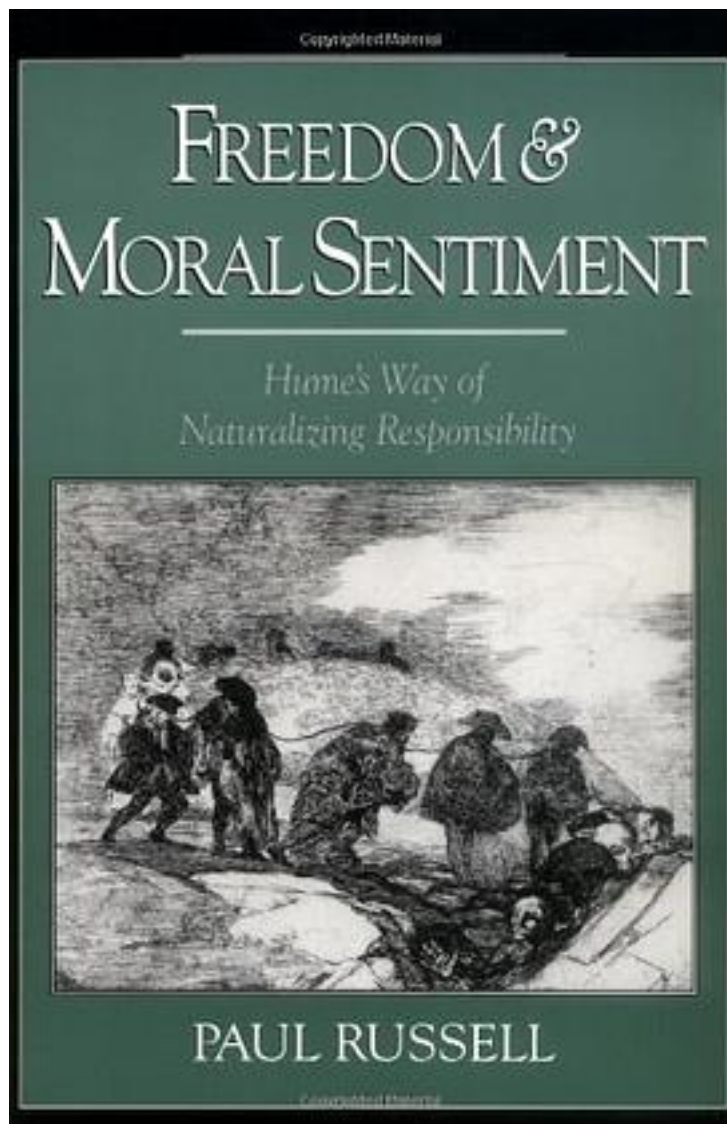


Freedom and Moral Sentiment



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In this book, Russell examines Hume's notion of free will and moral responsibility. It is widely held that Hume presents us with a classic statement of the "compatibilist" position-that freedom and responsibility can be reconciled with causation and, indeed, actually require it. Russell argues that this is a distortion of Hume's view, because it overlooks the crucial role of moral sentiment in Hume's picture of human nature. Hume was concerned to describe the regular mechanisms which generate moral sentiments such as responsibility, and Russell argues that his conception of free will must be interpreted within this naturalistic framework. He goes on to discuss Hume's views about the nature and character of moral sentiment; the extent to which we have control over our moral character; and the justification of punishment. Throughout, Russell argues that the naturalistic avenue of interpretation of Hume's thought, far from draining it of its contemporary interest and significance, reveals it to be of great relevance to the ongoing contemporary debate.

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