

Invited Speakers

MARTHA BOLTON (Rutgers University, USA)

Fictions in Hume's *Treatise*

In Hume's empirical psychology, the account of mental representation has major importance. According to this account, mental representations are ideas (images) that represent their intentional objects by virtue of strictly resembling them in intrinsic respects. But Hume discovers that humans believe in the existence of several sorts of impossible "fictions" which nothing could possibly represent by virtue of resemblance. The paper aims to provide an account of "fictions" adequate to the demands of Hume's naturalistic psychological theory. The proposal is that fictions are mental entities which are in certain respects functionally equivalent to ideas. In defending this proposal, I consider two sorts of issues. One concerns intentional content—do the ideas that constitute a fiction retain their intentional objects as components of the fiction, and does functional role bestow intentional content, for Hume? The other concerns causal role—do the constituents retain their causal relations within the fiction, and do the causal relations of its constituents, taken separately, determine the causal role of the fiction?

MICHAEL GILL (University of Arizona, USA)

Humean Moral Pluralism

If you're a moral sentimentalist, you ought to be a moral pluralist. If you're a pluralist, you ought to be a sentimentalist. And there are excellent reasons both to be a pluralist and to be a sentimentalist. In this paper I will not attempt to do anything as large-scale as argue for all the claims of the preceding paragraph. But I will try to lay the groundwork for that larger position by showing how well sentimentalism and pluralism combine in the moral theory of David Hume. The normative view of moral pluralism is often most closely associated with the intuitionist meta-ethics of W.D. Ross. The meta-ethical view of moral sentimentalism is often most closely associated with the Utilitarian normative view of Bentham and Mill. Through an examination of Hume's theory, I hope to convince you that it is sentimentalism and pluralism that are most compellingly paired.

WILLIAM EDWARD MORRIS (Illinois Wesleyan University, USA)

A Naturalist's Religion

Hume's naturalistic project is to develop a science of human nature that will determine "the proper province of human reason." An essential part of that project is the critical task of repudiating metaphysical theories that attempt to go beyond the bounds of sense and serve as smoke screens for "popular superstitions" "unable to defend themselves on fair ground." But even Hume's most astute readers have failed to appreciate just how deeply integral his resolutely anti-metaphysical and anti-theological stance is to his naturalism. Although they applaud his hostility to metaphysics and theology in general, they haven't hesitated to attribute this or that metaphysical or theological position to him. Taking another look at how Hume questions the intelligibility of some central doctrines of religion will not only clarify his attitude toward them, but will also shed further light on his critical naturalism and its relation to his "scepticism."

JOHN NORTON (University of Pittsburgh, USA)

How Hume and Mach Helped Einstein Find Special Relativity

In recounting his discovery of special relativity, Einstein recalled a debt to the philosophical writings of Hume and Mach. I review the path Einstein took to special relativity and urge that he was aided decisively not by any specific doctrine of space and time, but by a general account of concepts that Einstein found in Hume and Mach's writings. That account required that physical concepts must be properly grounded in experience. In so far as they extended beyond that grounding, they were fictional and to be abjured (Mach) or at best tolerated (Hume). Einstein drew a different moral. These fictional

concepts revealed an arbitrariness in our physical theorizing and may still be introduced through freely chosen definitions, as long as these definitions do not commit us to false presumptions. This insight gave Einstein the courage to mount his celebrated critique of simultaneity and thereby arrive at special relativity.

Book Panels

RACHEL COHON (The University at Albany, SUNY, USA)

Hume's Morality: Feeling and Fabrication

Abstract from OUP website: Rachel Cohon offers an original interpretation of the moral philosophy of David Hume, focusing on two areas. Firstly, his metaethics. Cohon reinterprets Hume's claim that moral distinctions are not derived from reason and explains why he makes it. She finds that Hume did not actually hold three "Humean" claims: 1) that beliefs alone cannot move us to act, 2) that evaluative propositions cannot be validly inferred from purely factual propositions, or 3) that moral judgments lack truth value. According to Hume, human beings discern moral virtues and vices by means of feeling or emotion in a way rather like sensing; but this also gives the moral judge a truth-apt idea of a virtue or vice as a felt property. Secondly, Cohon examines the artificial virtues. Hume says that although many virtues are refinements of natural human tendencies, others (such as honesty) are constructed by social convention to make cooperation possible; and some of these generate paradoxes. She argues that Hume sees these traits as prosthetic virtues that compensate for deficiencies in human nature. However, their true status clashes with our common-sense conception of a virtue, and so has been concealed, giving rise to the paradoxes.

Respondents:

DON GARRETT (New York University, USA)

ELIZABETH RADCLIFFE (Santa Clara University, USA)

PETER KAIL (University of Oxford, Edinburgh University, UK)

Projection and Realism in Hume's Philosophy

Abstract from OUP website: In his writings, Hume talks of our 'gilding and staining' natural objects, and of the mind's propensity to 'spread itself' on the world. This has led commentators to use the metaphor of 'projection' in connection with his philosophy: Hume is held to have taught that causal power and self are projections, that God is a projection of our fear, and that value is a projection of sentiment. By considering what it is about Hume's writing that occasions this metaphor, P. J. E. Kail spells out its meaning, the role it plays in Hume's work, and examines how, if at all, what sounds 'projective' in Hume can be reconciled with what sounds 'realist'. In addition to offering some highly original readings of Hume's central ideas, *Projection and Realism in Hume's Philosophy* offers a detailed examination of the notion of projection and the problems it faces.

Respondents:

DAVID OWEN (University of Arizona, USA)

KENNETH P. WINKLER (Yale University, USA)

Concurrent Sessions

TIM BLACK (California State University, Northridge, USA)

Hume's Epistemic Naturalism in the Treatise

According to epistemic naturalism, some beliefs are justified, some are unjustified, and non-normative facts about belief-producing mechanisms serve to distinguish the two. I propose the determinacy account of Hume's epistemic naturalism, unique in that it has Hume characterize justification in terms of feeling. I begin with a careful look at *Treatise* 1.3.9, in which Hume articulates this account. I also show how this account can explain Hume's suggestion that a belief's justification is closely associated with its

production. Finally, for some of Hume's examples of unjustified believing, I show that the determinacy account can explain why those beliefs are unjustified.

CHARLES CAPET (Université de Lille 3, Arts, Lettres et Sciences humaines, France)

Nature et nature humaine chez Hume: l'hypothèse de la co-émergence de l'esprit et de la nature

[Trans.] I suggest interpreting the Humean philosophy of mind with the help of the modern notion of emergence. It's about showing that what it is called "nature" in Hume, does not preexist to the appearance of mind; no more than mind preexists to the emergence of nature. Besides, mind and nature might appear as the result of a projection of some fictions throughout perceptions. In other words, I endeavour to show that on the basis of perceptions and impersonal events, nature and mind "co-emerge". Therefore, mind is being naturalized and nature appears to be reducible to the idea of nature, its separate and exterior existence being simply believed, but can never be proved. This "co-emergentist" approach allows us to give some credit to an anti-realistic reading of the Humean philosophy of mind.

MARK COLLIER (University of Minnesota, USA)

Hume's Theory of Moral Imagination: Sympathy, Compassion, and the General Point of View

Hume endorses three claims which are not easily reconciled: (1) sympathy is sufficient for benevolence, (2) we are naturally capable of extensive sympathy, (3) but we are naturally incapable of extensive benevolence. In order to understand how Hume solves this puzzle, we must carefully examine his account of the sympathetic mechanisms that are responsible for benevolent motivation and disinterested moral judgment. This paper defends his solution by drawing upon recent work in cognitive science.

KARANN DURLAND (Austin College, USA)

Hume's Mitigated Skepticism and the Science of Man in the *Treatise* and the first *Enquiry*

This paper explores mitigated skepticism and the science of man as they appear in Book I of the *Treatise* and in the first *Enquiry*. It presents Hume's conception of the science in both, argues that the mitigated skepticism of the *Enquiry* should be identified with the true skepticism of the *Treatise*, and develops an account of the skepticism's origin and basis that will allow Hume to recognize epistemic norms. The account not only explains how Hume can offer reasons on behalf of his skepticism despite unanswerable Pyrrhonian doubts, but it helps to explain the importance he attributes to the science of man.

ALEXANDER GEORGE (Amherst College, USA)

Hume and the Archbishop

David Hume's invocation, in "Of Miracles," of Archbishop Tillotson's argument against transubstantiation is explicated. A conception of self-stultifying argument is identified and its role in Hume's discussion is assessed.

LIZ GOODNICK (Illinois Wesleyan University, USA)

Hume on the Epistemic Status of Belief in God

I argue that Hume provides a naturalistic response to any generalized skepticism, but deny that this approach can be extended to theistic belief. I consider evidence from the *Dialogues*, which purports to show that the belief in God is a "natural belief," and maintain that this evidence is insufficient. I then examine the causal explanation for theism found in the *Natural History*, in conjunction with evidence from the *Treatise*, to show that the belief in God is not warranted on the basis of the psychological mechanisms which cause it. I conclude that, according to Hume, polytheism is epistemically superior to monotheism.

YORAM HAZOUNY (The Shalem Centre, Israel)

Hume's Program as an Alternative to Naturalism in Contemporary Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind

Hume is often taken to be an advocate of naturalism in philosophy. But in at least one respect, Hume's program is very different from what is today understood to be the naturalist agenda in epistemology and philosophy of mind. While contemporary debates center on whether the mind can be understood from within the explanatory framework of natural science, Hume sought to understand natural science in terms of operations of mind. This alternative to the contemporary naturalist program opens up intriguing possibilities for transforming current issues in epistemology and philosophy of mind.

KENNETH HENLEY (Florida International University, USA)

Character Naturalized: Hume's Distinction Between Artificial and Natural Virtues and the Rejection of Traditional Virtue Ethics

Hume's distinction between artificial and natural virtues presciently captures the situationist rejection of traditional character attribution in recent psychological research. The artificial virtues are best interpreted as taboos. Thus use of another's property is forbidden (taboo) to me unless he consents, promises are inviolable in ordinary circumstances, and disrespect for political authority is a form of secular sacrilege. The natural virtues (e.g., benevolence) are varying, unreliable, and situation sensitive. Rejection of traditional character plays a crucial role in Hume's political philosophy. And Hume's conception of the constructed, non-substantial self also coheres with the rejection of traditional character attribution.

COLIN HEYDT (University of South Florida, USA)

Contextualizing Hume as a Practical Moralist

Eighteenth century British philosophers typically divided morality into the theory of morals and practical ethics. While the theory of morals dealt with questions concerning the nature and ground of morality, practical ethics outlined basic rules of conduct. In this paper, I will focus on select aspects of practical ethics, namely the duties to God and to self. I hope to show that attention to practical ethics promises new insights into the dominant themes and problems of eighteenth century moral philosophy. In particular, I will focus on how an appreciation of practical ethics illuminates important aspects of Hume's moral philosophy.

THOMAS HOLDEN (University of California, Santa Barbara, USA)

Mitigated Skepticism And Hume's Liminal Natural Theology

Hume seems to place natural theology among the "airy sciences" that would take us beyond the limits of our human faculties and outside the sphere of legitimate human inquiry. However, on occasion he also seems to dabble in a form of natural theology himself, apparently endorsing arguments for certain negative and irreligious conclusions concerning the divine attributes.

I first argue that Hume *does* practice a form of natural theology. I then argue that he *can* permit his own negative version of natural theology without running afoul of his own epistemological critique of traditional forms of theological speculation.

HARUKO INOUE (Sapporo University, Japan)

Is Hume's Account of Free Will and Necessity Really a "Lengthy Digression"?

Kemp Smith complains concerning Part iii of Book II of the *Treatise* that Hume's discussion on the subject of free will and necessity is a "lengthy digression", which "ought properly to have followed immediately upon the discussion of the idea of necessary connexion in Book I" (Kemp Smith 160/1). Should we agree with this opinion of Kemp Smith's? Is it likely that Hume accepts Kemp Smith's suggestion and includes this part of his account into Book I, rather than into Book II? This complaint of Kemp Smith's seems to be derived from his failure to envisage what is intended by Hume in this part of his discussion of the passions. The object of this paper is to show that Hume's account in question is not to be taken as a digression, as it belongs to the core of his strategy for his treatment of "the will and direct passions".

WILLIAM KLINE (University of Illinois at Springfield, USA)

Hume's Theory of Justice: How Moral Obligation Survives the Sensible Knave

Hume's theory of justice rests on the argument that self-interest leads individuals to form conventions of justice and that this interested obligation to follow the rules of justice is the origin of our moral obligation to act justly. Hume's argument, though, faces a particularly pressing problem - the interested obligation can also lead people to act contrary to the moral obligation. If Hume is claiming that self-interest is the origin of justice because it always motivates individuals to act justly, then the existence of self-interested defection strikes at the foundation of Hume's theory of justice showing it to be both factually and theoretically mistaken (Baron, 542; Gauthier 1992, 422). This paper argues that while the interested obligation is rooted in the self, the moral obligation to act justly arises out of group interaction. The sensible knave's defection is not fatal to Hume's theory of justice because solitary actions or motivations establish neither virtue nor vice in Hume's theory. The interested obligation may lead individuals to take the possessions of others, but the existence of the moral obligation, and hence whether the sensible knave is acting virtuously or viciously, depends on what the group is doing.

MIRIAM MCCORMICK (University of Richmond, USA)

Hume's Skeptical Politics

I argue that the conclusions Hume comes to in his political writings are natural outgrowths of his skepticism, a skepticism that recommends limitation of inquiry, modesty, moderation and openness. After briefly stating some of the central features of Hume's skepticism, I show that Hume does not embrace views that are inconsistent with his skepticism. I then turn to two examples of Hume's views which are importantly connected to his skepticism. The first is Hume's view of factions; here we find a clear application of his skeptical principles. Second, Hume's stance on the American issue can be better understood if we remember that he is a skeptic.

SILVIA MANZO (Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina)

David Hume and Copernicanism

The aim of this paper is to examine how far Hume knew about astronomy, in order to understand the reasons that founded his acceptance of Copernicanism. My contention is that Hume's positive reception of heliocentrism arises mainly from the importance conferred to three features that he attributes to the Copernican system: beauty, simplicity and uniformity. I also give some evidence that Hume had first-hand knowledge of at least some sections of Galileo's *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo tolemaico e copernicano* (1632), from where the "solely proofs" of the Copernican system are said to be found.

ALISON MCINTYRE (Wellesley College, USA)

Calm Desires and Undesigning Propensities: Hume's Response to Hutcheson at T 2.3.3

Hutcheson's account in his *Essay* and *Illustrations* of the regulation of our violent particular passions by two calm desires, the desire for private and public interest, seems to have influenced Hume's discussion of the calm passions in T 2.3.3-4. But Hume's three examples of preferences that are said to be not "contrary to reason" but are nevertheless bizarre can be read as a clear rejection by Hume of some of Hutcheson's central claims about the role of reflection in determining what is reasonable. These agents are not unreasonable, on Hume's view, they are unreflective, and prompting reflection is not a function that could be carried out by reason. Reflection must itself be motivated, not as intentional actions are by desires to achieve specific ends, but by calm passions that direct our attention to the tendencies of our actions and govern our appraisal of them.

KATHARINA PAXMAN (University of Western Ontario, Canada)

What Happens When I Feel Your Pride? A (re)examination of Hume's Principle of Sympathy and the Indirect Passions

Hume's principle of sympathy is meant to explain our tendency to adopt in ourselves the passions, sentiments and beliefs we perceive in other people. While the workings of this mechanism are fairly

straightforward in the case of the direct passions, the account Hume provides of the indirect passions, such as pride and humility, is less clear. When I sympathize with your pride will I feel pride in myself, a pride in you (as you do), or love of you? In this paper I explore this apparent ambiguity in the workings of Humean sympathy on the indirect passions.

TONY PITSON (University of Stirling, UK)

Hume's Moral Psychology: the Treatise and Second Enquiry Compared

I am concerned with the relation between the moral psychology of the Treatise and of the second Enquiry. I focus on what is said in each case about benevolence, humanity and sympathy. A principal aim is to demonstrate a substantial continuity in Hume's moral psychology from the Treatise to the second Enquiry. Among particular issues addressed is the nature of benevolence as a passion and also as a moral motive, with the implications of the latter for egoism. The nature of humanity as a sentiment is also discussed, together with sympathy as a means of catching the sentiments of others.

GABRIELA REMOW (University of Washington, USA)

Hume vs. Berkeley on the Unity of Perception

In this paper I will briefly explore a dispute between Berkeley and Hume about whether perceptions are single, unified experiences that are both descriptive and affective, or else whether perceptions are constituted by separable elements of the two kinds of content. Berkeley holds that perceptions are unified experiences, and Hume disagrees. Recent suggestive brain research supports Hume rather than Berkeley in this dispute.

WADE ROBISON (Rochester Institute of Technology, USA)

Hume's Impartial Histories "...it is neither whig nor tory but truly impartial."

Hume's first volume in *The History of England* sold some copies in Scotland over a period of year, but few in England, and Hume was attacked by reviewers for partiality. But that volume is arguably impartial and, far more importantly, illustrates as well as any of his essays on politics and economics how he introduces causal reasoning into "all those sciences, which more intimately concern human life," covering philosophy, ethics, politics, history, economics, religion -- all the human mind can encompass. Thus understood, the *Histories* become a part of the project he committed himself to at the beginning of the *Treatise*. Far from having given up philosophy when the *Treatise* "fell dead-born from the press," Hume went on in all his writings to use its principles to show how we can come to understand everything in the world, using the power of causal reasoning. This is as true in the *Histories* as it is in his essays on economics and politics, for instance. What makes Hume's *Histories* impartial is not just, as I heard someone say in a discussion about them, "Well, he just appeals to the facts." What makes the *Histories* impartial is that he uses causal principles and that he appeals, among other things, to axioms of politics, best understood as a way of producing certain effects through the use of certain causes, and to how the structures of a political society themselves produce effects, quite independently of the actors on scene. Any reader can check what he has written against their own experience of what causes produce what effects in human affairs and how different structural relations among humans produce different effects. In addition, Hume appeals to texts throughout his *Histories* so that a reader can check what Hume has written against those original texts, and when he articulates the conflicts between competing political interests, he does so in an even-handed way, giving voice to each position in the conflict in a way that allows the reader to judge both the nature of the conflict and the strengths and weaknesses of the parties to it.

JUAN SAMUEL SANTOS-CASTRO (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Columbia)

Strength of Mind: Whether a virtue or the real cause to virtue?

Hume seems to portray strength of mind as mere prudence: as the ability to overcome the temptations that make you stray to the persecution of good. However, Hume appoints it a fundamental and deeper role. Strength of mind consists in the prevalence of the calm passions above the violent, and therefore it has to

do with the most important of the calm passions, the moral sentiment. Here, I want to explore the roles that strength of mind fulfills in the production of virtues and argue for the idea that it is an important component in virtuous character *because* of the sort of virtue it is: a one that motivates us to pursue our real good.

MONIKA STIVAL (Universidade de São Paulo (USP), Brazil)

L'Espace et le Temps Chez Hume

This paper aims at highlighting two species of space and time which are present mainly in Book I of the *Treatise of Human Nature*. Hume's notions of space and time are generally discussed considering only the senses of extension and succession, respectively. However, besides extension, related to the simplicity of spatial units, and succession, related to sequential units of time, it is also important to think space as situation (relation) and time as the logical movement of experience in the form of habit-expectation, in order to understand the nature of the form of experience.

JACQUELINE TAYLOR (San Francisco University, USA)

From Solitude to Sympathy

In recent years, Hume scholars have paid careful attention to Hume's point that sympathy with others' seconding sentiments plays a crucial role in a person's self-conception. In this paper, I argue that sympathetic emotional communication with others is crucial to our sense of self and our capacity to reap any satisfaction from life in an even more fundamental way. A lack of sympathetic engagement with others leaves us profoundly isolated. In such a "forlorn solitude" we become plagued by self-doubt and lack a compass for directing our own thoughts, judgments and sentiments (T 1.4.7.2). Moreover, we are bereft of a navigable map of the social terrain. In short, sympathetic communication is essential for both self-recognition and our understanding of and ability to be effective in the social world we occupy.

GREGORY TODD (Independent Scholar, USA)

The Logic of Hume's Maxim and its Influence on 19th Century Science

The paper has two objectives: to express the logic of Hume's maxim on miracles in terms of a probability calculus; and, using that probability expression, to show Hume's maxim as a bridge between Newtonian reasoning about the natural world and 19th century science. To do so, the paper examines an overlooked relationship between Hume's maxim and Newton's Fourth Rule of Reasoning, arguing that the same principles are at work in both. Although specific instances of influence are difficult to trace, Darwin is shown as an example of one 19th century scientist convinced by the logic of Hume's maxim.

Rico Vitz (University of North Florida, USA)

Lies, Captivating Lies, and Religious Belief: Hume on the Learned Elite and "The Christian Superstition"

David Hume contends that "every enquiry, which regards religion, is of the utmost importance" and identifies two questions that demand our attention. The first is an epistemological question that concerns whether, or the extent to which, religious belief is founded in reason. The second is a psychological question that concerns the way in which religious belief is grounded in human nature. Although each is particularly interesting, Hume scholars have tended to focus the overwhelming amount of their attention on the epistemological question. Consequently, they have frequently neglected the psychological question. To address this neglect in Hume scholarship adequately, his commentators will need both to elucidate and to analyze not only the originating causes of religious belief, but also its sustaining causes and its moral consequences. My aim in this paper is to explain what Hume regards as the characteristic sustaining cause of Christian belief among the sincere, reflective, learned elite.

RUTH WEINTRAUB (Tel-Aviv, Israel)

Hume's Neglected Argument against the Soul

Hume adduces two arguments against the existence of a substantive mind, or soul. The first, more

familiar one, invokes his empiricist criterion of meaning, the Copy Principle. There being no impression which the idea of a soul could copy, there is no such idea: the term 'soul', construed as denoting a substance "supporting" perceptions, is meaningless. The second argument, (intermittently) occupying several paragraphs in the *Treatise*'s section "Of the immateriality of the soul", purports to establish the impossibility of a soul being "locally conjoined" - as it must be - with all of its perceptions. In this paper I consider the neglected argument, focusing on premises which are original with Hume.