

# R. M. Hare

## Annotated Bibliography

By Keith Burgess-Jackson, J.D., Ph.D.  
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**1949**

**“Imperative Sentences.”** *Mind*, n.s., 58 (January 1949): 21-39. Reprinted, with Appendix (“Extract from ‘Practical Reason’, an Unpublished Thesis Awarded the T. H. Green Prize at Oxford, 1950”), as chap. 1 of PI. Hare shows that there can be a logic of imperatives as well as of indicatives. Why is this important? Because some writers “think that, because ethical sentences are not true indicatives, logical methods cannot be used in ethics with as much confidence as in other enquiries.” If Hare can show (1) that ethical sentences are (or entail) imperatives and (2) that there is a logic of imperatives, then he can rescue ethics from the irrationalists. Every imperative, like every indicative, has two parts: a descriptor, which describes a state of affairs, and a dictor, which describes the mood (either imperative or indicative). “All men are mortal” and “Let all men be mortal” have the same descriptor (men mortal) but different dictors. “[S]ince logic is mainly about descriptors, and commands contain descriptors, commands are a proper concern of the logician.” Here is an example of a valid inference in which all the sentences are imperatives: Let all men be mortal; let Socrates be a man; therefore, let Socrates be mortal. This is no less valid than the corresponding inference in the indicative mood: All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal.

**1950**

**Review of *Moral Obligation and Knowledge and Perception*, by H. A. Prichard.** *The Oxford Magazine* 68 (15 June 1950): 558. Hare praises Prichard’s rejection of “the objectivism of Moore” and “the naturalism of Mill and others.” That a situation has certain characteristics does not entail that one “ought to try to bring it about.” Prichard, to his credit, understood “how difficult and perplexing a subject philosophy is.”

**Review of *Morality and God*, by Edward Wales Hirst.** *Philosophy* 25 (October 1950): 376-7. Hare criticizes Hirst for violating Hume’s Law—with a twist. Instead of deriving values from natural facts, Hirst derives them from supernatural facts (about God’s existence and character). Hare says that if Christianity is to be

relevant to “present-day ethical controversies,” it must come to grips with recent “logical researches.”

**“Theology and Falsification: A Symposium.” *University* 1 (1950-51): xx-xx. Reprinted as appendix to chap. 1 of ERE.** Hare replies to Antony Flew’s argument that since nothing is allowed by theists to count against their claims, their “claims” are not assertions. Hare agrees that religious claims are not assertions, but denies that they are unimportant. They are expressions of a *blik*, or worldview (or attitude toward the world). Even atheists have a *blik*. “Flew has shown that a *blik* does not consist in an assertion or system of them; but nevertheless it is very important to have the right *blik*.” It sounds as though Hare is saying that religious claims can be understood only from within a *blik*, i.e., that there is no transcendent space from which to evaluate *bliks* as true or false.

## 1951

**“Freedom of the Will.” *The Aristotelian Society*, supplementary volume 25 (1951): 201-16. Reprinted, with one omission, as chap. 1 of EMC.** Hare asks what it is about the word “ought” that gives rise to the “ought’ implies ‘can” principle. First, he argues that the principle is not limited to moral uses of “ought.” It applies whenever one uses “ought” to give advice or guidance. “You cannot instruct people in a rule to do the impossible.” “Ought” implies “can” because “ought” is prescriptive. Second, he shows how advice differs from persuasion. The latter is a success concept (“achievement word”). Third, viewing moral judgment as persuasion leads to “ethical irrationalism,” as exemplified by Stevenson’s emotivism. Advice is directed to persons *qua* cognitive (i.e., free and rational) beings. Persuasion is directed to persons *qua* affective beings. (Hare is using “persuasion” to mean *non-rational* persuasion.)

**Review of *The Philosophy of Plato*, by G. C. Field. *Mind*, n.s., 60 (January 1951): 128-9.** Hare criticizes “Platonists” such as Field for not using “the methods of logical analysis” in their studies of Plato. Some of Plato’s ontological claims, for example, can be understood (and defended) as logical claims. Hare also criticizes Field for not paying sufficient attention to Plato’s practical philosophy.

**Review of *An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics*, by Stephen Edelston Toulmin. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 1 (July 1951): 372-5.** Hare praises Toulmin for asking the relevant question—“What to do”—but finds fault with his answer. Toulmin violates Hume’s Law by inferring an “ought” (X provides a good reason to act) from an “is” (X falls under a practice that minimizes conflicts of interest). No appeal to usage can establish a moral judgment. “The trick is per-

formed only by smuggling in the essential moral premiss disguised as a rule of inference. . . .”

**Review of *Value: A Cooperative Enquiry*, ed. Ray Lepley. *Mind*, n.s., 60 (July 1951): 430-3.** Hare criticizes the contributors to this volume for presupposing what should be questioned, namely, that value can and should be studied scientifically. What the contributors (philosophers generally) should do is study the logical behavior of “good” and other evaluative terms. This study would show that “good” functions very differently from “brown.” Another presupposition is that words such as “good” have referents. This is decriptivism, which leads to relativism. The whole “enquiry” is therefore misplaced.

## 1952

**Review of *Morals and Revelation*, by H. D. Lewis. *Philosophy* 27 (October 1952): 374-5.** Hare criticizes Lewis for failing to stress “the distinction between ethics, considered as the study . . . of moral thought, and morals, in the sense of the actual propounding of moral judgments and systems.” Hare also rejects the idea that ethics is a “battle” between objectivists and skeptics. Viewing it that way will retard progress.

***The Language of Morals*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.** See [here](#) for a summary.

## 1954

**Review of *The Ethics of Aristotle*, trans. J. A. K. Thomson. *The Oxford Magazine* 72 (25 February 1954): 240.** Hare praises the readability of the book, but criticizes the translator for “missing important philosophical points.”

**Review of *What Is Value? An Essay in Philosophical Analysis*, by Everett W. Hall. *Mind*, n.s., 63 (April 1954): 262-9.** Hare praises Hall for using “linguistic analysis,” but criticizes Hall’s analysis. Hall’s aim is to show that value, like fact, is “in the world” (i.e., objective), albeit in a different way. His method is to show, *inter alia*, that value-sentences are not reducible to factual sentences. Specifically, it is to show that the “syntax” of imperatives is “completely different from” that of indicatives. Hare argues that the alleged differences do not exist. “Thus Professor Hall is unsuccessful in establishing a difference between the logics of singular imperatives and singular indicatives.”

**Review of *Philosophy and Psycho-analysis*, by John Wisdom. *Philosophy* 29 (July 1954): 284-6.** Hare praises Wisdom’s “subtle mind,” then proceeds to

criticize him. Wisdom came to despair of providing a logical analysis of “expressions of common speech.” Instead of taking up the difficult challenge of “construct[ing] simpler models of language which would illuminate its logic,” Wisdom “abandon[ed] formal analysis altogether.” In other words, Wisdom gave up and retreated to “literature.” Wisdom is to Socrates and the sophists as Wisdom’s successors are to Plato and Aristotle. The former “had their fun”; the latter must do the hard work of analysis.

## 1955

**“Universalisability.” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s., 55 (1954-55): 295-312. Reprinted as chap. 2 of EMC.** Hare argues that moral judgments are “U-type valuations,” i.e., universal prescriptions. They are not “E-type valuations,” i.e., singular prescriptions (or imperatives). Universality differs from generality. The former is opposed to singularity or particularity, the latter to specificity. Universality is all or nothing; generality is a matter of degree. “One ought not to tell lies” is more general than “One ought not to tell lies unless this is necessary in order to save innocent lives,” since it has no exceptions; but both are universal, since neither makes reference to individuals (particulars). Hare replies to the objections that (1) he makes the choice between principles a matter of inclination and (2) he makes the choice between principles arbitrary.

**“Ethics and Politics.” *The Listener* 54 (13 October 1955): 593-4; *The Listener* 54 (xx October 1955): 651-xx. First essay (of two) reprinted as chap. 1 (“Can I Be Blamed for Obeying Orders?”) of AMP.** Hare criticizes the argument from “S wills me to do x” to “I ought to do x.” The premise is descriptive, the conclusion evaluative. Hence, the inference violates Hume’s Law. To repair the structural defect, one must add an evaluative premise to the effect that I ought to do whatever S wills, and one must *decide* whether to endorse this principle. Morality consists of making decisions of principle. Everyone, even a soldier, is responsible for his or her behavior. (Cf. Sartre.) Moral choice (for normal adults) is incapable. We can leave means to the experts, but ends are up to us, as individuals.

## 1956

**Review of *Ethics*, by P. H. Nowell-Smith. *Philosophy* 31 (January 1956): 89-92.** This is “a very thoughtful and stimulating book.” Hare criticizes Nowell-Smith’s terms “contextually implies” and “logically odd,” neither of which is “entirely clear.” Hare praises Nowell-Smith’s classification of words into D-words (descriptive), A-words (intermediate), and G-words (evaluative). A-words, such as “terrifying” and “funny,” have different meanings in different contexts. This variety of meanings generates some of the perplexities experienced by logicians. Hare says

he doesn't understand what Nowell-Smith means when the latter says that he is "a champion of the traditional moral philosophy."

**Review of *Filosofia Analitica e Giurisprudenza*, by Uberto Scarpelli. *Mind*, n.s., 65 (January 1956): 102-3.** This is "an extremely penetrating essay." Hare expresses hope that the philosophy being done in English-speaking countries and on the continent of Europe (France, Germany, and Italy) will converge. One ground for hope is the interest among Italian jurists (such as Scarpelli) in "logical analysis as an aid to the study of law." Hare encourages jurists to conduct their logical inquiries "in as concrete terms as possible, with more attention to the actual discourse and decisions of the courts than to the abstract, tidy theories of jurists."

**1957**

**"'Rien n'a d'importance': l'anéantissement des valeurs est-il pensable?" Talk, 1957. Published in *La Philosophie Analytique*, edited by L. Beck, xx-xx. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1959/1960. Reprinted (in English, as "Nothing Matters": Is 'the Annihilation of Values' Something That Could Happen?") as chap. 4 of AMP.** Hare tells the story of a young man of his acquaintance who read Albert Camus's *L'Etranger* (*The Stranger*) and insisted that "nothing matters." Hare sat him down for a discussion. He showed the young man that to say that something matters is to express concern for (or about) it, "to be disposed to make certain choices, certain efforts, in the attempt to affect in some way that about which [one is] concerned." To say that *nothing* matters is to say that one is unconcerned about "absolutely everything." The young man admitted that he was concerned about "many things." In the remainder of the essay, Hare discusses (1) the sources of our values, (2) the impossibility of annihilating values "as a whole" (since "a man is a valuing creature"), (3) the pointlessness of quarrels over whether values are objective, and (4) the confusion between subjectivism (which is an ethical position) and relativism (which is a moral position). In modern parlance, subjectivism is a metaethical theory, while relativism is a normative ethical theory. Hare adds that relativism is "an absurd position"—and "a very pernicious view" to boot!

**"Geach: Good and Evil." *Analysis* 17 (April 1957): 103-11. Reprinted, with "small amendments," as chap. 3 of EMC.** Hare says that Geach's target—"The Oxford Moralists"—is too heterogeneous to be of any use. Hare agrees with some of the views attributed to The Oxford Moralists but not to all. He says Geach should name people instead of creating such a "composite . . . creature." Geach conflates prescriptivism and emotivism: "To commend may be to seek to guide choice; but it certainly is not necessarily to seek to influence or affect choice." As

for Geach's own theory of the meaning of "good," Hare says it is correct where "good" precedes a functional word, such as "hygrometer," but incorrect where it precedes a nonfunctional word, such as "sunset." Unfortunately for Geach, "the mere occurrence of a functional word after 'good' is normally an indication that the context is *not* a moral one" (italics in original). Hare then criticizes Geach for thinking that "man" is a functional word. Geach would probably consider Hare's criticism question-begging, for he (Geach) is a teleologist (like Aristotle, but unlike Hare) who believes that there is a specific good for man.

**"Oxford Moral Philosophy." *The Listener* 57 (21 February 1957): 311; *The Listener* 57 (28 March 1957): 520.** These are letters to the editor. In the first letter, Hare criticizes G. E. M. Anscombe's talk "Does Oxford Moral Philosophy Corrupt Youth?" (*The Listener* 57 [14 February 1957]: 266-7, 271). Anscombe argued that Oxford moral philosophy does *not* corrupt youth, since that implies that youth would not otherwise be corrupted. In fact, "Oxford moral philosophy is perfectly in tune with the highest and best ideals of the country at large. . . ." These ideals include consequentialism, with its thesis of negative responsibility (i.e., responsibility for what one allows, not merely for what one does). Hare accuses Anscombe of "tortuous sarcasms" and of "hat[ing]" certain people or views. Her method is to allude to certain philosophical views—which are caricatures—and then say, "Isn't this very much in line with. . .," hoping thereby to turn the listener against the views. Hare denies that students who go to Oxford will meet the sort of corrupting people Anscombe describes. In the second letter, which is immediately preceded by a letter from Anscombe, Hare makes a number of sarcastic and insulting points. As this exchange shows, Anscombe (1919-2001) and Hare (1919-2002) did not get along.

**Review of *The Problem of Knowledge*, by A. J. Ayer, and *Logic and Knowledge: Essays, 1901-1950*, by Bertrand Russell. *The Spectator* (4 January 1957): 25-6.** Hare praises Ayer's book for its "rare combination of vigour and maturity." He praises Ayer personally for being "more concerned with the truth than with self-defence." Russell's book makes some of his essays accessible, but it's badly edited. Hare says it contains "many advertisements of [the editor's] own rather adolescent opinions about philosophy and philosophers." Hare also takes a swipe at Russell for journeying from common sense (which is good) but never coming back (which is bad). Common sense should lead to paradox and then back to "an illumined common sense."

**Review of *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, by C. A. Mace. *The Spectator* (1957): xx-xx.** I have been unable to locate this item.

**"Are Discoveries About the Uses of Words Empirical?" *The Journal of***

***Philosophy* 54 (November 1957): 741-50. Full version, entitled “Philosophical Discoveries,” printed in *Mind*, n.s., 69 (April 1960): 145-62. Reprinted, revised, as chap. 2 (“Philosophical Discoveries”) of EPMe.** Hare describes a dilemma: Either philosophical statements are empirical discoveries (about how words are used) or philosophical statements are decisions (about how to use words); if they are empirical discoveries, then they are contingent; if they are decisions, then they aren’t the sort of thing that can be known. But philosophers want to say both that their statements are necessary and that they are knowable. Hare escapes between the horns of the dilemma, but not by postulating (like the “metaphysicians”) a “non-empirical order of being,” i.e., a realm of synthetic *a priori* statements. Philosophical statements are neither empirical discoveries nor decisions, but instances of remembering. (Compare Plato.) The philosopher’s job is to elucidate (Hare’s word) concepts that we learned and use but haven’t brought before our minds. It is to say what we know when we know something. It is to discover a *definition*.

**Review of *Philosophical Analysis: Its Development Between the Two World Wars*, by J. O. Urmson, and *The Revolution in Philosophy*, by A. J. Ayer et al. *Philosophische Rundschau* 5 (1957): 269-80.** This review is in German. Since I don’t know German and don’t have an English translation, I can’t annotate it.

**“Religion and Morals.” Chap. 7 in *Faith and Logic: Oxford Essays in Philosophical Theology*, edited by Basil Mitchell, 176-93. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957. Reprinted as chap. 2 of ERE.** Logical positivists considered ethical and religious utterances meaningless, since (1) they defined “meaning” in terms of knowing what would have to be case for an utterance to be true and (2) they believed that ethical and religious utterances lack truth value. Hare says this was not a criterion of meaningfulness but of “empiricality.” Different types of utterance can have different types of meaning. Religious discourse hasn’t been studied as much as other types, such as scientific discourse. Many philosophers lack religious experience (or are uninterested in religion), and many of those who have religious experience lack philosophical expertise. Hare proceeds to display similarities between moral and religious language. The word “god,” for example, has both evaluative and descriptive meaning. It prescribes behavior (e.g., worship) and conveys information.

**“Reasons of State.” Address, 1957. Chap. 2 of AMP.** Hare asks: “Is it possible to make moral judgements about political actions at all?” Many people say no, but Hare says yes. What determines the morality of an act is “its effects on other people,” and political actions have this characteristic. Indeed, political actions have

“widespread effects.” Moral decisions made by political actors are more complicated and difficult because of this, but in principle they can be made. Some people say that consequences are morally irrelevant, but Hare says it is impossible to distinguish between “an act and its consequences in such a way that the consequences become morally irrelevant” (15). One’s acts are what one causes to happen. Which consequences are morally relevant depends on one’s moral principles, which can be complicated and inarticulate. Great statesmen *seem* to act intuitively (i.e., without principles), but they, too, act on principles, which are learned through experience and by the study of history.

**1959**

**“Broad’s Approach to Moral Philosophy.” Chap. 18 in *The Philosophy of C. D. Broad*, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp, 563-77. The Library of Living Philosophers, vol. 10. New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1959. Reprinted as chap. 1 of EPMe.** C. D. Broad wrote in *Five Types of Ethical Theory* that “The interest of ethics is . . . almost entirely theoretical.” He appeared to be saying that ethics has no bearing on practical moral questions. Hare says that when he read Broad, as an undergraduate, he was “scandalised.” Hare had gone into philosophy precisely because it promised assistance in answering such questions. Hare traces Broad’s view of ethics to G. E. Moore, who, with H. A. Prichard, preceded—and influenced—the logical positivists (including the emotivists). (It’s often thought that it was logical positivism that made ethics irrelevant to practical affairs.) Hare admits that his “irritation at Broad’s remarks was entirely unjustified,” since it stemmed from ignorance of the history of ethics. What, then, can ethics contribute to answering practical moral questions? Two things. First, it clarifies the questions by distinguishing between factual, conceptual, and evaluative statements. Second, by showing (through analysis) that moral judgments are universalizable, it eliminates certain actions, viz., those that one is not willing (or able) to universalize.

**“Function and Tradition in Architecture.” B.B.C. Third Programme talk, 1959. Chap. 3 of AMP.** Hare discusses a book by J. M. Richards: *The Functional Tradition in Early Industrial Buildings*. He calls it a “very beautiful book” (24), but criticizes the author for various “obscurities” (27). Hare clarifies the concept of a tradition (“something *banded down* from one generation to another” [25]), inquires into the meaning of “functionalism” (26-7), and points out that “we can commend a building for different kinds of virtues: either because it is aesthetically pleasing, or because it fulfils well the needs it was designed for, or because it is economical to erect and maintain—to name three important qualities of good architectural designs” (27). Two buildings may be aesthetically the same but functionally different, just as two buildings may be functionally the same but aesthetically different.

The truth in functionalism is that “It is possible to pay close attention—even predominant attention—to the practical function of a building without thereby detracting from its aesthetic qualities” (30). “It follows that an architect can safely pursue function in the certainty that a building whose shape is determined by its function can yet take on a beauty appropriate to that shape” (31).

## 1960

**“A School for Philosophers.” *Ratio* 2 (February 1960): 107-20. Reprinted as chap. 3 of EPMe.** Hare explains how philosophy in Great Britain differs from philosophy in Germany. The same subject is being studied, but “in two different ways.” Hare describes the daily routine of fellows and tutors. Tutors teach pupils to think effectively and to express their thoughts clearly. Regular seminars, which are attended by other fellows and tutors (as well as pupils), serve as testing grounds for ideas. These seminars are highly structured and demanding, like chess. Rhetoric and evasion are not accepted. British philosophers are impatient with obscure, overblown prose. Writing books is a by-product of teaching and discussing. The best way to get a book read is to make it “short, clear and to the point.” As for the claim that British philosophers don’t do metaphysics, Hare denies it. It’s simply not *called* metaphysics. British philosophers call it logic. It is oriented to the study of word meanings (uses). Its aim is to avoid linguistic pitfalls.

**Review of *An Enquiry into Goodness*, by F. E. Sparshott. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 10 (October 1960): 372-4.** The book is well organized and comprehensive, in the sense that it treats most of the “topical problems about philosophical method,” but the discussion is “elusive.” Hare says he “was left with the impression that [Sparshott] had been sitting on the fence.” Sparshott claims that commendation is not essential to “good,” since there are other ways to commend X besides saying that it’s a good X. “A similar argument would show that the function of entering into an undertaking was not ‘essential to’ the words ‘I promise’; for can we not enter into undertakings by many other means than saying ‘I promise?’” The book, while instructive, does not contain “a clear-cut train of reasoning.” It is inferior to G. E. Moore’s *Principia Ethica*, which Sparshott denigrates.

**“Ethics.” In *Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers*, edited by J. O. Urmson, xx-xx. London: Hutchinson, 1960. Reprinted as chap. 4 of EMC. Reprinted with minor changes in *The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers*, new rev. ed., edited by J. O. Urmson and Jonathan Rée, 100-9. London: Unwin Hyman, 1989.** Hare distinguishes between normative ethics (which he calls “morals”), descriptive ethics, and metaethics (which he calls “ethics” or “ethics proper”). Ethics is the philosophical study of morals. “We cannot, even if we can establish the meaning

of the moral words, pass from this to conclusions of substance about moral questions.” (Hare appears to have changed his mind about this by the time he wrote *Freedom and Reason*.) Hare then discusses naturalism (which includes supernaturalism), intuitionism, and emotivism, which are ethical (i.e., metaethical) theories. Along the way, he distinguishes between relativism and subjectivism. Relativism is a moral doctrine (i.e., a normative ethical theory), while subjectivism is an ethical (i.e., metaethical) theory. Hare uses “emotivism” as a catch-all term for nondescriptivist ethical theories, such as his own universal prescriptivism. He says the division between descriptivists and nondescriptivists is “the most fundamental in ethics.” The relation between descriptive and prescriptive meaning “continues to tax ethical thinkers.”

### 1961

**“Adolescents into Adults.” Lecture, 1961. Published in *Aims in Education*, edited by T. C. B. Hollins, xx-xx. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964. Reprinted as chap. 5 of *AMP* and as chap. 7 of *ERE*.** Hare argues that the distinction between education (a good thing) and indoctrination (a bad thing) is one of aim (i.e., purpose) rather than content or method. The aim of education is to get the pupil to think for him- or herself. The aim of indoctrination is to get the pupil to accept what is taught. Early on, nonrational methods (environment and example) will have to be used, since the child cannot yet think for him- or herself; but the aim is to induce critical thinking as soon as possible. As for which method of critical thinking to inculcate, why, it’s universal prescriptivism, for this, Hare says, captures the logic of moral judgment. In short, “the educator is trying to turn children into adults; the indoctrinator is trying to make them into perpetual children” (65-6).

### 1962

**Review of *Generalization in Ethics: An Essay in the Logic of Ethics, with the Rudiments of a System of Moral Philosophy*, by Marcus George Singer. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 12 (October 1962): 351-5.** The book is “a full and closely reasoned treatment of the most central feature of moral arguments.” “[N]othing but profit can come from the serious study of it.” Singer’s focus is the following type of argument: “If everyone were to do  $x$ , the consequences would be disastrous (or undesirable); therefore no one ought to do  $x$ .” Hare criticizes Singer’s inattention to “the distinction between singular and universal terms.” Hare is also critical of Singer’s disregard for the prescriptivity of moral judgments. Perhaps Singer considers prescriptivism (Hare’s theory) a form of relativism. This is unfortunate, because “generalization arguments cannot be successfully mounted unless moral judgments are recognized to be prescriptive.” Singer asks what would

happen if everyone did x. Hare thinks this puts too much emphasis on quantity. According to Hare, “If an action is wrong, it is wrong because it would be wrong for *anyone* (N.B. not ‘everyone’) to do it in just these circumstances, whether or not anyone else did it in the same or in different circumstances.” In other words, generalization differs from universalization. The generalist asks, “What if *everyone* did what I’m about to do?” The universalist asks, “Can I will that *anyone* in my situation do x?”

## 1963

***Freedom and Reason*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.** See [here](#) for a summary.

**“Descriptivism.” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 49 (1963): xx-xx. Reprinted as chap. 5 of EMC.** Hare views descriptivism—the term was suggested to him by J. L. Austin—as a mistake. Some descriptivists “impugn [the] distinction” between description and evaluation, so Hare seeks to “establish[] its existence” (55). The distinction concerns not *terms*, but different *meanings* of a given term. That evaluative meaning exists can be established by finding two terms that have the same descriptive meaning but different evaluative meanings. When you subtract “x is a wine which tastes  $\emptyset$ ” from “x is a good wine,” there is something left over, namely, an evaluation. Hare follows Charles Stevenson (whom he doesn’t mention) in saying that two people can “agree about the description but disagree about the evaluation” (62). Hare devotes the remainder of the essay to refuting various descriptivist arguments—or rather, to showing that descriptivist arguments are not successful against *him*.

**Letter in *Times Literary Supplement* on review of *Freedom and Reason* (26 April 1963).** I have been unable to locate this item.

## 1964

**“The Lawful Government.” Lecture, 1964. Published in *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, 3d series, edited by Peter Laslett and W. G. Runciman, xx-xx. Oxford: Blackwell, 1967. Reprinted as chap. 8 of AMP.** Hare poses the following question: “How does a *de facto* government turn into a *de jure* government?” (90). Hare criticizes attempts to answer this question by “looking for a *criterion* of lawfulness in governments” (91)—for example, “a government is lawful if it enjoys the support of the people of a territory” (94). All such attempts are forms of descriptivism, Hare says. Some descriptivist theories of lawfulness are empirical and some non-empirical. Hare rejects descriptivism. He says that when

we say that a government is lawful, we are judging, not describing. The word “lawful” is being used ascriptively, not descriptively. To ascribe lawfulness to a government is to perform “an act of allegiance” (101), not “to state any *facts* about it” (107). What is an act of allegiance? “In giving my allegiance to a certain government, I am committing myself to treat its regulations as laws binding upon myself; that is to say, I am submitting or subjecting myself to it” (103). In settled times, people don’t go around performing acts of allegiance. Their allegiance is taken for granted. In unsettled (e.g., revolutionary) times, people can either perform acts of allegiance or forswear allegiance.

**“Pain and Evil.”** *The Aristotelian Society, supplementary volume 38 (1964): 91-106. Reprinted as chap. 6 of EMC.* Hare admits to grinding an ax in this essay, the aim of which is to show that there is a “distinction between descriptive and evaluative judgements” (89). Some people have said that the distinction “breaks down” in the case of pain, for “I am in intense pain,” they say, is both descriptive and evaluative. Hare argues that it’s logically possible for someone to be in pain (in the sense of having a distinct sensation) but not to suffer (or to dislike it). That pain and suffering often or even always coincide doesn’t prove that they *must* (logically) coincide. The essay is an analysis of the concept of pain.

**“A Question About Plato’s Theory of Ideas.”** In *The Critical Approach: Essays in Honor of Karl Popper*, edited by Mario Bunge, xx-xx. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1964. Reprinted, with “minor corrections,” as chap. 4 of EPMe. Hare asks—and answers—the following “question of psychological fact”: “What, in certain circumstances and on certain occasions . . . , was actually going on in Plato’s experience? The circumstances and occasions in question are, roughly, those in which Plato himself would have said ‘I am seeing (or apprehending) an Idea’” (55). Hare’s hypothesis, which he tests against Plato’s corpus, is that Plato was “forming a mental image” (62).

**“The Promising Game.”** *Revue Internationale de Philosophie 70 (1964): 398-412. Reprinted as chap. 9 of EET.* Hare criticizes John Searle’s attempt to derive a moral conclusion from a set of nonmoral premises. Uttering the words “I promise” generates an obligation *only if* there is an institution of promising, the constitutive rules of which are moral principles. Hare is vindicating Hume’s Law.

**“The Objectivity of Values.”** *Common Factor 1 (1964) 3-5.* Hare argues that “the distinction between ‘subjectivism’ and ‘objectivism’ is no longer a useful one in moral philosophy” (3). The distinction made sense “before about 1935” (5), when everyone thought sentences had only one function, viz., to state facts. Subjectivists claimed that the facts were about subjects (speakers); objectivists claimed that the facts were about objects (something other than speakers). Once it was understood

that sentences have other functions besides that of stating facts, the distinction lost its usefulness. The main divide is now between descriptivists and nondescriptivists. Subjectivism and objectivism are types of descriptivism (the doctrine that “the role of moral judgments is exclusively factual” [5]). Calling nondescriptivists such as Hare “subjectivists” only confuses things. Hare recommends that the terms “subjectivism” and “objectivism” be used only in connection with the earlier debate.

**1965**

**“Wat Is Leven?” *Crucible* (1965): xx-xx. Reprinted (in English, as “What Is Life?”) as chap. 6 of AMP.** Concepts such as life, human, and murder are useful in standard cases but not in nonstandard cases, for they were not developed to handle nonstandard cases. Are those whose hearts have stopped beating dead for a while, and then alive again when they are resuscitated? Are extremely deformed children human? Is it murder to kill one’s enemies in battle? No definition or simple rule (e.g., “Thou shalt not kill”) can answer these questions. “If you wish to understand how to decide what it is right to do in the queer cases, you will have to think hard about why it is right to do what most of us do in the ordinary cases” (70). Hare seems to be saying that there are no shortcuts in moral reasoning.

**Review of *Norm and Action: A Logical Enquiry*, by Georg Henrik von Wright. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 15 (April 1965): 172-5.** Hare says that von Wright’s book is “important” and “yields . . . much illumination,” but criticizes it for focusing on “norm-kernels.” Norm-kernels consist of the three central ingredients of norms: their character (obligation or permission), their content (that which ought to be done), and their condition of application. Hare says that this class of norms is “at once too narrow in some ways and too heterogeneous in others” (174). It is too narrow because it omits norms the violation of which aren’t sanctioned by an authority. It is too heterogeneous because it includes imperatives, “ought” sentences, commands, obligation-norms, and permissions. “In short, my complaint is that he [von Wright] excludes from his *logic* of norms expressions which do not differ in their logic from those which he includes, while he includes some which do differ radically” (174; italics in original). Hare is worried that unsophisticated readers of von Wright’s book will not notice the “crucial distinction between ‘ought’ and imperatives” (175), which “may lead to a good deal of confusion in ethics” (175). Hare yearns for a “logic of normative discourse” (175).

**“Plato and the Mathematicians.” In *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, edited by Renford Bambrough, xx-xx. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965. Reprinted as chap. 5 of EPMe.** Hare tries to make sense of Plato’s “indictment of the mathematicians” (80). The first mistake mathematicians make,

according to Plato (as interpreted by Hare), is not defining their terms prior to constructing proofs. (Hare notes that Frege also railed against this—and I might add that Hobbes did as well.) This mistake can be remedied by dialectic, which serves “to establish definitions” (91). The second mistake is using diagrams (such as the one drawn in the sand in *Meno*) as the basis for inference. Hare concludes with some reflections on Plato’s Idea of the Good. Plato (he says) did not clearly distinguish between the *meaning* of “good” and the *criteria* for its application.

## 1966

**“Peace.” Lecture, 1966. Published in *Moral Problems: A Collection of Philosophical Essays*, 323-41. Edited by James Rachels. New York: Harper & Row, 1971. Reprinted as chap. 7 of AMP.** According to Hare, “peace [between nations] is overwhelmingly the greatest interest of nearly everyone” (87). The question is how to achieve it. Philosophers have a role to play. That role is to promote clear thinking. The “two main forces in the world which endanger peace” (71) are nationalism and fanaticism, both of which are ideas. “A nationalist is a person who thinks it right to pursue, single-mindedly, the interests of his own nation, to the disregard of those of other nations” (74). A fanatic, by contrast, “is loyal not to a group of people but to an ideal” (79). The danger of nuclear war is greatest when nationalism and fanaticism are combined in one country or one person, as they were in Nazi Germany. Hare shows that nationalists can be reasoned with; fanatics cannot. A fanatic will say, for example, that he or she should be killed if it should turn out that he or she has the property (e.g., being Jewish or being black) that one detests and is trying to exterminate. A fanatic, in other words, believes that being Jewish or black is morally relevant. Fortunately, fanatics are “scarce” (80) and “very rare” (83). Hare is not an abolitionist with regard to nations; he admits that “there is still plenty for nations to do which is legitimate and indeed a duty, and which may involve the conservation of their own power” (88).

## 1967

**“The Practical Relevance of Philosophy.” Inaugural Lecture delivered at Oxford, 1967. Chap. 6 of EPMe.** This is Hare’s Inaugural Lecture (1967) as White’s Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford. He succeeded William Kneale (1905-1990), who had succeeded J. L. Austin (1911-1960). The following five propositions are inconsistent: (1) If (a) “philosophy is concerned centrally and essentially with the elucidation of concepts,” (b) “no substantial or synthetic conclusion of any kind can follow” from elucidation of concepts, and (c) “the elucidation will never give us a means of deducing moral judgements from statements of fact,” then philosophy has no practical relevance; (2) a; (3) b; (4) c; (5) philosophy has practical relevance. Some philosophers reject 2; some reject 3; some

(descriptivists) reject 4; some reject 5. Hare *accepts* propositions 2 through 5, but rejects 1. His rejection of 1 comes down to showing that moral reasoning is prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature. Philosophy has practical relevance because it elucidates the nature of morality, which is not conformity to pre-existing rules but “the endeavour of a free agent to find for himself principles which he can accept as binding on all alike” (114). Hare believes that if his proposed method of moral reasoning (universal prescriptivism) were widely adopted, it would generate agreement on many or most moral problems, thus solving them.

**“Conventional Morality,” “Decision,” “Deliberation,” “Ethics,” “Intention,” “Right and Wrong.”** In *Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, edited by John Macquarrie, 74, 85, 86, 114-6, 170-1, 299. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967. Hare defines six ethical terms, noting both their general and (where appropriate) their specifically Christian meanings.

**Review of *Freedom of the Individual*, by Stuart Hampshire.** *The Philosophical Review* 76 (April 1967): 230-3. Hare begins with the observation that “The borderland between ethics and the philosophy of mind has become one of the great growth points of modern philosophy” (230). Unfortunately, many of “the growths are malignant” (230). Hare criticizes Hampshire for lack of “lucidity.” He says that he (Hare) is not always sure what Hampshire is arguing. Hare criticizes Hampshire’s analysis of “can”; he says that Hampshire fails to sort out desires; and he challenges Hampshire’s claim that there can be knowledge without observation. Hare concludes this rather grumpy review by saying that “It is . . . more likely that ethics will illuminate the philosophy of mind than vice versa” (233).

**“Some Alleged Differences Between Imperatives and Indicatives.”** *Mind*, n.s., 76 (July 1967): 309-26. Reprinted as chap. 2 of *PI*. Hare argues that “several of the reasons which various writers have given for alleging differences between imperative and ordinary logic are based on misunderstandings” (25). He discusses two such reasons. The first is this. “Post the letter; ergo, post the letter or burn it” does not seem valid (indeed, it “strikes us as paradoxical” [30]), but the corresponding indicative inference is valid (by addition): “You are going to post the letter; ergo, either you are going to post the letter or you are going to burn it.” Hare says (on my interpretation and in my words) that just as the second inference preserves *truth*, the first inference preserves *compliance*. If I comply with “Post the letter,” then I have, eo ipso, complied with “Post the letter or burn it” (but not conversely). The inferences are parallel; the paradox disappears. (Hare makes use of Paul Grice’s concept of conversational implicature, but it seems to me to be unnecessary to his argument.) The second reason conflates “ordinary imperatives” such as “Shut the door” with “deontic or normative sentences” such as “You ought to shut the door” (34). Hare says that the logic of these is different. “It is possible

for it to be neither the case that Smith ought to do *a*, nor the case that Smith ought not to do *a*; the proposition that Smith either ought to do *a* or ought not to do *a* is not a logical truth” (35). By contrast, “Do *a*” and “Do not do *a*” “seem to have as much right to be called contradictories as the corresponding indicative pair ‘You are going to do *a*’ and ‘You are not going to do *a*’” (40). So imperatives (Do *a*) are like indicatives (You are going to do *a*) but unlike normative sentences (You ought to do *a*). It was only the assimilation of imperatives to normative sentences that made it appear otherwise.

## 1968

**Review of *Contemporary Moral Philosophy*, by G. J. Warnock. *Mind*, n.s., 77 (July 1968): 436-40.** Hare praises the clarity of Warnock’s writing and says that he (Hare) will focus on the differences between the two men. The main difference is that Warnock, a descriptivist, defines morality “in terms of its content” (436), while Hare, a prescriptivist, defines it in terms of its form. The word “ought” has two formal properties: prescriptivity and universalizability. Hare criticizes Warnock for ignoring the first property. Given that there are “negligibly few” fanatics, people are not prepared to make moral judgments unless they are willing to accept the judgment no matter which position they occupy. Hare says that prescriptivism can “claim to have exposed the nerve of some real and important moral arguments” (440), which counts in its favor as against descriptivism. Hare agrees with Warnock’s criticisms of “the intuitionists and emotivists” (440). Hare ends by praising Warnock’s “strenuous efforts to be fair to his opponents,” but adds, somewhat sinisterly, that Warnock “has not entirely succeeded” (440).

**Review of *The Concept of Education*, ed. R. S. Peters. *Mind*, n.s., 77 (July 1968): 450.** Hare notes that philosophy of education “is becoming a popular subject.” If philosophers do their job, which is to illuminate problems by clarifying concepts, they can have an impact on education itself, like John Dewey did. Hare says that the essays in the book are “of exceedingly uneven quality,” with those by Gilbert Ryle and John Passmore the best. Some are “elegant nothings.” Michael Oakeshott, for example, “says very little very beautifully about learning and teaching.” Ouch.

**Review of *Law, Morality and Religion in a Secular Society*, by Basil Mitchell. *Philosophy* 43 (October 1968): 379-81.** Hare says that this book “contains much more wisdom than can be even briefly indicated in a review, on a wide variety of connected topics, including the bearing of religion on law and morality” (381). Hare devotes most of his review to Mitchell’s “examination of the questions raised by the Hart-Devlin controversy” (379). He says that Mitchell’s po-

sition on one important point is “somewhat unclear,” namely, whether it is permissible for law to prohibit and punish harmless immoralities. Mitchell clearly rejects Devlin’s answer (yes), but he doesn’t describe a case on which he and Hart differ. It thus appears that he sides with Hart as against Devlin, in which case one wonders why he discusses the debate.

**“Wanting: Some Pitfalls.” Paper presented at the Fourth University of Western Ontario Philosophy Colloquium, 1968. Published as chap. 3 in *Agent, Action, and Reason*, 81-97. Edited by Robert Binkley, Richard Bronaugh, and Ausonio Marras. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971. Reprinted as chap. 3 of *PI*.** Hare marks four “pitfalls” involved in explicating the concept of wanting. First, “I want to do A” can be either a *statement* about a desire (which, qua statement, is either true or false) or an *expression* of desire (which, qua expression, is neither true nor false). (Compare “I am angry.”) One must not use both meanings of “want” in a single argument. Second, the term “command” suffers from generic/specific ambiguity. Sometimes it is used generically, to refer to orders, requests, prayers, and other directives. Sometimes it is used specifically, to *contrast* with orders, requests, prayers, and other directives. A command<sub>s</sub> is a species of command<sub>g</sub>. Third, commands, like orders, but unlike exhortations, are not perlocutionary acts; they are illocutionary acts. So intending can be self-commanding even if it is not self-exhorting. Fourth, if liberties are allowed to be taken in speaking of mental *indicative* speech-acts, then they should be allowed to be taken in speaking of mental *imperative* speech-acts. No double standard!

**“Community and Communication: What Are Cities and What Are They For?” Lecture, 1968. Published in *People and Cities*, edited by S. E. Verney, xx-xx. London: Fontana Books, 1969. Reprinted as chap. 9 of *AMP*.** This essay was written as an introduction to a conference on people and cities. Hare claims that cities are not machines but rather “organism[s] for communication” (110). They are not designed; they grow. Town planners are like doctors or gardeners, not engineers. Commerce, government, and art require communication, which cities facilitate. Cities could specialize in a particular *type* of communication, but that promotes isolation, which is inimical to cooperation. Governors, for example, must interact with citizens in order to represent them; otherwise, there will be resentment and perhaps violence. “If Washington were an all-white city, the United States would be worse governed” (114). The key to successful communication is understanding, and the key to that is education, which always involves understanding a language. “The discipline which has as its task the furthering of this understanding is called philosophy” (114). This essay reads like a series of sound bites. In the postscript, which was added after the conference, Hare equates peace, morality, and love. “[I]n truth morality *is* love” (115; italics in original). He mentions

Bentham (everybody to count for one, nobody to count for more than one), Kant (willing one's maxims to be universal laws), the Bible (loving one's neighbor as oneself), and the Golden Rule (doing unto others as you would have them do unto you), as though they were merely different ways of expressing the same value or principle. Perhaps they are, but this needs to be shown, not merely asserted.

**1969**

**“Practical Inferences.”** In *Festskrift til Alf Ross*, xx-xx. Edited by V. Kruse. Copenhagen: Juristvorbundets Vorlag, 1969. Reprinted as chap. 4 of *PI*. Hare begins with two distinctions: (1) between logical and causal conditions “for being said to have done the thing in question” (59); and (2) between necessary and sufficient conditions (either logical or causal) for “performing an action” (59). Hare believes that the second distinction sheds light on “the logic of imperatives” (60). He shows that some of Aristotle’s examples of practical reasoning involve necessary conditions (e.g., All men are to march; I am a man; therefore, (He at once marches)), while others involve sufficient conditions (e.g., A good thing is to be made by me; A house is a good thing; therefore, (He at once makes a house)). Aristotle appears not to have noticed the difference; or, if he did, he did not comment on it. Hare shows that Alf Ross’s “logic of satisfaction” is “isomorphic with standard assertoric logic” (63). The only difference is that Ross’s logic preserves satisfaction rather than truth. Hare shows that Kenny’s “logic of satisfactoriness” is nothing more than reasoning to sufficient conditions, as opposed to reasoning to necessary conditions. Hare concludes by drawing a parallel between imperative and assertoric logic: “Imperative logic is about what can be commanded by a consistent commander, just as assertoric logic is about what can be stated by a maker of consistent statements” (73). So there *is* such a thing as practical inference, and its logic is that of assertoric (propositional) logic. There is nothing peculiar, in other words, about practical inference.

**Review of *Directives and Norms*, by Alf Ross. *Mind*, n.s., 78 (July 1969): 464-6.** Hare describes this book as “interesting and important” (464). He says that he found it “often stimulating, sometimes infuriating, and always worth reading” (464). One of the main disagreements he has with Ross concerns “ought”-sentences and imperatives. Ross assimilates them, calling both of them “directives,” whereas Hare has argued that only “ought”-sentences are universalizable. The sentence “You ought to shut the door” entails “Anyone in precisely your situation ought to shut the door.” “Shut the door” (an imperative) “does not have this entailment” (465). Hare believes that indicatives and imperatives share a logic; Ross believes that they have different logics. The “most serious disagreement” Hare has with Ross concerns Ross’s claim that what distinguishes indicative and imperative speech acts is that only imperative speech acts have perlocutionary force. Hare

claims that perlocutionary force cannot differentiate speech acts since it has nothing to do with “rules or conventions” (466).

**1970**

**“Meaning and Speech Acts.”** *The Philosophical Review* 79 (January 1970): 3-24. Reprinted, with Appendix (“Reply to Mr G. J. Warnock”), as chap. 5 of **PI**. Hare’s aim in this essay is to contribute to an understanding of “meaning theory,” which, he says, is divided into two camps: “those who want to explain the meanings of certain words in terms of the speech acts which those words (or sentences containing them) are standardly used to perform, and those who say that this is a mistake” (76). Hare calls these individuals “performers” and “critics,” respectively. He is a performer. John Searle is sometimes a performer and sometimes (in the case of “good”) a critic. Hare replies to the “strongest” argument of the critics, which is that the words in question appear in negative sentences (“That is not a good movie”), interrogative sentences (“Is that a good movie?”), and hypothetical/conditional sentences (“If it is a good movie, then it will make a lot of money”). Since no speech act (e.g., commendation) is being performed in these cases, as in affirmative, categorical, indicative sentences (“That was a good movie”), the analysis of meaning in terms of speech acts cannot be correct. Hare’s argument, in a nutshell, is that we explain the meaning of “That is a good movie” in terms of “the speech act of commending the movie” (85). To ask “Is that a good movie?” is to invite one’s interlocutor to *say* either “That was a good movie” (commendation) or “That was not a good movie” (the negation of a commendation). Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to negative and to hypothetical/conditional sentences. In the appendix to this essay, Hare replies to a published criticism by G. J. Warnock.

**“Condizioni intellettuali per la sopravvivenza dell’uomo.”** *Proteus* 1 (1970). I have been unable to locate this item.

**“Reply to ‘Liberals, Fanatics and Not-so-innocent-Bystanders.’”** Chap. 3 in *Jowett Papers: 1968-1969*, edited by B. Y. Khanbhai, R. S. Katz, and R. A. Pineau, 44-52. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970. Hare replies to an essay by R. S. Katz, who was, at the time of publication, a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College, Oxford. Hare begins by clarifying certain points on which (he claims) Katz misunderstood him. The task of moral philosophy, according to Hare, “is to help us to understand the moral questions that we are troubled about, and by so doing to help us answer them, either by ourselves or in discussion with those with whom we are in dispute” (46). Katz (according to Hare) wants philosophy “to put into the hands of the radical a propaganda weapon which will turn all the intellectual bullets of the fascists into water” (46). Hare denies that this is the task of philosophy; but

that doesn't mean that philosophy is irrelevant, pointless, or unpractical. Hare concludes by "show[ing] theoretically that fanatics must be extremely rare or non-existent" (50). He says that he was unable to do this in his "last book," which presumably refers to *Freedom and Reason* (1963).

**General Introduction to *The Dialogues of Plato*, translated by Benjamin Jowett and edited by R. M. Hare and D. A. Russell, 11-30. 4 vols. London: Sphere Books Limited, 1970.** Hare introduces a new edition of Benjamin Jowett's translation of Plato, pointing out that "There is much in common between the intellectual and moral climate of Plato's time and that of our own" (13). According to Hare, "Plato's philosophical enterprise . . . had a practical purpose—to provide the means of building a society in which moral and political disputes would either not occur, or be rationally settled" (18). Plato's method had much in common with that of contemporary linguistic philosophers.

**1971**

**"Was Hiroshima Necessary?" Review of *The Prisoner and the Bomb*, by Laurens van der Post. *The New York Review of Books* 16 (20 May 1971): xx-xx.** Hare, who was a prisoner of the Japanese during World War II, but who hadn't written anything about his experiences by the time this review was composed, says that he "ought not to be critical of those [such as van der Post] who have." Hare discusses van der Post's claim that, "if the bombs had not been dropped, most of us prisoners would have perished." Hare says that van der Post "offers very little hard evidence for this claim," and that he (Hare) is "not competent to assess [its] truth." Hare goes on to criticize those (G. E. M. Anscombe?) who hold that no amount of good consequences could have justified the killing of innocents in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Statesmen are as responsible for harm they allow as for harm they cause. This is not to excuse President Truman. "If he is to be condemned, it will have to be because he did not do the best he could in the circumstances and did not take sufficient trouble to inform himself about the circumstances in order to determine what *was* the best thing to do" (italics in original).

***Practical Inferences. New Studies in Practical Philosophy*, ed. W. D. Hudson. London: Macmillan, 1971; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972.** The chapters of this book are annotated separately.

**"Austin's Distinction Between Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts," with Appendix ("Austin's Use of the Word 'Meaning' and Its Cognates in *How to Do Things with Words*"). Chap. 6 of PI.** Hare says that Austin's

distinction between performatives and constatives evolved into the “threefold distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts” (100). Some of the problems of the former crept into the latter. Austin failed clearly to distinguish between (a) “different things that we can be doing in saying something” and (b) “two different ways of doing the *same* thing” (102; italics in original). For each illocutionary act (e.g., promising, ordering), there are primary and explicit performatives. The primary way of promising (for example) is to say “I shall be there.” The *explicit* way of promising is to say “I promise that I shall be there.” Hare says that Austin didn’t notice that there are two distinctions rather than one. Hare goes on to argue that all locutionary acts are also, already, illocutionary acts. Thus, “the distinction between locutionary and illocutionary breaks down” (113). In the appendix, Hare scours Austin’s *How to Do Things with Words* for uses of the word “meaning.” Austin, he says, had a “distaste” (115) for the word (and its cognates).

***Essays on Philosophical Method. New Studies in Practical Philosophy*, ed. W. D. Hudson. London: Macmillan, 1971; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972.** The chapters of this book are annotated separately.

**“The Argument from Received Opinion.” Chap. 7 of EPMe.** Hare’s aim is to “clarify . . . the logic of a form of argument that has been exceedingly common in moral philosophy” (117). The argument, roughly stated, is as follows: Theory T commits its adherents to views “which are very much at variance with those of most people” (118); therefore, T is unacceptable. Hare says that it is “unclear why the argument should be thought to have any force” (118). Some received opinions ought to be accepted and some ought to be rejected. Unless we can distinguish between them, we ought to “reject received opinion altogether as an authority” (118). Hare argues that “Common moral opinions have in themselves no probative force whatever in moral philosophy” (122). This is not to say that common *uses* of the moral words are irrelevant, for how words are used determines which *theories of the meaning of moral words* are correct. Two people can agree in their use of moral words, but disagree in their moral opinions. Prescriptivism makes this possible; descriptivism precludes it. Hare takes this as support for prescriptivism. Sometimes (as in the case of car pushing—Hare’s example) Hare’s method of moral reasoning will *support* common opinion; sometimes it will *clash with* common opinion. “[T]he examination has to be done afresh in each case” (135). “[T]he first step to unravelling moral problems is to understand the language in which they are posed” (135).

**“Drugs and the Role of the Doctor.” Chap. 11 in *Personality and Science: An Interdisciplinary Discussion*, edited by I. T. Ramsey and Ruth Porter,**

**85-92. Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone, 1971.** Hare addresses two topics: (1) “the morality of drug taking by individuals”; and (2) the duty of “a medical man” in these and other cases (85). After sketching his theory of universal prescriptivism, Hare shows how a person would reason prior to deciding whether to use drugs (such as cannabis). He also shows how a doctor would reason prior to treating a patient. “The duty of a doctor to his patient is grounded in the relational property in which that patient stands to him, and in which the other man does not stand, viz., the property of being his patient” (91). So doctors have duties qua doctors. But they also have duties qua public servants. “[T]hese duties to others could in principle override the doctor’s duty to promote the interests of his patient” (92). Hare recommends that doctors adopt fairly simple principles and dismiss from their minds exceptions to these principles.

**(With B. G. Mitchell.) “Some Philosophical Comments.” Chap. 12 in *Personality and Science: An Interdisciplinary Discussion*, edited by I. T. Ramsey and Ruth Porter, 93-101. Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone, 1971.** This is an exchange between Basil Mitchell and Hare. Mitchell defends a “citadel” view of personality in which “A man’s moral, intellectual and aesthetic standards . . . are to be identified more closely with the man himself than are his other desires and interests” (95). Hare rejects the metaphor of a citadel as misleading. He would replace it with talk of interests, “which can be more or less radically affected either by changes in his personality or values, or by changes in his physical state or environment” (98). It is not always “objectionable” (as Mitchell says it is) to change a person’s values (i.e., invade the citadel).

**1972**

**“Principles.” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s., 73 (1972-73): 1-18. Reprinted as chap. 4 of EET.** The kind of principles with which moral philosophers are concerned have two characteristics: prescriptivity and universality. Universality is not to be confused with generality. Two principles, equally universal, can be more or less general. Generality, but not universality, is a matter of degree. Having made this distinction, Hare examines a claim of G. E. M. Anscombe, who complained (in Hare’s words) “of a tendency of modern moral philosophers not to admit that there could be any ‘absolutely general’ principles which were beyond question” (53). Hare inquires into the meaning of “absolutely general.” Anscombe’s principle “One should not kill the innocent by any means” is not as general as “One should not kill anything,” so in what sense is it absolute? “Any principle . . . which has content goes some way down the path of specificity” (54). Hare says that simple principles—those that are comparatively general in nature, with few exceptions—“are necessary for the moral life” (55). To question them is “often, though not perhaps, as Professor Anscombe seems to think, always, a sign

of moral corruption” (55). A utilitarian will inculcate simple principles in his or her children. Hare does not endorse rule utilitarianism, however. He says “there will be cases in which we know, or can at least be reasonably certain, that to depart from the rule [i.e., the principle] would be for the best” (59). Hare provides a sketch of the two levels of moral thinking. “A difference between act-utilitarianism and rule-utilitarianism can be introduced by limiting the specificity of the rules, i.e. by increasing their generality” (61). Specific rule-utilitarianism allows for any degree of specificity; general rule-utilitarianism “requires its rules to have a certain degree of generality” (62). These correspond to the critical level and the intuitive level of moral thinking, respectively. Anscombe’s “mistake” consists in confusing the two levels; “she tries to attach to the moral philosopher, who is only doing his job, an opprobrium which would indeed rightly attach to a moral agent in a situation of stress and difficulty” (65). At the critical (philosophical) level, it is not a sign of a corrupt mind to wonder whether executing an innocent person is right. At the intuitive (practical) level, however, so wondering may “show[] a corrupt mind.”

***Essays on the Moral Concepts. New Studies in Practical Philosophy*, ed. W. D. Hudson. London: Macmillan, 1972; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973.** The chapters of this book are annotated separately.

**“Wrongness and Harm.” Chap. 7 of EMC.** Hare tries to find common ground between his own theory (universal prescriptivism) and the naturalism (descriptivism) of Philippa Foot and Geoffrey Warnock. He says that all of them are utilitarians, in the sense that all of them “are prepared, in arguing for moral opinions, to base [their] arguments on the good or harm done to people by actions” (93). The difference is that Hare’s theory is “more developed” and is “founded on a non-naturalistic account” of the meanings of the moral words. The naturalists, by contrast, “leap straight from the fact that a certain action would cause harm to people . . . to the conclusion that the action would be bad or wrong” (94). Hare analyzes harm as a setback to interests, which are “tied in some way or other to the notion of desires and that of wanting” (97). “[T]o want something, is to assent to a prescription of some sort, for example a universal or singular imperative” (98). Thus, harms are linked to prescriptions, which, to count as moral, must be universalizable. “To speak very crudely and inexactly, to say that some act would harm somebody is to say that it would prevent some interest of his being satisfied; and this, in turn, is to say that it would, or might in possible circumstances, prevent some desire of his being realised” (98). Hare concludes with a discussion of different types of fanatic.

**“Rules of War and Moral Reasoning.” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 1 (winter 1972): 166-81. Reprinted as chap. 5 of EPMo.** Hare discusses

Thomas Nagel's essay "War and Massacre" and Richard Brandt's essay "Utilitarianism and the Rules of War." He says that the "methods" of the two philosophers differ significantly. Nagel seems to be "torn" between utilitarianism and absolutism. Brandt, meanwhile, "wishes to operate both with simple general rules and with calculations about consequences" (46). Hare proceeds to discuss "five theories about the basis of moral thought," namely, ideal-observer theory, rational-contractor theory, specific rule-utilitarianism, universalistic act-utilitarianism, and universal prescriptivism. These theories, he says, are "practically equivalent." All five face the same four "difficulties," to wit: distributive justice; "justifying the enterprise of moral thought in the first place" (51); the fanatic; and counterintuitive implications. Brandt handles counterintuitive implications with a two-level approach. Nagel, "who is confined to one level of moral thinking" (58), cannot handle them. Hare's way out is "to treat the general principles of the absolutist as indispensable practical guides, but not as epistemologically sacrosanct, and to admit a level of thought at which they can be criticized, justified, or even on occasion rejected in their particular applications when conflicts arise or when a case is sufficiently out of the ordinary to call for special consideration" (59). Hare admits near the end of his essay that he may have "got Nagel all wrong" (60).

***Applications of Moral Philosophy. New Studies in Practical Philosophy, ed. W. D. Hudson. London: Macmillan, 1972; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973.*** The chapters of this book are annotated separately.

**Review of *The Object of Morality*, by G. J. Warnock. *Ratio* 14 (1972): 199-205.** Hare begins by praising "this admirable and useful book" (199). He says that it "makes up an important contribution to the subject, worth careful study both for its many valuable insights and and [*sic*] for its few (but, as I think, fundamental) errors" (199). Hare criticizes Warnock for so narrowing the meaning of "rule" as to give rules an "extremely small" (201) role in morality. Warnock uses "principle" in the way "rule" is typically used. Hare cheekily observes that Warnock's criticisms of rule-utilitarianism would founder if the theory had been called "principle-utilitarianism." Hare also criticizes Warnock for introducing an irreducible plurality of moral principles: non-maleficence, beneficence, fairness, and non-deception. This is reminiscent of W. D. Ross, but Ross at least "shows an awareness" (202) that there is a problem when principles conflict. Finally, Hare criticizes Warnock for failing to distinguish between prescriptivity and imperativity. The former notion is wider than the latter. Hare's view is that "not all moral utterances are prescriptive" (204), though the "typical and central ones" are. At the end of the review, Hare challenges Warnock to "write something" (205) about "the really difficult moral issues." This will show the usefulness of Warnock's method in facilitating (or promoting) rational argumentation.

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LM = *The Language of Morals* (1952).

FR = *Freedom and Reason* (1963).

PI = *Practical Inferences* (1971).

EPMe = *Essays on Philosophical Method* (1971).  
EMC = *Essays on the Moral Concepts* (1972).  
AMP = *Applications of Moral Philosophy* (1972).  
MT = *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method, and Point* (1981).  
P = *Plato* (1982).  
EET = *Essays in Ethical Theory* (1989).  
EPMo = *Essays on Political Morality* (1989).  
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EB = *Essays on Bioethics* (1993).  
SOE = *Sorting Out Ethics* (1997).  
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Richard Mervyn Hare was born on 21 March 1919 and died on 29 January 2002.