Introduction

Hume's infamous essay "Of Suicide," published posthumously in 1777, endeavored to "restore men to their native liberty" by rebutting "all the common arguments" against suicide and showing that suicide "may be free from every imputation of guilt or blame."[1] Hume characterized these "common arguments" as follows: "If Suicide be criminal, it must be a transgression of our duty, either to God, our neighbor, or ourselves."

The year before, another text also expressed what its author called "the common sense of the subject" with lines such as these: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."[2]

This "common sense" and these "common arguments" were, indeed, common. They both derived from early modern practical ethics, which covered the *content of morality* – what we ought to do and be. Practical ethics included the determination of our moral relations to God, self, and others, and the specific duties, rights, and virtues we are bound to respect or realize.

The leading tradition of practical ethics developed from Protestant natural law and particularly from Samuel Pufendorf, whom Francis Hutcheson described in 1725 (with some vexation) as "the grand Instructor in Morals to all who have of late given themselves to that Study."[3] Any time a philosopher – Hume, Smith, Butler, Hutcheson, Reid, Paley, Jefferson, Bentham – treated topics such as virtue, natural rights, marriage, slavery, or the duties of a citizen, he drew on this practical ethics, either reaffirming

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[1] David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, edited by Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), 580.
[2] Jefferson, T., "Letter to Henry Lee, May 8, 1825," in Merrill D. Peterson (ed.), *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1984).
[3] Francis Hutcheson, "Reflections upon Laughter," *The Dublin Weekly Journal*, 5 June 1725.

convention or knowingly revising it. There was no one working in moral or political philosophy that was unaware of this tradition.

This book reconstructs the history of practical ethics in Britain, focusing on the period from the 1670s, when this Pufendorfian moral philosophy gained an institutional foothold in England, to early British responses to the French Revolution (c. 1791), when natural rights became tainted for Britons by the events in France. The book is about the "common arguments" and the moral thought they express. It strives to reconstruct the now crumbled intellectual architecture that characterized philosophical morality in this period. It is a history, in other words, of the conventional moral philosophy of the long eighteenth century.

Pufendorfian Practical Ethics

This story begins with the publication of Pufendorf's *De Officio Hominis et Civis* [*On the Duty of Man and Citizen*] (1673) – the compendium of his massive *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* [*On the Law of Nature and Nations*] (1672). The *De Officio* was quickly incorporated into university curricula. It was followed by commentaries and by a variety of Pufendorfian English and Scottish textbooks. This style of moral philosophy achieved something close to universality by the early to mid-eighteenth century. Generations of young men – including the American founding fathers and much of the governing class of Britain – learned this subject.

Pufendorfian practical ethics dominated instruction in modern moral philosophy at English and Scottish universities, Dissenting academies, and American colleges, and occupied a large part of the required undergraduate curriculum, roughly a quarter to a half of the student's third or fourth year. While there was some variation in that curriculum across the British world, it typically covered Greek and Latin, logic (mostly epistemology), metaphysics, pneumatology (i.e., the study of human and divine minds), natural theology, moral philosophy, and natural philosophy.[4]

Within this curriculum, practical ethics included the bulk of academic moral philosophy (and, with some qualification, I will use the terms interchangeably). It contrasted most directly with the "theory of morals," which

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[4] For discussion of curriculum, see M. A. Stewart, "Curriculum in Britain, Ireland, and the colonies," in Knud Haakonssen (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth Century Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 97–120; John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Christine Shepherd, *Philosophy and Science in the Arts Curriculum of the Scottish Universities of the 17th Century* (PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1975); and Paul Wood, *The Aberdeen Enlightenment: The Arts Curriculum in the Eighteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1993).

analyzed "the Moral and active Powers of the human Mind" and covered the nature of obligation, agency, and moral judgment – typically within the study of pneumatology and natural theology rather than within moral philosophy proper.[5] Practical ethics delineated the nature of our moral relations to God, self, and others, and it thereby encompassed ethics (our duties to ourselves), private jurisprudence (our duties to others qua human), oeconomical jurisprudence (our duties to others qua member of a family), and political jurisprudence (our duties to others qua member of a state).

Most generally, the moral obligations within these relations included *knowing and worshipping God*, *preserving and cultivating ourselves*, and *being sociable toward others*. Fulfilling duties to God of knowledge and worship began in natural theology (see Chapter 5), where one acquired appropriate beliefs about God: God is the original, independent being, omnipotent, wise, good, the creator and governor of the world. This understanding of God, in turn, was supposed to prompt worship of him. This worship took two forms: internal and external. The requirements of internal worship included feeling love, reverence, and gratitude toward God, while the duties of external worship demanded both private and public acts such as prayer, confession, and thanksgiving.

Preservation and cultivation of mind and body made up duties to ourselves (Chapters 6 and 7). One was obliged to preserve oneself from harm, which included, among other things, a right to self-defense and duties against suicide, gluttony, intemperate passion, sexual excess, and indolence. Proper cultivation of mind and bodies required that one know one's duties, cultivate proper judgment concerning the relative value of the objects of one's desires, strengthen self-control, and learn an honest trade.

Duties to others were described in terms of rights (Chapters 3 and 8). The rights individuals possess as human beings, as members of households, and as members of the state all garnered significant attention. The rights persons possess as human beings – private rights – included both perfect and imperfect rights. Imperfect rights are claims of humanity (e.g., claims to charity, benevolence) we can make against others, though we cannot compel the performance of that humanity nor do we hold these rights against specifiable individuals. Perfect rights, which make up the bulk of natural jurisprudence, are claims of justice we hold against specific individuals that we can legitimately demand that they fulfill. These were of three kinds: rights in our person (e.g., natural rights – see Chapters 3 and 8), real rights

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[5] Thomas Reid, *Practical Ethics*, edited by Knud Haakonssen (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990 [c. 1765–71]).

(*jura in re*), and personal rights (*jura ad rem*). Rights in our person are claims against harm to life, liberty, and reputation. Real rights (*jura in re*) are property rights *per se* (rights to possession, inheritance, mortgage or pledge, and allowing small uses [servitudes]).[6] Personal rights (*jura ad rem*) are claims we have to the performance of another's obligation grounded in contract, wrongdoing (delict), or miscellaneous other sources (usually subsumed under the Roman notion of quasi-contract).[7]

Oeconomical rights structured the relations among spouses, parents and children, and masters and servants. For marriage, practical ethicists were most concerned to define the ends (e.g., procreation) natural to marriage and the kinds of marriage suitable for beings with our nature and in our situation. This enabled evaluations of the natural law legitimacy of polygamy (see Chapter 9), divorce, acceptable degrees of consanguinity, and a wife's independent claims to property. The main point of controversy in parent/child relations was the source of parental authority over children (e.g., whether that authority arises from generation of the child). Analysis of the master/servant relation centered on two issues: the origins of legitimate servitude and what conditions of service were permissible (see Chapter 8).[8]

Finally, discussions of political rights covered the rights of magistrates and subjects and the origins and proper ends of government. Academic moral philosophy gave special attention to the right of resistance (see Chapter 10), though there is little revolutionary fervor to be found in British practical ethics; it is paradigmatically part of the "moderate Enlightenment."[9] And as John Pocock and others have noted, natural law

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6 See Francis Hutcheson *Philosophiae Moralis Institutio Compendiaria (A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy)*, edited by L. Turco (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2007 [1745–7]), 146–7 and Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982 [1762–3/1766]), 10–11, as examples. Brian Tierney suggests that the distinction between *jus ad rem* and *jus in re*, which he traces back to the twelfth-century canonists, tracks a distinction between passive rights and active rights, where the latter demands only forbearance from others while the former demands that they actually do something [Brian Tierney, *The Idea of Natural Rights* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 58, 3].

7 For the last category, see Peter Birks and Grant McLeod, "The Implied Contract Theory of Quasi-Contract: Civilian Opinion Current in the Century before Blackstone," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 6:1 (1986), 46–85.

8 See, for instance, Gershom Carmichael, *Supplements and Observations upon The Two Books of Samuel Pufendorf's On the Duty of Man and Citizen . . .* , in J. Moore and M. Silverthorne (eds.). *Natural Rights on the Threshold of the Scottish Enlightenment: The Writings of Gershom Carmichael* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002 [1724]), 139; J. G. Heineccius, *A Methodical System of Universal Law: Or, the Laws of Nature and Nations*, translated by G. Turnbull (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2008 [1741]), II.4; Hutcheson, *Short Introduction*, 230. Smith also seems to accept long-term contracts of servitude (Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, 456).

9 Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Richard Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

and natural jurisprudence tended to be highly congruent with cosmopolitanism, trade, and empire.[10]

A Conventional Moral Philosophy?

The evidence that this Pufendorfian practical ethics became conventional in the long eighteenth century is considerable. This moral philosophy became the default position by being propagated in the university, especially through the curriculum and through textbooks. As has been well documented in the early modern Cartesian context, establishing new ideas in the academy typically required the presence of textbooks that tutors, regents, and professors employed for lectures and disputation.[11] The Protestant natural law tradition that largely displaced the scholastic tradition in moral philosophy provided textbooks in abundance.

Pufendorf's *De Officio*, both in Latin and in translation, was widely used in Britain (and in Europe more generally) and also helped spur the development of Scottish and English counterparts. These included Gershom Carmichael's edition of Pufendorf's *De Officio* with "*Supplementis & Observationibus in Academicae Juventutis usum*" (1724), Thomas Johnson's 1735 annotated version of *De Officio* out of Cambridge, George Turnbull's annotated edition of Johann Gottlieb Heineccius' *A Methodical System of Universal Law* (1741), Hutcheson's *A System of Moral Philosophy* (1755) and *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (1747), David Fordyce's *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (1754), Thomas Rutherforth's *Institutes of Natural Law* (1754–6), and Philip Doddridge's *A Course of Lectures On the Principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity* (1763), just to name a few prominent examples. All these books take Pufendorf's lead and structure the content of morality using our fundamental moral relations to God, ourselves, and others. This continues through the end of our period and beyond, as one can see in William Paley's *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), in Adam Ferguson's *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1792), and in John Witherspoon's *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*.

It was not remarkable, then, that Locke should have had his pupil, Caleb Banks, buy the *De Officio* in 1678 and that he should later recommend Pufendorf for students, calling the *De Jure* "the best book of that kind."[12]

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[10] J. G. A. Pocock, "Virtues, Rights, and Manners: A Model for Historians of Political Thought," *Political Theory* 9:3 (Aug. 1981), 353–68.

[11] Roger Ariew, *Descartes and the First Cartesians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[12] See James Moore, "From the Divine Forum to the Invisible Hand: Or Natural Law and Political Education from Samuel Pufendorf to Adam Smith," Paper prepared for the 23rd World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Montreal, July, 19–24, 2014), 5.

In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Locke suggested that a young man studying systems of ethics should read the Bible, Cicero's *De Officiis*, then "[w]hen he has pretty well digested Tully's Offices, and added to it, Puffendorf de Officio Hominis & Civis, it may be seasonable to set him upon Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis, or, which perhaps is the better of the two, Puffendorf de Jure naturali & Gentium; wherein he will be instructed in the natural rights of men, and the original and foundations of society, and the duties resulting from thence."[13]

These Pufendorfian books and others like them spread quickly throughout the British educational system, though more quickly and thoroughly in some places rather than others. Ultimately, the evidence we have suggests that although Pufendorf's work was more swiftly incorporated into English teaching, its adoption in Scotland was more complete.[14]

In the case of Scotland, the signs of Pufendorf's influence are most clear and emphatic. Though the first occupants of the moral philosophy chair at the University of Edinburgh – William Law (1708–29), William Scot (1729–34), and John Pringle (1734–45) – all lectured on Pufendorf,[15] it was Carmichael, the first Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, who was most responsible for establishing the authority of the natural law tradition in Scottish practical ethics.[16] Carmichael favored

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[13] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and Of the Conduct of the Understanding* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996 [1693]), Sections 185–186. Given these comments, it is perhaps not surprising how important Pufendorf was in the development of radical Whig theories of politics around the time of the Revolution of 1688.

[14] Shepherd notes that in Scottish universities there is no mention of Pufendorf (or obvious acquisition of his texts) before a 1697 thesis (*Philosophy and Science in the Arts Curriculum of the Scottish Universities of the 17th Century*, 205).

[15] Richard Sher, "Professors of Virtue: The Social History of the Edinburgh Moral Philosophy Chair in the Eighteenth Century," in M. A. Stewart (ed.), *Studies in the Philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 87–126. Law finishes his 1705 *Theses Philosophicae* with a discussion of "illustrissimus Pufendorfius" (Edinburgh, 1705). Scot edited a 1707 abridgement of Grotius for Edinburgh students (while he was Professor of Greek). Pringle taught a private class on Pufendorf [See Knud Haakonssen, "Natural Jurisprudence and the Scottish Enlightenment," in R. Savage (ed.), *Philosophy and Religion in Enlightenment Britain: New Case Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 258–77]. For Pringle's reliance on Pufendorf's *On the Duty of Man and Citizen* as the main text for his moral philosophy class, see Mossner's discussion [E. C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 44] and the reminiscence of Alexander Carlyle [Alexander Carlyle, *The Autobiography of Dr. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk, 1722–1805* (London and Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis: 1910), 55].

[16] It was also true that natural law, particularly Grotius', influenced Scottish legal education at the end of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth centuries. In part, this developed from the tendency of Scottish students to study in the Netherlands, where Grotius was widely taught [Clare Jackson, "Revolutions Principles, Ius Naturae and Ius Gentium in Early-Enlightenment Scotland: The Contribution of Sir Francis Grant, Lord Cullen (C. 1660–1726)," in T. J. Hochstrasser and P. Schroeder (eds.), *Early Modern Natural Law Theories* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic P, 2003), 107–40].

natural law over the Reformed scholasticism popular in seventeenth-century Scottish universities (see Chapter 1), and his critical commentary on Pufendorf's *De Officio* garnered significant attention and established a pattern for moral philosophy instruction at Glasgow.[17] Hutcheson was opposed to many facets of Pufendorf's thought (as we will see in Chapters 1, 2, and 7), but this did not stop him from teaching Pufendorf when he took over for Carmichael at Glasgow.[18] Nor did it inhibit Hutcheson's eminent successors, Smith (1752–64) and Reid (1764–80), from teaching practical ethics.[19]

In Edinburgh at mid-century and beyond, William Cleghorn (1745–54; selected over Hume for the job), James Balfour (1754–64), Adam Ferguson (1764–85), and Dugald Stewart (1785–1810) all followed their predecessors Law, Scot, and Pringle, and taught ethics in the natural jurisprudential mode. They shaped the curriculum to suit their individual interests, but the content of morality remained structured in the conventional manner.[20]

We find a similar history in the Aberdeen schools. In the early part of the century at Marischal and King's, the ethics texts included works from Cambridge Platonists such as Ralph Cudworth and Henry More (an interest facilitated by the contemporary Episcopalian tendencies of the northeast of Scotland), along with texts from Hugo Grotius and Richard Cumberland.[21] The move towards natural jurisprudential texts continued apace throughout the century. As Paul Wood notes, David Verner's graduation theses from 1721 and 1730 both treat natural jurisprudence and our duties to God, ourselves, and others, while Turnbull appeared to regard natural jurisprudence as "the most important part of his course on the moral sciences."[22] They were followed by David Fordyce, Alexander Gerard (Marischal's first professor of moral philosophy and logic, 1753–60), James Beattie (1760–96), and regents at King's, including James Dunbar (1765–94), Thomas Gordon (1765–97), and Thomas Reid (1751 until his 1764 move to Glasgow), among others. All had practical ethics as

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[17] Carmichael, *Supplements and Observations*, 10–11.
[18] On Hutcheson teaching Pufendorf, see W. R. Scott, *Francis Hutcheson: His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), 63.
[19] Other professors of moral philosophy in the period included Thomas Craigie (1746–51) and Archibald Arthur, who taught the course from 1780 to 1797, but officially took over Reid's professorship only in 1796.
[20] See Adam Ferguson, *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell, 1769) and *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Creech, 1792). See also James Balfour, *A Delineation of the Nature and Obligation of Morality, with Reflexions upon Mr Hume's book entitled* An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals (Edinburgh: 1753). See also William Cleghorn's 1752 moral philosophy lecture notes (Manuscript from St. Andrews University Library, MS BJ 1021.C6).
[21] Wood, *The Aberdeen Enlightenment*, 6.   [22] Ibid., 39, 46.

a centerpiece of the ethics curriculum (though the Aberdonians tended to emphasize pneumatology as a foundation for ethics in a way reminiscent of Bacon and Hume and not as common in Glasgow and Edinburgh).

At Oxford and Cambridge, while it appears that modern ethics became slightly deemphasized as the century wore on, the modern ethics that was taught was more and more Pufendorfian in form. Moreover, the ancient ethics in the curriculum became more Ciceronian and, thus, as we will see in a moment, more congruent with natural law practical ethics.

The influence of Pufendorfian practical ethics is supported, first, by what was published. In Oxford, we see, for instance, that Aristotelian moral philosophy textbooks were reprinted at least through the 1740s.[23] But one also sees that works in the natural law tradition gained traction, were esteemed, and became widely available. Pufendorf's compendium appeared in England first in a 1682 edition, "was often reprinted," and read throughout the century, though its peak was in the 1760s.[24] We also see the remarkable indications of Pufendorf's importance in the work of Basil Kennett of Corpus Christi (tutor, 1697–1705, president, 1714–15), who led the team that translated Pufendorf's huge *De Jure* – a translation that went through five editions (with the first Oxford edition in 1703), including the 1749 edition that included Jean Barbeyrac's notes (there was also a 1716 two-volume abridged London edition of this work and a three volume London edition of Barbeyrac's annotated French translation of Pufendorf from 1740). Such a large book was expensive to produce and its numerous editions suggest an ample market.

In Cambridge, the publishing story was much the same. There were a number of editions of Pufendorf's *De Officio* produced in Cambridge, beginning in 1682 (with the first English translations published in London in 1691, with editions following in 1698, 1705, 1708, 1716, and 1735) including two versions in 1701 and one in 1715. In addition, there was Thomas

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[23] Richard Zouch, *Ethicae Compendium* (Oxford, 1743); *Ethices Compendium in Usum Juventutis Academicae* (Oxford, 1745).

[24] P. Quarrie, "The Christ Church Collection Books," in S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell, eds., *The History of the University of Oxford*: Vol. V*, The Eighteenth Century* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1986), 493–512 [505]. Beyond the use of Pufendorf's texts, there is at least one important case of his unacknowledged appearance in a widely printed textbook by Antoine Le Grand, used in Cambridge from the 1680s on, his *Institutio Philosophiae Secundum Principia D. Renati Descartes* (with the 3rd edition of 1675 incorporating the Pufendorf material) – see also the English translation of Le Grand in a seemingly expensive edition: *An Entire Body of Philosophy According to the Principles of the Famous Renate Des Cartes, In Three Books* (1694). The key discussion of Le Grand's appropriation of Pufendorf is Thomas Mautner, "From Virtue to Morality: Antoine Le Grand (1629–99) and the New Morality," *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik*. 8 (2000), 209–32.

Johnson's 1735 heavily annotated edition of Pufendorf's *De Officio* (a 3rd London edition of Johnson's work was published in 1748).

What was taught by tutors in Cambridge's and Oxford's colleges is imperfectly understood. That said, we have a better idea of what transpired at Cambridge.[25] The teaching at Cambridge more clearly included natural law influences, many of which were obvious and explicit. As latitudinarianism and religious rationalism (particularly in the forms given to it by people like Samuel Clarke and Bishop Hoadly) became more dominant at Cambridge, they promoted the view that the core of Christianity was morality (rather than doctrine) and the core of morality was natural law (with supernatural law or divine positive law as an addition, never in conflict with natural law). This encouraged study and research on moral philosophy, and Cambridge produced a number of distinguished moral philosophers in this century. In particular, Anglican or theological utilitarianism became the preeminent moral philosophy in Cambridge, and it was defended by many of the university's finest ethical thinkers, like John Gay, John Brown, Soame Jenyns, Edmund Law, Abraham Tucker (an Oxford graduate), Thomas Rutherforth, and William Paley.[26] Unlike secular utilitarianism, this Anglican utilitarianism developed out of the natural law tradition, running through Locke back to Pufendorf. Its utilitarian standard for right action was taken to be a law commanded by God, so that the fundamental natural law is "promote happiness." This natural law brand of utilitarianism was not only influential – William Whewell noted in 1852 that the philosophy of Gay, Tucker, and Paley is "*the* scheme of morality which has been taught in this University for the last century" – it also employed the categories of conventional practical ethics.[27] This is clearly illustrated in the greatest textbook of the Anglican utilitarian tradition, Paley's *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), where morality is organized in terms of (the by then standard) duties to God, oneself, and others.

Oxford produced little original moral philosophy during the century. The best source we have for what students studied is the set of collection books from Christ Church – the largest and wealthiest of Oxford colleges – that provide a pretty clear picture of the books assigned to undergraduates

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[25] See, in particular, Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment*.

[26] For general discussion, see Colin Heydt, "Utilitarianism before Bentham," in *Cambridge Companion to Utilitarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 16–37. The best collection of their works (with helpful introductory essays) is James Crimmins, *Utilitarians and Religion* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1998).

[27] Whewell, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, 137; italics added.

in their four years.[28] As the century went on, the arts curriculum became
dominated by ancient texts, especially Latin ones (though with a grow-
ing number of Greek texts). These texts include histories, plays, poems,
speeches, and philosophical treatises. Cicero was "beyond doubt" the most
read author and his most read book was *De Officiis*. Among the moral phi-
losophy texts that took up a varying, though typically sizeable, part of the
middle two years of the B. A., the most assigned texts by mid-century were
Cicero's *De Officiis* and Pufendorf's *De Officio* (Burlamaqui also makes an
appearance), though the scholastic ethics text by Eustachius a Sancto Paulo,
Ethica: sive summa moralis disciplinae, in tres partes divisa, was used into
the 1750s (Isaac Watts also notes the use of Eustachius in some Dissenting
academies).[29]

   This evidence, along with evidence suggesting similar curricular strate-
gies in Oxford colleges other than Christ Church, supports a couple
of (qualified) observations about the undergraduate ethics education at
Oxford. First, natural jurisprudence was present from the late seven-
teenth century and achieved preeminence in modern ethics by the 1750s
or 60s. By mid-century, one sees, for instance, very positive comments
about Pufendorf's "excellent work" from prominent Oxford figures like
Edward Bentham.[30] Second, the centrality of Cicero, especially his *De
Officiis*, brings out an important point: Cicero's ethics, unlike Aristotle's,
were understood to be wholly congruent with – indeed an inspiration for
and precursor of – Protestant natural law ethics. We have already seen
Locke's (not at all uncommon) recommendation of the Bible, Cicero, and
Pufendorf for education in ethics. For another instance, take the preface
to Thomas Cockman's very popular and "constantly reprinted" volume of
De Officiis.[31] In it, Cockman summarizes Cicero's text, contrasts Cicero's
practical presentation of rules of duty with "a dry and Scholastical Manner"
that engages in "nice" enquiries into virtues and their opposing vices, cate-
gorizes Cicero's rules of duty "for the Government of our Lives in relation
to God, our Neighbours, and Ourselves, such as are deservedly admired

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28 See P. Quarrie, "The Christ Church Collection Books," in S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.,
    The History of the University of Oxford: Vol. V, *The Eighteenth Century* (Clarendon Press: Oxford,
    1986), 493–512. Two other sources of information are disputation questions drawn up by Provost
    Smith of Queen's [see J. Yolton "Schoolmen, Logic and Philosophy" in Ibid., 565–92] and Daniel
    Waterland's "Advice to a Young Student in Theology."
29 For Watts, see David Wykes, "The contribution of the Dissenting Academy to the Emergence of
    Rational Dissent," in Knud Haakonssen (ed.), *Enlightenment and Religion: Rational Dissent in Eigh-
    teenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 99–139.
30 Edward Bentham, *An Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (Oxford, 1746 [1745 1st ed.]), 116.
31 Quarrie, "The Christ Church Collection Books," 499; Thomas Cockman (ed.), *Tully's Offices, in
    English*, 3rd ed. (London: Buckley, 1714).