I. A DISTINCTION

We wish to begin with an intuitive distinction between "historical" and "non-historical" phenomena. The phenomena in question may be such things as states of affairs, facts, or properties. The simple basic idea is that certain phenomena are historical in the sense that they depend (in some interesting way) on features of their history. This idea will be elaborated and made more precise below, but it is sufficient at first simply to rely on the notion that whereas some phenomena do not depend in any significant way on the past, other phenomena depend in deep and interesting ways on features of the past. For example, a particular fact may depend on the past in the sense that its obtaining entails the obtaining of certain facts in the past; similarly, a property may depend on the past in the sense that an object's having it at a time entails the obtaining of certain facts in the past.

A "current time-slice" phenomenon is a non-historical phenomenon. A current time-slice phenomenon is dependent solely upon its "snapshot" properties and not facts about its history. (The snapshot features of an object at a time are those that would be revealed by an optimally comprehensive snapshot of an object at a time. Less metaphorically but still somewhat roughly, we might say that the snapshot properties of an object at a time are the temporally nonrelational physical properties of the object at that time together with the properties that supervene on these properties.) A current time-slice phenomenon is resilient with respect to changes in its history; that is, holding fixed its snapshot properties, alterations in its history would not affect the phenomenon. In contrast, a historical phenomenon is responsive to changes in its history; if a phenomenon is historical, its dependence on the past implies that alterations in certain features of the past would imply alterations in the phenomenon, even given that its snapshot properties are held fixed.
II. SOME EXAMPLES

To see more clearly what we have in mind with the distinction between historical and current time-slice phenomena, consider certain aesthetic phenomena. Properties such as "smooth," "round," "bright," "colorful," "symmetric," and "shiny" are fairly clear examples of current time-slice phenomena. An object's having these properties is simply a function of its snapshot features and is not dependent in any interesting way upon facts about the past. In contrast, a painting's being a genuine Picasso (and not a fake) is intuitively not a current time-slice phenomenon—it is not solely dependent upon its snapshot properties. An object's being a genuine work of art and not a fake depends crucially upon its history. Thus, it is relatively clear that there is some interesting distinction between historical and current time-slice phenomena in the context of aesthetics.

Certain aesthetic features may be difficult to classify as historical or current time-slice. For example, it may seem obvious that being beautiful would be a current time-slice feature of an object. But some have argued that this is not so. In particular, it might be argued that if it is discovered that a particular lampshade is made of human skin of someone killed in a concentration camp, then the lampshade cannot be considered beautiful, irrespective of its snapshot properties. Others might argue that a distinction should be made between an object's beauty and other normative judgments about it and further that beauty is purely a current time-slice notion.

Parallel to the issue of whether something is an original work of art or a fake is the issue of whether something is a particular natural artifact or a duplicate. Consider this example from Peter van Inwagen:

Imagine a 'duplication machine'. This machine consists of two chambers connected by an impressive mass of science-fictional gadgetry. If you place any physical object inside one of the chambers and press the big red button, a perfect physical duplicate of the object appears in the other chamber. The notion of a perfect duplicate of the object may be explained as follows. A physical thing is composed entirely of quarks and electrons. A perfect physical duplicate of the physical thing \( x \) is a thing composed entirely of quarks and electrons arranged in the same way in relation to one another as are the quarks and electrons that compose \( x \): and each of the quarks and electrons composing the perfect physical duplicate of \( x \) will be in the same physical state as the corresponding particle in \( x \). If, for example, you place the Koh-i-Noor Diamond in one of the chambers and press the button, a thing absolutely indistinguishable from the Koh-i-Noor (since it is a perfect physical duplicate of the Koh-i-Noor) will appear in the other. If the two objects are placed side by side, and then moved in a rapid and confusing way, so that everyone loses track of which was the original and which the duplicate, no one, no jeweler, geologist, or physicist, will ever be able to tell, by any test whatever, which of the two
played an important role in the history of the British Raj in the nineteenth century, and which was created a moment ago in the duplicating machine.³

After the machine has created the duplicate, the two objects are identical with respect to their current time-slice properties. But clearly one is the Koh-i-Noor diamond, and the other is a mere duplicate. Which object is the original (and which is the duplicate) is a historical phenomenon.

Examples of allegedly historical phenomena can be found in various contexts. We shall here assemble some examples of putatively historical phenomena. (Below we shall ask whether these apparently historical phenomena are genuinely historical.) According to certain theories of linguistic reference, a word can refer to a certain object (and a person can refer to the object employing the word) only if a certain sort of causal process has taken place in the past. Although different causal accounts of reference posit different causal processes which are allegedly required in order to secure reference, they all evidently construe reference as a historical phenomenon. Similarly, certain philosophers argue that the content of beliefs is crucially dependent upon causal interactions with the world in the past. These philosophers typically invoke "Putnam-type" thought experiments (involving twin planets, doppelgangers, and so forth) to establish their claim that the content of our beliefs depends upon causal interactions with features of the world in which we live. If in the past I and my cohorts on earth had been in causal contact with \( \text{XYZ} \) rather than \( \text{H}_2\text{O} \), then I would not now have beliefs about water.⁴

The medical context provides other examples of apparently historical phenomena. In the absence of the appropriate diagnostic technology, a physician can derive information important to a diagnosis from the patient's medical history. For instance, learning that a patient had previously taken a drug like Haldol would enable the physician to determine that the patient with partial paralysis and spasms of the neck and face suffers from a dystonic reaction to the drug rather than tetanus or botulism, other possible candidates with the same characteristic symptoms. Similarly, in the context of psychoanalysis facts about an analysand's past may be used to assist in the appropriate diagnosis of neurosis or psychosis brought about by repressed memories and thoughts. It might be claimed that precisely because the relevant present psychic states are repressed and unconscious, analyzing an agent's history is a necessary step to uncovering and understanding the agent's psychological state.

The examples just sketched are of allegedly historical non-normative phenomena. There are also various allegedly historical normative phenomena. ("Normative" is being used here broadly to encompass all ought-implying or value notions; thus, normative phenomena include but are not exhausted by moral phenomena.) We now turn to an area which is both normative (in this broad sense) and non-moral: justification and knowledge in epistemology.

Various philosophers have argued that justification of belief and knowledge requires some sort of causal condition. In the first instance, it is claimed that in order for a belief to be justified, there must be an appropriate causal
relationship between the state of affairs which the belief is about and the agent's holding the belief. In his well-known paper, "A Causal Theory of Knowing," Alvin Goldman argues that knowledge requires that there be an appropriate causal connection between the state of affairs that makes an agent's belief true and the belief. In his later paper, "What Is Justified Belief?" Goldman argues that justification requires that the agent's belief about a state of affairs be caused in a "reliable" way. Other philosophers have also argued that knowledge of some state of affairs requires that the agent's belief about the state of affairs be caused by it (in some appropriate manner). Consider this Gettier-type example proposed by Marshall Swain:

Suppose that S is looking into a field, and in the distance he sees an object that has the shape of a sheep. In addition to seeing an object that looks like a sheep, he hears bleating noises, is aware of sheeplike odors in the air, and so forth. On the basis of this experience he comes to believe (truly) that he seems to see a sheep in the field. This evidence, in the context of the other relevant propositions that he believes, renders it evident for him that he does see a sheep in the field, and this latter evidence then renders it evident for him that there is a sheep in the field ($p$). Suppose that, on the basis of his evidence, he comes to believe that there is a sheep in the field. . . . Now, suppose there is in fact a sheep in the field, but the sheep is in some far comer of the field where S cannot see. The object that S sees is a cement replica of a sheep placed in the field by the farmer for decorative purposes. Thus, S has a true belief that there is a sheep in the field, and his justification renders this evident for him. Yet S does not know that there is a sheep in the field. (p. 90)

Swain points out that one way to explain that S lacks knowledge in this case is to point out that his belief that there is a sheep in the field is not caused by the state of affairs in question—the sheep's being in the field. Thus, it seems that a causal condition suggested by this insight must be added to the analysis of knowledge.

There are various moral notions which are arguably historical. For example, Robert Nozick has argued that distributive justice is essentially historical. His point is that one cannot properly judge whether a given distribution of goods is just without knowing how it came about; an apparently very unequal distribution might have come about via voluntary interactions and transactions and thus not necessarily be unjust. (The "Wilt Chamberlain" example is invoked to support this sort of view.) In the Wilt Chamberlain example, thousands of individuals are willing to pay [and do pay] to watch Wilt Chamberlain play basketball; thus, this voluntary exchange of funds upsets whatever pattern had previously existed. But it is intuitively a permissible transition. Further, one could imagine quite a number of such voluntary interactions which at every point change the pattern of holdings. Also, this is the point of Nozick's claim that particular patterns and profiles can be upset by "capitalist acts between consenting adults." It is reasonable to think that considerations of desert based
on past effort, performance, and so forth are relevant to ascertaining whether a particular distribution is just. Notoriously, Nozick criticized Rawls for having an ahistorical or current time-slice model of justice, which was certainly at least in some respects an inaccurate characterization. But whether Nozick's criticism of Rawls was on target is not our concern here. What does seem undeniable is that distributive justice is in some important way a historical phenomenon.

In an intriguing passage, Nozick says:

Incidentally, love is an interesting instance of another relationship that is historical, in that (like justice) it depends upon what actually occurred. An adult may come to love another because of the other's characteristics; but it is the other person, and not the characteristics, that is loved. The love is not transferrable to someone else with the same characteristics, even to one who 'scores' higher for these characteristics. And the love endures through changes of the characteristics that gave rise to it. One loves the particular person one actually encountered. Why love is historical, attaching to persons in this way and not to characteristics, is an interesting and puzzling question. (p. 167-168)

Another interesting example of a claim that a particular moral phenomenon is historical is the view that the virtues depend on certain processes of acquisition. On this view, the virtues are not simply propensities or dispositions to behave in certain ways in relevant circumstances; they are these dispositions only provided that they have been acquired through certain appropriate processes of education and habituation. According to this approach, it is impossible in a strong sense that there be "virtue pills"—pills which one could take that would induce dispositions which would count as virtues. Whereas these pills might induce the pertinent propensities, these would not count as virtues insofar as they were not acquired in the prescribed fashion. This position implies that it is not simply a general empirical truth that certain methods of education and habituation are most conducive to the virtues; it is a conceptual and metaphysical impossibility that a person have the relevant virtue without having acquired it in the specified manner.

Similarly, notions of well-being and flourishing do not appear to be current time-slice notions. That is to say, simply attending to an agent's present condition without comparing it to past states (and perhaps alternative possibilities) will not adequately ground judgments of well-being or flourishing. As Thomas Nagel puts it:12

Often we need to know [an individual's] history to tell whether something is a misfortune or not; this applies to ills like deterioration, deprivation, and damage. Sometimes his experiential state is relatively unimportant—as in the case of a man who wastes his life in the cheerful pursuit of a method of communicating with asparagus plants. . . . It therefore seems to me worth exploring the position that most good and ill fortune has as
its subject a person identified by his history and his possibilities, rather than merely by his categorical state of the moment. . . .

These ideas can be illustrated by an example of deprivation whose severity approaches that of death. Suppose an intelligent person receives a brain injury that reduces him to the mental condition of a contented infant, and that such desires as remain to him can be satisfied by a custodian, so that he is free from care. Such a development would be widely regarded as a severe misfortune, not only for his friends and relations, or for society, but also, and primarily, for the person himself. This does not mean that a contented infant is unfortunate. The intelligent adult who has been reduced to this condition is the subject of the misfortune. (p. 5)

It seems that Nagel is here suggesting that the notions of something's being a misfortune or someone's being in an unfortunate state are historical notions.

Finally, it has been suggested that the notion of moral responsibility is historical. The motivation for this claim can be understood by thinking about the apparent inadequacies of various current time-slice models of moral responsibility. One particularly salient current time-slice approach to moral responsibility has been developed in a series of articles by Harry Frankfurt. On one version of this theory, an agent is morally responsible for an action if there is conformity between his "second-order volition" (his preference as to which first-order desire should move him to action) and his "will" (the first-order desire that does in fact move the person to action). Roughly, the idea is that an agent is morally responsible for his action insofar as there is a mesh between what the person wills and what he wants to will.

In his later work, Frankfurt has proposed refinements (or perhaps further specifications) of his model of moral responsibility. Frankfurt stresses the way in which a person can identify with a particular desire. Such identification requires that an agent form an unopposed higher-order desire to make a particular first-order desire his will and that he judge that no further consultation with other even higher-order desires would lead to a reversal of this decision. Does it matter for Frankfurt how this mesh between higher-order volitions and the will (together with a judgment that future deliberation and reconsideration would not issue in a different decision) come about? Evidently not. Frankfurt's theory holds that an agent who identifies wholeheartedly with his will should be held responsible for his action, independent of his history (and in particular the history of the identification). Frankfurt says, "to the extent that a person identifies himself with the springs of his actions, he takes responsibility for those actions and acquires moral responsibility for them; moreover, the questions of how the actions and his identifications with their springs are caused is irrelevant to the questions of whether he performs the actions freely or is morally responsible for performing them."15

Another kind of "mesh" theory of moral responsibility is suggested by Gary Watson. But Watson's theory is not a hierarchical mesh theory; rather, it is what might be called a "multiple-source" mesh theory. Instead of positing
a hierarchy of preferences, Watson posits different sources of preferences. According to Watson's theory, there are "valuational preferences" (which in some sense come from "reason" or reflect what reason recommends) and "motivational preferences" (which move one to act). A mere motivational preference would have its source somewhere other than reason, perhaps in "appetite." Roughly speaking, Watson suggests that the valuational preferences reflect what the agent takes to be defensible, considering his life as a whole. Employing the resources developed by Watson, one could say that an agent is morally responsible for an action insofar as there is a mesh between the valuational and motivational preference to perform the action.

An approach which combines elements from both sorts of mesh theories sketched above has been suggested by Charles Taylor. He follows Frankfurt in employing a hierarchical apparatus, but follows Watson in requiring that a selected group of preferences reflect certain values. Taylor claims that these values must in some suitable way express deontological considerations such as rights rather than merely capture judgments about maximization or optimization. The details of this approach are not important here. What is relevant is that Taylor's approach is also a mesh theory; it claims that a certain mesh between a "strong-evaluation" (the pertinent higher-order preference based on appropriate moral considerations) and the preference that moves one to action is sufficient for moral responsibility.

The theories of Frankfurt, Watson, and Taylor are mesh theories of various sorts. They simply focus on the issue of whether there is a suitable connection or mesh between selected elements of one's mental economy. As such, these theories are purely structural—they look for a particular pattern in the relevant snapshot properties. Clearly, then, these theories are current time-slice approaches to moral responsibility.

Another influential mesh theory of moral responsibility posits a mesh between one's character (or particular traits of character) and choices (or actions) as sufficient for moral responsibility. On this view, one is morally responsible for one's behavior insofar as it expresses one's character (in some suitable way). The pertinent elements selected as the "mesh-elements" here are an agent's character (or perhaps particular traits of character) and the preferences and actions which result. (Here the mesh elements are not both particular motivational states, but a disposition or propensity and a motivational state or action.) David Hume suggested this sort of approach, and it has been defended by various contemporary philosophers. A particularly salient articulation of this sort of theory is found in a recent *Yale Law Journal* article by George Vuoso, "Background, Responsibility, and Excuse":

The version of compatibilism I advocate claims that an agent can properly be held morally responsible for his actions to the extent and only to the extent that they reflect badly on his character. Thus, if an action is a moral wrong, and it was determined by the agent's character, in the sense that his character would be the predominant causal factor in an
accurate explanation of the action, then he generally would be morally responsible for it. . . . It clearly follows from this view that one’s past is irrelevant to the assessment of his moral responsibility for a wrong he committed: all that is relevant is the extent to which his character was causally responsible for the wrong, or in other words, the extent to which the wrong was due to his bad character. . . . The sort of character a person has is relevant to assessing his moral responsibility for an action, but not how he came to have that character. (pp. 1680–81)

Similarly, Robert Cummins says:21

The fact that a bad habit or trait is not culpably acquired or maintained has no tendency to show that it is not a bad habit or trait. Vicious habits are like vicious dogs in that their viciousness does not depend on how they were acquired. . . . Most often, we want to know what someone is like now; whether they are good or bad now. Here it is plainly which traits are reflected in conduct that counts, not how those traits were acquired. (p. 224)

But we believe that the problem with all mesh theories, no matter how they are refined, is that the selected mesh can be produced via intuitively “responsibility-undermining” mechanisms. No matter what the mesh-elements are, they may be induced by such processes as (clandestine) electronic stimulation of the brain, hypnosis, brainwashing, and so on. More specifically, a connection between selected higher-order elements (even ones which reflect or embody certain values) and relevant lower-order elements, or between elements with different sources (such as reason and appetite, as specified by Watson), or between a preference and a character trait can be caused via (for example) direct electronic stimulation of the brain or any number of other clandestine responsibility-undermining processes. It seems that the problem with all such theories is precisely that they are purely structural and ahistorical. Moral responsibility however appears to be a historical phenomenon: whether an agent is morally responsible cannot be read off his snapshot properties, but is at least in part a matter of how the action came about. Given that the snapshot properties are held fixed, alterations in facts about the causal history of an action can elicit alterations in our views about the agent’s responsibility.22

III. EVALUATION AND A FURTHER DISTINCTION

The examples assembled in the previous section were all instances of “apparently” or “allegedly” historical phenomena. But now we must inquire a bit more carefully into whether the phenomena are genuinely historical or merely apparently historical. Certainly, the claims about distributive justice and the authenticity of a work of art are very plausible: these phenomena seem to be genuinely historical. But other such claims may lose some of their appeal upon closer scrutiny. Ultimately, we will want to consider whether moral responsibility is genuinely or merely apparently historical.
Let us consider again the medical examples sketched above. It seems that the physician's understanding of the fact that the patient took a drug is helpful precisely because this past fact points the physician to the appropriate present condition of the patient's body. The past fact then is "epistemically" helpful—it helps to direct the physician to the pertinent snapshot properties. But the past fact is not important apart from referring the physician to a present condition which is assumed to be causing the symptoms in question. Thus, it is plausible to suppose that the importance of history in this sort of context is solely epistemic; the pertinent phenomena are thus not genuinely historical, but merely apparently so.

We shall say that certain merely apparently historical phenomena are "epistemically historical." The claim that a certain range of phenomena is epistemically historical is the claim that turning to the past is necessary, given the limitations of the relevant situation, in order properly to ascertain and evaluate the relevant snapshot properties. But it is evident that a claim of epistemic historicism does not imply a claim of genuine historicism. Epistemic historicism is an epistemological view; if something is epistemically historical, the past is a useful (although in principle dispensable) guide to us in describing and characterizing the present. In contrast, genuine historicism is a metaphysical position: if something is genuinely historical, its being the way it is entails something (of a certain sort) about the past.

To illustrate this point further, let us return to the example of psychoanalysis. In his early case studies on hysteria, Freud describes the case of Elisabeth von R., a young woman referred to him with severe leg pains. The referring physician had "thought the case was one of hysteria, though there was no trace of the usual indications of that neurosis" (p. 135). Traditional examinations could not explain the pains which in two years had grown so severe that Elisabeth frequently had trouble walking. But while her present condition was of little help in diagnosing her illness, Freud discovered that her past did provide the needed information. According to Freud, Elisabeth's pains were the result of troubling ideas which were being repressed—in particular the memory of reaching her sister's deathbed and thinking that at last she could marry her dead sister's husband: "The girl felt towards her brother-in-law a tenderness whose acceptance into consciousness was resisted by her whole moral being. She succeeded in sparing herself the painful conviction that she loved her sister's husband by inducing physical pains in herself instead" (p. 157).

In this case, the pain in Elisabeth's leg is explained in terms of a conversion of the psychical pain from the repressed thought into physical pain. Thus the past influences Elisabeth's present state by causing some snapshot property (i.e., the repressed idea of loving her brother-in-law). In order to understand Elisabeth's present state, Freud needed to use her past to uncover the feeling she was presently repressing. But here the role of the past is purely epistemic: it is not the case that the past is alleged to affect certain features of the present without leaving a trace in the snapshot properties.
In the medical and psychological examples, then, the past is epistemically important. But it does not seem in these examples that the past can have an influence on certain features of the present without "casting a shadow" on the present or "leaving a trace" on the present. Information about the past points us to pertinent snapshot features of the present. When a phenomenon is epistemically historical but not genuinely historical, there is something in the snapshot features of the present which fully grounds the judgments in question, and nothing is entailed about the past.

Indeed, there are debates about whether various of the other phenomena (in addition to the medical and psychoanalytical phenomena) adduced in the previous section are genuinely historical. For example, "neo-Fregeans" of various sorts wish to argue that at least some of the phenomena of linguistic reference and psychological content mentioned above are not genuinely historical. Also, various epistemologists wish to deny that the notions of justification of belief and knowledge are genuinely historical. For example, such epistemologists as Ginet and Foley have argued that the notions of justification and knowledge are not appropriately analyzed causally.

Let us briefly reconsider the Gettier-type examples which were used above to motivate the historical conception of these epistemic notions. $S$ has based his view that there is a sheep in the field on his perceptual data. He is correct in believing this proposition quite by coincidence. The causal theorists hold that the only (or perhaps most effective) way of explaining why $S$ does not know the proposition in question is by pointing out that some sort of causal condition is not met: the sheep itself must cause the belief (in some suitable way). But the anti-causalists argue that there are other ways of explaining why $S$ does not know the proposition in question. For example, there is a fact which obtains at the time of $S$'s belief—the fact that there is a cement replica of a sheep which is causing $S$'s perceptual data—which is such that, if $S$ were to be aware of it, his evidence would no longer render it evident or probable that the proposition that there is a sheep in the field is true. That is, there are snapshot features of the world at the time of the belief by reference to which the defective epistemic situation of the believer can be analyzed. Of course, this sort of fact has been dubbed a "defeater" in the literature in epistemology, and the approach sketched here is in the tradition that suggests that (say) knowledge is undefeated justified true belief. It is not uncontroversial or obvious that such an approach is ultimately tenable, and in any case any version of this sort of strategy would have to be developed with considerably more refinement and specificity in order to be deemed acceptable. Our point is only that such approaches exist and seem on the surface at least as plausible as the causal/historical theories.

In thinking about whether certain of the apparently historical phenomena assembled above are genuinely historical, it is clear (in our view) that some of these phenomena—such as distributive justice and authenticity of works of art—are indeed genuinely historical. Other apparently historical phenomena are merely apparently historical. Among these, some—such as certain
phenomena in the medical and psychoanalytical contexts—are epistemically historical. Other notions such as justification of belief and knowledge are quite controversial; we are not in a position to resolve the question of whether they are genuinely or merely apparently historical.28

IV. RESPONSIBILITY AND HISTORY

The question arises as to whether moral responsibility is genuinely historical. The considerations sketched above appear to indicate that it is. But there are also reasons to question this conclusion. The arguments just developed that certain notions are merely apparently historical suggest a parallel strategy in this context. That is, it might be argued that appeals to history are relevant to responsibility ascriptions only insofar as they point us to something about the present (or the time of the pertinent behavior); the claim would be that responsibility ascriptions are at best epistemically historical. On this approach, features of background and causal history are alleged to be relevant only to the extent that they point us to appropriate present conditions. Thus, the view is that scrutiny of an individual’s childhood or past experiences can only be useful to responsibility ascriptions if the past is found to have left some trace or shadow on the present, just as in the psychoanalytic context discussed above.

The argument presented above for the conclusion that moral responsibility is a genuinely historical phenomenon relied on the point that the current time-slice view of responsibility tends to claim that a structural feature of the agent—a certain selected mesh—is a sufficient condition for moral responsibility. The claim was then that the selected mesh could be generated by an apparently “responsibility-undermining” process or mechanism, and thus the mere existence of the mesh is not indeed sufficient for moral responsibility; the history behind the mesh is also relevant. We wish here to focus, for ease of exposition, on the rather vivid context of significant direct electronic manipulation of the brain.

The anti-historicist might argue as follows. Suppose the direct stimulation of the brain is so significant that it induces a genuinely irresistible urge to perform a certain action. Here it is conceded that the agent is not morally responsible for his action, and thus the mesh theories are inadequate. But it does not follow that no nonhistorical theory will be adequate. And indeed (as with the medical and psychotherapeutic examples and perhaps also the epistemic notions of belief and justification discussed above) the resources for explaining the agent’s lack of responsibility appear to reside in the current time-slice. That is, the past manipulation can be seen to rule out moral responsibility because it results in the presence of some snapshot feature which is sufficient to explain the lack of moral responsibility: the irresistible urge.

Suppose now that the direct stimulation of the brain is considerable but not so significant that it induces a genuinely irresistible urge to behave in a certain way. If the agent does behave in this way, then it will be pointed out that he can be held morally responsible for doing so. However, the nature of the
causal process which issued in the behavior will have an impact on the degree of blameworthiness or praiseworthiness of the agent; these will presumably vary with the nature of the behavior and the degree of "pressure" placed on the agent. Thus, the phenomenon of manipulation may not indicate the necessity for a historical approach to moral responsibility, even if it calls into question purely structural or mesh theories. As we have just argued, if the manipulation issues in irresistible impulses, the agent is not responsible, and a nonhistorical account can accommodate this point. And if the manipulation does not issue in such impulses, the agent is indeed responsible (as the nonhistorical account would have it), but the appropriate reaction to the agent will depend on various factors including the intensity of the urge resulting from the manipulation. (Of course, a similar analysis would apply to other apparently responsibility-threatening factors, such as hypnosis, subliminal advertising, and so forth.) It might seem then that responsibility is, after all, a merely apparently historical phenomenon.

But this conclusion would be hasty. We believe that the dilemma posed above is misleading. The dilemma presupposes that an agent's basic values—the parameters of his practical reasoning—are immune to the envisaged manipulation (or other problematic influence), and it then offers the two alternatives of an irresistible and resistible urge as exhaustive of the field of possibilities. But it seems to be possible that an agent's values themselves be tampered with in significant ways. And if so, then the agent may not be morally responsible for what he does, even if the urge is not irresistible.

To elaborate. Suppose that someone fundamentally alters an individual's relevant values by direct electronic stimulation of the brain. Imagine further that the agent has strong but not irresistible desires to act in accordance with these values (perhaps after deliberation). We believe that the agent is not morally responsible for his behavior, unless he has taken responsibility for the new values. It is possible for an agent to reflect upon and deliberate about his newly formed values and either alter them or accept them. If the agent undertakes this sort of activity, he can be said to take responsibility for his values and thus he can be morally responsible for the actions that flow from them (under certain circumstances). But an agent who has just been manipulated (or subjected to hypnosis, subliminal advertising, psychosurgery, potent drugs, and so forth) and who has not yet taken responsibility for the newly generated values cannot legitimately be held morally responsible for his actions. It is intuitively quite clear that if (some of) an individual's values have been suddenly and radically altered in the envisaged way—say a devoutly religious person has been rendered an atheist, or a feminist has been given chauvinistic values—and the agent has not yet had the opportunity to reflect on these values, he or she is not responsible for the resulting behavior. And this is so because of the nature of the individual's history—it lacks the crucial element of taking responsibility for important values and the parameters of practical reasoning.

Much more needs to be said about the notion of taking responsibility, and most of this will need to await another occasion. We hope that it will be
enough here to rely upon some intuitive (and admittedly inchoate) conception of this notion. In future work we intend to give a more explicit account of this notion, and to address the problem of whether this process itself can be induced by (say) manipulation. Our claim here is that taking responsibility is necessary for moral responsibility, and it is precisely this fact that renders moral responsibility a genuinely historical notion. (The sufficiency claim is quite another matter, but it is only the necessity claim which is required for our view that responsibility is essentially historical.) Taking responsibility for one’s values and the basic mechanisms of one’s practical reasoning can be explicit and deliberative, but it can also be implicit and nondeliberative. Our claim is that the plausibility of the view that an agent is morally responsible for his behavior in the case of a resistible urge in the original dilemma (in which the values have not been tampered with) issues from the presupposition that the agent has indeed taken responsibility for these values in some appropriate sense. The process of taking responsibility—although it need not be explicit or deliberative—is a prerequisite for moral responsibility.

Pursuing the other horn of the anti-historicist’s dilemma, we wish to claim that even in the case of certain irresistible urges, it may be the case that the agent is morally responsible for his behavior, if (but only if) he has taken responsibility for the basic parameters of the practical reasoning which issues in the urges. For example, it may be that a mother has a literally irresistible urge to run into a burning house to save her children who are at risk. It is highly controversial whether this is an accurate characterization of the situation, but it is at least possible that there are some such cases of “volitional necessity”—cases in which it would be literally unthinkable for the agent to behave otherwise. In the case described above, the mother may be morally responsible for her behavior insofar as she has taken responsibility for the values that issue in her urge to save the children. In general, it may be the case that even action on literally irresistible impulses may be consistent with moral responsibility, given an appropriate process of taking responsibility in the past.

Thus, moral responsibility requires a certain sort of past process of taking responsibility. Both horns of the dilemma proposed by the anti-historicist can be denied: there may be cases of action on irresistible desires for which the agent is morally responsible, and there may be cases of action on resistible desires for which the agent is not morally responsible. In both cases the tenability of the responsibility ascription will depend on the agent’s having taken responsibility; the relevant facts about moral responsibility cannot be read off the snapshot properties.

As we stated earlier, Harry Frankfurt has frequently insisted that his approach to moral responsibility is purely structural and ahistorical. But consider now the following passage from Frankfurt:

Let us distinguish two fundamentally different states of affairs. . . . In the first state of affairs the D/n [Devil/neurologist] manipulates his subject
on a continuous basis, like a marionette, so that each of the subject's mental and physical states is the outcome of specific intervention on the part of the D/n. In that case the subject is not a person at all. His history is utterly episodic and without inherent connectedness.

. . . The other possibility is that the D/n provides his subject with a stable character or program, which he does not thereafter alter too frequently or at all, and that the subsequent mental and physical responses of the subject to his external and internal environments are determined by this program rather than by further intervention on the part of the D/n. . . . [There are no] compelling reasons either against allowing that the subject may act freely or against regarding him as capable of being morally responsible for what he does.

He may become morally responsible, assuming that he is suitably programmed, in the same way others do: by identifying himself with some of his own second-order desires, so that they are not merely desires that he happens to have or to find within himself, but desires that he adopts or puts himself behind. In virtue of a person's identification of himself with one of his own second-order desires, that desire becomes a second-order volition. And the person thereby takes responsibility for the pertinent first- and second-order desires and for the actions to which these desires lead him. (pp. 119-120)

But Frankfurt's remarks are puzzling, given that he repeatedly endorses a current time-slice model of moral responsibility. Notice first that he infers from the fact of continuous manipulation that the subject's "history is utterly episodic and without inherent connectedness." But surely this is a spurious transition, for continuous manipulation is compatible with continuity and intelligibility. Whether an agent's history is continuous or episodic in its content is quite a different matter from whether it is internally or externally generated. Further, the clear implication seems to be that a certain degree of historical continuity and connectedness is essential to moral responsibility, which would appear to be incompatible with a current time-slice model of moral responsibility.

But let these matters pass, and let us look carefully at what Frankfurt says about the second horn of his dilemma. This is the situation in which the D/n "provides his subject with a stable character or program, which he does not thereafter alter too frequently or at all." Frankfurt's claim is that the agent may become morally responsible by taking responsibility. We agree with Frankfurt about this, but we have an important disagreement about the nature of taking responsibility. We claim that some sort of process of taking responsibility is necessary for moral responsibility. And (of course) a process is essentially historical. In contrast, Frankfurt is committed to the view that taking responsibility is a current time-slice notion—it is a matter of attitudes and dispositions one has at a given moment. That is, Frankfurt's view (developed in "Identification and Wholeheartedness") is that one identifies oneself with (say) a first-order desire insofar as (a) one has an unopposed second-order volition
to act in accordance with it, and (b) one judges that any further deliberation about the matter would issue in the same decision. This view reflects a slight refinement in the simple mesh theory of Frankfurt's early work; here, the mesh condition is supplemented by the "resonance" condition—in virtue of the judgment that further deliberation would simply issue in the same judgment, one's commitment is alleged to be "decisive" and to "resound" through the various levels of one's motivational states. But clearly this judgment can be induced in the same manner as the mesh, and even if the second condition addresses other apparent problems with Frankfurt's theory, it clearly does not address the problem of (say) manipulation.36 At least part of the reason it is not successful here is that it posits an ingredient that may simply be another element in the mental economy of the agent at the time of the action which is induced in precisely the same manner as the mesh. What is needed, we have argued, is attention to the history of the action; what is needed here is some process of evaluation and scrutiny of the "program" or values which have been induced. And it is evident that this process requires that moral responsibility be a historical phenomenon. Frankfurt is correct in thinking that taking responsibility is crucial to moral responsibility, but he is wrong to think that taking responsibility can be analyzed simply by reference to snapshot properties.37

Finally, why exactly would one wish to insist that moral responsibility is a current time-slice notion? What is at stake? Frankfurt is a compatibilist about moral responsibility and causal determinism. If moral responsibility does not depend on history, then compatibilism would be easier to defend; perhaps this is part of the motivation for holding that moral responsibility is not historical. Indeed, an argument has been made that even if moral responsibility did not require alternative possibilities, it would not follow that moral responsibility is compatible with causal determinism insofar as causal determinism might constitute "actual-sequence compulsion."38 According to this argument, even if responsibility does not require alternative possibilities, further work would have to be done in order to establish the compatibility of causal determinism and moral responsibility. But if moral responsibility were not a historical phenomenon, then this further task could be obviated.

Note however that the above strategy is not required in order to argue for the compatibility of causal determinism and moral responsibility. For example, it could be conceded that moral responsibility is essentially historical while insisting that causal determination need not in itself constitute the kind of past that rules out responsibility.39

V. TWO OBJECTIONS

Two related objections to our distinction between historical and non-historical phenomena (and our claim that moral responsibility is historical) issue from the worry that too many phenomena will be deemed historical. More specifically, if a historical phenomenon is one that entails something about the past, then the worry is that too many things will be counted as historical.
Va. The first objection points out that everything entails something about the past, in some sense of “about the past.” So, for example, our writing this essay now entails that two plus two equalled four in 1900. Also, our writing this essay now entails that it was not the case in 1980 that we wrote our last essay. In general, the truth of any proposition about a time seems to entail the truth of at least some propositions about prior times. And if this is true, then all phenomena would turn out to be historical, and the distinction we have put forward would have been shown to be trivial.

No doubt, it is not an easy thing to give a precise account of the distinction between historical and non-historical phenomena. For our purposes, however, it is sufficient to say that a historical phenomenon entails the truth of a certain sort of proposition about the past. Alternatively, a historical phenomenon entails that a certain sort of fact obtained in the past. More specifically, the idea is that a historical phenomenon entails that an immediate fact obtained in the past, where an immediate fact is a contingent fact which specifies what is “really” going on in a basic sense at a given time. An immediate fact specifies what is happening in the “pure present” at any given time.40 We do not purport (here) to give an analysis of immediacy, but must rely upon intuitively clear cases of immediate and non-immediate facts.41

At this point it is appropriate to note that historical facts are the “mirror image” of so-called “soft facts.” (The following are soft facts: the fact that it was true on Monday that Mary would go to the movies on Tuesday, the fact that Jack went to sleep on Wednesday prior to eating breakfast on Thursday, and so forth.42) Both sorts of facts (historical and soft) are temporally relational. But whereas soft facts are implicitly about (or depend upon) immediate facts which obtain at subsequent times, historical facts are implicitly about (or depend upon) immediate facts which obtain at prior times. Indeed, Alvin Plantinga has suggested that the mark of a soft fact about a time is that it entails the obtaining of some intuitively immediate fact about the future.43 Our suggestion is precisely the mirror image of Plantinga’s: the mark of a historical fact is that it entails the obtaining of some intuitively immediate fact about the past. It is interesting to note that soft facts and historical facts are mirror image species of the genus, temporally relational facts.

Vb. A second objection issues from certain views about the essential features of individual objects (and perhaps also natural kinds). On a certain view of personal identity, it is a necessary condition of an individual’s being (say) Max Smith that he have come from the particular sperm and egg cell from which Max Smith actually developed. Thus, it would appear (on the account of historical facts we have suggested) that such statements as “Max Smith is wearing a red shirt” express historical facts insofar as the truth of the statement entails that certain particular sperm and egg cells came together in the past to initiate the developmental sequence which issued in Max Smith. Also, on this sort of view, if this table is (and always has been) made of wood, it is an essential feature of it that it not have been originally made of ice. Thus, such statements as “This table is brown” would appear to express historical facts.
insofar as they entail that this table not have originally been made of ice, and so forth.44

We do not know whether these views about the identity of persons and particular objects are indeed true. They are controversial; if one denies them, one can of course block the objection. But even if they are true it does not follow that the distinction between historical and non-historical phenomena becomes trivial. For although (on this view) there will turn out to be more historical phenomena than one otherwise might have supposed, there is still a robust distinction insofar as such facts as “A person in such and such a location is wearing a red shirt,” and “A table in such and such a location is brown” turn out to be non-historical. Indeed, for every (allegedly) historical phenomenon, there would seem to be various related intuitively non-historical facts. Thus, even on this “Kripkean” view about the essential features of objects, the distinction between historical and non-historical facts does not collapse.45

VI. SUMMARY

We began by sketching (in an admittedly somewhat vague way) a distinction between historical and current time-slice phenomena. A historical phenomenon is in some intuitive sense “dependent” on the past in a way in which a current time-slice phenomenon is not. Roughly speaking, a historical phenomenon entails that the past be a certain way, whereas a current slice phenomenon is solely a function of snapshot properties. We then assembled a number of examples of apparently historical phenomena from both nonnative and non-nonnative contexts.

But some apparently historical phenomena were found to be merely apparently historical. Even though some such phenomena were found to be epistemically historical, they were nevertheless deemed not to be genuinely historical. They were not thought to be genuinely historical because these phenomena could in principle be explained solely in terms of snapshot properties—the resources for explaining these phenomena all reside in the relevant current time-slice, even if they are difficult for us to identify without consulting the past.

Finally, we argued that moral responsibility is in the class of genuinely (and not merely apparently historical) phenomena. We argued that various possible cases impugn the idea that current time-slice resources can adequately ground and explain responsibility ascriptions. These cases point to a quite general truth that obtains even in relatively less unusual cases: moral responsibility requires a process of taking responsibility. This process need not always be explicit, conscious, or deliberate. But it has in fact almost always taken place, and it must have taken place, if the agent is to be held responsible: the arcane cases bring out and point us toward a quite general and important truth. And this truth—that moral responsibility requires the process of taking responsibility—helps us to see that moral responsibility is a genuinely historical phenomenon.

It just might be the case, finally, that there are two agents with precisely the same relevant snapshot properties and who perform precisely the same unfortunate action, but with very different pasts. It might be, for example, that
one of the agents was subject to a long history of brutal and humiliating physical and psychological abuse. Specifically, it might be that one of the individuals was beaten and continuously abused in the past by her husband, while the other had no such history. Here it may be that—it is at least worth considering the proposition that—even though the relevant snapshot properties are precisely symmetric, the one agent is morally responsible, while the other agent is not.64

Stephen Daedelus complained, in Joyce’s Ulysses, “History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.” For some, history is a nightmare from which they cannot awake.47

NOTES

1. This is a rough first approximation to the idea of something’s being historical. We further refine and discuss the characterization below.

2. We are grateful to Ruth Barcan Marcus for this example and conversations about it.

3. Peter van Inwagen, Metaphysics (Boulder, Colo., forthcoming). We have taken this passage from a pre-publication manuscript.


8. And just as Goldman wishes to insist on a certain sort of causal sequence (a reliable or truth-conducive kind of causal chain), so Swain also must opt for an appropriate sort of causal sequence:

Imagine the following variation [on the above example]. Suppose that S is looking into a field as before, and sees an object that he takes to be a sheep. And, as before, he hears bleating noises and is aware of sheeplike odors in the air. This time, however, he is seeing not a cement replica of a sheep, but rather a very cleverly engineered television image of a sheep, Someone, for reasons on which we need not speculate, has placed an invisible glass projection screen out in the field and with hidden projection equipment is projecting the image of a sheep on the screen. Moreover, the sheep whose image is being projected is off in some far comer of the field, where S cannot see. We may suppose that S’s evidential beliefs, etc., are in this case just as they were in the previous example. Of course, in this case, as in the previous example, S does not know that there is a sheep in the field. (p. 95)

As a result of this sort of case, Swain concludes that the relevant condition on knowledge must specify a certain sort of causal connection (not just any causal connection), but the details are not important here. It suffices to note that various philosophers have argued that such notions as justification and knowledge are in the sense specified above historical notions: according to these philosophers, claims about justification and knowledge entail that the history of belief acquisition be of a certain sort.


10. Ibid., 161–63.


17. Note that we mean “logical source,” not “causal source” here.


22. Note that our criticism applies to “pure mesh theories”—those which claim that the mesh is itself sufficient for moral responsibility. If one wished to add some sort of historical condition to the mesh condition, then of course our criticism would not apply. In this case one would have abandoned the sort of mesh theory we are interested in, insofar as it is only the pure mesh theories which are current time-slice (and not historical) theories.


24. Compatibilists about causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise tend to argue that only features of the current time-slice are pertinent to ascriptions of freedom to do otherwise. They believe that the only way in which the past can matter to such ascriptions is by casting a shadow on the present: this is essentially the point of Keith Lehrer’s “Shadow Principle” in Profiles: Keith Lehrer, edited by Radu J. Bogdan (Dordrecht, 1981), esp. pp. 30-39. In contrast, incompatibilists hold that the past can be directly relevant to current ascriptions of freedom to do otherwise (without casting any kind of shadow). They reject the shadow principle, replacing it with some sort of Dog’s Tail Principle, according to which the past is like a dog’s tail which must follow the dog wherever it goes. The shadow theorist may accuse the incompatibilist of allowing the tail to wag the dog, but we cannot go into this dispute here.

25. Not all philosophers have been careful to distinguish between phenomena which are genuinely historical and those which are merely epistemically historical. For example, in his book, Philosophy of the Social Sciences (Boulder, Colo., 1988), 107-108, Alexander Rosenberg says:

As we saw in the case of Freud’s theory, Marx’s is also sometimes interpreted, defended, and attacked as ‘historicist’. A theory or method is historicist, roughly if it holds that in order to understand and to predict subsequent states of a system... we must have detailed knowledge of the past states of the system. Even to predict the very next ‘state’ in the development of a neurosis or an economic system, we need to know about events long past in the life of the individual—usually the patient’s infancy—or the society—sometimes even its prehistory... When Marx’s and Freud’s theories are described as essentially or unavoidably historicist, what is meant is that past events really do continue to exercise control over future ones... We need to study
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the past . . . because over and above features of the present state, there are causes in
the distant past.

Note that Rosenberg here slides from epistemic to genuine historicism.

26. Carl Ginet, Knowledge, Perception, and Memory (Dordrecht, 1975); “Contra Relia-
obilism,” The Monist 68 (1985): 175–87; “Justification: It Need Not Cause But It Must
Foley, “What’s Wrong With Reliabilism?” The Monist 68 (1985): 188–202; and The Theory

27. The strategy just sketched pertains primarily to knowledge claims. But a similar ap-
proach can be employed in regard to justification. Consider this passage from “Justification”
by Carl Ginet:

For a fact to contribute to making me justified at a particular time in then adopting a
certain belief, it is not necessary that it be part of what causes me to adopt the belief,
but it is necessary that it be something in my field of awareness at that time so that it
could induce me to adopt the belief should I be disposed to be influenced by it.

Suppose, for example, that S knows that (a) certain medical tests she has undergone
indicate, with 95% reliability, that she has a certain serious and incurable disease. She
then has a reason, a strong reason, to believe that she does in fact have the disease. But
she also has a reason not to believe that she does, a non-evidentiary reason, namely,
the extreme disagreeableness of such a belief. A person in such circumstances need
not be compelled by either of these reasons, need not either believe she has the disease
without being able to help so believing or withhold believing she has it without being
able to help doing that. A person in such circumstances may be in a position to choose
whether or not to believe she has the disease (and I suspect that this is the position
many of us would in fact be in).

Now consider a person in such a position who knows that the test results are
excellent evidence that she has the disease but who refuses to believe that she has
it—she clings to the hope that she might be one of the 5% of false positives. She does
this, that is, until she learns that the astrological signs indicate that she has acquired
a serious disease, whereupon, having faith in astrology, she begins to believe that she
has the disease. So the situation is that she would not believe that she has a serious
disease if she had only the good reason for doing so (the evidence of the medical
tests), but she would believe this if she had only the bad reason (the astrological
signs) for doing so. Thus, it is not for the good reason but only for the bad reason
that she believes it; it is because of her awareness of what the astrological signs say
and not because of her awareness of the significance of the results of the medical
tests that she believes it; it is solely the former that explains her believing it, the latter
is not even part of the explanation. Nevertheless, the fact that she is aware that there
is a good reason for believing it justifies her in believing it: she could turn aside any
suggestion that she in her current circumstances ought not to believe such a thing
by citing that good reason she then has for believing it. Her being aware of a good
reason for believing it justifies her in believing it, even though it played no part in
inducing her to believe it. (p. 100)

Again, the key insight here is that the fact which implies that the agent is justified in her belief
resides in the snapshot features of the world at the time of belief: it is (allegedly) irrelevant
how the belief is produced. The proponents of the epistemic strategies here described would
argue that the crucial notions of justification of belief and knowledge are current time-
slice notions; they would claim that these notions are merely apparently historical. Snapshot
features of the world are available to explain the epistemic defect of S when he believes
that there is a sheep in the field in the example discussed in the text, and snapshot features
of the world are available to explain the epistemic virtue of the agent who believes that she
will get the disease in Ginet’s example.
28. The question of whether love and friendship are genuinely historical phenomena is an interesting and difficult one. Let us (somewhat morbidly) suppose that one's spouse and children suddenly die, but in an independent and incredible coincidence, exact duplicates come into being. These are molecule for molecule duplicates with exactly the same mental states, such as memories, as the "originals." Now it would seem almost impossible not to have the same attitudes of love toward these new persons as to one's old family, and yet one has never had any causal interaction with the new persons in the past (and the past is irrelevant to their coming into being). Of course, this is a fantastic scenario, and it is difficult to assess such possibilities sensibly. But we simply wish to raise some preliminary doubts about Nozick's suggestion that love and friendship are (like distributive justice) historical notions.

29. This claim can be challenged, but it is beyond the scope of this essay to evaluate these challenges carefully.

30. Ultimately, our preferred notion of "taking responsibility" will have core elements of the intuitive notion, but it will also depart from the ordinary intuitive concept in some ways. We believe that the ordinary intuitive concept of taking responsibility is too explicit and deliberative for our purposes. In cases in which it is tempting to say that an agent is morally responsible because he should have taken responsibility although he did not, we shall suggest that the temptation to suppose that the agent has not in fact taken responsibility may come from an excessively narrow conception of taking responsibility.


32. Harry Frankfurt, "Rationality and the Unthinkable," *The Importance of What We Care About* (Cambridge, 1988), 177-90.

33. We have focused on one particular anti-historicist argument. Of course, we do not deny that it is possible that there are other anti-historicist arguments, and thus we do not claim to have decisively established historicism.

34. In the recent essay, "Identification and Wholeheartedness," Frankfurt says:

It is these acts of ordering and of rejection—integration and separation—that create a self out of the raw materials of inner life. They define the intrapsychic constraints and boundaries with respect to which a person's autonomy may be threatened even by his own desires. [The following is the footnote that attaches to this passage] The determining conditions that are pertinent here are exclusively structural arrangements. I mention this, although I do not pursue the point, since it bears on the familiar issue of whether historical considerations—especially causal stories—have any essential relevance to questions concerning whether a person's actions are autonomous. (p. 39)

35. Frankfurt, "Three Concepts of Free Action: II."

36. In his famous critique of Frankfurt's early formulation of his mesh theory, Gary Watson argued that simply adding higher levels in the hierarchy of preferences does not provide enough to ground the claim that an agent is acting freely (Watson, "Free Agency"). Roughly, the point is that if acting on a first-order desire is not itself sufficient for moral responsibility because of considerations pertinent to the second level, then surely acting in accordance with a second-order desire of a certain sort is not itself sufficient for moral responsibility because of considerations pertinent to the third level, and so forth. This might be called the "logical" problem with the simple mesh view, and Frankfurt's new view seems to address the logical problem (in virtue of positing the resonance condition). But the logical problem is clearly different from the "source" problem—the problem that the mesh can be induced in responsibility-undermining ways. (This problem for the simple mesh theory was nicely developed by Michael Slote: "Understanding Free Will," *Journal of Philosophy* 77 [March 1980]: 136-51.) Thus, it might be said that Frankfurt's new view addresses Watson's critique, but not Slote's—it addresses the logical problem, but not the source problem. Thus, the new view, even if it is successful in addressing the logical problem, does not in any way diminish the plausibility of the insight that responsibility is essentially historical.
37. In his fascinating and elegant Presidential Address to the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, Frankfurt reiterates his attempt to analyze identification in terms of purely internal, snapshot resources:

Hierarchical accounts of the identity of the self do not presume, however, that a person's identification with some desire consists simply in the fact that he has a higher-order desire by which the first desire is endorsed. The endorsing higher-order desire must be, in addition, a desire with which the person is satisfied. Identification is constituted neatly by an endorsing higher-order desire with which the person is satisfied. (Hary Frankfurt, "The Faintest Passion," manuscript p. 23—delivered to the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, December 1991)

But if identification is to do the work required of it in Frankfurt's theory of freedom and responsibility, matters cannot be as neat as he supposes: one must attend to the causal sources of the satisfaction in question. Frankfurt is here primarily concerned with analyzing such notions as ambivalence and wholeheartedness. Perhaps for these notions it is appropriate to employ a concept of identification that is analyzed by reference solely to snapshot resources; perhaps these notions are indeed simply a matter of patterns of internal attitudes quite independent of how the patterns are produced. But then this would simply reinforce the point that such notions as wholeheartedness and identification (thus construed) are not sufficient for moral responsibility.


39. See Fischer, "Responsiveness and Moral Responsibility."


41. For a selection of essays which explore various putative analyses of this problematic notion, see John Martin Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom* (Stanford, 1989).

42. For discussion of the nature of soft facts and their role in debates about the relationship between God's omniscience and human freedom, see ibid.


44. For a defense of such views about identity, see Saul A. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980).

45. Suppose a fact is composed of an individual and a property. Some facts are historical in virtue of their constituent properties, whereas others are historical in virtue of their constituent individuals (if the Kripkean view is correct). Thus, there are different "sources" of historicity of facts. Interestingly, there is a parallel here with soft facts. Some soft facts are soft in virtue of their constituent properties. But others are soft in virtue of their constituent individuals—or perhaps the interaction between the constituent individuals and properties (which themselves are not soft). Thus, there are different sources of the softness of facts. See John Martin Fischer, "Hard-Type Soft Facts," *Philosophical Review* 95 (October 1986): 591–601.

46. It might be argued that such a case is impossible, since there must be some differences at some levels of description between the two brains, if indeed the past history of the abused individual is to exculpate her. It is not however obvious to us that this is true, even if it is true. It is at least worth considering whether such a case is possible.

47. We thank Ruth Barcan Marcus for the example concerning the nature of beauty. We have benefited from very useful comments by Carl Ginet, Mark Lance, Nancy Sherman, Wayne Davis, Carl Hoefer, and Tom Senor. Also, we are grateful to Harry Frankfurt for a manuscript copy of his APA Eastern Division Presidential Address and to Peter van Inwagen for a manuscript copy of his book, *Metaphysics* (Boulder, Colo., 1993). Previous versions of this essay have been read at the University of California, Riverside, Georgetown University, and Occidental College.