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MEMORIAL ESSAY

# Learning from Frankena: A Philosophical Remembrance*

*Stephen Darwall*

William Frankena contributed as widely to moral philosophy and its neighboring areas as anyone in that remarkable group that dominated English-speaking ethics from the end of World War II well into the 1980s. From metaethics, the history of ethics, and normative ethical theory, to moral education, moral psychology, and applied ethics, to religious ethics and the philosophy of education, the sweep and quality of his ethical philosophizing was simply extraordinary.

In some ways Frankena's greatest contribution was to show by argument and example how all these areas are inextricably linked. Like any field, ethics is given to fashions and enthusiasms, with all the action seeming to be in some particular area, which comes to be pursued more or less independently of, and out of balance with, the rest. This frequently causes a period of reaction, during which some other important but recently neglected area gains its day in the sun. Afterward, we sometimes get Hegelian synthesis, sometimes further reaction.

For example, the 1950s and early 1960s were marked by a concentration on analytical metaethics to the exclusion of normative theory. Some even held that ethical philosophy can only be metaethical; normative ethics was said to be moralizing, not moral philosophy. In reaction, the late 1960s and much of the 1970s saw normative theory's "Great Expansion," with metaethics receding into the far background.[1]

* An earlier version of this article was presented at a special session devoted to the philosophy of W. K. Frankena held at the Central Division meetings of the American Philosophical Association in Chicago on April 27, 1996. I am indebted to the other participant, Robert Audi, and members of the audience for helpful discussion. I am also indebted to David Copp and John Deigh for their comments on an earlier draft.

1. For a discussion, see Stephen Darwall, Allan Gibbard, and Peter Railton, "Toward Fin de Siècle Ethics: Some Trends," *Philosophical Review* 101 (1992): 121–24.

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These trends interact with others. During periods like the Great Expansion, ethics seems more continuous with political theory, jurisprudence, economics, and policy analysis than with such central philosophical areas as metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophies of language and mind. When focus shifts to metaethics, however, ethics may come to look more like a convenient laboratory to test general theories in metaphysics and the philosophies of language and mind. There are also similar, sometimes corresponding shifts in the relation ethics has to its history, between periods in which the subject is pursued more or less ahistorically and those in which this is thought ill advised or even impossible. And, of course, any and all of these dialectical oppositions can be represented within any given period as well.

Frankena constantly overcame these false dualisms. Some of his most original and penetrating work—on the naturalistic fallacy and the externalism/internalism debate—was in analytical metaethics. But four-fifths of his extraordinarily successful text, *Ethics,* was devoted to normative theory, even though it was published during the heyday of metaethics.[2] And much of Frankena's analysis of the concept and nature of morality—metamorality, as he called it—as well as his work on Sidgwick on practical reason, was pursued during the 1970s, in the teeth of the Great Expansion of normative ethics.

Stimulated by the political struggles of the 1960s and by Rawls's *Theory of Justice* (1971), 1970s normative theory was preoccupied with issues of justice and obligation, focusing on the morality of institutions and individual conduct. This provoked a 1980s reaction in the direction of ethics of virtue and care, as well as various critiques of orthodox moral theory and even of morality itself. But here again, these movements brought into relief elements that Frankena had tried to keep in view during the 1970s in such important papers as "Prichard and the Ethics of Virtue" and "The Ethics of Love Conceived as an Ethics of Virtue."[3]

The latter was published in the *Journal of Religious Ethics,* a mark of Frankena's desire to bring secular and religious moral philosophy into constructive engagement. William Frankena was raised in a small, Dutch Calvinist community in western Michigan, and despite its explicitly secular form, there was always a religious element to his thinking. This expressed itself more as a fundamental faith than in any explicit

2. William Frankena, *Ethics,* 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973). How successful was *Ethics?* Originally published in 1963, it is in at least the twenty-sixth printing of its second edition. And it has been translated into eight languages, with two Chinese editions, one for Taiwan and one for mainland China.

3. William Frankena, "Prichard and the Ethics of Virtue," *Monist* 54 (1970): 1–17, and "The Ethics of Love Conceived as an Ethics of Virtue," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 21–36.

theological doctrine. So long as the possibility is left open by empirical evidence, he believed, faith can give us confidence that rational reflection will converge in the limit to provide morality the rational warrant it presents itself as having and which, to have the appropriate authority, it perhaps must have.

Frequently, what impressed students and colleagues most about Frankena—in addition to his penetrating analysis and knack for luminous categories—was his astounding historical erudition. When he retired in 1978, the regents of the University of Michigan said in tribute, "He is renowned for his learning in the history of ethics, a subject about which he is generally believed in the profession to know more than anyone else in the world." And who could have gainsaid that? However, scholarly exegesis and the historical treatise were only rarely Frankena's genre. If we exclude his essays on Sidgwick, whom he regarded as near enough to a participant in contemporary debates anyway, and his *Three Historical Philosophies of Education,* there were only three historical essays, two on Spinoza and one on Hutcheson. Frankena preferred to bring historical figures and ideas into contemporary discussion to provide context and focus for his own philosophizing. As he put it in his "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," he was "a not very typical, more or less eighteenth-century-minded, moral philosopher of the twentieth century."[4]

Frankena was apparently no more comfortable speaking entirely in his own voice than he was in simply interpreting the voices of others, whether historical figures or contemporaries. A typical Frankena paper was more a description and pursuit of a conversation than a soliloquy or an interpretation. He was more at ease developing his own views in creative engagement with others' views, and in treating theirs in dialogue with his own. And, in doing so, he drew his readers, colleagues, and students into crossing boundaries, between metaethics and normative ethics, ethics of duty and ethics of virtue, ahistorical and historical ethics, and secular and religious moral thought, countering fashions and enthusiasms that kept these areas apart. He helped to keep alive aspects of the subject that were relatively out of fashion

4. William K. Frankena, *Three Historical Philosophies of Education: Aristotle, Kant, Dewey* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1965), and "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," in *Perspectives on Morality: Essays of William K. Frankena,* ed. Kenneth E. Goodpaster (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), pp. 208–17. The latter collection contains a bibliography of Frankena's writings through 1975. The bibliography in A. I. Goldman and J. Kim, eds., *Values and Morals* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1978) is complete through 1977. Both list various works that were forthcoming at the time of publication. One important essay on Sidgwick postdated both bibliographies: "Sidgwick and the History of Ethical Dualism," in *Essays on Henry Sidgwick,* ed. Bart Schultz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 175–98.

and to bring the subject together as an integrated whole. And he kept the subject connected to its life blood, its history.

## MOORE AND SIDGWICK

No two figures loomed larger in Frankena's pantheon than G. E. Moore and Henry Sidgwick. Although united by agreement in fundamental metaethical and normative views (both were intuitionists and consequentialists), Moore and Sidgwick had almost diametrically opposed philosophical temperaments and styles. And these evidently found very different resonances in Frankena. Moore was a philosophical radical, who attempted in *Principia* to sweep the slate clean so that ethics could finally achieve focus on the critical preliminary question of what 'good' means before it attempted to determine what things are good. For Moore, the history of ethics was, with the possible exception of Plato, a litany of failures and blind alleys. Moore tended to see all positions other than his own as based on confusion and fallacy rather than as alternative perspectives from which one might learn, or even as simple errors.

For Sidgwick, however, the moral philosopher's job was a judicious weighing of alternative "methods of ethics" as these are manifest in philosophical tradition and moral common sense. Ultimately, Sidgwick believed, like Moore, that ethical thinking must bottom out in a few self-evident, irreducible ethical propositions, intuitively grasped. And both agreed that, however revolutionary these ethical foundations might seem, the specific practical recommendations derivable from them bear a remarkable resemblance to moral common sense. But Sidgwick's philosophical manner was entirely different from Moore's. Where Moore's instincts were radical, Sidgwick's were conservative. A survey of the index of *Principia* reveals a list of figures (Bentham, Kant, Mill, Spencer, etc.) whose shoddy thinking Moore will expose, while that of the *Methods* runs toward moral philosophers whom Sidgwick believes to have made genuine contributions to the subject. And, of course, Moore would never have written anything like Sidgwick's *Outlines of the History of Ethics*.

For Frankena, Moore may have been the philosophical father he rose to slay. Or perhaps, the fascinating threat from which his philosophical "family" was to be protected (not least his ethical naturalist Harvard teachers, Ralph Barton Perry and C. I. Lewis). Sidgwick, on the other hand, was the ancestor to be understood, venerated, and emulated (partly, in constructive disagreement). Of course, I don't mean that Frankena rejected everything Moore stood for (or that he accepted everything Sidgwick said). To the contrary, Moore was a powerful figure for Frankena precisely because he so vividly represented the value of analytical clarity and rigor, but used it in ways Frankena thought unwarranted, unwise, and, sometimes, unfair.

In 1935, in the middle of graduate training at Harvard, Frankena went to spend a year at Cambridge studying with Moore. Moore was a commanding presence even then (over thirty years after *Principia*), and his attack on naturalism was, if anything, even more influential than it had been when *Principia* was first published in 1903, especially in England. New versions of naturalism had been advanced in the United States (by Perry, for example), but the impression was widespread abroad that Moore had decisively proven in *Principia* that any such view was involved in fallacy.

When he returned to Harvard in 1936, Frankena made Moore the center of his dissertation, "Recent Intuitionism in British Ethics," which he completed the next year. Moore was also the subject of Frankena's first two published papers: "The Naturalistic Fallacy," which appeared in 1939 in *Mind* and "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," published in the Schilpp volume on Moore in 1942.[5] But I am getting ahead of myself.

## FRANKENA ON MOORE ON NORMATIVITY

I title this remembrance "Learning from Frankena," because I want to discuss the way Frankena's thought and writings centered around a set of issues in which there is intense interest today—the normativity of ethics and ethical thought, and the relation these have to motivation and the will—in the hope that we might learn something from his approach. I shall argue that Frankena can be viewed as siding with Sidgwick, and against Moore, about the normative character of ethical properties and judgments, and that Sidgwick and Frankena were right.

The entry point for our discussion is Frankena's "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," but we should begin by rehearsing some of the main points of "The Naturalistic Fallacy." And here we might pause to get some of the flavor of Frankena's reaction to Moore in that essay's opening words. "The future historian of 'thought and expression' in the twentieth century," Frankena writes, "will no doubt record with some amusement the ingenious trick, which some of the philosophical controversialists of the first quarter of our century had, of labeling their opponents' views 'fallacies'. He may even list some of these alleged fallacies for a certain sonority which their inventors embodied in their titles."[6] Frankena mentions, among others, the fallacy of initial predication, the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, and,

5. William Frankena, "The Naturalistic Fallacy," *Mind* 48 (1939): 464–77, and "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," in *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, ed. P. A. Schilpp (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1942), pp. 93–110.

6. William Frankena, "The Naturalistic Fallacy," reprinted in his *Perspectives on Morality*, p. 1.

finally, the naturalistic fallacy. Moore had charged in *Principia* that any view that identified ethical properties with natural properties committed this fallacy. Indeed, he held there that any view that identified ethical properties with any properties thought to have genuine existence, whether natural or supernatural, committed a fallacy of the very same kind. But what, exactly, is the naturalistic fallacy? Frankena shows that no mistake of reasoning is involved. The charge might more accurately be termed: the "definist fallacy" (defining or identifying one thing as another). But even putting it this way is question begging, since it assumes that there are two different things, which are mistakenly thought to be one. Naturalists like Perry thought (as contemporary naturalists still think) that there is really only one property, to which two different expressions may both refer, one in ethical vocabulary ("good") and another in some other naturalistic vocabulary ("the object of an interest").

What Frankena thought Moore should have said was that naturalists seemed to him to suffer from a kind of blindness. Where naturalists believed they could see only one property, Moore thought he could see two, indeed, properties of two different kinds—ethical and natural. Calling this a fallacy was but a "trick." Moreover, from the perspective of naturalism, nonnaturalism must seem to involve a corresponding error, namely, hallucination. Moore had enlisted Bishop Butler's dictum—"Everything is what it is, and not another thing"—as his motto. Frankena suggested this naturalist response: "Everything is what it is, and not another thing, unless it is another thing, and even then it is what it is."[7]

"Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," is not nearly so well known as "The Naturalistic Fallacy," but it deserves much more recognition than it gets. It attempts to make a deeply cutting criticism of Moore's own positive view, not just to show that a charge Moore makes against opposing views is unfounded. Moore had famously argued in *Principia* that the fundamental ethical notion is intrinsic goodness and that it is a simple, indefinable, and nonnatural property. Later, he added that goodness is a property that depends only on the intrinsic features of what has it.[8] Frankena argued, however, that these

7. Ibid., p. 7.

8. G. E. Moore, "On the Conception of Intrinsic Value," in his *Philosophical Studies* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1922), pp. 253–75, reprinted in G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, ed. Thomas Baldwin, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Moore says there that while intrinsic value depends only on a thing's intrinsic nature, it is nonetheless not among the thing's intrinsic properties (see *Principia Ethica*, p. 272, original ed.; p. 295, Baldwin ed.). To ease exposition, however, I will sometimes say that Moore believes that intrinsic goodness is an "intrinsic property." This should be understood as shorthand.

various aspects are in tension with one another: what grounds the thought that ethical features are indefinable and not natural tells against the thesis that they are simple and intrinsic.

The reason, according to Frankena, is that it is the normativity (or "obligatoriness") of ethical features that best explains why they should be thought indefinable and not natural. By a normative property (or, as we might also say, the "normativity" of an ethical property), Frankena means the property of being something an agent ought to desire, feel, promote, or aim at—if what has the property is some object or state—or of being something an agent should do, if what has it is an action. It is clear enough that in *Principia* Moore thinks of intrinsic goodness as a normative feature. As Frankena points out, Moore talks indifferently in his discussions of Mill and Spencer of something's being intrinsically good and of its being something that "ought to be desired" or "ought to be aimed at" for its own sake.[9] And there is a well-known passage in which Moore implies that "is intrinsically good" is synonymous with "ought to exist for its own sake."[10] This latter phrase is hardly idiomatic, and Frankena implies, rightly I think, that, as any 'ought' presupposes someone subject to it, even if only hypothetically, it should be understood in terms of the former expressions. Thus, Moore should be read in *Principia* as holding that something's being intrinsically good consists in (or analytically entails) its being something an agent should desire, aim at, or promote for its own sake.

Frankena argues, moreover, that if Moore wants to maintain that intrinsic goodness is indefinable and not natural, he had better hold this: "What makes ethical judgments seem irreducible to natural or to metaphysical judgments is their apparently normative character, that is, the fact that they seem to be saying of some agent that he ought to do something." Consequently, "if intrinsic value is to be indefinable and non-natural, if judgments of intrinsic value are to be different in kind from non-ethical judgments, then intrinsic value must in itself possess a normative character or obligatoriness."[11]

Frankena does not say why the normativity of ethical features and judgments is necessary to ground their irreducibility to natural or metaphysical features or judgments, but the idea is plausible enough. (Note: Frankena is not here saying that they *are* irreducible, but that the only ground on which they might reasonably be thought irreducible is by virtue of their normativity.) Why, for example, do the open-

9. William Frankena, "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," reprinted in his *Perspectives on Morality,* p. 14. Further references to this essay will be to the version in this collection.

10. Moore, *Principia Ethica,* ed. Baldwin, pp. 34, 169.

11. Frankena, "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," p. 17.

question argument and its near cousins continue to seem to so many to illustrate the irreducibility of ethics, despite the fact that it has been well known, at least since Frankena's first paper, that, as they stand, these arguments cannot logically establish irreducibility, any more than the fact that the exact nature of genes was an open question during Mendel's time could then establish that genes are not identical with segments of DNA molecules? Surely, the answer must have something to do with the fact that no matter what we discover about the actual features of some object, state, or action, it is left logically open how this appropriately regulates action, emotion, and feeling—indeed, how it regulates any state of an agent other than belief.[12] Nothing about the natures of things entails what or how we ought to desire, feel, and act with respect to them.

Now belief *is* regulated by, it is to fit, the way things are. By the very nature of belief, what we have evidence is true is what we have reason to believe. But that is thanks to the fact that belief (and so theoretical reason) have accurate representation as their internal aim. Even here the way things are does not regulate all by itself, but via an essential representative aim. And when it comes to desire and action, there is apparently no such internal aim that might give the world even a derivative normative or regulatory force.[13] If it is of the nature of ethical properties to be normative or regulatory, then this would explain why it is natural to conclude that they cannot be reduced to anything concerning the natures of things as they are.

So it seems that Frankena must be right to hold that Moore's claim that intrinsic goodness is irreducible is plausible only if intrinsic goodness is a normative property. But Frankena argues that if intrinsic goodness is a normative property, then it cannot be a simple property something has owing only to its intrinsic nature, independently of its relation to any other thing. The reason is that normative properties essentially concern the relation of what has them to rational agents, since they just are, or entail, the property of something's oughting to be desired, aimed at, or promoted by such agents (should any exist). Their primary existence is as qualifying the attitudes and actions of agents. Therefore, Frankena argues, Moore's claim that intrinsic value is indefinable and not natural is in conflict with his thesis that it is simple and intrinsic. Moore can make the former claim only if he holds that intrinsic value is a normative property, but that conflicts with the thesis that intrinsic value is a simple, intrinsic property.

12. For some discussion of this point, see Darwall, Railton, and Gibbard, pp. 115–21.

13. For a very helpful discussion, see J. David Velleman, "The Possibility of Practical Reason," *Ethics* 106 (1996): 694–726.

But what about the commonsense distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic value? Surely we want to preserve that and, consequently, the idea that some things are good, in some sense, just because of their intrinsic features. It is important to see, however, that this does not require Moore's view that intrinsic value is a simple property that depends metaphysically only on the intrinsic features of what has it. One can maintain that value is essentially normative, bearing essentially on what agents ought to desire and do, without abandoning the internal/external distinction. If intrinsic value is a normative property, then the most natural way to conceive it is as the object of desires or aims we should have when we restrict consideration to things' intrinsic features. Things have value, as W. D. Falk put it, "on account of" what they are like, that is, on an accounting, reckoning, or consideration of their features.[14]

Frankena believed that Moore landed himself in an even worse position to maintain that intrinsic goodness is indefinable when, in *Ethics,* he changed his view to say that it is a synthetic rather than an analytic truth that intrinsic value ought to be promoted.[15] This meant that, for Moore, intrinsic value was no longer itself a normative property. But if that is so, then we lose any reason to think intrinsic value irreducible deriving from normativity.

Frankena concludes that if Moore wants to hold that the fundamental ethical notion is intrinsic value, then he must give up either his claim that it is simple and intrinsic or his thesis that it is irreducible. The fundamental ethical notion is irreducible only if it is the notion expressed by 'ought'. And either it is analytic that something having intrinsic value ought to be desired or pursued or it is not. If it is analytic, then intrinsic value is irreducible, but it cannot be a simple, intrinsic property. Alternatively, if it is not analytic that something having intrinsic value ought to be desired or promoted, then intrinsic value has no intrinsic normativity, and we have lost any reason to think that it cannot be reduced to some natural property.

In his "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," Frankena tells us that this last view was his own when he wrote his two essays on Moore. "Roughly speaking, my position during this first period, held very tentatively, was a cognitivistic one combining naturalism about 'good' and intuitionism about 'ought'. It seemed to me, as

14. W. D. Falk, "Fact, Value, and Nonnatural Predication," in his *Ought, Reasons, and Morality* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 110–16. See also Christine Korsgaard, "Two Distinctions in Goodness," *Philosophical Review* 92 (1983): 169–95, reprinted in her *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 249–74.

15. G. E. Moore, *Ethics* (1912; New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 25–26.

it perhaps had to Henry Sidgwick, that it was unnecessary to be an intuitionist about both and implausible to be one about 'good', but important and plausible to be one about obligation, as Sidgwick and A. C. Ewing thought."[16] That Sidgwick was a naturalist, and not an intuitionist, about the good is debatable, as Frankena may concede with his "perhaps." The informed preference account of a person's good that tradition attributes to Sidgwick is actually something of a caricature of his view. It is probably more accurate to interpret him as holding that 'good' is defined in terms of 'ought' (what a person ought to desire).[17]

In criticizing Moore as he did, Frankena was siding with Sidgwick about the distinctively normative character of ethical judgments, concepts, and properties. Ethical judgments contain "the fundamental notion represented by the word 'ought'," and that is why, Sidgwick concludes, they "cannot legitimately be interpreted as judgments respecting the present or future existence of human feelings or any facts of the sensible world."[18]

Sidgwick takes the indefinable notion expressed by 'ought' to be expressible also by such phrases as 'prescribed' or 'dictated by reason', 'reasonable', and so on. What a person ought to do is what it would be rational or reasonable for her to do. Thus, at one point Sidgwick defines "my ultimate good on the whole" as what I would "practically desire if my desires were in harmony with reason, assuming my own existence alone to be considered."[19] It is owing to his agreement with Sidgwick that the fundamental ethical notion concerns what a rational agent ought to seek and do, therefore, that Frankena rejects Moore's claim that it can concern a simple, intrinsic property of an object. Ethical notions are irreducible because they are normative, concerning what we should do, desire, feel, etcetera.[20] So if something is intrinsically valuable (in the sense of intrinsically desirable), it is by virtue of being the object of a rational aim or desire.[21]

16. Frankena, "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," p. 209.

17. See Robert Shaver, "Sidgwick's False Friends," *Ethics* 107 (1997): 314–20; and my "Self-Interest and Self-Concern," in *Self-Interest*, ed. Ellen Paul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

18. Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 25, 32. For a very helpful discussion, see John Deigh, "Sidgwick on Ethical Judgment," in Schultz, ed., pp. 241–58.

19. Sidgwick, p. 112.

20. This is what provides space to argue, as Elizabeth Anderson does (*Value in Ethics and Economics* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993]), that there is an irreducible plurality of kinds of value—there may be an irreducible plurality of valuing attitudes. So we might think of the desirable as what we ought to desire, the estimable as what we ought to esteem, and so on.

21. For an excellent discussion and defense of this idea, see Korsgaard, "Two Distinctions in Goodness."

Moore was clearly much exercised by Frankena's paper. His reply in the Schilpp volume is fully twice as long as Frankena's and wears its irritation on its sleeve. It makes a number of good points, along with some niggles, but does not, I think, satisfactorily answer Frankena's main line of criticism. Years later, Frankena would say that, while Moore had rightly taken him "to task" on various matters, he nonetheless still thought that his "main contentions were correct" and could be "restated and maintained." Frankena's central criticism, left still standing after Moore's reply, was that "if intrinsic goodness is a simple and/or an intrinsic quality, then it cannot be analytically or by definition ought-implying." And if this is so, then "there is no very good reason for regarding [intrinsic value] as indefinable or non-natural."[22]

## A "POST-EMOTIVIST" INTERNALISM

In 1958, Frankena published "Obligation and Motivation in Recent Moral Philosophy," which stands, along with W. D. Falk's "'Ought' and Motivation," as one of two major sources of the recently reinvigorated debates concerning internalism and externalism in ethics.[23] The main issue that Frankena addresses there is once again ethical normativity, but now as it relates to practical reason and the will. There are two different, but related, sets of issues. The first concerns whether ethical thought and judgment is intrinsically motivating, ceteris paribus. *Judgment internalism* asserts that it is, *judgment externalism* that it is not.[24] The second, concerns whether the existence of facts concerning what an agent should do entails or consists in the existence of motivation available to him, perhaps of a certain kind, perhaps only hypothetically. *Existence internalism* says that it does, *existence externalism,* that it does not.

In his 1958 paper, Frankena took an externalist position on both counts. There are, he argued, various natural, contingent connections between ethical facts, ethical judgment, and motivation, but motivation is not "built into" either ethical facts or judgments themselves. As he would describe it later, his "orientation then was still rather cognitivistic, if not intuitionistic."[25] He still held that ethical facts and judg-

22. Frankena, "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," p. 210.

23. William Frankena, "Obligation and Motivation in Recent Moral Philosophy," in *Essays in Moral Philosophy,* ed. A. I. Melden (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), reprinted in his *Perspectives on Morality,* pp. 49–73; W. D. Falk, "'Ought' and Motivation," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 48 (1947–48): 492–510, reprinted in his *Ought, Reasons, and Morality,* pp. 21–41.

24. These terms derive from my *Impartial Reason* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 54–55.

25. Frankena, "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," p. 212.

ments fundamentally concern what agents ought to do and desire and that normative facts and judgments are one thing and motivation, another. Still, even at this point Frankena clearly saw one of (existence) internalism's central attractions, namely, that it is a consequence of an appealing doctrine relating the moral 'ought' to autonomy. As Frankena there put it, what internalists should hold is that externalism involves a "gap" between obligation and motivation that is unacceptable, "given morality's task of guiding human conduct autonomously."[26] This introduces a theme I shall develop below, namely, an increasing convergence between Frankena's views on these matters and an "autonomist internalism."

By the time *Ethics* appeared, only five years later, Frankena was no longer an externalist. Partly because of increasing doubts about "the epistemology and metaphysics of intuitionism as [he] understood it," he had come to think that a noncognitivist, judgment internalist, approach to normative judgment had genuine appeal.[27] As he would later put it, "when one judges that *x* ought to do *A*, one is necessarily taking a pro attitude toward *x*'s doing *A*, at least ceteris paribus."[28] But Frankena characterized his position in *Ethics* as "post-emotivist." Normative ethical judgments do not simply express motivational states or attitudes—although, the important grain of truth to noncognitivism is that, standardly, they do express them. Additionally, they also "clai[m] some kind of status, justification, or validity for our attitudes or judgments."[29] They claim that such an attitude or motivational state is rational.

But what is it to judge an attitude rational? This judgment seems no less normative than the initial judgment, the one that standardly expresses the attitude one is claiming in this second judgment to be justified. In saying, "Jones ought to do *A*," one standardly expresses a pro attitude toward Jones's doing *A*. This is the first judgment. But Frankena thought that one is not merely doing this. One is committed also to a second judgment that the pro attitude expressed in the first judgment is rational, that it is an attitude one ought to have.

Now a thoroughgoing noncognitivism about normative judgment would be noncognitivist at this second level also. It would hold that the judgment that one ought to have a pro attitude toward Jones's

26. Ibid., p. 73.

27. The quoted passage comes from Frankena, "Concluding More or Less Philosophical Postscript," p. 212. See his *Ethics*, p. 106 (see pp. 89–90 of the 1st ed. of *Ethics* [Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963]).

28. Frankena, "Obligation and Value in the Ethics of G. E. Moore," p. 213.

29. Frankena, "On Saying the Ethical Thing," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 39 (1966): 21–42, reprinted in his *Perspectives on Morality*, p. 116. For a similar passage in *Ethics*, 2d ed. see p. 106 (p. 90 in the 1st ed.).

doing *A* also expresses a pro attitude toward one's (presumably, anyone's) having a pro attitude toward Jones's doing *A*.[30] This is not, however, the strategy that Frankena pursues. Although his account of normative judgments of the first kind includes the judgment internalist, noncognitivist core that such judgments standardly express pro and con attitudes, his account of normative judgments of the second kind is existence internalist rather than judgment internalist. As Frankena came to see it, in judging an attitude rational, one is saying that the attitude is one that anyone (the agent included) would have on fully rational consideration or reflection.[31]

Moreover, since the first judgment involves or entails this second judgment, existence internalism at this second level trickles down to the first level also. According to what Christine Korsgaard calls the "internalism requirement," Jones ought to do *A*, only if Jones would, if rational, be motivated to do *A*.[32] (Both 'ought' and motivation may be understood here as ceteris paribus.) On Frankena's analysis, the judgment that Jones ought to do *A* includes or entails the judgment that it would be rational for anyone (Jones included) to have a pro attitude toward his doing *A*. And that, Frankena believes, amounts to the judgment that anyone (including Jones) would have a pro attitude toward Jone's doing *A* were he to reflect in an ideally rational way. By transitivity, therefore, the judgment that Jones ought to do *A* can be true only if Jones (like anyone) would have a pro attitude toward his doing *A* were he to reflect in a fully rational way. Therefore, someone ought to do something, on Frankena's analysis, only if the internalism requirement (existence internalism) is satisfied.

This closes the gap between 'ought' and motivation. But as Frankena is thinking of it, the rationale for this closure is no Kantian, "autonomist internalist" doctrine that connects obligation to autonomy, holding that the practical 'ought' must be self-imposed within an agent's self-determining, deliberative reasoning.[33] Rather, it is an attempt to combine the judgment internalist/noncognitivist idea that normative judgment standardly expresses endorsement together with the idea that normative judgment also expresses the conviction that this endorsement has a kind of objectivity or groundedness.

30. This is, of course, Gibbard's strategy in *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990). Gibbard holds that normative judgments express the acceptance of norms rather than pro attitudes.

31. See Frankena, *Perspectives on Morality,* pp. 116–17, and *Thinking about Morality* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), p. 85.

32. Christine Korsgaard, "Skepticism about Practical Reason," *Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986): 5–25, reprinted in her *Creating the Kingdom of Ends,* pp. 311–34.

33. For a discussion of "autonomist internalism," see my "Autonomist Internalism and the Justification of Morals," *Nous* 24 (1990): 257–68, and also *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought': 1640–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Like autonomist internalism, Frankena's position respects the distinction between representative and regulative normative judgments on which the open-question argument relies. Whereas the objectivity of representative judgments consists in accuracy or truth, that of normative practical judgments must reside elsewhere. Frankena's proposal is that is consists in ideal intersubjective convergence in attitudes through which an agent regulates conduct. "Jones ought to do *A*" is true if, and only if, anyone (Jones included) would endorse Jones's doing *A* were he to consider it in a fully rational way.

Even if the rationale for Frankena's position is distinct from autonomist internalism, however, it is no coincidence that it ends up in a similar place. For the idea of autonomy arguably is itself best understood in terms of some notion of objective endorsement, as philosophers from Cudworth, Shaftesbury, and Butler, to Rousseau and Kant, to Thomas Nagel have argued.[34] Ruling oneself requires the ability to take an appropriately objective, critical stance on one's conduct and regulate it through motivation from that point of view.

Thus, by the early 1960s, Frankena held (as he would throughout the rest of his life) that normative judgments essentially concern what attitudes a person would have toward something were she to consider it in a fully rational way. But what is rational reflection? Frankena now rejected the epistemology and metaphysics he thought were required by intuitionism, a kind of perception that brings independently existing normative facts into view.[35] Fully rational reflection is not, like good eyesight, the use of a faculty that reliably tracks some independent reality. What is required, he thought, is some formal or procedural characterization rather than a substantive one.[36]

## NORMATIVITY AND AUTONOMOUS DELIBERATION

But from what perspective does rational reflection proceed? In "On Saying the Ethical Thing" (1966), Frankena ventured the thought,

34. This is somewhat overstated for Cudworth and Shaftesbury. For details on Cudworth, Butler, and Kant, see *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought'*. I discuss Rousseau and Kant within this same tradition in "Norm and Normativity in Eighteenth-Century Ethics," in *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, in press). See also Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 113–20, 134–37, 149–63. I discuss this aspect of Nagel's view in "How Nowhere Can You Get (and Do Ethics)?" *Ethics* 98 (1987): 137–57, and in "Autonomist Internalism and the Justification of Morals."

35. As John Deigh reminds me, this is probably a caricature of Sidgwick's position.

36. In my review of his *Thinking about Morality* (*Philosophical Review* 91 [1982]: 454–57), I characterized Frankena's as a "process" conception of rationality. Frankena concurs with this characterization in "Rational Action in the History of Ethics," *Social Theory and Practice* 9 (1983): 165–97, p. 180.

which he credited to Paul Taylor, that normative judgments are always made relative to some assumed perspective or point of view, and that the rationality that normative judgments claim for the attitudes they standardly express is always within that point of view. Thus he wrote that "the reasons (and hence the rationality) claimed by normative judgments may be of different sorts: aesthetic, legal, moral, prudential, perhaps even religiuous. . . . Each type of reason may be conceived of as relative to a 'point of view', and each type of normative judgment claims that something is justified or rational (or the opposite) from some such point of view."[37]

Making normativity perspective-relative, however, arguably removes (genuine) normativity altogether. We can begin to see this by considering the role normative reasons and practical 'oughts' play from an agent's perspective in deliberation. By its very nature, deliberation involves consideration of normative reasons for and against alternative actions in order to decide what to do. The deliberating agent is involved in the practical task of deciding, but by weighing reasons rather than by some arbitrary process; flipping a coin is not deliberating.

Consider now the relevance of perspective-relative normative judgments in this context. As a deliberating agent, I want to know what there is good reason for me to do. Of course, I will be interested in what I ought to do from the moral, prudential, legal, or aesthetic perspectives, but only to the degree that I regard what seem to be reasons from these various perspectives as really being reasons for me to act (not just reasons relative to those perspectives). It is only to the extent that I *accept* these perspectives as reason giving that they are of any interest to me as a deliberating agent. Thus, to take a familiar example, I might believe that relative to the perspective of etiquette I ought to use forks from the outside in as they are placed before me. But if I am deliberating about what to do, this will properly interest me only to the degree that it reveals nonrelative reasons for me to act, and not just reasons relative to the perspective of etiquette. I will want to know whether this reason relative to the perspective of etiquette really is a reason (unqualifiedly or nonrelatively).

Another way of putting the same point is to note that people who accept the perspective of etiquette as having some genuine authority do not view reasons of etiquette just as perspective-relative reasons. To people who accept etiquette's norms, reasons of etiquette present themselves as nonrelative reasons, relevant to what a person should do (nonrelatively). This is also true of a widely held and deeply appealing view about morality. 'Oughts' that seem binding to us from the moral point of view, present themselves (from that point of view) as binding nonrelatively, not just as binding relative to that perspective.

37. Frankena, "On Saying the Ethical Thing," p. 120.

A similar point applies to *comparative* weight of reasons. To a deliberating agent, the issue is what she has, on balance, most reason to do. And again, what she desires to know is not simply how weighty various considerations are relative to their respective perspectives or frameworks, but how weighty they are, period. The phrase, 'a weighty *X* reason' is ambiguous as between these. It can mean a weighty reason relative to perspective *X*, without prejudice as to its nonrelative weight. Or it can mean a weighty reason relative to perspective *X* that also has significant nonrelative weight. For any *X*, the relevance of *X* reasons to deliberation is in this second sense.

On reflection, it would seem that, given his objections to Moore, Frankena has especially good reasons for thinking that perspective-relative normativity is not really normativity, that all genuine normativity is nonrelative. The force of the open-question argument in the ethical case appears to depend on a background assumption of nonrelative normativity. Consider, for example, the possibility of reducing the 'ought' of etiquette to the prescriptions of various recognized authorities and manuals of etiquette. Consider now the question, "I'll grant you that recognized authorities unite in dictating the use of forks from the outside in, but does etiquette really recommend that?" It is hard to hear that question as open unless we take it as a query about nonrelative reasons. If the open-question argument is an indication of normativity, then it would seem that perspective-relative 'oughts' are not really normative.

It is consistent with this, of course, that some perspectives may make the validity of dictates and recommendations relative to their own points of view dependent on whether they bind nonrelatively. On the appealing view of morality I mentioned above, this is true of moral 'oughts': moral obligations present themselves as categorically binding. This, after all, was the view of morality that Foot's famous example of etiquette was meant to put in question, and which Frankena himself attempted to defend against Foot's attacks.[38]

In any case, it is nonrelative normativity that underlies the open question and makes trouble for reducibility. Or, to put the point another way, the 'ought' which both Frankena and Sidgwick hold to be the fundamental concept of ethics is a nonrelative 'ought'.[39] But if this

38. William Frankena, "The Philosopher's Attack on Morality," *Philosophy* 49 (1974): 345–56.

39. What, then, about Sidgwick's claim that the fundamental notion of 'ought' is involved in hypothetical no less than categorical imperatives? (*The Methods of Ethics*, p. 37). The answer is that what stands behind a hypothetical imperative is actually a nonrelative 'ought', but one from which no practical conclusions can be drawn without some premise concerning the rational warrant for pursuing some end. Strictly, what grounds hypothetical imperatives is a consistency constraint. To adopt an end, as Kant

is so, any perspective-relative account of the rationality of pro and con attitudes must ultimately be unsatisfactory as a module to be fitted into an account of normative judgment or fact. To see this, let us continue with the etiquette example. Suppose I accept norms of etiquette and I judge that Jones ought to use his forks from the outside in. By Frankena's lights, in making this judgment I am doing two things. I am expressing my pro attitude toward Jones's using forks in this order, and I am saying of this attitude that it is justified or rational. Now it is in this second "moment" where the proposal to understand rationality relativistically enters. We are to understand my judging my pro attitude to be rational as amounting to the judgment that it is rational relative to some standpoint, say, the standpoint of etiquette. Of course, I believe that it is. But this is hardly all that I believe or express when I judge that Jones ought so to use his forks. For if I accept the norms of etiquette, I am bound to disagree with someone who rejects etiquette's norms and says that while, of course, there are reasons relative to the standpoint of etiquette, these in fact provide no reasons for anyone to do anything. When someone who takes etiquette seriously and someone who does not disagree, they don't disagree about what the norms of etiquette dictate. They disagree about whether these norms are binding, about whether anything normative follows from them.[40] If, consequently, an account of normative judgment is to have an account of rational attitude as a module within it, the latter will have to be an account of nonrelatively rational attitude.

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argued, is to intend to take some means or other to accomplish it, so it is inconsistent simultaneously to will an end, believe that a given means is necessary to achieve it, and intend not to take those means. Therefore, one (nonrelatively) ought not adopt *A* as an end, believe *B* is necessary to accomplish *A*, and intend not to do *B*. But without an additional premise concerning the rational warrant for pursuing *A*, or not doing *B*, no practical conclusions follow, since one can do as one ought either by taking the necessary means or by giving up the end. On this point, see R. M. Hare, "Wanting: Some Pitfalls," in *Agent, Action, and Reason*, ed. Robert Binkley, Richard Bronaugh, and Ausonio Marras (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968); Patricia Greenspan, "Conditional Oughts and Hypothetical Imperatives," *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (1975): 259–76; Darwall, *Impartial Reason*, pp. 43–50; and Christine Korsgaard, "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in *Ethics and Practical Reason*, ed. Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

40. David Copp has suggested to me that a point-of-view-relative notion of justification might be sufficient for the "second moment" of conflicting normative judgments if, as Frankena thinks, their "first moments" express conflicting noncognitive attitudes. But suppose that the two individuals mentioned in the text make the "second moments" of their respective judgments explicit by judging each other's attitude to be unwarranted or irrational. These "second-moment" judgments would then seem to be in conflict also. On the current proposal, however, there would be no conflict, since each would presumably be judging that the other's attitude is unjustified relative to different perspectives.

Indeed, this very point was central to Sidgwick's understanding of normativity and normative judgment, as Frankena came later to realize, if he hadn't already. In "Sidgwick and the Dualism of Practical Reason," Frankena put the point this way: "For Sidgwick, the question of ethics is to determine what an individual ultimately ought to do in the situations he faces, not what he ought to do on some special kind of ground or from some special point of view."[41] The whole point of Sidgwick's dualism is that self-interest and morality present themselves (self-evidently, according to Sidgwick) as comprehensive, but potentially conflicting dictates concerning what a person should do, really and nonrelatively. The axioms of prudence and universal benevolence can conflict only if both are addressed, as Frankena put it, to "what it is rational *for me to do, period.*"[42]

Consequently, Frankena found himself in the following dilemma. Like Sidgwick, he agreed that the core element of ethics and ethical judgment is normativity, its pronouncing on what agents ought to do (desire, feel, etc.). This, he thought, showed that Moore must have been wrong, and Sidgwick right, about whether ethical properties are simple and intrinsic. But Frankena had come to believe, on general metaphysical and epistemological grounds, that intuitionism was untenable.[43] Sidgwick was right about the irreducible normativity of ethical concepts and judgments, but the idea of a realm of independently existing normative facts open to rational intuition is, Frankena thought, simply incredible. And, even if there were such facts, how could these regulate the will?

Unlike his externalist intuitionist successors, Prichard and Ross, Sidgwick held that motivation is intrinsic to ethical judgment, but Frankena believed that intuitionism could not explain why this should be so. Frankena had come to accept this judgment internalism and to believe as well that noncognitivism provides a unified, if partial, solution to the problems of explaining both why normativity is irreducible and why motivation is built into ethical judgment. However, Frankena also believed that noncognitivism cannot account for the objective purport of normative judgment. When I judge that Jones ought not to discriminate against gays, I don't merely express my con attitude toward his discriminating, I also express the conviction that this attitude is justified, that it is one anyone ought to have. But how to account for this latter judgment? Frankena rejected the thoroughgoing noncognitivist expedient of treating this second normative judgment as the expression of another, second-order attitude. This, he

41. William Frankena, "Sidgwick and the Dualism of Practical Reason," in his *Perspectives on Morality,* p. 193.

42. Ibid., p. 204.

43. Again, for a more "Kantian" reading of Sidgwick, see Deigh.

must have thought, does not adequately capture the apparent objectivity that normative judgments claim.

Frankena's solution was to hold that the objectivity of normative judgment, as of normativity itself, consists in a form of intersubjectivity. If I judge that Jones ought not to discriminate against gays, I express my con attitude toward his (or anyone's) so discriminating, and say of my attitude that it is one anyone, including Jones, ought to have. This, again, entails a form of existence internalism, since it entails that Jones ought not so to act, only if Jones himself would have some motivation, insofar as he is rational, not to do so (a con attitude toward doing so). Rejecting an intuitionist realism, however, amounts to denying that there are facts about what it is rational to do (or what attitudes it is rational to have) that are independent of what would emerge from a process of practical reasoning and rational reflection. So the sense in which Jones would have a con attitude toward discrimination were he rational cannot be just that he would if is his motives were as they rationally should be. Rather, what attitudes it is rational to have must be fixed by what attitudes anyone would have, Jones and oneself included, were they to have conducted the process of deliberative reflection properly.

This is a form of existence internalism we might call metaphysical or constitutive internalism, since it holds that facts about what a person ought to do (or what attitudes she ought to have) are constituted by facts concerning what anyone would be moved to do were that person's reflections to accord with a deliberative ideal.[44] It takes normative objectivity to consist in intersubjective agreement in the limit in what would regulate practical reasoning when that reasoning matches the deliberative ideal.

Any constitutive existence internalism must thus hold the relevant ideal to be a procedural or formal one. Frankena's version was that ideally rational reflection is fully informed, clearheaded, and fully vivid.[45] Sometimes he added that it must also be impartial, but this may already be implicit anyway.[46] If the judgment that Jones ought not to discriminate expresses the conviction that anyone would have a con attitude toward Jones's doing so were he or she to deliberate properly, then proper deliberation must cancel out individual personal differences. Of course, for any actual set of individuals, deliberation from their personal standpoints may happen to converge on the same attitude. But the object of deliberation is to determine what one should do. And if Frankena is right, to judge that one should do something

44. For a more general discussion of varieties of internalism, see my "Internalism and Agency," *Philosophical Perspectives* 6 (1992): 155–74.

45. Frankena, *Ethics*, 2d ed., p. 115, and *Thinking about Morality*, p. 85.

46. Frankena, *Thinking about Morality*, p. 85.

is to endorse one's so acting and to think that anyone would likewise endorse it were they to deliberate rationally. But any form of deliberative thinking that could issue in these two aspects together must be one that at least aims to cancel out personal differences. This means that it must be built into rational deliberation that, at its most fundamental level, it is as from anyone's standpoint.

## CONCLUSION

This form of constitutive internalism was the final result of Frankena's grappling with the normative aspect of ethics and ethical judgment during a period of over forty years. In closing, I want to note a remarkable similarity between where Frankena ended up and the line of thought I have called autonomist internalism, a similarity that I think is hardly coincidental.

As we have noted in passing, the question, "What ought I to do ('period', as Frankena put it)?" is the question that faces an agent in deliberation. It is no coincidence, I think, that writers like Cudworth and Kant, who were some of the first to insist on the irreducibility of ethics to any theoretical discipline, whether theology or naturalistic psychology, were also among the first to maintain that the autonomy of the moral agent is central to understanding the (irreducible) normativity of ethics. The autonomy of ethics, they thought, is linked to the autonomy of the moral agent by more than homonymy.

Like Frankena, autonomist internalists take the practical 'ought' as the fundamental ethical concept. And they reject, as well, any intuitionist account of this irreducible normativity. Deliberation is genuinely practical reasoning, not theoretical inquiry concerning a special class of independently existing normative facts. So they face the same dilemma that Frankena faced, and they come to a similar solution. A free deliberating agent confronting the question, "What should I do?" but lacking, by the very logic of his situation, any given answer (either naturally or nonnaturally), can do no other than to consider what he could endorse from some nonarbitrary reflective standpoint that he can share in principle with any rational person, anyone, that is, who can raise the very question he is attempting to answer. Accordingly, what can make the judgment that someone ought to do something true is its being the case that anyone would, from such a standpoint, endorse that person's doing that thing. The ethical 'ought' is an "internal 'ought'" made binding by motives resulting from or mobilized by the deliberative thinking that realizes autonomy.

If it is, as autonomist internalists think, no coincidence that the autonomy of ethics is linked to the autonomy of the agent, then it is likewise no coincidence that both they and Frankena, drawn together by their acceptance of the irreducible normativity of ethics and their

rejection of both naturalism and intuitionist realism, should draw such similar conclusions. Thus we might say that while, if we are to learn from Frankena, we must, of course, bear in mind certain explicit lessons he had himself learned from Sidgwick, Frankena's work also exhibits implicit lessons that both he and Sidgwick may have learned from Kant.