

PHIL 5983: Hume and Practical Reasoning
Prof. Funkhouser
Shorter Paper Assignment

Shorter Paper (400 points)

Write an approximately 8 page paper on the topic below. Make sure your paper is typed, double-spaced, written in proper English, stapled, with the pages numbered. Do not provide any unnecessary background — get to the point.

Due Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 (Yes, the middle of Spring Break)

Topic: Hume argued that only desires can motivate us to act and that these desires cannot be rationally evaluated. Thus, with a few caveats, Hume denied that we can rationally deliberate about ends.

Your paper topic area is deliberation about ends. You are to choose among the many more specific topics that fall within this area. You can provide a criticism of some author's argument for or against the possibility of rational deliberation of ends. You can explain the logical relevance of the Humean Theory of Motivation to deliberation about ends. Or, you can provide your own argument for or against rational deliberation of ends. Or, you can draw out further consequences that follow from some claim concerning deliberation of ends. Etc.

Whatever you choose to write about, you must make your own contribution to the debate (even if it is only criticism). Also, run your topic by me before you start writing. I do not require that you do any additional research, but you might find it helpful. You are on your own for such research.