should conclude, more trenchantly, that neither view is right? When Graham remarks that 'Anaximenes might not explain what the precise relation is between the original stuff and the stuffs that arise from it' (p. 90), it is difficult not to agree. And in that case we should ascribe neither MM nor GST—nor any other articulated scientific theory—to Anaximenes.

There is very much to admire in Graham’s book. The detailed interpretations, which of course occupy most of its pages, are almost always carefully done; and they contain a number of subtleties. The criticism of other scholars is almost always polite, and it is far more often right than wrong. The puffs on the dust-jacket assure us that ‘the book makes a significant contribution’ or ‘an excellent contribution to our understanding of Presocratic philosophy’; and, for once, the puffs are right. But the revisionary view does not persuade me. But then it wouldn’t, would it? After all, ‘Barnes follows traditional, even Aristotelian, models almost slavishly’ (p. 21, n. 57).

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James Harris’s book, *Of Liberty and Necessity*, is a remarkable achievement. It is the first book to provide a true chronicle of the rich and intricate discussion in early modern Britain of the relationship between freedom and necessity. The figures it discusses range from the towering figures of early modern British thought (Locke, Hume, Reid), to the well-known (Clarke, Collins, Edwards), to the under-appreciated and insufficiently discussed in recent times (Kames, King, Beattie, Priestley), to the obscure (Watts, Hartley). As a result, the book makes available a world of scholarly material that few contemporary historians of philosophy are even aware of. In addition, the book possesses a rare sensitivity to nuanced differences between similar philosophical positions.

Although the book is organized by figure, rather than by the type of position advocated by particular figures—each chapter is devoted to a figure, or sometimes more than one, beginning with Locke and progressing to a collection of post-Reidian philosophers—the book is none the less the very careful to situate the positions of those it discusses with respect to one another and with respect to the intellectual context of the time. Broadly speaking, the figures it discusses fall into three camps: the indifferentist libertarians, the (what might be called) ‘moral necessitarian’ libertarians, and the necessitarians. The indifferentists think that a person in the same circumstances, with the same dispo-
positions, the same history, and the same mental state as someone who just chose to do something might choose the same thing, or might choose something entirely different. The moral necessitarian libertarians think that although, in actuality, such a person will choose the same thing the agent chose, none the less, any of a variety of choices could have been made by him. And the necessitarians think that such a person will choose as the agent actually chose and could not have chosen any differently. Harris indicates both the subtle manner in which figures who fall into the same camp differ from one another in their substantive positions, and also the ways in which they respond to their predecessors, and influence their successors. Thus, although the book is a survey, and so aspires to breadth rather than depth, it is the best type of survey: it identifies the philosophical ground occupied by each of the figures it discusses with sufficient detail and precision to allow others with less broad aims to know where to look for what fits their particular interests.

Quite rightly, Harris sees the eighteenth century discussion of freedom of will as beginning in the late seventeenth—with Locke’s convoluted and confusing discussion of the issue in the longest chapter of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Peter Nidditch (ed.), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, pp. 233–87). Harris claims that the most important contribution made by Locke’s discussion to the eighteenth century debate that followed was methodological. Locke emphasizes an ‘experimental’ method for tackling the question of liberty and necessity; he describes what we can glean about the nature of our agency primarily through introspection, but also through observation of the behaviour of others. This contrasts with approaches involving reflection on metaphysical issues such as the nature of causality or modality, or on theological issues such as the contingency, if any, remaining to actions given that God foresees them. Harris sees the application of Locke’s ‘historical, plain method’ to the question of liberty and necessity as Locke’s most important legacy in the eighteenth century British discussion that followed.

This is not false, exactly, but there may be other more substantive contributions of Locke’s to the ensuing debate. Locke recognized, for instance, that there is a peculiarly human capacity to commit oneself to actions, where these commitments go beyond the sort involved in desire and differ significantly from the sort involved in belief about what it is best to do, to be incapable of occupying. The debate in the eighteenth century was framed in significant respects that Harris fails to emphasize by Locke’s conception of the will, a conception that, to be sure, Locke took himself to have discovered by applying his ‘historical, plain method’ to the question of the nature and limits of our powers to choose and act.

Although it is of great interest to see described the views held by some figure that become objects of critical scrutiny by others, it is fascinating also to see described, as we do in Harris’s book, the views of one figure that then seem to...
disappear, ignored by those who follow. Such is the case with an appealing idea of William King's. King was an indifferentist, and he found a novel way to respond to one of the most difficult problems for indifferentist positions.

It is standardly objected that under indifferentism there is no reason to want freedom. Indifferentist freedom includes a capacity to choose acts of no value; it includes a capacity to break loose from reason itself. The objection can be presented also in terms of the explanation of free action: there can be no explanation of action, of the sort that free actions intuitively admit, under the indifferentist view. To cite something of value about the action in order to explain the doing of it, is to cite something external to the will that pushed or pulled it. But the indifferentist is committed to the claim that any such push or pull undermines freedom. This commitment, together with the claim that the value of an act has its source in something external to the will, seems to commit the indifferentist to the absurd claim that free acts do not admit of explanation through appeal to the value of the act. King's response is to deny that everything of value about an act derives from something external to the will; instead, acts are sometimes of value in virtue of having been chosen.

What conception of the will would a philosopher like King need to hold in order to think that acts have value in virtue of being chosen? Harris takes a stab at an answer that he takes to have been King's:

There is a happiness felt in the complete and proper exercise of all the powers one has, and therefore there is a happiness in making completely free choices, choices not determined by anything other than, as we might say, willfulness itself. (p. 45)

Harris's idea draws its appeal from a conception of the faculties, from the period and before, according to which each has its proper function and according to which one form of pleasure consists in a faculty serving its proper function. Only some conceptions of the will's function, however, will support King's response to the objection. If, for instance, the function of the will is the performance of acts of antecedent value, then there can be value deriving from the fact that an act is willed only if the act is already of antecedent value. King, then, is committed to thinking that the purpose of willing is attained when the will is undetermined from without. Under an alternative conception of the will, the exact opposite is true: the will's purpose can be attained only if it acts with the help of other faculties that allow us to recognize value in the potential objects of choice.

As is well-known, it is difficult to adjudicate disputes about the function of any particular thing. What would count as evidence for King's conception of the point of willing over a competitor? In fact, one worries that there can be no non-circular way of settling such disputes. One who thinks that the purpose of the will is to guide action independently of external influences asserts something about the value of choosing: we find its distinctive form of value when none of the determinants of choice are external to the faculty for making choices. But acceptance of that claim is exactly what is in dispute. Breaking the circle requires finding independent grounds for asserting that the will has some particular pur-
pose, and it is very difficult to see what grounds there could be for any such claim. Perhaps King offers such grounds. Determining what his grounds might be, if he has any, seems to me to be the next thing that needs to be done in the critical and historical evaluation of his contribution to the free will debate.

The best complement that can be paid to a work of philosophy—in contrast to, say, a novel—is not just to read it, but to use it to do more philosophy. Anyone who reads Harris's wonderful book will find themselves wanting to pay Harris that very complement.

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This is among the best books in metaethics, and one of the best defenses of ethical intuitionism, in recent years. It is admirably clear and very thorough, covering a wide range of important metaethical topics and views. While it is well suited for use in advanced ethics classes, it will surely be of interest to anyone working in the field. The more difficult and challenging sections of the book, those which typically involve high level discussions of recent work, are starred so that casual readers can pass them over, but more advanced readers will find them interesting, clear, and thoughtful.

Most of the book is devoted to an explication and defense of ethical intuitionism, but Huemer considers a variety of metaethical views, including non-cognitivism, subjectivism, nihilism, and naturalism. After a helpful introductory chapter, in which Huemer discusses what it is for a characteristic to be objective, he examines non-cognitivism, subjectivism, and reductionism in chapters two, three, and four. He covers a wide variety of views, including individual and cultural relativism, the divine command theory, the ideal observer theory, and both 'analytic' and 'synthetic' reductionism.

Many of the objections to these views will be familiar to those in the field, but they are well explained and the pacing is good. Huemer also discusses recent work which attempts to respond to the standard objections. So, for example, in discussing non-cognitivism he examines the views of Hare, Gibbard, Blackburn, and Timmons. In discussing the 'is–ought' problem he explains the views of Searle, Geach, Prior, and Karmo.

In the second half of the book, chapters five through nine, Huemer defends a form of intuitionism 'according to which terms such as 'good' refer to objec-