

On Free Will: Pols versus Ravven

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(for the meeting of the Metaphysical Society of America, University of Georgia, April 18, 2015)

The cause is in my will: I will not come.

That is enough to satisfy the Senate.

- Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, II, ii, 75-76.

Abstract: From two premises, (1) free will is a commonsense reality and (2) no post-Rylean thinker wants to accept Cartesian "ghost in the machine" dualism, two quite distinct lines of conclusion evolve. One side, epitomized in *Meditation on a Prisoner* by Edward Pols, accepts the reality of free will and avoids Cartesian dualism by appeal to hierarchic biology in which individual causal power simply exists at the overarching level of organic life. The other side, epitomized in *The Self Beyond Itself* by Heidi M. Ravven, denies the reality of free will and avoids Cartesian dualism by appeal to neuroscience, social psychology, and the sociopolitical conditioning of natural desire. This paper argues that, taken as a whole, Pols's corpus can refute Ravven's point of view *avant la lettre*.

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Edward Pols (1919-2005) died at about the time that Heidi Ravven (1952-) was beginning her monumental denial of free will. She does not mention him in her book,¹ yet their respective works on free will, if studied in tandem, form a natural juxtaposition which can illuminate this central philosophical problem for both sides of the question. Pols represents the thesis of Kant's third antinomy² as purely as Ravven represents its antithesis. Kant's point with this antinomy is that causality may be either strictly physical or also sometimes due to what Pols calls the "originative act"³ of a conscious agent and what Socrates calls "the real cause without which the cause cannot be the cause."⁴

Pols was under no illusions about the dangers to the human spirit which are posed by the physical reductionism toward which natural science has been constantly and strongly tempted since the seventeenth century. We might have thought that Hegel put this sort of reductionism to rest once and for all with his cogent *reductio ad absurdum* argument against phrenology.⁵ Indeed that argument had its effect against phrenology itself, but, even though it is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to all other forms of reductionist natural science,⁶ such reductionism not only persists among scientists, but also has eloquent defenders among philosophers and has gained theoretical force since Ryle published *The Concept of Mind* in 1949.

The *locus classicus* of Pols's defense of free will is his 1975 book, *Meditation on a Prisoner*. Most of his subsequent work concerned related issues of action theory and the mind/body problem. His general plan was to steer a plausible middle course between two implausible options, namely, on one side, Cartesian dualism and, on the other, all forms of physicalist reductionism, including epiphenomenalism and even compatibilism. He would not countenance - nor should we - psychic reductionism, Berkeleyan idealism, or any other theory which asserts the efficacy of non-physical reality while denying the physical. Not too surprisingly, he did not often use terms such as "free will" or "freedom," but preferred more philosophically specific terms such as "agent causality" or "rational agency."

When we say "freedom," we typically mean either one of two things: either "political liberty" - which is not our topic here - or "free will" - which is our topic. For Pols, "human freedom" or "free will" is the natural ability of a living being to act as an originative cause in the world, i.e., as an agent. He phrases it this way in order to harmonize his hierarchic theory of human ontology with the findings of modern biology while still remaining true to the whole dignity of the human being.

Philosophical thought about free will occurs across a broad spectrum. On one extreme is the pre-Marxist Jean-Paul Sartre of the 1940s, for whom the agent/subject (*pour-soi*) is radically free, but essentially powerless, insofar as, in Sartre's dualist ontology, this radical freedom is a nothingness (*néant*) over against the being (*être*) of the world (*en-soi*) in its radical facticity and indifference. On the other extreme is B.F. Skinner, who reduces everything to physical causes and denies free will entirely. Hence the Skinnerian agent/subject is likewise powerless, insofar as the world determines all human actions and provides humans with only the illusion of freedom. Pols is either in the center or slightly to the Sartrean side of center. Ravven seems slightly toward the Skinnerian side of center. Pols and Ravven find common ground in attributing initiative power - in their respective senses - to the human individual, power which both Sartre and Skinner - for diametrically different reasons - would deny.

About a year before his death, Pols identified for his biographer six points - in order of importance - upon which he claimed philosophical originality. The first and third of these points are: "(1) The human person is a causally significant power whose unity consists of a universal component embodied in a particular component. ... (3) The causal relation is not merely temporally sequential but also formal/telic."⁷ Considered from the "top down," the overarching structure and physical infrastructure of the human agent is formal/telic, while considered from the "bottom up," it is hierarchical, but throughout, it is the same structure and infrastructure.⁸

At a symposium held in his honor at Bowdoin College on April 27, 2001, Pols mentioned that around the beginning of the seventeenth century, the philosophical notion of "cause" moved from a property of a being to a property of an event, thus shifting emphasis toward the possibility of physicalistic and mechanistic explanations for human action.⁹ Such explanations not only came to pass, but also proliferated, until, in the twentieth century, absurd nadirs of reductionism appeared in the scientific and popular literature, seeking to reduce all explanation of all observable phenomena to what Pols has called "a perfected physics."¹⁰ He argued that "micro-entity reductionism" would undercut its own basis by seeking smaller and smaller principles of explanation, while remaining oblivious to the fact that micro-entities can only obey the laws of physics but cannot assess their own status, as larger entities, such as humans, can.¹¹ He sought to turn the locus of causality away from the event and back again toward the agent. To this end he posited the "primary being" as "one that has a continuity even though it may be in continuous change; one that, if it is complex, may be analyzed in terms of an infrastructure in which there will be other primary entities of less complexity,"¹² and claimed that the living world is a pluralism of "primary beings" which are each "characterized by an order that includes a temporospatial one."¹³ Nevertheless, this pluralism is not "radical" or chaotic, but only "a context of particular primary beings."¹⁴ This worldwide - or humanity-wide - context preserves the personal integrity, basic subjectivity, and free personhood of each human individual insofar as "primary" means "not completely explicable because itself a fundamental ground of explanation."¹⁵

Pols posits at least seven levels of human action. The purely physical levels are the infrastructure of an action. These levels include, from simplest to most complex, the submolecular, the molecular, the intracellular, the cellular, the organic, the bodily, the personal, as well as several more in-between, beneath, and perhaps even beyond. Consciousness is not a level in itself, but pervades, with varying intensity and complexity, the upper levels, depending on their respective degrees of sentience. Each level operates according to its own natural laws, yet depends on lower levels for its active existence, and, to some extent, influences these lower levels, just as it contributes to the well-being of higher levels. In a hierarchic biological system in which each level obeys its own set of laws, individual causal power simply exists at the overarching level of organic life; and the highest levels of organic life, which involve perception, consciousness, and initiative or originative action, are not reducible to "a perfected physics."

The top level is not soul, spirit, *res cogitans*, or some epiphenomenal consciousness or self-consciousness tacked on, but the *whole living being*, the *whole organism*, i.e., the person considered as an overwhelmingly powerful organic life,¹⁶ just as "the individual cell ... controls the multiplicity of its infrastructure."¹⁷ The power that this whole being embodies and exerts is "ontic power," i.e., the capability

of a living individual to bring an action and its result into actuality. Ontic power is Pols's key concept and can be explained in terms of the complex relations between the physical infrastructure of the action and the act-temporality of the agent. Act-temporality is the defining quality of an agent whose act expresses itself in the present, reaches back into the past, and projects into the future. In other words, no originitive act exists alone or entirely in the infinitesimally small present, but always has a temporal character - which Pols calls "tensive" - and must stretch across some amount of time, beginning in the (usually very recent) past and either ending in or continuing into the future.¹⁸ Part of this temporality involves the C→E or "billiard ball" causality of the physical events or sub-events of the infrastructure, which must necessarily occur in time, because, in efficient causality, the cause always precedes the effect, and because a cause and its effect together constitute an event. It is indeed this necessarily temporal character of the infrastructure of an action which prevents this action from occurring instantaneously in the infinitesimally small present. Pols would agree with Ray Cummings's Big Business Man that "Time ... is what keeps everything from happening at once."¹⁹ More to the point, it is the tensive character of action in the act-temporality of the agent which keeps the agent's life from being lived all at once.

Pols sees the human agent as identical with his/her body, but this is not "identity as a physicalist (materialist) would conceive of it. The identity ... instead is an asymmetrical one: the agent is asymmetrically identical with his body and its history; and any one of his actions is asymmetrically identical with everything that happens in his body as he performs it."²⁰ Given this identity, even if qualified or mitigated by asymmetry, at this juncture we might be tempted to defer to neuroscience for further investigation into act-temporality, agent causality, and other aspects of originitive action, but neuroscience has little to do with understanding originitive action as such - except in determining the mechanics, chemistry, etc., of its infrastructure. Rather, our specific conclusions about originitive human agency are deductions from introspecting upon our everyday, immediate, commonsense experience of our own free choices. Not all of our choices are free, and not all of our actions are choices, but some of them are, and that fact alone is enough from which to confirm the self-evident reality of free will, which, as we have seen, Pols wisely prefers to call "agent causality" or "rational agency."

For Pols, we have a *prima facie* or immediately intuitive, perhaps even pre-reflective, awareness, which cannot be denied, of our own power to originate actions: "... we perceive or experience causal power. That we have an authentic, direct, and non-inferred access to it seems ... clear, as also that the access involves perception and can be said to be experiential."²¹ This is not naive realism, but just the simple, introspective self-awareness of our essential nature as persons, i.e., of what it means to be authentically human. (Parenthetically, in this connection, as a senior philosophy major at Bowdoin, I was a student in Pols's metaphysics seminar when he was writing *Meditation on a Prisoner*. His manuscript-in-progress was one of the texts for this course. Among the other texts that we studied under his direction that semester were Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Whitehead's *Process and Reality*, and Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics*. From this list, we can see clearly that the ontology and value of the human being was one of his central concerns.)

Pols was sensitive to the possibility that some interpretations of his theory might see his hierarchy as just Cartesian dualism split wider, i.e., into at least a heptism, with seven or more species of disconnected but mysteriously interacting ontological entities instead of just two. Accordingly, he devoted quite a bit of space in one of his later books to creating explicit distance between himself and Descartes.²² For example, he writes that despite the "sharp contrast between causality as it is represented by the scientific doctrine and the kind of causality that must prevail in nature if rational animals like ourselves are in fact causal hierarchies,"²³ "despite a complete knowledge of the parameters of the central nervous system at the beginning of a rational action, [and] despite an exhaustive knowledge of all relevant laws, the God-like neurophysiologist is quite unable to predict the *merely physical* parameters of the central nervous system at the end of an action,"²⁴ which means that when "you, as the apex of a pyramid of beings [i.e., the levels of your internal hierarchy²⁵], exercise ... power within and by virtue of your neuronal system when you think or otherwise act rationally, ... we can say that you, who are thus both One and

Many, have a causality that is *immanent* in you."²⁶

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Ravven characterizes the western world's almost automatic popular belief in free will as an "Augustinian legacy" (pp. 164-182) and sees the first significant philosophical deviations from it in the works of Maimonides and Spinoza (p. 182). But the Roman Stoic tradition, which she does not consider, is less vulnerable to her criticisms than the Christian tradition is. She is correct to claim that the concept of free will is essentially European and American, but wrong to claim that it originated with early Latin Christianity, especially Augustine. Granted that Augustine codified, sanctified, and Christianized it, but it really originated in Plato's *Phaedo*, as Pols emphasizes.²⁷ It persisted and strengthened through Roman Stoicism and was already the dominant moral ideal in the Mediterranean region before Augustine was born. There are important differences between Stoic and Christian ontologies of free will. In other words, by ignoring the Roman Stoics, she sets up Augustine as a straw man. The difference between Roman Stoic and early Christian views of free will may be summed up as follows:

Epictetus's God was constantly placing Epictetus in various situations just to see what he would do. God expected certain things of Epictetus, but did not compel or even unduly influence him. In each situation, Epictetus was on his own, with complete free will. Moreover, we may infer from the whole corpus of Stoic literature that, whatever Epictetus would finally decide in each case, even though God may not have agreed, God would accept his decision. Human free will is seen here as the ultimate good.

With Paul and Augustine it is different. Their God places us in situations and lets us know commandments. We choose whether or not to obey. The greatest good in such situations is obedience, not the exercise of free will. For Paul and Augustine, free will is only a good when it chooses to submit to God and thus becomes unfree; but for the Stoics, it is always a good, as long as it is not constrained and remains free, though still perhaps more of a good when it acts as God seems to want.²⁸

The Stoics believed in fate, and a pagan deterministic universe was the ground of both their metaphysics and their ethics. But they were dualists - not in a proto-Cartesian, but in a proto-Christian or proto-Augustinian sense - i.e., they saw (free) divine nature and (determinate) physical nature as entirely separate from each other, but nevertheless saw human nature - by virtue of will and reason, straddling the boundary between the divine and the physical, participating in both, so that the whole human being would consist of a unified duality of the divine and the physical and would, moreover, contain a hierarchy of faculties, e.g., sensation, speech, courage, etc. For the Stoics, "Will is free and is chiefly divine, but has some natural aspects; reason is governed by the will and is chiefly natural, but has some divine aspects."²⁹

That the will exists and is free to choose within certain limits is not only a standard Roman Stoic doctrine, but also a self-evident, commonsense notion; i.e., to argue, as Ravven does, that there is no such thing as free will goes against common sense and the evidence of one's own immediate feelings. She disavows physicalism and behaviorism, but, since the existence of the free will is a commonsense notion, the burden of proof is on her and her social psychologist allies, not on everyday people, Pols, or believers in what she calls the "standard cultural assumption" (pp. 3-4), to show that what we call the will is reducible to neuro-this and neuro-that. Pols laments that, the more complicated we make things, "the more we are likely to fail to notice that mind itself is something familiar, something that is part of our commonsense grasp of ourselves in the world."³⁰ He writes: "... if ontic responsibility is authentic, moral responsibility is a special case of it. ... we want the notion of ontic responsibility to function in many of the ways in which the notion of free will functions in other settings. ... there is some advantage in thus avoiding that vexed notion ... Any well-developed denial of ontic responsibility must rest on the claim that

reality in general has a structure that makes rational human action *not what it appears to be*.³¹ Ravven participates in this denial. Yet a burden of proof lies on Pols as well, to show that hierarchic science is the way out of Cartesian dualism, which no post-Rylean wants. As we have already seen, his way out of this problem is to posit that his top level is not a level among other levels, but rather the whole human being as such.

Compatibilism is the occasionally encountered belief that freedom and determinism can coexist harmoniously and that voluntaristic and deterministic explanations can each be used, with no contradiction or inconsistency implied, to explain respectively their own particular kinds of events. Ravven (p. 242) includes compatibilists among her opponents. Pols denies being a compatibilist.³² Compatibilism, in fact, is just Cartesian dualism in modern dress. It leaves free will and deterministic nature as incompatible and their possible connection as inexplicable as the two irreconcilable entities of Ryle's "ghost in the machine."³³ Neither Pols nor Ravven can - or even attempts to - supply a magic pineal gland to connect them. Yet Ravven's description of compatibilism might seem to fit Pols. She writes, "Compatibilists believe that actions are contextually determined events, yet they also mentally and freely originate in an individual's reasons" (p. 141). Even though Pols's ontology is most assuredly hierarchic and not dualistic, I can find nothing in his works to contravene this description - even as regards his own philosophy. I can only conclude from this odd convergence that her description of compatibilism is too broad, encompassing more than just dualism. Any compatibilism must necessarily be some kind of dualism - albeit with something analogous to a magic pineal gland. The trick for any viable compatibilism would be to avoid any kind of dualism - and that would be a stunning trick indeed!

The thorny question of moral responsibility raises problems for both Pols and Ravven. For Pols, moral responsibility is a species of "ontic responsibility," i.e., the responsibility of agents each to be accountable for whatever they bring into the world. There is an "ontological justification" for being "appropriately responsible," insofar as agents are "governed by reasons instead of causes," ideally their own reasons, by which they themselves become causes, so "that they have authentically the status of rational agent [which] they seem to have."³⁴ Although such moral responsibility itself is ontologically determined, moral accountability is to a large extent socially determined. Ravven emphasizes this social dimension, and Pols does not deny it. For Ravven, following the empirical research of Julia Driver, moral responsibility seems to be determined by a consensus of "social desirability" (cf. p. 278), so that free will is either irrelevant, unreal, or an afterthought (cf. pp. 418-419), insofar as "we determine the moral responsibility and *then* assign the cause. So the causal claim, the free will claim, is actually mere shorthand for saying 'You're morally responsible for having done X.' ... we don't need to assume a person has free will or choice to hold that person morally responsible" (pp. 280-281, Ravven's italics). For her, initiative power would be just someone's reaction to stimuli or surrender to motives, as in - (her own example, p. 278) - the case of a speeding driver who causes a crash being - by consensus - less morally responsible for the crash if he was speeding to hide a gift for his parents than if he was speeding to hide cocaine. But this scenario overlooks the plain fact that this driver *chose* to exceed the speed limit, regardless of stimuli or motives. Ravven's argument seems inverted in the sense that claiming that moral responsibility precedes its cause is analogous to claiming that, if a driver hits a legally, safely parked car, then the fault lies with the owner of the parked car for having parked it in what would eventually become the path of the moving car. Likewise, Kierkegaard's statement, "A court does not prove that a thief exists, but proves that the accused, who certainly exists, is a thief,"³⁵ may be paraphrased as: "An ontologist does not prove that free will exists, but proves that the cause of this action, which certainly exists, is free will" or "An ethicist does not prove that morally responsible agency exists, but proves that this person is a morally responsible agent."

Ravven cites empirical evidence (pp. 277-281) that we humans typically do not assign moral responsibility in terms of free will serving as the cause of some result. But this research only shows - or suggests - that everyday people do not understand what the word "cause" means.³⁶ It says nothing about free will or originative cause as such. There is plenty of ordinary empirical evidence for this lack of

general understanding too. For instance, we hear in our daily lives such statements as, "I couldn't help it, because I was drunk," "He ticked me off, so I had to hit him," or "She was dressed like a slut, so I had to treat her like one." But those three people, respectively, chose to get drunk, chose to react violently, and chose to commit sexual assault. There was no external or physical causality for their actions. Such sentences are nothing but denials of moral responsibility, i.e., refusals to take blame for one's own free choices, attributing external cause where there is none.

Ravven supports her view that morally accountable actions are grounded in external or situational causes with her concept of "selfiness."³⁷ Surreptitiously related to Stephen Colbert's coinage of "truthiness" (p. 327) in 2005 as "gut-felt, not book-learned, truth" and his usage of it to lampoon George W. Bush as preferring that which one wants to be true, but isn't - "selfiness" is a feeling of self-ownership (p. 304). Ravven describes "selfiness" as: "the emotional ownership we feel toward our body-mind" (p. 327); "our highly emotionally charged self-relation (p. 318); "self-servingness ... an urge we have to make a self-serving picture of ourselves and the world that is coherent rather than piecemeal and contradictory" (p. 319); "self-interestedness ... the urge to maintain, promote, protect, and further our embodied organic selves, body and mind" (p. 309); "our overweening sense of ownership of our (self-)conscious actions" (p. 353); "the channeling of individual self-servingness ... [so that] ... our basic sense of self, self-protection, self-furthering, and even self-servingness, are all filtered through, shaped, and channeled by our complex world or social relationships, institutions, power relations, and group meanings" (p. 288); "our felt survival-promoting perspectives on our engagements with the environment" (p. 365); "the record of organism-environment engagements introjected into self-maps" (p. 363); and "the arrogance of the myth of self-creation, of free will" (p. 408). At one point she refers to "selfiness" as "the urge to preserve oneself" (p. 349), which sounds just like Spinoza's *conatus* - and if so, then all the problems which attend the concept of the *conatus* would also attend the concept of "selfiness."

"Selfiness" is closely connected to neuroplasticity. "Neuroplasticity" refers to any change in the nervous system, but even neuroscientists admit that this definition is not very helpful - mainly because it is too broad.³⁸ Is this change at least partially self-initiated? If so, then the concept supports Pols. Is it at least partially determined by outside influences or causes? If so, then the concept supports Ravven. In any case, neuroplasticity enables "selfiness" (p. 288).

"Selfiness" can be unconscious (p. 336), so that "normal people ... who do not have dissociated ego identities ... come to own and hence take responsibility for [their] un(self-)conscious, denied, and disavowed thoughts, feelings, and actions, all of which are expressions of [their] self and of its selfiness ... [and] such a step is necessary for moral agency" (p. 347). Thus "selfiness is distributed into" social relationships, which creates for each "selfy" self "an ongoing vulnerability to the world's feedback" (p. 369). But if I am a self who does not feel particularly "selfy," am I therefore *not* vulnerable to the world's feedback and hence a free agent who takes full individual responsibility for his own thoughts, feelings, and actions - in the tradition of moral accountability? Of course, empathy must be involved in practical ethics, since, even for an isolated individual, "evil is rooted in the failure to see others as ourselves" (p. 376), but this does not mean surrendering either our individual responsibility or our free moral agency to the otherness of humanity - or the "selfiness" of the other - as we imagine it to resemble our own "selfiness" (cf. pp. 382, 408).

There can also be "group selfiness" (p. 321): "We *are* our cognitive frames, so we have selfiness (feelings of ownership and desire for their furtherance) toward them. These cognitive frames are also 'groupy'; that is, they arise in all kinds of socially and historically shaped contexts" (p. 304, Ravven's italics). Granted that humans are gregarious, social creatures, have we not each lost some of our natural individuality or even our personal identity in Ravven's conception of our role in society - and especially of society's role in us?

I am here right now because I *choose* to be, not because of any social conditioning or any "selfy" feeling. My neurons, synapses, organs, muscles, bones, cells, organelles, molecules, atoms, and even my subatomic particles, all contribute in their own way to *support*, *enable*, and *instantiate* that decision, but

they do not *cause* it - or even much influence it.³⁹ What Ravven calls neuroplastic, neurochemical, neuroscientific "causes" of human actions, Pols would call the high-level infrastructure of those actions.

So, indulge in all the neuroscience and social psychology you want, but realize that neuroscience can aspire to understand only as high as the level of brain, not the whole person; and that social psychology can study only certain aspects of the whole person, not the *entire* whole person, considered as a whole - and certainly not the self-consciousness of the person, which, for each individual, always remains private and inaccessible to anyone else. We can easily join Spinoza and recent materialist or physicalist reductionists in denying the reality of the Christian soul, a separate spirit, the Cartesian *res cogitans*, and any epiphenomenal consciousness or separable self-consciousness, but obviously we cannot deny the reality of the whole person. Likewise, we can easily and cogently deny that soul, spirit, *res cogitans*, consciousness, or self-consciousness separately originate or initiate action; but we cannot deny that it is the whole person, *qua* overarching self-conscious presence, who originates or initiates action - not any part or aspect of the person.

Free will is, along with our intellect, what makes us human and what makes us special among animals. It is what makes life worth living. It is the source of our pride, value, dignity, and potential. Ethicists as diverse as Epictetus, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Sartre have made it their moral touchstone, their ground of autonomy, and their principle of psychological individuation. Anthony Burgess demonstrated in *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) that a person can be conditioned or coaxed by entirely physical means to perform only outwardly "moral" actions and thus to become an acceptable member of conforming society, but in such cases, with no inward morality or conscience to inform or motivate these actions, the person becomes an automaton, a joyless, worthless, merely reactive wretch, not a true person at all. If there is no such thing as free will, i.e., if Ravven is correct that free will is a myth, then we are just cattle or obedient puppies with no reason to live, no justification to be cheerful, no possibility of genuinely moral action, and no hope for any real progress.

We may now all look forward to a comment from Prof. Ravven. I am particularly hopeful that she will explain the last sentence of her book, in which she expresses her wish for expanded social, political, environmental, and scientific awareness "to bring out the best in us and also point the way to greater freedom for all" (p. 420), because, frankly, I do not understand how, aside from political liberty, a human being can have freedom without free will.

Notes

1. Heidi M. Ravven, *The Self Beyond Itself: An Alternative History of Ethics, the New Brain Sciences, and the Myth of Free Will* (New York: New Press, 2013).
2. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A444/B472-A451/B479.
3. Edward Pols, *Meditation on a Prisoner: Towards Understanding Action and Mind* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press; London: Feffer & Simons, 1975), pp. 93-100, 159-162, 308-309, 313.
4. Plato, *Phaedo*, 99b.
5. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by Terry Pinkard (2008), PDF widely available online, para. 323-346, pp. 289-313.
6. Eric v.d. Luft, "The Birth of Spirit for Hegel out of the Travesty of Medicine," in: *Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit*, edited by Peter G. Stillman (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), pp. 25-42.
7. Eric v.d. Luft, "Pols, Edward (1919-)," *Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers*, edited by John R. Shook (Bristol, England: Thoemmes Continuum, 2005), vol. 3, p. 1940. In *The Mystery and Agency of God: Divine Being and Action in the World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), p. 79, Frank G. Kirkpatrick presents a theological reading of Pols and identifies what he considers the three main points of Pols's theory of agency: "one, it establishes the ontological primordially of agency and of the agent who exercises it; two, it rejects the notion that agency can be reduced to its constituent or atomic

parts fully explained by a cause-effect relationship; and three, it suggests a way by which agency can be brought into a metaphysically harmonious relationship with the concept of 'Being'." Kirkpatrick admits that Pols might not have agreed with Kirkpatrick's theistic implications of Pols's work.

8. Edward Pols, "Rational Action and the Complexity of Causality," *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 22 (2002): 1-18.
9. Eric v.d. Luft, handwritten notes taken at this symposium.
10. Edward Pols, *The Acts of Our Being: A Reflection on Agency and Responsibility* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), pp. 53, 76, 148; *Meditation*, p. 8.
11. Luft, notes at the 2001 symposium.
12. Edward Pols, "The Ontology of the Rational Agent," *The Review of Metaphysics* 33, 4 (June 1980): 694; *Acts*, p. 196.
13. "Ontology," p. 702; *Acts*, p. 204.
14. "Ontology," p. 708; *Acts*, p. 211.
15. "Ontology," p. 702; *Acts*, p. 204.
16. Edward Pols, *Mind Regained* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 121.
17. *Meditation*, p. 60.
18. *Meditation*, pp. 111-121, 153-159, 342-347; *Acts*, pp. 117-122, esp. p. 121; *Regained*, pp. 114, 129-130.
19. Ray Cummings, *The Girl in the Golden Atom* [1922] (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), p. 46.
20. Edward Pols, "Human Agents as Actual Beings," *Process Studies* 8, 2 (1978): 104; cf. Edward Pols, "Action and its Physiological Basis," *The Review of Metaphysics* 31, 3 (March 1978): 365-386.
21. Edward Pols, "Feature Book Review: *Causal Powers: A Theory of Natural Necessity*. By R. Harré and E.H. Madden. Oxford: Blackwell ... 1975 ..." *International Philosophical Quarterly* 16, 3 (September 1976): 376.
22. *Regained*, pp. 52, 90-92, 95-101, 125-131.
23. *Regained*, p. 90.
24. *Regained*, pp. 90-91; Pols's italics.
25. Cf. *Regained*, p. 126.
26. *Regained*, p. 130; Pols's italics.
27. *Meditation*, pp. 1-5, 176, 178-179, 184, 274-275.
28. Eric v.d. Luft, *The Value of Suicide* (North Syracuse, New York: Gegensatz Press e-book, 2012), Chapter II.4, "Stoic Psychology" <www.gegensatzpress.com/suicide.html>.
29. Ibid.
30. *Regained*, p. 12.
31. Edward Pols, "The Conditions of Ontic Responsibility," *The Review of Metaphysics* 35, 2 (December 1981): 298; italics added.
32. "Conditions of Ontic Responsibility," p. 312; *Acts*, p. 43.
33. Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949), pp. 15-16.
34. *Acts*, p. 26; cf. Chapter 2, "The Metaphysical Conditions of Ontic Responsibility," *passim*.
35. Søren Kierkegaard, *Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs*, translated by M.G. Piety with an introduction by Edward F. Mooney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 113.
36. Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, translated by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956), pp. 97-101.
37. Ravven, pp. 288, 304, 309, 318-319, 321, 327, 330, 336, 345, 347, 349, 353, 363-365, 369, 372, 376, 382, 408, 419.
38. *Toward a Theory of Neuroplasticity*, edited by Christopher A. Shaw and Jill C. McEachern (Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis, 2001), p. xv.
39. Cf. *Meditation*, pp. 2-3.