bulwark of Hume’s case against moral rationalism. For the reflective acts
that give us our sentiments also help constitute the objects on which we reflect. That is one reason for classifying our passions and sentiments as impressions of reflection, rather than of sense: they go beyond what we receive in sense. It is also a reason for classifying these reflective perceptions as impressions. Hume interprets the Empiricist commitment to experience as the ultimate source of conceptual content as a refusal to derive new content solely from the perception of ideas, even from the introspective perception of ideas already gained from external sense. Since reflective, secondary impressions introduce content into our psychology, they cannot count simply as perceptions of the workings of our own mind. Instead, they are genuinely new kinds of experience, impressions of reflexion, arising in response to original, sensory experience. Because they are experiences, we may have realist intuitions about the qualitative content they introduce (whether moral, aesthetic, or the feeling of necessary connexion). Hume appeals to the expansive aspect of reflective impressions to explain the appearance of independently existing contents without endorsing such intuitions.

Smith recognizes several of the previous senses of “reflexion” in the context of explaining Hutcheson’s views. For his own part, however, he seems to have no particular use for a concept of reflection. Often he uses the word simply to mean “to consider” or “to think about” (e.g., 1982: 71, 84), although sometimes he reserves it for operations requiring time or refinement of thought (1982: 192). Reflection in this sense may “correct” our sentiments and passions (1982: 94, 160, 170), so it is not surprising that reflective consideration is often normative (1982: 115-6). But when Smith turns to his gloss of Hutcheson, he adopts a technical sense allowing him to contrast the “direct or antecedent senses” with the “reflex or consequent” ones (1982: 322). On this basis, he
distinguishes sharply between the Hutchesonian sense of reflexion, in which properties are discerned from an object given by an antecedent sense, and Lockean reflection, which counts as a “direct,” though “internal” sense. Even this sense of reflexion may not be as robust as Hume’s, but Smith argues against the proliferation of sense faculties it allows, holding that we do not need another power of perception. Smith’s reasons for rejecting Hutcheson’s notions of reflex senses rest both on grounds of explanatory economy, and rather ironically, on the claim that senses, even special, reflex ones, are not themselves subject to reflective evaluation (1982: 323). Such a consequence, Smith maintains, is absurd, for we can always evaluate sentiments themselves (1982: 325-7). Moreover, we evaluate sentiments through sentiment – just not through any particular kind of sentiment. Instead, moral approbation and disapprobation arise “from sympathy [even] with . . . opposite emotions” (1982: 325).

In Smith’s hands, sympathy does some of the work that reflection did in his predecessors. Sometimes he even talks of sympathy as a form of reflection, as when he distinguishes sentiments that originate with us from those “reflected or sympathetic images” of others’ sentiments (1982: 219). Smith also discusses how higher-order, general consideration or “reflection” plays a role in proper sympathetic sentiment-formation (1982: 326). Such uses of the term may have rubbed off on Kames, who sometimes takes “reflection” simply to mean deliberation or reasoning (2005a: 63). But elsewhere Kames refers to how “passion and emotion, beside being felt” can be “made an object of thought or reflection” (2005a: 78). Such reflective consideration of our feelings is, he maintains, crucial to certain kinds of aesthetic judgments and perceptions (2005a: 143, 322). Kames also holds that reflection performs a corrective function, since even the
“delicate” taste of a candidate judge “must be improved by education, reflection, and experience” (2005b: 727).

5. Sympathy:

Like Smith, Hume took sympathy to be a crucial operation in the transmission and regulation of our passions and sentiments. But he understands it very differently from Smith. Smith gives sympathy a strongly evaluative component: to sympathize with another’s sentiment is to indicate some degree of approval for it. For Hume, sympathy is simply a causal mechanism whereby we come to experience the passions and sentiments we imagine others to feel by borrowing from the ever-present lively perception of self to vivify the ideas of those passions and sentiments. Still, neither restricts sympathy to pity or compassion; instead, sympathy concerns how our experience of the affective situation of others produces various passions and sentiments in us. This common notion is the culmination of a long history in which a broadly causal operation became paired with an understanding of the communication of emotions across persons. The effect of this history was to convert “sympathy” from a general principle of attraction or likeness of effect (particularly between spatially separated objects and events) to a description of a specifically psychological activity, which connects us to other people, and in Smith’s hands, adds a normative aspect to interpersonal relations.

The antecedents for Hume’s and Smith’s notion of sympathy lie not only in philosophy, but also in medicine and rhetoric. Much early modern medical theory relied on sympathy to explain how a body with spatially distributed parts could nonetheless exhibit a systematic unity. Even some late eighteenth-century texts, such as Seguin Henry
Jackson’s *Treatise on Sympathy, in Two Parts*, illustrate the notion. Jackson treats sympathy generally as “a quality of the living solid, and moving fibre” (1781: 6), “one of the most extensive principles in the animal oeconomy,” which is required to explain simple life, sensation and the mind (1781: 19). Sympathy can be either “mental or corporeal,” depending on its causal history, but both kinds involve effects arising at several removes from initial impressions (1781: 10, 18). Jackson is particularly interested in how the nervous system enables sympathetic communications (1781: 6), and from there, associates sympathy particularly with “feelings, actions, and inclinations,” including passions and affections, whether agreeable or disagreeable (1781: 7). Jackson’s treatise thus shows how ties were forged to yoke an “extensive” principle to “medical” sympathy and psychology.

Because sympathy involves the transference of effects at a distance from their originating causes, it can be extended to explain the interpersonal transmission of passions, affections and sentiments. Such affective communication across persons had already been widely recognized by classical authors; the rhetorical works of Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian consider it central to the rhetorician’s task to arouse appropriate emotions in the audience, most commonly by transferring those felt or described by the speaker (see Schmitter, 2001b). This remained a common view of the nature of affective communication, adopted by both Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, who speak of sympathy as a kind of “contagion,” “infection,” or “fellow-feeling” (e.g., Shaftesbury, 2001a: 10; Hutcheson, 2007: 33, 2002: 23, 2004: 68). Hutcheson appeals to sympathy to explain how “the state and fortunes of others affect us exceedingly”:
so that by the very power of nature, previous to any reasoning or meditation
[purpose], we rejoice in the prosperity of others, and sorrow with them in
their misfortunes; as we are disposed to mirth when we see others cheerful,
and to weep with those that weep, without any consideration of our own
The disinterested quality of sympathy is evidence of our social nature, demonstrating our
disposition to share qualities of feelings and to increase their intensity by communicating
them (2002: 23). Moreover, both Shaftesbury and Hutcheson assume that feelings
received from others have at least a pleasurable element. For this reason, the
sympathetically received affections we direct at others should tend to be friendly, making
“human sympathy” much the same as “social Affection” (Shaftesbury, 2001b: 62). So,
sympathetic fellow-feeling translates directly into benevolence toward others, at least for
those who “live according to nature” (Shaftesbury, 2001b: 65). Hutcheson even takes our
“generous Sympathy” to embrace a general wish for “the flourishing State of the

These two elements come together in unexpected ways when early modern
philosophers turn their attention to explaining the causal basis of our affective
communication in ways consistent with their physics, a particularly tricky task for the
mechanical philosophies of the seventeenth century. Malebranche, for instance, insists
that our passions are communicated solely through efficient, mechanical causes.
Shaftesbury later satirizes those who account for the passions at this level of explanation
But Hume picks up on Malebranche’s account, and his *Treatise* develops a thorough account of the mechanics of sympathy as part of the “science of man.” On his view, sympathy is a causal process whereby we come to feel the passions we suppose others feel: it starts with observations of the outward signs of a passion in another; from there, we form an idea of, indeed a belief in, the existence of some passion, using standard causal reasoning. That belief in turn can be converted into the passion itself, if we share sufficiently close relations to the other person. Here Hume follows Malebranche in taking relations among people as associative conduits for transferring passions among them. But because of the framework of his philosophical psychology, Hume needs to explain how an idea of the other’s passion converts into an impression in me, that is, into my passion, and so he introduces the vivification process of sympathy borrowing from the ever-present, and lively sense of self (see 1978: 317-9; 1826: 219).

Hume’s analysis of the mechanical components involved in the causal process of sympathy allows him to dispense with the assumption that sympathetic communication works through simple contagion to produce “fellow-feeling” and resembling affects. For one, the sympathetic transfer of qualitatively similar perceptions from person to person may alter the ideas associated with the communicated perceptions; doing so can change the object of the indirect passions produced by sympathy, such as pride or love stimulated

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14 Shaftesbury does not suppose that the passions work non-naturalistically, he is simply uninterested in the mechanisms of the passions, in what belong to “a Watch or common Machine,” rather than to “a human Agent.” Hutcheson takes a similar focus.
15 The later *Dissertation on the Passions* includes an account of sympathy very similar to that of the *Treatise* (1826: 219), but the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* does not (see Cohen, 2010: sec. 14).
16 Because of the influence of “general rules,” Hume thinks we can skip some of these steps, and may feel a sympathetic passion, even without believing the other to experience an initial passion (as with the princes in the tower; see 1978: 369-71).
by the “love of fame” (1978: 320-1). Hume deviates from Shaftesbury’s and Hutcheson’s framework even further by introducing another operation for the affective communication, which he dubs “comparison.” In this respect too, he may borrow from Malebranche, even as he develops his account differently from the earlier philosopher (cf. James, 2005, and Schmitter, 2011b). Although comparison works according to much the same principles as sympathy, it produces passions that are qualitatively inverted from the stimulus: “the misery of another gives us a more lively idea of our happiness, and his happiness of our misery. The former, therefore, produces delight; and the latter uneasiness” (1978: 375). However, even though Hume introduces it to explain malice as a form of “pity revers” (1978: 377, see also 1826: 220), comparison need not produce antisocial attitudes, any more than sympathy inevitably promotes benevolence (e.g., 1826: 221). The essential difference between sympathy and comparison is a matter simply of the causal processes each involves.

Smith takes his understanding of sympathy in yet other directions. Like Hutcheson, he considers our capacity for sympathy to be fundamental to our social and moral nature, and begins the Theory of Moral Sentiments with chapters devoted to sympathy and its pleasures. Unlike Hutcheson, Smith takes sympathy to signal normative appraisal and approval. For a spectator to approve of an agent's feelings is for him to observe that he sympathises with the agent: “to approve of the passions of another . . . as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them” (1982: 16, see Broadie, 2010: sec. 9). This is not the same as compassion, “our fellow–feeling with the sorrow of others,” for sympathy, “though its meaning was, perhaps, originally the same, may now, however, without much impropriety, be made use
of to denote our fellow–feeling with any passion whatever” (1982: 10). Nor is sympathy simply the genus for the passions transmitted through social contacts. Smith does allow that “upon some occasions, [the passions] may seem to be transfused from one man to another, instantaneously, and antecedent to any knowledge of what excited them in the person principally concerned,” but stresses that this “does not hold universally, or with regard to every passion” (1982: 11). Rather, he insists that we typically mediate our feelings toward the person experiencing a passion by considering the exciting occasions and circumstances. Indeed, sympathy “does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it” (1982: 12). That is because the situation in which the passion arises provides a measure of its appropriateness. We direct our attention to it, then, in order to assess the “propriety” of the other’s affections. If the other person’s passions correspond to ours, to “the sympathetic emotions of the spectator,” we judge them “just and proper.” Thus, “to approve of the passions of another, therefore, as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them” (1982: 16). It is in this normative sense that Smith identifies “sympathy” with the “correspondence of sentiments” (1982: 17).

The normative dimension of sympathetic correspondence also accounts for why “nothing pleases us more than to observe in other men a fellow–feeling with all the emotions of our own breast” (1982: 13). Smith rejects Hume’s explanation that we derive pleasure from the extra vivacity supplied by the causal operations of sympathy as insufficient. Sympathetic attunement with others is an independent source of pleasure, which cannot be reduced either to the pleasures of the first-order feelings involved or to self-interest (1982: 14). Mutual sympathy involves the sentiment of approval or
approbation, and such approval is intrinsically pleasant. Indeed, Smith treats the satisfactions of sympathy by comparison with aesthetic pleasures, as a kind of pleasure in “harmony and correspondence,” although since what we approve is the fit between sentiment and object, our pleasure is directed specifically at the display of taste in feeling the appropriate sentiment, not at its cause or object (1982: 20).

Sympathy also figures importantly in Edmund Burke’s Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757). As did Hume and Smith, Burke takes sympathy to be a very general phenomenon: “the nature of this passion is to put us in the place of another in whatever circumstance he is in” (1993: 75). But his treatment differs from that of either Hume or Smith, for he classifies sympathy itself as a passion. This difference is not trivial: Burke considers sympathy to be one of three “principal links” in “the great chain of society,” each of which is a passion serving a distinct social function (for which reason he sometimes also refers to them as “principles”). Sympathy serves to make us “enter into the concerns of others” so that we are not indifferent to each other (1993: 68). Although they arise from similar causes, the passion of sympathy is distinct from “imitation,” the desire to copy what others do and the pleasure in doing so (1993: 72). Both passions differ from “ambition,” by which we are driven to various ways of “signalizing” ourselves, and derive satisfaction from such distinctions (1993: 74). Each of these passions are implanted in us naturally by Divine wisdom (1993: 76), and serve to unite and improve society, by giving us concern for, the ability to learn from, and the desire to surpass others.

Burke’s view of sympathy and the other social passions is part and parcel of his vision of proper social structure. Kames likewise invokes sympathy for particular
purposes: to advocate for the social and political value of taste, and for literature and other arts as means of cultivating it. He is uncharacteristically imprecise about the concept, initially declaring sympathy “the capital branch of every social passion,” concerning the communication of joys and sorrows in general (2005a: 16-17, see also 82), while later sometimes restricting sympathy to pity or compassion (2005a; 227, 294, 2005b: 654). Both senses of sympathy, however, play a role in his brief for the arts. Most generally, “delicacy of taste” tends “to invigorate the social affections [and] to moderate those that are selfish” (2005a: 16). Literature, music and other arts appear particularly effective in arousing what Kames dubs the “sympathetic emotion of virtue,” a hard to classify mood, somewhere between emotions and passions, involving objectless desire (2005a: 48-9). This sympathetic transmission of virtuous feelings, such as gratitude, courage, etc., seems the most effective way in which examples of virtue work to promote virtue in us; it supplies a kind of moral practice (2005a: 51). Because they invoke “ideal presence,” literature and other arts enjoy a particular advantage in producing such morally efficacious sympathy (2005a: 72, 77). By the same token, Kames takes success in invoking sympathy, whether understood broadly or narrowly, to be a significant criterion for artistic value (2005a: 134; 2005b: 651, 653-4).

6. Taxonomic Principles:

6.1 Traditional frameworks of classification:

Before the eighteenth century, the most entrenched principles for classifying the passions rested on two kinds of divisions: that between pleasurable and painful passions (and between generally good and evil objects) and those arising from the specific objects
of various passions. The first distinction, between passions involving pleasure or pain, remained central: eighteenth-century philosophers typically assimilated the qualitative difference between pleasurable and painful passions to the objective one between the “formal objects” of good and evil. The beginning of Hume’s *Dissertation on the Passions* illustrates the identification: “some objects produce immediately an agreeable sensation, . . . and are thence denominated good; as others, from their immediate disagreeable sensation, acquire the appellation of Evil” (1826: 195; cf. Kames, 2005a: 79). The distinctive phenomenal character of specific passions also allowed for qualitative distinctions among very specific passions: it is recognizable even if it is “impossible to define and needless to describe any farther” (Hume, 1978: 399). But the vast territory intermediate between the most general and the most specific is much trickier to taxonomize so. Yet that is where previous philosophers did much their classificatory work, distinguishing among different modifications of the objects or relations between object and perceiver to generate classificatory trees. Such devices of classification presented difficulties for eighteenth-century theories of mind, particularly those influenced by Locke’s and Berkeley’s views of mental content, which tended to identify

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17Another important distinction is that between simple and compound passions. But even before the eighteenth century, philosophers invoke it less frequently than the others, and it appears only erratically among eighteenth-century British philosophers.

18For instance, Aquinas distinguished between considering good and evil simply and considering them as arduous in order to separate concupiscible from irascible passions; Descartes singled out the kind of wonder that is directed at our own free will as the special passion and virtue of “generosity;” Hobbes took our conception of the relation between my power and the power of other people to generate the different passions of glory and diffidence; and Malebranche and Spinoza took considerations of temporality of the object, and our distance from it to produce branching points for different kinds of love and desire.
the objective content of perceptions with their qualitative character, while reducing perceptions to their atomistic parts (see further Schmitter, 2009: 225-228).

Hume presents some notorious obstacles to accounting for any intentional or representational features of the passions, or indeed for making a distinction between perceptions and objects at all (1978: 241). Book II of his Treatise denies that the passions have “any representative quality,” insisting that they make “no . . . reference to any other object” (1978: 415). Hume also maintains that no passion is necessarily or intrinsically conjoined to any other passion, or any other perception (1978: 368; see also the separability principle at 1978: 36). Yet despite these official positions, Hume often refers to intentional or objective aspects of particular passions. Most importantly, he devotes the lion’s share of Book II of the Treatise to the category of the “indirect passions,” which are characterized by a sharp distinction between “causes” and “objects” (1978: 278). Hume also insists on differentiating the specific indirect passions of pride and love by their objects: self for pride, and another for love. In contrast, direct passions (such as desire or fear) do not separate object from cause; nonetheless, their causes often function as intentional objects. Moreover, direct passions typically provide motives for actions and can thereby be characterized by the ends to which they are directed. Benevolence, for instance, is described in both ways (1978: 387, cf. 382). So even Hume cannot completely forego classifying passions by something like their intentional content (see, e.g., Davidson, 1976; Baier, 1978 and 1994: 164; Schmitter, 2009).19

19To make sense of the quasi-intentional features of the passions Hume seems to rely on some of the most distinctive features of his psychology, such as the distinction between impressions and ideas, the forms of association in general, the double relation of ideas and impressions structuring indirect passions in particular, the expansive aspect of reflection, and the causal patterns in which specific passions are typically embedded.
Still, even the most firmly established and basic principles of taxonomy came in for some tweaking, as happened with the distinction between pleasure and pain. On the one hand, it remains an important branching point for all taxonomies, as is illustrated by Robert Clayton’s declaration that “the love of pleasure and dread of pain is the main spring and first mover of all human actions,” which he judges to be almost the only “part of [Hume’s and Bolingbroke’s] reasoning I entirely agree with”: (1753: 7). On the other hand, several philosophers tinkered with the view that pain and pleasure constitute exclusive, opposed categories. Both Burke and Hume do so when they confront the puzzle of dramatic tragedy: we experience pleasing aesthetic sentiments in response and proportionately to our feelings of pity and outrage at the portrayed events. Hume’s solution ultimately maintains the division, since it assumes only a causal connection between qualitatively different perceptions. On his view, the “conversion” of painful passions accomplished by a successful tragedy simply redirects their force into a qualitatively different sentiment of pleasure (1987: 218-20). Elsewhere, however, he describes phenomena involving genuine mixtures of pains and pleasures. Passions such as malice, for instance, require that we compare pains and pleasures, which are attributed differentially to self and other. Still, the person experiencing the passion must feel both, and so the distinctive character of malice shows a hybridization of pain with pleasure.

Burke takes the mixture of pain and pleasure much further, even though pain and pleasure form his first major taxonomic division. Burke even absorbs the important distinction between self-preserving passions and social passions under it (1993: 63; cf. below). But he promptly introduces a notion of the sublime that gains much of its power from mixing painful terror with delight (1993: 64, 74-5). For this reason, Burke takes a
more direct approach to the puzzle of tragedy than Hume does, and one that takes little account of its fictional or rhetorical character: he simply declares that “we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others” (1993: 69). He does not deny that we also feel terror and pity, and that they are species of pain. Nonetheless, “terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too close, and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection” (1993: 70). In an illustration of the old adage, Burke’s view of the sublime closely resembles Kames’s later account of ridicule as a “mixed emotion” (2005a: 194). Kames distinguishes between the “risible,” which “is mirthful only” and the ridiculous, in which “the pleasant emotion of laughter . . . is blended with the painful emotion of contempt” (2005a: 194, cf. 253). Perhaps because he views the emotion as a hybrid, Kames insists that aesthetic “impropriety” is often the literary vehicle for invoking ridicule (2005a; 253-4).

6.2. Division into Selfish and Social Affects:

One innovation of eighteenth-century taxonomy is the distinction between self-directed passions and those oriented toward others. Shaftesbury seems the first to have elevated the difference to a classificatory principle; indeed, he ties the whole issue of taxonomy to deciding whether there are friendly, other-directed affections or all is selfish (2001a: 73-4). Shaftesbury urges us to recognize a natural teleology, of which our affections are a part: individuals belong within more general systems both of species and environment, and they can be judged good or “ill” relative to whether they promote the good of the whole of which they are a part. This context underwrites a distinction between “the good and natural and . . . the ill and unnatural affections” (2001b: 12). The
“natural affections” are those leading “to the good of the Publick;” they constitute the basic psychological make-up of humans, along with “self affections.” But there are also totally “unnatural affections” (2001b: 50). The unnatural affections are always vicious, but some self-interested passions may benefit, while some self-sacrificing behavior can damage the good of the whole. Still, Shaftesbury maintains that what usually motivates us to actions “inconsistent with the interest of the species or public” is some “more than ordinary self-concernment or regard to the private good” (2001b: 13). In contrast, when we subject affections to moral judgment, we approve most highly of the natural, public affections.

Hutcheson took Shaftesbury’s approach even further, understanding the distinction largely according to the question *cui bono*. He applies the classification well beyond the passions and affections, devoting the first section of the Essay to “a general Account of our several Senses and Desires, Selfish or Publick” (2002: 15). Although he acknowledges that some might dissent from this taxonomy, he argues forcefully that they do so only because of they implausibly reduce all our seemingly other-directed impulses to selfish ones. So after considering classificatory schemes for our desires, he eventually decides that they are mere “subdivisions” of the “more extensive” division between the “selfish” and the “Publick or Benevolent Desires” (2002: 22). His *Institutio* likewise posits a “division of the motions of the will . . . according as the advantage or pleasure in view is for ourselves or others” (2007: 30). Further classifications follow on this basic one, since “the several affections or passions . . . have a variety of names as their objects are various, as they regard one’s self, or regard others” (2007: 31, cf. 44-5). Moreover, Hutcheson maintains throughout his works that the degree to which a desire and the
resulting actions are other-regarding determines how much we approve of it as a virtue, although we may qualify the measure by considerations of whether one is driven by calm affections or violent passions (2007: 32, 38). At the acme of all worthy dispositions Hutcheson places benevolence, the “calm general good-will to mankind,” and declares that it can serve not only as the measure of virtue, but as the ultimate tool for self-governance and means to happiness:

And whosoever by frequent impartial meditation cultivates this extensive affection, which the inward sense of his soul constantly approves in the highest degree, may make it so strong that it will be able to restrain and govern all other affections, whether they regard his own happiness or that of any smaller system or party (2007: 32; 2002: 110).

Hume does not organize his taxonomy on Hutesonean principles. Although the Treatise sometimes classifies passions according to whether their object is self or other, the difference forms only a subdivision, less fundamental than that between indirect and direct passions. Book III likewise finds the contrast between artificial and natural virtues more important to moral distinctions than that between selfish and public impulses. Hume denies that we naturally feel any absolutely general benevolence (1978: 481) and he also makes much of the transitions from “limited” to “extensive” generosity (1978: 494), while putting sympathy at the service of almost any passion. So he may consider that the differences between self- and other-regarding attitudes form more of a continuum than a sharp distinction (cf. 1978: 384). However, later works take a slightly different tack. The Dissertation on the Passions refers to Hutchenson’s (seemingly) account as the

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20Hutcheson supposes most of our broadly benevolent impulses are affections, but does allow exceptions (2002: 33, 40, and 2007: 30-1).
“most probable system, which has been advanced to explain the difference between vice and virtue” (1826: 206). Most importantly, the Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals moves immediately from the claim that moral distinctions require sentiment to discussing such social virtues as benevolence and justice, followed by “qualities useful to ourselves” (1975b: 233) and “immediately agreeable to ourselves” (1975b: 250). The taxonomy in this work seems designed to bolster its claim that virtue “consists altogether in the possession of mental qualities, useful or agreeable to the person himself, or to others” (1975b: 268).

A distinction between self-directed and other-regarding sentiments is also central to Burke’s classification of the passions, which begins by declaring that they “may be reduced very nearly to these two heads, self-preservation and society” (1993: 63). But Burke gives it an unusual twist by mapping the division between passions bent on self-preservation and those directed at society on that between pain and pleasure. “The passions,” Burke tells us “which concern self-preservation, turn mostly on pain and danger” (1993: 63). In contrast, passions serving society may either concern the sexes, and therefore “have their origin in gratifications and pleasures” (1993: 64-5), or be directed at society in general, for which Burke argues “the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of particular society are sensations of pleasure” (1993: 68). The assimilation of painful and pleasurable to self- and society-preserving passions may explain why Burke thinks pain and pleasure may be mixed, just at the tendency to preserve self and society can be united. In general, Burke allows that both pain and pleasure and the self- and other-directed passions may exist in complicated relations;
sympathy, for instance, often involves just such an amalgam, since its social character produces delight, but it may “turn on” the pain of another (1993: 74-5).

Many later philosophers, however, retained Hutcheson’s approach. Most important of these was Smith, who makes the categories of “social,” “unsocial,” and “selfish” passions an important framework of division in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1985: 5). Kames, too, describes the object of passions so as to make every passion either social or selfish, except for those that are blindly instinctive (2005a: 40). Like Hutcheson, he sets his view in contrast to those who reduce all motives to self-interested ones, arguing that having a constitution “partly selfish partly social” fits us well for society (2005a: 41, cf. 33). Hutcheson’s influence is particularly marked in Bethune’s *Short View of the Human Faculties and Passions*. Bethune doesn’t make the distinction between self and other quite as central a taxonomic principle as Hutcheson does, but it still plays a role: the important affection of esteem “is either of ourselves or others” (1770: 22), while love likewise divides into self-love and benevolence (1770: 31-3).

6.3 Other Principles of Classification:

Other kinds of classificatory divisions are distinctive to particular philosophers. Of these, perhaps the most important is the split between calm affections and violent passions introduced by Hutcheson. Hutcheson is well aware of the ancient provenance of the distinction (2007: 3) and uses it to play with traditional classifications, such as the scholastic division into concupiscible and irascible (2007: 29-30), Cicero’s stoic categories (2002: 49), and Malebranche’s notion of “spiritual or pure affections” (2002: 50). Like his ancient models, Hutcheson prefers the calm affections, which are “more beautiful than the turbulent or passionate” (2007: 38), as well as appearing more
“reasonable” (2002: 143; cf. 2007: 29). Hume picks up on Hutcheson’s predilection, despite criticizing the distinction (1978: 276; 1932: 46) to argue that “what is commonly . . . called reason . . . is nothing but a general and a calm passion (1826: 226), which may influence the will without creating much “immediate feeling or sensation” (1978: 417).

But the distinction does not sit well with the rest of Hume’s views: on the one hand, he wants to explain why calm feelings can motivate better than disturbing passions, and so reserves a category for how passions agitate us that is not the same as their strength within our psychic economy (1978: 419); on the other hand, he sometimes seems to treat the violence of passions simply as a matter of their force and vivacity (e.g., 1978: 345, 371).

Hume himself introduces novel forms of taxonomy.\footnote{One distinction peculiar to Hume seems to be that between the natural and artificial, which he introduces when discussing virtues, but which also seems to apply to passions, insofar as they have a direct or “oblique” relation to their usual causes and object (e.g., 1978: 497). However, Hume says very little about how this distinction applies to the passions and sentiments.} A particularly important innovation, which seemed to please Hume enormously, is the division between direct and indirect passions: “direct passions . . . arise immediately from good or evil, from pain or pleasure, [whereas . . . ] indirect . . . proceed from the same principle, but by the conjunction of other qualities” (1978: 276). The former include “desire, aversion, grief, joy, hope, fear, despair and security,” while the latter are “pride, humility, ambition, vanity, love, hatred, envy, pity, malice, generosity, with their dependents” (1978: 276-7).

Hume’s analysis of pride and humility, and love and hate shows that the indirect passions are characterized by a distinction between the cause and the object of the passion, which Hume explains in terms of “the double relation of impressions and ideas,” an extension of
his account of association (1978: 286). The effect of this double relation is to impose order on the mind’s movements and direct attention to the object of the passion (Schmitter, 2009), but not itself to motivate action. The direct passions, in contrast, are closely connected with the will (1978: 399). They “arise from good and evil most naturally, and with the least preparation” (1978: 438), although Hume also admits passions that arise simply from a “natural impulse or instinct” to produce good and evil (1978: 439). Direct passions do not separate object from cause, but may be so closely and frequently associated with particular indirect passions, both causally and by resemblance, that they appear to have much of the same structure. Because the Treatise devotes twice the space to the indirect passions as to the direct, and discusses them first, some commentators have argued that the indirect passions are central to Hume’s classifications (Árdal, 1966: 17-8; Baier, 1991: 133ff; McIntyre, 2000; Inoue, 2003). However, the Dissertation on the Passions reverses the order, beginning with the direct passions. Fieser uses this feature of the Dissertation, while noting that the direct passions it specifies are “clearly the four Stoic primitives” (1992: 7) to argue that Hume is thereby “following tradition by grounding all passions in a class of primitives” from which other passions are formed (1992: 8). But this is a minority view, even of the Dissertation (cf. Merivale, 2009). Hume says little about the compounding of passions, and his account of the “mixed” passions of hope and fear does not rest on mixing component passions, but mixing judgments about the probability of their objects (1826: 201; cf. 1978: 441-3).

6.4 Master passions:

A less obvious, but still important feature of various taxonomies is the role given “master” passions. There are several ways in which such passions could structure a
taxonomy, two of which appear early in the eighteenth century: either as a pinnacle to aspire to, or as a root to which other passions can be reduced. Mary Astell’s treatment of love as “the leading and Master Passion” illustrates the former (1695: 130), despite borrowing heavily from Malebranche’s view of love as the “parent” of other passions. Astell, however, is most concerned with how a “regulated” love for God should order the psyche, and thereby remedy the “Misapplication and unsuitable Management of the passions” to lead us to happiness (1695: 130; cf. Schmitter, 2011a).

Something similar can be seen in Shaftesbury in considering the economy of pleasures and motivations. The *Inquiry Concerning Virtue and Merit* understands happiness in terms of long-lasting and reliable mental pleasures. Shaftesbury argues that indulging the natural affections is the best way to achieve such mental pleasures: we find “our chief means and power of self-enjoyment” in having “the natural, kindly, or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good of the public” (2001b: 57). Since the natural affections also tend to promote the good of the whole, “virtue and interest may be found at last to agree” (2001b: 9). By making our most publicly-directed affection the “master-pleasure and conqueror of the rest” (2001b: 60), we gain control over our pleasures, voluntarily ordering our affections and forming our characters. Hutcheson’s focus on benevolence gives it similarly normative priority: Hutcheson holds, in general, that “the more extensive [affections] are the more amiable” (2007: 38), and that the acme of such affections is general benevolence, the calm good will toward mankind. Such benevolence has the salutary effect of being “able to restrain and govern all other affections, whether they regard [our] own happiness or that of any smaller system or party” (2007: 32).
A different use of leading passions can be found in Mandeville, who first singles out pride, and later, self-love and self-liking, as the roots of his system. On the one hand, Mandeville declares us “a compound of various Passions, that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern [us] by turns” (1988a: 39). On the other, he declares most passions the “offspring” of a small subset of select passions, which are the “seeds,” “center,” and “cause” of the others (e.g., 1998a: 51, 67, 75; 1998b: 92). The first volume of the *Fable of the Bees* particularly identifies pride and shame as “the two passions in which the seeds of most virtues are contained” (1998a: 67). Shame and pride are simply inverse passions, and “no body can be touched with the first, that never felt anything of the latter” (1998a: 66-7). Mandeville goes on to characterize both as involving an “extraordinary concern in what others think of us, [that] can proceed from nothing but the vast esteem we have for ourselves” (1998a: 67). This statement gives a hint of his later position that taking “pride and shame to be two distinct passions” was an “error” (1732: 12); instead, nobody “could be affected with either, if he had not such a passion in his nature, as I call self-liking,” making them “different affections of one and the same passion” (1732: 13). The second volume of the *Fable* goes on to make a further distinction, separating “self-liking” from “self-love” (1998b: 133), roughly the urge for self-preservation, and the desire for self-esteem. These passions are distinct, but not “reverse,” since they are both self-regarding. Since Mandeville’s main aim here is to puncture the pretensions of altruistic moralists, his greatest efforts are devoted to tracing virtuous, other-regarding affects back to a self-regarding root. Self-regarding passions and motives dominate our psychology, although there may be independent passions, such
as affection for offspring (1998a: 75). Treating self-love and self-liking as our root passions serves the kind of deflationary naturalism he favors.

Other uses of “master” passions appear in Hume. Hume famously speaks of reason as the “slave” of the passions, and presumably the passions are “masters” (1978: 415). Annette Baier has used this relation to argue that both the moral sentiment and a healthy, well-founded pride should shape a well-ordered psyche, rather as benevolent, public affection functioned for Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. But Hume also gives us another, less idealized notion of “ruling” passions as what typifies particular characters. Shaftesbury already hints at something similar when he speaks of the “predominant passion” that determines a creature’s “nature” and “temper” (200b: 15). Hume, however, understands a ruling passion as a mark of a personal character: “Almost every one has a predominant inclination, to which his other desires and affections submit, and which govern him, though, perhaps, with some intervals, through the whole course of his life” (1987: 160). His History of England is filled with analyses of such character-determinants. They show a complicated conception of ruling passions: they are not simply drives crowding out other interests and desires, but patterns of motives, likes, dislikes, and resultant behavior. A particular character may even be marked by appearing under survey “in the different lights, which it will admit of, [. . . as ] various, and [giving] rise to different and even opposite sentiments” (1983b: 446). History is character-driven, and passions are the key to character; in this regard, the historian enjoys a distinct advantage of subject-matter, for “history . . . places the objects [character and events] in their true point of view” (1987: 568).
Hume’s view of the connections between passions and character seems to have been shared widely, even outside of philosophy. One example is Joanna Baillie’s *Series of Plays: in which it is Attempted to delineate the Stronger Passions of the Mind, Each passion being the subject of a tragedy and a comedy*, written over a nearly forty year period (1798-36). But Baillie disagrees with Hume about the best means for revealing character: dramatic tragedy offers something akin to experiments in human nature, unveiling the human mind “under the dominion of . . . strong and fixed passions” . . . “in a way which the poet, the novelist, and the historian can but imperfectly attempt” (1995: 307-8). Perhaps she took this stance in dismay at some of the “histories” devoted to the passions that appeared late in the century. But whether philosophy, history, drama or potboiler, such examination of how significant passions characterize individuals drew attention away from the more general business of categorizing and ordering kinds of passions, affections and sentiments. Although philosophy had practiced taxonomizing the passions for centuries, it would never be quite the same game after the eighteenth century.

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22 See, for instance, *A concise dissertation on the human passions, exemplified in the life and untimely death, of John McNaughton, Esq; lately executed for the murder of Miss Knox*.
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(some spelling and punctuation corrected and modernized)


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