NIETZSCHE ON FREEDOM

L. Nathan Oaklander
The University of Michigan—Flint

In attempting to understand the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche one is immediately faced with the task of resolving the *prima facie* inconsistencies in his views on freedom. On the one hand, Nietzsche claims that we do not have freedom of will and that, consequently, we are not accountable for our actions. The following passage is representative of many:

> The history of the moral sensations is the history of an error, the error of accountability, which rests on the error of freedom of will. (. . . . . .) No one is accountable for his deed, no one for his nature; to judge is the same thing as to be unjust. This applies when the individual judges himself. The proposition is as clear as daylight, and yet here everyone prefers to retreat back into the shadows and untruth: from fear of the consequences.[1]

On the other hand, Nietzsche emphasizes that the significance of the death of God is that it frees us into an open sea in which an infinite number of choices lie before us. He says,

> We philosophers and 'free spirits' in fact feel at the news that the 'old God is dead' as if illuminated by a new dawn; our heart overflows with gratitude, astonishment, presentiment, expectation—at last the horizon seems to us again free, ...[2]

Furthermore, his characterization of freedom in *The Twilight of the Idols* suggests that the will is free; that freedom is a realizable possibility. He asks:

> For what is freedom? That one has the will to self-responsibility. Freedom means that the manly instincts . . . dominate over other instincts. The free man is a warrior.[3]

For Nietzsche, the powerful strong willed individual would seem to be able to set goals for himself, alone and in isolation, and has the power to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of achieving those goals. He gives Julius Caesar as an example of someone who has achieved a certain measure of freedom. Thus, there is textual evidence to support the charge that Nietzsche both affirms and denies freedom of will.

There is a second difficulty concerning Nietzsche's views on freedom that also deserves attention. In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche maintains that the will is *neither* free *nor* non-free. Nietzsche expresses this view in a passage I shall quote at length:

L. Nathan Oaklander is a Professor of Philosophy at The University of Michigan-Flint. He has published articles on metaphysics, Berkeley, Sartre, and has a book forthcoming on the philosophy of time.

The desire for "freedom of will" in the superlative, metaphysical sense, such as still holds sway, unfortunately, in the minds of the half-educated, the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one's actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, chance, and society therefrom, involves nothing less than to be precisely this *causa sui*. If anyone should find out in this manner the crass stupidity of the celebrated conception of "free will" and put it out of his head altogether, I beg of him to carry his "enlightenment" a step further, and also put out of his head the contrary of this monstrous conception of "free will": I mean "non-free will," which is tantamount to a misuse of cause and effect. (. . . . . .) The "non-free will" is mythology; in real life it is only a question of *strong* and *weak* wills.[4]

How can the will be neither free nor unfree? And, more generally, how are we to understand Nietzsche's enigmatic remarks concerning freedom? The main aim of this paper is to answer these questions and in so doing provide a coherent and consistent account of Nietzsche's views on freedom. I shall proceed by first discussing the conception of freedom that Nietzsche rejects together with his reasons for rejecting it. Then I shall offer an interpretation of Nietzsche's positive views on freedom, and finally I shall relate his view of freedom to his view on values. In that connection I shall attempt to show, once again, that the paradox inherent in Nietzsche's remarks on freedom and value can be overcome.

I. NIETZSCHE'S NEGATIVE VIEW OF FREEDOM

The conception of freedom that Nietzsche rejects is founded upon a mistaken view of the self. According to this radically defective view, the self is an indivisible, eternal, monad or substratum that retains its identity through time. This subject, ego, or substance is construed as an agent or a *doer* that lies behind the deed that it causes. Nietzsche expresses this position in the following passage: "The subject: interpreted from within ourselves so that the ego counts as a substance, as the cause of all deeds, as a doer."[5] And in another he says:

And just exactly as people separate the lightning from its flash, and interpret the latter as a thing done, as the working of a subject which is called lightning, so also does the popular morality separate strength from the expression of strength, as though behind the strong man there existed some indifferent neutral *substratum*, which enjoyed a *caprice and option* as to whether or not it should express strength.[6]

On this view, the agent is endowed with a simple faculty of free will that enables it to choose or not to choose to perform an action without itself being acted upon by any causes outside or behind it. Thus, a free act or deed is one performed by a substance *qua* agent that lies outside the realm of causality and the net of scientific predictability.

In denying free will Nietzsche is denying that the will or self is an entity existing outside the habit, desire, reflection, and act, that together constitute the deed. For Nietzsche,

there is no such *substratum*, there is no "being" behind doing, working, becoming; "the doer" is a mere appendage to the action. The action is everything.[7]

To be sure, the self exists but not as a mere block of identity distinct from its concrete activities; not as a substance whose freedom is antecedently possessed. Rather, on Nietzsche's view, the doer or subject and deed are one, and its freedom is something that must come to be, *mature*, and grow. As he says:

No "substance," rather something that in itself strives after greater strength, and that wants to "preserve" itself only indirectly (it wants to *surpass* itself—).[8]

And he continues:

My hypothesis: The subject as multiplicity.[9]

We have here an important beginning in our attempt to understand Nietzsche's positive view of freedom, but before developing it let us return to the reasons for his negative attitude toward the substantialist doctrine of free will.

Nietzsche attacks the doctrine of freedom of will because he believes that, *as traditionally conceived*, it is internally inconsistent. It implies that we both are and are not accountable and punishable for our actions. The overall structure of his argument may be stated as follows:

(1) An agent can be held responsible for an action only if the agent acted *intentionally* or *for some reason*, and not unconsciously or under compulsion.
(2) No act of free will is intentional.
(3) Therefore, no agent can be held responsible or punishable for an act of free will.

If defenders of the substantialist conception of free will are committed to (3) then it can easily be shown that a contradiction follows. For those who defend free will accept as axiomatic that

(4) All agents *are* responsible for actions done freely, and, under certain conditions, punishable for actions done freely.

Thus, together with (3) the doctrine of free will entails that

(5) Agents are and are not responsible and, under certain conditions, are and are not punishable for their own free acts of will.

A doctrine of freedom that arrives at that conclusion Nietzsche rejects as absurd. Let us look more closely at the crucial steps (1) and (2) to see if his rejection is justified.

First consider the textual evidence for step (1). Nietzsche says:

People who judge and punish as a profession try to establish in each case whether an ill-doer is at all accountable for his deed, whether he was *able* to employ his intelligence, whether he acted for *reasons* and not unconsciously or under compulsion. If he is

punished, he is punished for having preferred the worse reasons to the better: which he must therefore have *known*.[10]

For defenders of free-will, a necessary condition of responsibility or accountability is that the perpetrator *could have* deliberated and provided reasons for or against the deed before performing it. In other words, the ability to make a purposeful or rational decision in which motives do play a part is a necessary condition of responsibility. Thus, an agent who is unable to distinguish between good and bad motives for his action would not be held responsible. Furthermore, if we can distinguish good and bad reasons or motives, and if we prefer bad reasons or bad motives over good ones, then our deed is one for which we are not only responsible but punishable as well.

An example might help. Suppose a woman has to decide whether or not to have an affair with her neighbor's husband. She knows that it is not right because it goes against her religious beliefs, and yet she is motivated to have the affair by what she considers, from her religious perspective, to be an evil motive, namely, self-interest. The final choice she makes is one for which she is responsible because she deliberated and based her decision on reasons. Punishment would be justified, only if she intentionally chooses the bad motive to govern her action. At this point the question that troubles Nietzsche is "Whence comes the decision when the scales are weighted with good and bad motives?" Alternatively, "How can anyone intentionally be less intelligent than he has to be"?[11] The response to these questions leads us to a justification of Nietzsche's claim that (2) no act of free-will is intentional, which is, of course, the heart of the argument.

The defenders of "free-will" maintain that our choice of bad motives over good ones comes,

> Not from error, from blindness, not from an external nor from an internal complusion . . . . Whence? one asks again and again. And here one calls 'free-will' to one's aid: *it is pure willfulness which is supposed to decide, an impulse is supposed to enter within which motive plays no part, in which the deed, arising out of nothing, occurs as a miracle.*"[12]

Let us be clear about the view of "free-will" that Nietzsche is attempting to reduce to absurdity. There are two main aspects of this conception: First, there exists a self, an agent, that retains its strict identity through time, without temporal parts, and is distinct from the events or happenings that constitute its history. Second, this substance or agent has the capacity to assert its will *uncaused* or *uninfluenced* by its knowledge, environment, history, and heredity. Can the existence of "free-will" in the sense just defined ever justify the right to punish? According to Nietzsche the answer is emphatically *no*.

Recall that the first condition of all punishment is that the perpetrator of the deed acted *intentionally*, i.e., on the basis of reasons. However, a substantialist act of free-will is ultimately *unintentional* because it is not influenced or caused by reasons, motives, environment, or anything else. An act of free will is a purely arbitrary, whimsical act *arising out of nothing*: "a deed without a 'for that reason', without motive, without

origin, something purposeless and non-rational."[13] Therefore, Nietzsche concludes, "You adherents of 'free-will' have no right to punish, or to hold a person responsible, your own principles deny you that right!"[14]

On Nietzsche's own view of freedom a person *is* responsible. Indeed, he maintains that freedom is: "That one has the will to self-responsibility."[15] For Nietzsche a person is responsible and punishable for his or her deeds because these deeds *are* the self and proceed from a person's concrete make-up of habits, desires, and purposes. If our actions are caused by some arbitrary force, agent, or substratum, outside the individual person as he actually is, then there is no reason to hold the concrete individual responsible. Freedom and responsibility require an identification of self and deed; an awareness of ourselves as being our deeds. The traditional conception of freedom is false because it separates the self from its acts and thereby makes responsibility impossible.[16]

With this background we can easily understand Nietzsche's claim that those who reject the doctrine of a free-will must also reject the notion of an unfree-will. An unfree-will would be a subject or ego that is determined to act by heredity or environment or past character. In any case, the assumption employed by both indeterminists and determinists alike is that there is a distinction between a doer and a deed. For Nietzsche, however, there is no such distinction. "The 'thing-in-itself' is nonsensical. If I remove all relationships, all the 'properties,' all the 'activities,' of a thing, the thing does not remain over; because thingness has only been invented by us owing to the requirements of logic . . . ."[17] Once the "I" as underlying substratum is abandoned both traditional doctrines of a free and an unfree will must be abandoned too, and that is precisely what Nietzsche does.

We are almost ready to turn to Nietzsche's own view of freedom, but before we do let us summarize the main points of his attack on the conception of freedom he rejects. A freedom that requires an ego as cause does not exist because (i) it creates a false dichotomy between doer and deed. (ii) It becomes impossible to hold a person responsible, accountable, or punishable for his actions. And (iii) as I shall substantiate in Part II, it views freedom as something that we possess at creation rather than something that is a process and consequence of activity, development, and growth.

II. NIETZSCHE'S POSITIVE VIEW OF FREEDOM

Although Nietzsche has many disparaging things to say about freedom in the substantialist sense, there can be no doubt that he believes that it *is* possible to become free; that freedom is a realizable ideal. Thus, the issue we must now consider is in what sense this is so. What is freedom and how is the existence of free-spirits possible, according to Nietzsche? The key to unraveling the answers to these

questions lies, I believe, in the idea that freedom is not something that we antecedently possess, but that it is something we can acquire through a difficult and painful process of overcoming. Our will or spirit becomes free as we fully realize and develop our will to power, or synonomously, our instinct to freedom. As I understand it, our will, drive, or instinct to power or freedom has as its goal or aim the creation of something that is truly one's own, a monument to one's uniqueness. It also aims at self-mastery; the mastery that comes through being able to set goals for oneself and then overcome the obstacles that might interfere with their realization. Ultimately, the obstacles that stand in the way of realizing our instinct or will to freedom are to be found within. Thus, individuals who can gain control over their own life, "those who give themselves their own law, those who create themselves!",[18] they are the ones who are most fully realizing the fundamental instinct that, according to Nietzsche, manifests itself in everything we do.

The fundamental will of the spirit is to continually create a new self by surpassing the old. The process of overcoming the old self by continually setting new goals upon the attainment of the old is a process of growth, and in the process of growth freedom is to be found. As Nietzsche says:

> That imperious something which is popularly called "the spirit," wishes to be master internally and externally, and to feel itself master; . . . . Its object thereby is the incorporation of new "experience," the sortment of new things in the old arrangements—in short, *growth*; or more properly, the feeling of growth, the feeling of increased power—is its object.[19]

What sort of change, then, is growth? And under what conditions does growth take place?

Nietzsche says that the free, *very* free spirits grow under special conditions where "the dangerousness of his situation had to be increased enormously."[20] For Nietzsche, growth, "involves the dangerous privilege of living *experimentally*"[21] continually taking risks and at every step of the way accepting responsibility for one's actions through a realization that I am those actions. To live dangerously or experimentally involves a continual process of striving toward goals and upon their attainment creating new ones and with them a new self.

> *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: *I teach you the superman.* Man is something that should be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?[22]

In the same vain he says:

> And life itself told men this secret: 'Behold,' it said, 'I am that which must overcome itself again and again. (. . . . . .) Whatever I create and however much I love it—soon I have to oppose it and my love: thus will my will have it.'[23]

The free-spirit is a creating, shaping, changing power whose tireless process of recreation resists the temptation to rest on one's laurels or to be an imitator or parasite of others.

Unfortunately, as Nietzsche sees it, the process of change that defines growth is a painful one. For individuals who want to stand out from the crowd and distinguish their evaluations from the evaluations of others are punished and made to feel guilty. With each level of guilt the fetters and bonds of obligation become all but unbreakable. Thus, the exhilaration that results from breaking away from theology and traditional morality is accompanied by pain and sickness. When one liberates oneself, there exists

> A sudden terror and suspicion of what it loved, a lightning bolt of contempt for what it called 'duty', . . . perhaps a hot blush of shame at what it has just done and at the same time an exultation *that* it has done it, a drunken inwardly exultant shudder which betrays that a victory has been won . . . *such bad and painful things are part of the history of the great liberation.* It is at the same time a sickness that can destroy the man who has it, this first outbreak of strength and will to self-determination, to evaluating on one's own account, this will to *free*-will: and how much sickness is expressed in the wild experiments and singularities through which the liberated prisoner now seeks to demonstrate his mastery over things.[24]

In spite of the pain, the development of a mature freedom of spirit is worth it for those who have the strength to engage in it. For only by overcoming ourselves again and again can we most fully realize our instinct to freedom and come to have an awareness of ourselves as "the new, the unique, the incomparable, those who give themselves their own law, those who create themselves!"[25]

My interpretation of Nietzsche on freedom is, to a considerable degree, based on his equating the will to power with the instinct to freedom.[26] Since Nietzsche also identifies the will to truth with the will to power, what he says about "truth" can serve to further clarify and strengthen my interpretation of his view of freedom. Consider the following passage:

> "Truth" is therefore not something there, that might be found or discovered—but something that must be created and that gives a name to a process, or rather to a will to overcome that has in itself no end—introducing truth, as a *processus in infinitum*, an active determining—not a becoming—conscious of something that is in itself firm and determined. It is a word for the will to power.[27]

Like truth, freedom is not something that is bestowed upon an enduring individual or ego before it acts. Rather, freedom is something that must be acquired through a process of self-determination. The self, like truth, is plastic and malleable—a multiplicity—and not a fixed block of identity. The self does not become free by introducing freedom as a concrete goal to be attained. On the contrary, free will is created through the process of determining or willing tasks that it shall strive to accomplish. Furthermore, freedom involves a recognition that upon the completion of our goals we must immediately set about to *surpass* the self that we have just become, and accept responsibility for the past actions we are, and the future actions we will be.

On the basis of the preceding interpretation of Nietzsche's positive view of freedom we can now reconcile his seemingly paradoxical statements concerning freedom. In so far as "freedom" involves (1) a distinction between subject or self and act or deed, and (2) some simple faculty of free-will that a substance possesses, freedom does not exist, there is no free-will. Of course, there is no unfree-will either since, for Nietzsche, the concept of "subject" or "substance" as caused or uncaused is false or nonsensical. On the other hand, if we eliminate the notion of substratum and identify will and deed, then freedom can be understood as a relationship between the successive deeds that constitute a person's choices. When properly understood, "freedom" means "growth" and to grow is to improve, to change, to actively transform the existent situation so as to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of accomplishing the future that we choose for ourselves. Although freedom, as Nietzsche conceives of it, can be achieved only through a mixture of the pleasure of self-realization or self-glorification, and the pain of breaking out of the chains of one's past, it is achievable. Thus, once we distinguish the substantialist conception of freedom from Nietzsche's, his seemingly inconsistent remarks concerning freedom can be reconciled.

Although the main task of this paper has been accomplished, it may be objected that the tentative coherence of Nietzsche's view of freedom may be pulled apart when we compare his doctrine of freedom with his position on values. In the next and final section, I shall argue that there is a conflict between Nietzsche's views on freedom and value, but that it is precisely this conflict or paradox that enables the great and truly free spirit to emerge.

III. FREEDOM AND VALUES

The coherence of Nietzsche's views on freedom and values is threatened by the consequence that they appear to imply that freedom is and is not a realizable possibility. To see why this is so let us first note that his scepticism and perspectivism entail that nothing is really valuable or even really true. For our purposes the following passages are crucial:

> Every belief is the considering-something-true. The most extreme form of nihilism would be the view that every belief, every considering-something-true, is necessarily false because there simply is no true world. Thus, a perspectival appearance whose origin lies in us . . . .[28]

And again,

> Judgments, judgments of value, concerning life, . . . can, in the end, never be true . . . in themselves such judgments are stupidities.[29]

We may infer from these passages that Nietzsche would maintain that all judgments of value are false. In other words, any belief that one course of action rather than another is more valuable or morally preferable is false. He holds this view because he rejects the possibility of there being a real world that could provide an objective ground for judgments of value. Unfortunately, when we combine Nietzsche's scepticism with his claim that freedom is realizable a paradox may be thought to ensue. For the possibility of freedom depends on the possibility of making decisions and choices, that is, if we cannot choose then we are not free. However, in a world in which all value judgments are false, that is, in a world in which there are no values, it can be argued that it is impossible to choose and thus, that it is impossible to be free.

To see what is involved in this last point consider that at present I am faced with the decision to continue writing this paper or to start walking out of my study. Clearly, if I choose to continue writing this paper it is because I place greater *value* on that act than I do on the alternative. In situations where a choice between two opposing actions is necessary, it is ultimately based upon our *believing* that what we are doing is in some sense more valuable than the alternative. Without that belief choice would be impossible. But for Nietzsche, "great spirits are skeptics."[30]

> The man of faith, the believer, is necessarily a small type of man. Hence, 'freedom of spirit' i.e., *unbelief* as an instinct is a precondition of greatness.[31]

Thus, free spirits will *doubt, not believe* that the choices they make are more valuable than the alternatives, and consequently, a "free" spirit would find it impossible to choose, that is, he would be unfree.

A critic might object that it is possible to make a choice even if one does not believe that what one is choosing has value since one can make an arbitrary choice. Admittedly, one can act arbitrarily, but Nietzsche would certainly not regard such decisions as *free*. For arbitrary or capricious choices would not represent a personal commitment to a goal, but would merely be a sign of your upbringing, and the influence of the valuations of others.

What, then, is a free choice? And how is a free choice possible in a world without value? The idea that a free choice is a subjective choice, that is, a choice based upon one's own self-created values is on the right track, but insufficient as it stands. For the free spirit understands that if all judgments of value are false, then even his own subjective value judgments are false, and so at one level cannot serve the purpose for which they were introduced, namely, to guide us in our actions and to be the foundation of our choices.

Nietzsche recognizes that the freedom left for the powerful individual who sets out on his own course without anything to base his decisions on except himself is a cagelike freedom. He says:

Horizon: infinity—We have left land and taken to our ship! We have burned our bridges more, we have burned our land behind us! Now, little ship, take care! The ocean lies all around you; true, it is not always roaring, and sometimes it lies there as if it were silken and golden and a gentle favorable dream. But there will be times when you will know that it is infinite and that there is nothing more terrible than infinity . . . . Alas, if homesickness for land should assail you, as if there were more freedom there-and there is no longer any 'land',[32]

The ship represents man and the land burned behind us represents objective values. We are thus faced with having to make a choice in an infinite sea that contains no path or road marked out as the right one. Has not the infinity of the sea, our monstrous and infinite freedom, become too much to bear? Has not our infinite freedom become an unfreedom? Indeed it has. For, as the preceding quotation suggests, there is a paradox in Nietzsche's conceptions of freedom and value that he does not attempt to rationalize away.[33]

Nevertheless, the truly free individual can overcome the paradox of freedom if he has the will to assume responsibility for self-created values by living in accordance with them. The powerful individual on the road to self-mastery and in the midst of the process of growth, has the strength to both acknowledge and go beyond the contradiction inherent in decision making. Earlier I quoted a passage wherein Nietzsche writes of the terror and pain that result from breaking the bond to custom and duty, and in the same passage he goes on to say that

From this morbid isolation, from the desert of these years of temptation and experiment, it is still a long road to that tremendous overflowing certainty and health which may not dispense even with sickness, as a means and fish-hook of knowledge, so that mature freedom of spirit which is equally self-mastery and discipline of the heart and permits access to many contradictory modes of thought . . . .[34]

The mature freedom of spirit, the individual who achieves a measure of freedom, is what Nietzsche calls a "manly sceptic." He is aware that the path that he sets himself on is not objectively true or right, but depends entirely on his perspective and so is a path for which he alone is entirely responsible.

We see, then, that the process of beoming free consists in facing the fact about values, realizing that there are no objective values, and yet overcoming that fact by positing goals that form the basis for the growth and development of a life of personal value and personal significance. For Nietzsche,

The scepticism of daring manliness, which is closely related to the genius for war and conquest, . . . despises and nevertheless grasps; it undermines and takes possession; it does not believe, but it does not thereby lose itself; it gives the spirit a dangerous liberty, but it keeps guard over the heart.[35]

Such dangerous and sceptical choices are truly free since they require the individual who makes them to be aware of himself as an existent, as

an individual *qua* individual, and not merely as a specimen of the abstract kind humanity.

A fully developed freedom does not stop, but continues to create new values over and over again, opening oneself up to new and different challenges. As he says:

> the power to create new and even personal eyes for oneself and again new and even more personal ones; so that for man alone there is no eternally fixed horizon and perspectives.[36]

If we realize our power to create new and even more personal goals and we recognize and act in accordance with the belief that growth is a *processus in infinitum*, then and only then can each of us become free.[37]

NOTES

[1] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, in *A Nietzsche Reader*, (hereafter *NR*) ed. and trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1979), 39. In each of the following citations from Nietzsche's works the number references will not be to a page but to a section or aphorism so that any edition may be consulted. See also, *Human, All Too Human*, 102, 107.

[2] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, in *NR*, 343.

[3] Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking Press, 1965), "What the Germans Lack," 38.

[4] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, trans. Helen Zimmern (New York: Modern Library, 1954), 21.
, 230.

[5] *The Will to Power*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale and ed. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 488.

[6] Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, *op. cit.*, trans. Horace B. Samuel, I, 13.

[7] *Ibid.*, I, 13.

[8] *The Will to Power*, 488.

[9] *The Will to Power*, 490.

[10] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, in *NR*, 23.

[11] *Ibid.*, 23.

[12] *Ibid.*, 23; emphasis added.

[13] *Ibid.*, 23.

[14] *Ibid.*, 23.

[15] *Twilight of the Idols*, "What the Germans Lack," 38.

[16] This same point is made by John Dewey in "The Ego as Cause," *The Early Works*, Vol. 4:1893-1894 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), pp. 91-95.

[17] *The Will to Power*, 558.

[18] *The Gay Science*, 335.

[19] *Beyond Good and Evil*, 230.

[20] *Beyond Good and Evil*, 44.

[21] *Human, All Too Human*, *Preface* 3.

[22] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Preface 4.

[23] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *NR*, II, Of "Self-Overcoming".

[24] *Human, All Too Human*, *Preface* 3, emphasis added.

[25] *The Gay Science*, 335.

[26] See, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II, 17, 18.

[27] *The Will to Power*, 552.

[28] *Ibid.*, 15.

[29] *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates," 3.

[30] Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, in *The Portable Nietzsche, op. cit.*, 54.

[31] *The Will to Power*, 963. See also, The Antichrist, 54. An excellent discussion of Nietzsche's skepticism is found in Adi Parush, "Nietzsche on the Skeptic's Life," *Review of Metaphysics*, 29 (March, 1976), pp. 523-542.

[32] *The Gay Science*, 124.

[33] A different, more intractable paradox arises in Nietzsche's philosophy. For he maintains, on the one hand, that freedom is something that we *ought* to strive to become; and, on the other, that there is nothing, objectively speaking, that we ought to do. A full discussion of this issue cannot be made here, but two brief remarks are in order. First, to show that a philosopher is inconsistent implies that one of his positions is false, not that both are. Thus, Nietzsche's view of freedom as I have interpreted it may be internally consistent and true, even though his philosophy as a whole is incoherent. Second, one might attempt to avoid the paradox by arguing, as Bernd Magnus does, that Nietzsche is *rejecting* the traditional picture of philosophy as the attempt to discover the truth about perennial questions, to solve them or to help the enterprise progress toward their solution. (See B. Magnus, "Perfectibility and Attitude in Nietzsche's Übermensch," *Review of Metaphysics*, 36 (March, 1983), pp. 633-659.) On Magnus' interpretation, Nietzsche is not offering us a new improved theory of morality, since there is no objective reality that could form the basis of such a morality or of any other philosophical truth. Thus, the Übermensch, or truly free spirit does not represent Nietzsche's vision of the human ideal of what human beings *should* be like. Rather, Magnus suggests that "an Übermensch is a representation only of a particular attitude toward life, that it articulates a certain form of life. The attitude toward life which is captured is the expression of nihilism already overcome." (pp. 634-635) Perhaps, then, one could avoid an inconsistency in Nietzsche's views on freedom and morality by interpreting freedom as an *attitude* toward life that embodies continual striving.

[34] *Human, All Too Human*, *Preface* 4.

[35] *Beyond Good and Evil*, 209. See also 210.

[36] *The Gay Science*, 143.

[37] Interestingly, John Dewey's positive views of freedom are remarkably similar to Nietzsche's. Compare, for example, "Self-Realization as the Moral Ideal," pp. 42-53, and *The Study of Ethics: A Syllabus*, Pt. II, Sec. 8, "Freedom and Responsibility," both in *The Early Works, op. cit.* See also, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), and "Philosophies of Freedom," in *On Experience, Nature, and Freedom* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1960), pp. 261-287.