<u>A spirit of distrust: Brandom on genealogy</u>

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<u>Abstract</u>

In *A Spirit of Trust* Brandom articulates or reconstructs a rationalist Hegelian critique of 'genealogy'. In this paper we argue that Brandom's discussion conflates two different forms of reductionism – 'objective' reductionism, which reduces reasons to naturalistically understood *causes*, and 'subjective' reductionism, which reduces reasons to psychologically understood *interests* or *desires*. We argue that, while Brandom interprets genealogy as a form of objective reductionism, it is often better understood as a form of subjective reductionism. We discuss Brandom's philosophical reasons for this conflation and suggest that an appropriately modified or extended Brandomian-Hegelian framework offers the possibility of a more productive engagement with 'genealogical' modes of analysis.

1. <u>The critique of genealogy</u>

One of the interesting dimensions of Brandom's complex rational reconstruction of Hegel's *Phenomenology* is Brandom-Hegel's critique of 'genealogical' modes of analysis (Brandom 2019).[2] For Brandom-Hegel, 'genealogy' is a particular kind of reductionism – a form of critique which operates by reinterpreting social phenomena that claim to be normative in causal terms. Paradigmatic forms of genealogy include Freudian analysis of values in terms of libidinal drives, Nietzschean analysis of morals in terms of the will to power, Foucauldian analysis of knowledge in terms of power, and Marxist analysis of ideological commitments in terms of class interests. For Brandom-Hegel, all these analytic approaches reinterpret norms or reasons in terms of causes, thereby stripping the norms in question of their truly normative character. Local genealogies perform this operation on a particular target class of norms – for example, analysing the normative commitments of bourgeois economics in terms of capitalist class interests. Such local genealogies, whether right or wrong, do not have general philosophical implications. But global genealogies aspire to perform this operation on norms in general – reducing the normative as such to causal analysis. For Brandom-Hegel, this kind of genealogical approach leads to nihilism – or would lead to nihilism, if only it could be coherently pursued. Brandom-Hegel is concerned to rebut this form of global genealogical critique by arguing that it cannot, in fact, be coherently pursued – that the global reduction of reasons to causes, the normative to the naturalistic, is not possible for deep semantic reasons.

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[1] And hopefully a coauthor, in conversations with whom this argument has been developed - but it doesn't seem appropriate to put anyone else's name on this thing in its current extremely underdeveloped state.

[2] In this paper we will refer to 'Brandom-Hegel' as the philosophical subject to whom many of the commitments articulated in *A Spirit of Trust* and related texts can be attributed. This usage is intended to capture something similar to the concept 'Kripkenstein', in that the positions discussed may be fully and properly attributable to neither Brandom (who is engaged in an interpretive task, rather than necessarily articulating his own views) nor Hegel (whose positions Brandom is at times somewhat aggressively reconstructing).

The culmination of this strand of Brandom-Hegel's argument comes at the conclusion of the 'Spirit' chapter of the Phenomenology. In his long interpretation of this section of text, Brandom foregrounds the distinction between the small-souled or 'niederträchtig' and the great-souled or 'edelmütig' attitudes. The small-souled attitude sees actions under the aspect of causation – that is, it does not treat actions as norm-governed or norm-following. The great-souled attitude sees actions under the aspect of normativity, or within the space of reasons – that is, it sees actions as norm-governed and norm-following, even if that norm-following is flawed or insufficient. For Brandom-Hegel, the exemplar of the 'small-souled' attitude is the 'kammerdiener' or valet. In Hegel's words:

> No man is a hero to his valet; not, however, because the man is not a hero, but because the valet – is a valet, whose dealings are with the man, not as hero, but as one who eats, drinks, and wears clothes, in general, with his individual wants and fancies. Thus, for the judging consciousness, there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the *moral* valet towards the agent. (665)[3]

For Brandom-Hegel, the global small-souled attitude plays the part of the moral valet towards normative action in general. The appropriate response to this attitude, Brandom-Hegel argues, is to adopt an alternative attitude of 'forgiveness', which can if properly pursued institute a distributed set of reciprocal recognitive relations and attitudes which treat our actions as a whole as norm-governed. The 'spirit of trust' of Brandom's title denotes the recognitive attitudes which can be instituted if the small-souled attitude of the moral valet is appropriately overcome.

In this paper we will not discuss Brandom-Hegel's account of forgiveness or trust - we are focused specifically on the question of genealogy. Our claim is that in these passages Brandom mischaracterises Hegel's critique of 'genealogy'. Brandom understands genealogy as the reduction of norms to *causes*; we suggest, rather, that genealogy can often more usefully be understood as the reduction of norms to *interests* or *desires*. The paradigmatic genealogist is not focused on causes, in the sense of naturalistically-describable objective facts; rather, the genealogist is focused on subjective desires, needs, or interests - the "individual wants and fancies" that preoccupy Hegel's moral valet. We suggest that incorporating this distinction between 'objective' and 'subjective' reductionism into Brandom's Hegel has broader implications for Brandom's project of rationally reconstructing Hegel.

2. Three kinds of social analysis.

We can begin to flesh out our argument by drawing a simple distinction between three different categories of attitude to social phenomena.

First, there is a scientistic or naturalistic attitude which studies human behaviour as just one specific category of natural phenomenon – treating Geisteswissenschaft as a special case of Naturwissenschaft. Second, there is an attitude which emphasises the desire- or goal-oriented dimension of human behaviour – analysing human action in terms of motive structures driven by subjective desires. Third, and finally, there is an attitude which emphasises normative commitments and meaning-systems as their own object of analysis.

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[3] All Hegel quotations are from the A.V. Miller translation.

Each of these approaches have characteristic modes of analysis and sets of research programmes. For example: behaviourist psychology is one exemplar of the 'scientistic' research programme; the desire- or goal-oriented approach encompasses large portions of both Freudian psychoanalytic theory (emphasising libidinal drives) and rational choice theory (emphasising instrumentally rational pursuit of utility maximisation); the meaning-system approach is widely adopted in interpretive sociology and anthropology, as well as large swathes of the humanities.

These categories are, of course, very sweeping. But mapping the terrain of social explanation in this way can be illuminating when we consider one of the major motivating problems of Brandom-Hegel's argument in 'A Spirit of Trust' – the problem of 'alienation'.

For Brandom-Hegel, the single most significant event in world history is the emergence of the attitudes and institutions of the 'Enlightenment'. Brandom-Hegel's historical narrative can, in its broad outlines, be reduced to a two-part periodisation: before and after the Enlightenment. The most significant element of this historical shift, in turn, is a shift in how we understand normativity.

In the prelapsarian pre-Enlightenment social paradigm, for Brandom-Hegel, norms and normativity were treated as something like unproblematic features of the furniture of the world. Norms were 'out there', somewhere and somehow, and we properly deferred to them. In this deference to norms we were 'at home' in our normative world – we enjoyed Sittlichkeit. There may have been 'first order' conflicts over norms – which norms we should follow, and why – but the basic legitimacy of norms as such was taken for granted.

With the Enlightenment, for Brandom-Hegel, this changed – the possibility that norms were and are instituted by human action became an active theoretical concern. For Brandom-Hegel this constituted a major philosophical advance – norms are indeed instituted by human action, and with the Enlightenment we became aware of this social-metaphysical truth. But the cost of this greater philosophical understanding was a loss of confidence in our norms, and in the very idea of normativity as such. If norms are instituted by human action, can norms really be properly binding upon us? Can they really be properly understood as normative at all?

This worry – that our norms are not truly binding at all, because they are human artefacts – is the attitude that Brandom-Hegel labels 'alienation'. It is closely related to the 'small-souled' attitude of the 'moral valet' – and to the 'genealogical' perspectives of critical social theory. These are alienated attitudes because they take a genuine insight – that norms are socially instituted – and turn it into a corrosive attack on normativity in general.

One of Brandom-Hegel's central goals is to resolve this challenge of alienation – to help us towards a set of attitudes that retain both the theoretical insights of the post-Enlightenment critical philosophy and the 'at-homeness' of pre-Enlightenment Sittlichkeit. If this synthesis were achievable, this would represent a third 'post-modern' historical period – one that institutes a 'spirit of trust'.

We suggest that it is important, when considering the problem of 'alienation', to consider different forms that such 'alienation' may take. Specifically, we suggest that there are three distinct post-Enlightenment threats to normativity, associated with the three different social-theoretic attitudes we have sketched. Distinguishing these three different categories of 'alienation' is important for unpacking the implications of Hegel's argument.

The *scientistic* attitude can be associated with an *objective reductionism* which claims that the only things that exist – the only real things – are the objects of natural-scientific study. Since norms and values do not appear to exist as natural-scientific categories, it would seem to follow that norms and values do not exist. We will call this claim *nihilism* about norms – the claim that there simply are no such things as norms in an appropriately 'disenchanted' world.

The *intentional* or *goal-oriented* attitude can prompt a different sort of reductionism. This subjective reductionism aspires to reduce norms not to natural-scientific categories, but to the subjective categories of desiring agents. On this account, there is nothing to the normative sphere 'above and beyond' the interests, desires, gratifications, etc. of social actors. Thus when people talk about their values, such talk can be fully explained in terms of utility functions, libidinal drives, or other subjectivist categories. For reasons that we will unpack in more detail in later sections, we will call this approach *cynicism* about norms.

Finally, the norm- or meaning-focused approach takes norms themselves as its object of analysis. It might seem that this approach does not participate in an 'alienated' challenge to normativity, given that norms are its explicit object. But because this approach often engages in the comparative analysis of different normative systems, its adoption unleashes the spectre of *relativism*. On what basis can we choose between the alternative normative systems we study? If there is no system-transcendent normative standpoint available, does this mean that different normative frameworks are all as good as each other? And does this not imply that none of these normative systems are truly binding, and thus truly normative, at all? From this perspective comparative normative analysis, with its relativistic implications, is just as much a threat to the reality of norms as are the objective and subjective forms of reductionism.

We have, then, three different categories of 'alienation': nihilism; cynicism; relativism. Each of these categories appears to threaten normativity in a different way – and they therefore need to be responded to using different resources. Our claim in this paper is that while Brandom has sophisticated and compelling responses to the challenges of nihilism and relativism, his apparatus for the most part simply does not address the problem of cynicism. Rather, Brandom typically assimilates the challenge of cynicism to the challenge of nihilism – treating the reduction of norms to *interests* (subjective reductionism) as a subspecies of the reduction of norms to *causes* (objective reductionism). We suggest that when considering the problem of 'genealogical' critique, it is important to keep these categories of 'alienation' distinct.

Brandom's relative silence on the issue of subjective reductionism is not an oversight. Rather, it is part of anti-psychologistic philosophical strategy that Brandom has pursued throughout his career. In the next section we discuss this strategy, before returning to the problem of alienation.

3. Brandom against psychologism

One of the striking features of Brandom's philosophical project is his resolute refusal of subjectivist or psychological categories. As Brandom remarks, he never uses the word "experience" in *Making It Explicit*. Rather, Brandom uses the category "reliable differential responsive dispositions" – substituting a behavioural category for a psychological one. Similarly, Brandom typically does not speak of "beliefs" (a psychological category), but rather of "commitments" (a normative category). In *A Spirit of Trust* Brandom loosens his vocabulary slightly – but when Brandom speaks of "experience" in *ASOT* it is to denote a process of

commitment-transformation, rather than the 'inputs' to that process. As Brandom puts it in *Perspectives on Pragmatism*, he is here deploying "the decidedly non-Cartesian sense of 'experience' in which a want-ad can specify "No experience necessary," without intending thereby to invite applications from zombies." (7)

This refusal at the level of vocabulary is part of a broad anti-subjectivist or anti-psychologistic philosophical strategy, which has roots in three different traditions that Brandom draws upon. First, Brandom endorses a Kantian-Fregeian emphasis on the normative. For Brandom, Kant inherited a dualistic tradition, exemplified by Descartes, which saw the mental and the physical as two different categories of substance, with concepts belonging to the 'mental' side of that divide. Kant rejecting this dualism by reconceptualising the conceptual in normative terms – drawing a distinction between natural and moral law, rather than a distinction between mind and world. Frege then extended this approach by rejecting the psychologistic understanding of formal logic, championed by Mill and others, in favour of a fully normative treatment of logic as science. Brandom endorses all of this: what marks out our cognition is its normative – not its psychological – character.

Second, Brandom follows both Hegel and Wittgenstein in seeing the social world as central to the determination of conceptual content. This is a different kind of rejection of the psychological – placing the determination of conceptual content literally "outside the head" in a space of social practices rather than "inside the head" in the space of beliefs or feelings.

Third, and finally, Brandom follows Sellars in rejecting 'the myth of the given'. For Brandom, empiricism has led philosophers astray by establishing a philosophically confused category called "experience" – something that is non-conceptual but that can nevertheless still serve as an authority in conceptual reasoning, or that can function as a premise in inferential chains without being subject to legitimate challenge. Brandom believes there is no warrant for the use of such a category – and thus no use for the central philosophical category of empiricism.

For all these reasons, then, Brandom rejects psychological or subjectivist approaches to philosophical explanation. Rather than trying to rework such categories, however, Brandom chooses to 'cut the Gordian knot' of empiricist and psychologistic philosophical categories by simply abandoning these categories altogether. As Brandom puts the point – drawing on Dummett's critique of conceptually flawed categories like 'Boche' - some concepts carry within them inferences sufficiently faulty that the concept itself simply cannot be used.

So Brandom rejects psychological or subjectivist categories – and for good philosophical reasons. These reasons, however, most centrally relate to the epistemic and semantic/referential 'direction of fit' between mind and world. When it comes to the alternative direction of fit – the philosophy of action – we suggest that Brandom's rejection of psychological or subjectivist categories leaves him without the ability to 'translate' some important Hegelian categories into his alternative analytic idiom.

In particular, we claim, the refusal to make use of psychological or subjectivist categories leads Brandom to mischaracterise the nature of Hegel's argument in the crucial final sections of the 'Spirit' chapter of the Phenomenology. Where Brandom sees the 'moral valet' as an exemplar of nihilism – engaged in 'objective' reductionism of norms to causes – we see the 'moral valet' as an exemplar of *cynicism* – engaged in 'subjective' reductionism of norms to interests or desires. To further unpack this point we will look in more detail at Brandom's treatment of this passage, before proposing an alternative interpretation.

<u>4.</u>   Cynicism, nihilism, and genealogy

In approaching Hegel's treatment of the 'moral valet', Brandom deploys two broad sets of philosophical resources.

The first is Brandom's account of the relation between normative attitudes and normative statuses, already articulated in *Making It Explicit*. In *A Spirit of Trust* Brandom argues that Hegel has already developed a version of this account, and therefore much of Hegel's argument can be translated into the vocabulary of normative attitudes and normative statuses without substantial loss of philosophical content. This element of Brandom's argument is too complex to adequately summarise here. In broad outline, normative statuses are norms themselves – things like obligations and entitlements. Normative attitudes are the social practices of treating things as possessing or exhibiting normative statuses. Brandom's approach is to take a small set of normative attitudes – the social practices of attributing and acknowledging commitments and entitlements – embed them within a broader set of social practices – the game of giving and asking for reasons – and argue that these social practices, properly understood, are sufficient to institute genuine normative statuses. Once normative statuses have successfully been instituted, we have established ourselves as sapient agents – the kinds of creatures whose actions are bound by norms. As norm-governed agents we are then in a position to analyse the practices that generated that status in normative terms. Giving an account of this complex reciprocal relationship between normative attitudes and normative statuses is the core of Brandom's pragmatics.

The second set of resources Brandom deploys is a reconstruction of Hegel's philosophy of action. Brandom argues, in a Davidsonian or Anscombian vein, that any action can be understood under multiple aspects. What makes an action an action is that at least one of those aspects is intended by the social actor in question. But the social actor cannot, in acting, determine the full content of their action. That content is additionally determined by both the network of causal implication of which the intentional dimension of the action is one moment, and the normative attitudes properly taken towards the action by other social actors. Since, on Brandom-Hegel's account, we are made by our actions, what we 'really are' is not captured by the private intention associated with the action, but by the entire complex of the action.

Brandom brings both these sets of resources to bear when reconstructing Hegel's discussion of alienation and the Kammerdiener.

On the one hand, Brandom reconstructs Hegel's discussion of alienation in terms of the distinction between normative attitudes and normative statuses. The alienated perspective, for Brandom, is the perspective that remains at the level of normative attitudes, refusing to believe that those attitudes have successfully instituted real normative statuses. At the same time, Brandom-Hegel argues that the 'small-souled' perspective of the Kammerdiener is for this reason analysing social action under only some of its aspects. Because any action has multiple aspects it is always possible to highlight the most 'ignoble' of those aspects, treating those ignoble dimensions as the 'truth' of the action, while ignoring those aspects of the action that would properly be regarded as normative.

In more Hegelian vocabulary, this understanding of the 'small-souled' perspective can be thematised under the heading of particularity versus universality. Normative attitudes and the ignoble dimensions of action are 'particular'; normative statuses and the normative dimensions

of action are 'universal'. The problem with the 'small-souled' Kammerdiener is therefore that they focus on particularity at the expense of universality.

Brandom-Hegel's response to this small-souled perspective is two-fold. On the one hand, Brandom-Hegel aspires to show how normative statuses can be and are instituted via normative attitudes. To look 'just' at normative attitudes is to fail to see the wood for the trees – to fail to recognise that the apparently non-normative social practices of *treating* agents as norm-bound have already successfully instituted the very norms they describe. This argument can then be applied within the domain of Brandom-Hegel's philosophy of action – to look at only the apparently non-normative dimensions of any given action is to fail to see the action as a whole.

We endorse all these dimensions of Brandom-Hegel's argument. We take it – though we do not here argue – that Brandom-Hegel has successfully made the case for the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes. We claim, however, that the anti-psychologistic dimensions of Brandom's overarching project lead him to unduly limit the categories of normative attitude that are the focus of his attention. The normative attitudes that Brandom discusses are *social practices* – Brandom is fundamentally a practice theorist. Hegel, however, is concerned not just with the 'objective' category of social practices, but also with the 'subjective' categories of desires and motives. Hegel is concerned not just with the 'objectivist' 'small-souled' project of reducing norms to *causes*, but also with the 'subjectivist' 'small-souled' project of reducing norms to *interests* or *desires*.

5. Hegel on desire

The difference between Brandom's specific focus on *practices* and Hegel's broader treatment of *motives* and *desires* is clear in the 'moral valet' passage itself – section 665 of the Phenomenology. In this section, the 'hard-hearted judging consciousness' assesses the social action of another. The judging consciousness "cannot deny" that the action in question "contains the universal aspect" – that is, has the form of a duty. However, the judging consciousness "does not stop short" at the "aspect of duty":

> On the contrary, it holds to the other aspect, looks at what the action is in itself, and explains it as resulting from an *intention* different from the action itself, and from selfish *motives*. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]

The judging consciousness here considers the action under its particular aspects, rather than its universal aspects. Note, however, that Hegel characterises those particular aspects not as *practices* but as *motives* – and, in particular, as selfish motives. This, we are claiming, is the "cynical" perspective that perceives every action under the aspect of gratification, self-interest, and the fulfilment of personal desires. As Hegel puts it in section 650, action considered under this aspect "would appear to us to be the fulfilling of one's pleasure and desire."

Continuing with the 'moral valet' passage, Hegel writes:

> If the action is accompanied by fame, then it knows this inner aspect to be a *desire* for fame. If it is altogether in keeping with the station of the individual, without going beyond this station, and of such a nature that the individuality does not possess its station as a character externally attached to it, but through its own self gives filling to

this universality, thereby showing itself capable of a higher station, then the inner aspect of the action is judged to be ambition, and so on.

Here Hegel is characterising what would later come to be called the "hermeneutics of suspicion" – what we are calling "cynicism" – the heart of the 'genealogical' perspective. Much 'genealogy', we suggest, is best understood as a form of 'subjective reductionism'. It translates *values* into *interests – virtues* into *desires*. The moral valet's debasing critique of the hero is not at base a *scientistic* one which understands the hero's action in *causal* terms. The moral valet sees the actions of the hero in intentional terms. But the intentions in question are ignoble – the man is not a hero to his valet, because the valet sees his actions as guided by personal, base interests and desires, not by norms.

We suggest that this subjectivist or psychological element of cynicism is central to Hegel's preoccupations. And it is central for at least two reasons.

First, Hegel is wrestling throughout this section with the legacy of debates between sentimentalist and Kantian understandings of morality. On the one hand, Humean moral philosophy explains human action in terms of desire; on the other hand, Kantian moral philosophy argues that only action untainted by individual gratification can be truly moral. For Hegel, the Humean approach (a form of alienated cynicism) risks evacuating the bindingness of norms – their 'universality'. At the same time, for Hegel, the Kantian approach risks evacuating norms in a different way, by stripping them of all determinate substance in the pursuit of the chimera of a norm untainted by desire. For Hegel, it is precisely the particularity of action that gives norms their content – the Kantian approach is in flight from "the blemish of determinateness" (645).

Hegel's argument, we take it, has the structure that Brandom identifies: Hegel is claiming that normativity is instituted via the very normative attitudes that an alienated perspective contrasts with normativity. The difference between Hegel and Brandom-Hegel is that Hegel makes this argument in both the register of practice *and* the register of desire. By eliding the subjectivist or psychological dimensions of Hegel's treatment of the 'moral valet', Brandom's reconstruction prevents the incorporation of the insights of this moment into the larger Hegelian narrative.

Second, and separately, Hegel's emphasis on the interests and desires at play in the constitution of normativity plays a role in his larger social theory. The *Phenomenology* is deeply influenced by the ideas of liberal political economy, particularly the idea – most famously expressed by Adam Smith's metaphor of the invisible hand - that actions pursued for reasons of private interests may contribute to the collective good. For Hegel, it is a pipe dream to believe that a good society can be constructed if that society requires its inhabitants to consistently act against their strongest interests and desires. A rationally constructed social order is rational precisely because it aligns private motives with public virtues – not just at the level of the marketplace, but fractally throughout the social order. Hegel's *metaphysical* argument – that universal norms are constituted in and by the pursuit of particular practices and motives – is supplemented by a *social-theoretic* argument – that sustainable and desirable norms can only realistically be so constituted if the norms and interests are sufficiently aligned. In anachronistic contemporary vocabulary, Hegel is making a proto-mechanism design argument.

This is why, for Hegel, we cannot overcome 'alienation' simply by adopting the appropriate *attitude* towards the 'particularity' of specific individuals' motives. We cannot achieve a 'spirit of trust' simply by choosing to trust each other. We need to inhabit a social world structured

such that it is *rational* to trust each other, precisely because there is no fundamental misalignment between 'particularity' and 'universality' – between the norms we aspire to realise and structure of the social world that shapes our actions.

This principle for assessing the rationality of a social order is much of what gives Hegel's social theory its critical edge. The Hegelian apparatus, understood in this way, can be mobilised to identify *misalignment* between the norms instituted by our practices and the motives and incentive structures guiding those actions. The identification of such misalignment is one of the critical tools that can be denoted with the term 'genealogy'. This kind of genealogy is not a reductive attack on norms in general – it is simultaneously an identification of a tension between norms and practice, and an account of the constitution of the norms in question by those same practices. By conflating subjective and objective reductionism – nihilism and cynicism – Brandom elides this entire critical dimension of Hegel's social-theoretic argument.

For Hegel, then, it is not just important to incorporate the 'cynical' perspective of the 'moral valet' for dialectical completionism's sake. This cynical, genealogical perspective is also crucial to Hegel's broader social-theoretic project. Without the ability to adopt the 'cynical' perspective of the 'moral valet' we are not in a position to effectively evaluate whether our modes of social organisation are indeed rational – and therefore whether they are capable of instituting the 'spirit of trust' that would achieve the reconciliatory goal of Hegel's project.

6. Conclusion

Brandom's 'A Spirit of Trust' is a monumental achievement – incisive across so many domains, and elaborating Hegel's arguments in a fine-grained detail that provides a superabundance of analytic resources. In this paper we have focused on just one dimension of Brandom's multi-faceted argument – his discussion of the 'moral valet' and genealogical critique. We have argued that, because Brandom is programmatically committed to the minimisation of psychological or subjectivist categories, he conflates Hegel's discussions of the relations between norms and *motives* with a treatment of the relation between norms and *causes*. This, we argue, leads Brandom to neglect a crucial element of Hegel's social-theoretic project – the development of a criterion of adequacy for the construction of a rational social order: the widespread alignment of private motives and normative demands. If we are right, we believe this argument should be taken not as a reason to reject Brandom's interpretation of Hegel, but rather as an opportunity to extend Brandom's apparatus still further, and to better incorporate Hegel's treatment of desire, interests, and the 'cynical' perspective of the 'moral valet' into a reconstructed analytic Hegelian framework. Such a modification of Brandom-Hegel's apparatus would carve out a larger space for 'genealogy' within Brandom's framework – and would offer significant resources for a non-reductive Brandomian-Hegelian critical theory.