

Notes to David Hume's "A Treatise of Human Nature"

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Title

1. This first edition of his philosophy was not popular. It is only after he breaks out the first and third books of this initial effort into separate "enquiries" of their own that they receive positive review.
2. Note that the subtitle for this text is **"Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects"**

Facts on Hume himself

- Born 1711
- Published "A Treatise of Human Nature" 1738
- Published "Essays, Moral and Political" 1741
- Rejected by University of Edinburgh
- Published "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding" 1751
- Published "An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals" 1751
- Published "Political Discourses" 1752
- Published "History of England" 1759-1761
- Published "Four Dissertations" 1757
- Died 1776
- Published "Autobiography" 1777
- Published "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion" 1779 (written bef. 1752)

Themes

1. Direct experience, or what you are sensing at the moment, is far more clear and distinct, more "forceful and lively," than a memory. As such, Hume differentiates between impressions and ideas. Impressions are the thoughts we have about what we are presently experiencing. And ideas are thoughts about what we have experienced in the past. Note that memories are strings of ideas, not ideas themselves. Ideas are more granular and are either simple or complex depending on whether they consist of more than one thought.
2. Our understanding is created through the natural association of ideas through resemblance, contiguity, and cause and effect. It is essential to realize that Hume doesn't allow that you create "impressions" or "impressions from reflection" on your own. The creation of these building blocks come from observation through the senses. People can put any set of ideas together on their own, but the resultant complex idea will never be as clear and distinct, as lively and strong, as impressions on the mind.
3. Belief, "which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from the imagination."
4. Custom "proceeds from a past repetition, without any new reasoning or conclusion."
5. Hume's explanation of how people "understand" anything discredits "reason" as the source of understanding. Ideas are joined together by impressions which resemble, are contiguous with,

or are connected with each other based on our experience. In fact, he will call reason nothing more than a “wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls.”

Aim

- Taking up the original aim of Locke, “to determine the extent of human knowledge.”
- Examine human understanding through inductive, and not deductive, methods; “where experiments of this kind are judiciously collected and compared, we may hope to establish on them a science which will not be inferior in certainty and will be much superior in utility, to any other of human comprehension.”
- The Philosopher’s choice:
 - A philosopher may consider man chiefly as born for action and concern himself with exhibiting the beauty of virtue with a view to stimulating men to virtuous conduct.
 - He may consider man as a reasoning rather than as an active being and concern himself with enlightening man’s understanding rather than with improving his conduct.
- Hume suggests that the second is “requisite if the first is to possess any sure foundation.”

Vocabulary

- Perceptions – the mind’s contents in general
 - Impressions – immediate data from experience (sensations, passions, emotions). They enter into our perception with force and liveliness.
 - Of Sensation – “arise in the soul originally from unknown causes”
 - Of Reflection – derived from ideas. Copies of impressions that make new impressions.
 - Ideas – copies or faint images of impressions in thinking and reasoning. Ideas always come from impressions.
 - Memory – of intermediate vividness, less than an impression but based on an experience. Preserves order and position of simple ideas.
 - Associated by:
 - Resemblance (comparison)
 - Contiguity in time or place (nearness to)
 - Cause and Effect (causal relations or “natural relations”)
 - Imagination – faint ideas, rearranged in any way desired
 - Abstract ideas – Don’t exist. Because, no one can think of a purely abstract idea without some example from experience. In our mind we envision an example. Concepts come from experience, not the other way around.
 - Substance – we have no idea of substance apart from a set of qualities, a collection of simple ideas that we receive from multiple senses.
 - Custom – habit that calls up a distinct component of an idea without thought. A propensity of the mind, an associative link, to pass naturally from one idea to another. Hume believes that a primary cause of all creation is simply a customary inference that we cannot verify by any form of experience.
 - Reason
 - Relations of ideas (later termed Analytic propositions, the truth of which is determined only by the definition of symbols) – affirmations which are intuitively or demonstratively

certain (algebra, geometry, arithmetic). These are independent of experience, and therefore, rationalist.

- Matters of fact (later termed Synthetic propositions) – a matter of probability, but no matter how great, not certain. I.e. “The sun will rise tomorrow.” All reasoning concerning matter of fact is founded on the relation of cause and effect.
- Constant Conjunction – regular recurrence of two kinds of similar events according to a constant pattern of contiguity and succession, but not a “necessary” connection.
- Necessary Connection – derived from some impression of reflection. It comes from custom.
- Cause – “an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other.” The scholastic types of causes (formal, material, efficient and final) are rejected. There is only one type of cause.
- Chance – A fortuitous or uncaused event. Not to believe in chance is to believe that every event has a cause. Hume does believe that every effect has a cause, but where we don’t see a cause, there is really a secret cause which is hidden behind “contrary causes.”
- Belief – only varies the manner in which we conceive of any object. It can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity. We pass from an impression to a lively idea by custom, and not through the use of reason. It is a “superior force, or vivacity, or solidity, or firmness or steadiness.” It is “a term that everyone sufficiently understands in common life, but in philosophy we can describe it only in terms of feeling.”

Religion

- Copleston: “... he thought that religion impairs morality by encouraging people to act for motives other than love of virtue for its own sake.” As such he was more irreligious, than atheist. He was raised Calvinist.

Skepticism

- Antecedent – “antecedent to the study of philosophy” .. doubting everything.
- Consequent – “consequent to science and enquiry” .. our faculties are untrustworthy and must be verified through experimentation

Logical Positivism

- Hume is not a logical positivist, but he will inspire a school of philosophers who believe that only statements that can be verified through empirical means should be considered when forming a philosophy. This is obviously a very strict, experimental foundation for philosophy. Like a scientist, you are not permitted to believe anything that you cannot trace back to a sense experience or reflection. Hume differs from these men only in that he allows “reflection” to form “impressions.” And, he still admits that the rationalist theory which suggests that anything that can be conceived of both clearly and distinctly could possibly exist.

Conclusion

- “When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, Does it

contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion." From Enquiry p.165

Hume's Introduction to the Treatise

1. Philosophy, more specifically metaphysics, has given the profession a bad name.
 - a. "Principles taken upon trust, consequences lamely deduced from them, want of coherence in the parts, and of evidence in the whole, these are everywhere to be met with in the systems of the most eminent philosophers, and seem to have drawn disgrace upon philosophy itself."
 - b. "Disputes are multiplied, as if everything was uncertain; and these disputes are managed with the greatest warmth, as if everything was certain. Amidst all this bustle it is not reason, which carries the prize, but eloquence; and no man needs ever despair of gaining proselytes to the most extravagant hypothesis, who has art enough to represent it in any favorable colors."
2. Philosophy is, and should be, as complicated as science; not reduced to overly simplistic answers. A new set of scientific rules are needed to govern philosophical inquiry.
 - a. **"For if truth be at all within the reach of human capacity, it is certain it must lie very deep and abstruse: and to hope we shall arrive at it without pains, while the greatest geniuses have failed with the utmost pains, must certainly be esteemed sufficiently vain and presumptuous."**
 - b. **"The sole end of logic is to explain the principles and operations of our reasoning faculty, and the nature of our ideas: morals and criticism regard our tastes and sentiments: and politics consider men as united in society, and dependent on each other. In these four sciences of Logic, Morals, Criticism, and Politics, is comprehended almost everything, which it can any way import us to be acquainted with, or which can tend either to the improvement or ornament of the human mind."**
 - c. "Here then is the only expedient, from which we can hope for success in our philosophical researches, to leave the tedious lingering method, which we have hitherto followed, and instead of taking now and then a castle or village on the frontier, to march up directly to the capital or center of these sciences, to human nature itself; which being once masters of, we may everywhere else hope for an easy victory. From this station we may extend our conquests over all those sciences, which more intimately concern human life, and may afterwards proceed at leisure to discover more fully those, which are the objects of pore curiosity. There is no question of importance, whose decision is not comprised in the science of man; and there is none, which can be decided with any certainty, before we become acquainted with that science. In pretending, therefore, to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a complete system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security."
 - d. "When we see, that we have arrived at the utmost extent of human reason, we sit down contented, though we be perfectly satisfied in the main of our ignorance, and perceive that we can give no reason for our most general and most refined principles, beside our experience of their reality; which is the reason of the mere vulgar, and what it required no study at first to have discovered for the most particular and most extraordinary phenomenon."

Book 1, Part 1

1. Defining Impressions and Ideas
 - a. **“All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call Impressions and Ideas. The difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness, with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thought or consciousness. Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence, we may name impressions; and under this name I comprehend all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul. By ideas I mean the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning; such as, for instance, are all the perceptions excited by the present discourse, excepting only those which arise from the sight and touch, and excepting the immediate pleasure or uneasiness it may occasion.”**
 - b. From first footnote: “I here make use of these terms, impression and idea, in a sense different from what is usual, and I hope this liberty will be allowed me. Perhaps I rather restore the word, idea, to its original sense, from which Mr. Locke had perverted it, in making it stand for all our perceptions. By the terms of impression I would not be understood to express the manner, in which our lively perceptions are produced in the soul, but merely the perceptions themselves; for which there is no particular name either in the English or any other language, that I know of.”
2. Simple and Complex Ideas
 - a. “Simple perceptions or impressions and ideas are such as admit of no distinction nor separation. The complex are the contrary to these, and may be distinguished into parts. Though a particular color, taste, and smell, are qualities all united together in this apple, it is easy to perceive they are not the same, but are at least distinguishable from each other.”
 - b. “...the great resemblance betwixt our impressions and ideas in every other particular, except their degree of force and vivacity. The one seem to be in a manner the reflection of the other; so that all the perceptions of the mind are double, and appear both as impressions and ideas.”
3. Ideas come from Impressions, not the other way around.
 - a. **“... many of our complex ideas never had impressions, that corresponded to them, and that many of our complex impressions never are exactly copied in ideas.”**
 - i. Examples: Paris and New Jerusalem
 - b. “...every simple idea has a simple impression, which resembles it, and every simple impression a correspondent idea.”
 - c. “Thus we find, that all simple ideas and impressions resemble each other; and as the complex are formed from them, we may affirm in general, that these two species of perception are exactly correspondent.”
 - d. “The full examination of this question is the subject of the present treatise; and therefore we shall here content ourselves with establishing one general proposition, That all our simple ideas in their first appearance are derived from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent.”
 - e. **“Our ideas upon their appearance produce not their correspondent impressions, nor do we perceive any color, or feel any sensation merely upon thinking of them.”**
 - f. “...our impressions are the causes of our ideas, not our ideas of our, impressions.”

- g. "...where-ever by any accident the faculties, which give rise to any impressions, are obstructed in their operations, as when one is born blind or deaf; not only the impressions are lost, but also their correspondent ideas; so that there never appear in the mind the least traces of either of them."
- 4. The Missing Shade of Blue! Hume admits that this example, although rare, does contradict his premise.
 - a. "Suppose therefore a person to have enjoyed his sight for thirty years, and to have become perfectly well acquainted with colors of all kinds, excepting one particular shade of blue, for instance, which it never has been his fortune to meet with. Let all the different shades of that color, except that single one, be placed before him, descending gradually from the deepest to the lightest; it is plain, that he will perceive a blank, where that shade is wanting, said will be sensible, that there is a greater distance in that place betwixt the contiguous colors, than in any other. Now I ask, whether it is possible for him, from his own imagination, to supply this deficiency, and raise up to himself the idea of that particular shade, though it had never been conveyed to him by his senses? I believe i here are few but will be of opinion that he can; and this may serve as a proof, that the simple ideas are not always derived from the correspondent impressions; though the instance is so particular and singular, that it is scarce worth our observing, and does not merit that for it alone we should alter our general maxim."
- 5. Secondary Ideas
 - a. "Ideas produce the images of themselves in new ideas; but as the first ideas are supposed to be derived from impressions, it still remains true, that all our simple ideas proceed either mediately or immediately, from their correspondent impressions."
- 6. Two types of Impressions: Sensation and Reflection
 - a. **"Impressions way be divided into two kinds, those Of Sensation and those of Reflection."**
 - i. "The first kind arises in the soul originally, from unknown causes. The second is derived in a great measure from our ideas, and that in the following order. An impression first strikes upon the senses, and makes us perceive heat or cold, thirst or hunger, pleasure or pain of some kind or other. Of this impression there is a copy taken by the mind, which remains after the impression ceases; and this we call an idea."
 - ii. "This idea of pleasure or pain, when it returns upon the soul, produces the new impressions of desire and aversion, hope and fear, which may properly be called impressions of reflection, because derived from it."
 - 1. Note: Hume is referring to feelings as a source of experiential data. I want to draw attention to this because I think that most modern readers will understand feelings to be the triggered by thoughts. They don't arise on their own. But, any emotion is a thing in itself. Anger, for example is of many degrees, but it is essentially one feeling. And, it is clear that emotions trigger thoughts that are related to that emotion. So, anger itself could be mistaken as an impression, especially if you believe it arises in the process of reflection. But, Hume is not talking about memories triggering emotions. I believe he thinks emotions and ideas of pleasure and pain just pop up on their own.
- 7. Distinguishing between Memory and Imagination. Note that memory is not "reflection."
 - a. "We find by experience, that when any impression has been present with the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea; and this it may do after two different

ways: either when in its new appearance it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate betwixt an impression and an idea: or when it entirely loses that vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty, by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner, is called the Memory, and the other the Imagination.”

- b. **“It is evident at first sight, that the ideas of the memory are much more lively and strong than those of the imagination, and that the former faculty paints its objects in more distinct colors, than any which are employed by the latter. When we remember any past event, the idea of it flows in upon the mind in a forcible manner; whereas in the imagination the perception is faint and languid, and cannot without difficulty be preserved by the mind steady and uniform for any considerable time.”**
 - c. “It is evident, that the memory preserves the original form, in which its objects were presented, and that where-ever we depart from it in recollecting anything, it proceeds from some defect or imperfection in that faculty.”
8. The Association of Ideas
- a. **“As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing would be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it, in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places. Were ideas entirely loose and unconnected, chance alone would join them; and it is impossible the same simple ideas should fall regularly into complex ones (as they commonly do) without some bond of union among them, some associating quality, by which one idea naturally introduces another. This uniting principle among ideas is not to be considered as an inseparable connection; for that has been already excluded from the imagination: Nor yet are we to conclude, that without it the mind cannot join two ideas; for nothing is more free than that faculty: but we are only to regard it as a gentle force, which commonly prevails, and is the cause why, among other things, languages so nearly correspond to each other; nature in a manner pointing out to everyone those simple ideas, which are most proper to be united in a complex one. The qualities, from which this association arises, and by which the mind is after this manner conveyed from one idea to another, are three, viz. Resemblance, Contiguity in time or place, and Cause and Effect.”**
 - i. Resemblance
 - ii. Contiguity
 - iii. Cause and Effect
 - 1. Note: More about these three later.
9. Simple Ideas are associated into Complex Ideas
- a. “Amongst the effects of this union or association of ideas, there are none more remarkable, than those complex ideas, which are the common subjects of our thoughts and reasoning, and generally arise from some principle of union among our simple ideas. These complex ideas may be divided into Relations, Modes, and Substances.”
 - i. Relations
 - ii. Modes
 - iii. Substances
10. Relations
- a. “if we diligently consider them, we shall find that without difficulty they may be comprised under seven general heads, which may be considered as the sources of all philosophical relation.”
 - i. **Resemblance**

- ii. Identity
- iii. Space and Time
- iv. Quantity or Number
- v. Degrees of quality
- vi. Contrariety
- vii. Cause and Effect

11. Modes and Substances. They do not come from impressions (from sensation or reflection).
- a. "I believe none will assert, that substance is either a color, or sound, or a taste. The idea, of substance must therefore be derived from an impression of reflection, if it really exist."
 - b. "But the impressions of reflection resolve themselves into our passions and emotions: none of which can possibly represent a substance. We have therefore no idea of substance, distinct from that of a collection of particular qualities, nor have we any other meaning when we either talk or reason concerning it."
 - c. **"The idea of a substance as well as that of a mode, is nothing but a collection of Simple ideas, that are united by the imagination, and have a particular name assigned them, by which we are able to recall, either to ourselves or others, that collection."**
 - d. "The. simple ideas of which modes are formed, either represent qualities, which are not united by contiguity and causation, but are dispersed in different subjects; or if they be all united together, the uniting principle is not regarded as the foundation of the complex idea. The idea of a dance is an instance of the first kind of modes; that of beauty of the second."
12. Berkley and Abstract Ideas. To paraphrase this, Berkley suggests that we do not really have any general abstract ideas. Rather, when we think of an abstraction like "triangle" we visualize a particular triangle and compare that with new instances we encounter.
- a. "A very material question has been started concerning abstract or general ideas, whether they be general or particular in the mind's conception of them. A great philosopher has disputed the received opinion in this particular, and has asserted, that **all general ideas are nothing but particular ones, annexed to a certain term, which gives them a more extensive signification, and makes them recall upon occasion other individuals, which are similar to them.** As I look upon this to be one of the greatest and most valuable discoveries that has been made of late years in the republic of letters, I shall here endeavor to confirm it by some arguments, which I hope will put it beyond all doubt and controversy."
 - i. Note: In general we are talking about not being able to conceive of a category, color or abstract idea without first thinking about a particular example. We don't think of an apple without envisioning particular examples from experience.
 - b. "... our abstract ideas have been supposed to represent no particular degree either of quantity or quality. But that this inference is erroneous, I shall endeavor to make appear, first, by proving, that **it is utterly impossible to conceive any quantity or quality, without forming a precise notion of its degrees:** And secondly by showing, that though the capacity of the mind be not infinite, yet we can at once form a notion of all possible degrees of quantity and quality, in such a manner at least, as, however imperfect, may serve all the purposes of reflection and conversation."
 - c. "... no object can appear to the senses; or in other words, that no impression can become present to the mind, without being determined in its degrees both of quantity and quality."

- d. "... it is a principle generally received in philosophy that everything in nature is individual, and that it is utterly absurd to suppose a triangle really existent, which has no precise proportion of sides and angles. If this therefore be absurd in fact and reality, it must also be absurd in idea; since nothing of which we can form a clear and distinct idea is absurd and impossible."
 - e. **"Now as it is impossible to form an idea of an object, that is possessed of quantity and quality, and yet is possessed of no precise degree of either; it follows that there is an equal impossibility of forming an idea, that is not limited and confined in both these particulars. Abstract ideas are therefore in themselves individual, however they may become general in their representation. The image in the mind is only that of a particular object, though the application of it in our reasoning be the same, as if it were universal."**
 - f. "This then is the nature of our abstract ideas and general terms; and it is after this manner we account for the foregoing paradox, that some ideas are particular in their nature, but general in their representation. A particular idea becomes general by being annexed to a general term; that is, to a term, which from a customary conjunction has a relation to many other particular ideas, and readily recalls them in the imagination."
13. "To explain the ultimate causes of our mental actions is impossible. It is sufficient, if we can give any satisfactory account of them from experience and analogy."
- a. "First then I observe, that when we mention any great number, such as a thousand, the mind has generally no adequate idea of it, but only a power of producing such an idea, by its adequate idea of the decimals, under which the number is comprehended."
 - b. "Secondly, we have several instances of habits, which may be revived by one single word; as when a person, who has by rote any periods of a discourse, or any number of verses, will be put in remembrance of the whole."
 - c. "Thirdly, I believe every one, who examines the situation of his mind in reasoning will agree with me, that we do not annex distinct and complete ideas to every term we make use of, and that in talking of government, church, negotiation, conquest, we seldom spread out in our minds all the simple ideas, of which these complex ones are composed."
 - d. "Fourthly, As the individuals are collected together, said placed under a general term with a view to that resemblance, which they bear to each other, this relation must facilitate their entrance in the imagination, and make them be suggested more readily upon occasion. And indeed if we consider the common progress of the thought, either in reflection or conversation, we shall find great reason to be satisfied in this particular. Nothing is more admirable, than the readiness, with which the imagination suggests its ideas, and presents them at the very instant, in which they become necessary or useful."
14. The Distinction of Reason.
- a. How do we separate out the ideas of related abstractions from the objects themselves?
For example:
 - i. Figure and the Body Figured
 - ii. Motion and the Body Moved
 - b. "The difficulty of explaining this distinction arises from the principle above explained, that all ideas, which are different, are separable. For it follows from thence, that if the figure be different from the body, their ideas must be separable as well as distinguishable: if they be not different, their ideas can neither be separable nor distinguishable."

Book 1, Part 3

1. Hume starts this book with a bit of a review, but explaining that
 - a. "There are seven different kinds of philosophical relation, viz. resemblance, identity, relations of time and place, proportion in quantity or number, degrees in any quality, contrariety and causation. These relations may be divided into two classes; into such as depend entirely on the ideas, which we compare together, and such as may be changed without any change in the ideas."
 - i. Relations that don't change
 1. Resemblance (Equality)
 2. Contrariety
 3. Degrees in Quality
 4. Proportions in Quantity or Number
 - ii. Relations that change
 1. Relations of Time and Space (Contiguity and Distance)
 2. Identity
 3. Causation
2. To what degree is Geometry or Mathematics useful?
 - a. "I have already observed, that geometry, or the art, by which we fix the proportions of figures; though it much excels both in universality and exactness, the loose judgments of the senses and imagination; yet never attains a perfect precision and exactness. Its first principles are still drawn from the general appearance of the objects; and that appearance can never afford us any security, when we examine, the prodigious minuteness of which nature is susceptible. Our ideas seem to give a perfect assurance, that no two right lines can have a common segment; but if we consider these ideas, we shall find, that they always suppose a sensible inclination of the two lines, and that where the angle they form is extremely small, we have no standard of a right line so precise as to assure us of the truth of this proposition. It is the same case with most of the primary decisions of the mathematics."
 - b. There remain, therefore, algebra and arithmetic as the only sciences, in which we can carry on a chain of reasoning to any degree of intricacy, and yet preserve a perfect exactness and certainty."
 - c. "...it is for want of such a standard of equality in extension, that geometry can scarce be esteemed a perfect and infallible science."
 - d. "...though geometry falls short of that perfect precision and certainty, which are peculiar to arithmetic and algebra, yet it excels the imperfect judgments of our senses and imagination."
 - e. "The reason why I impute any defect to geometry, is, because its original and fundamental principles are derived merely from appearances; and it may perhaps be imagined, that this defect must always attend it, and keep it from ever reaching a greater exactness in the comparison of objects or ideas, than what our eye or imagination alone is able to attain."
 - f. **"It is impossible for the eye to determine the angles of a chiliagon to be equal to 1996 right angles, or make any conjecture, that approaches this proportion; but when it determines, that right lines cannot concur; that we cannot draw more than one right line between two given points; it's mistakes can never be of any consequence. And**

this is the nature and use of geometry, to run us up to such appearances, as, by reason of their simplicity, cannot lead us into any considerable error.”

- g. “It is usual with mathematicians, to pretend, that those ideas, which are their objects, are of so refined and spiritual a nature, that they fall not under the conception of the fancy, but must be comprehended by a pure and intellectual view, of which the superior faculties of the soul are alone capable. The same notion runs through most parts of philosophy, and is principally made use of to explain our abstract ideas, and to show how we can form an idea of a triangle, for instance, which shall neither be an isosceles nor scalenum, nor be confined to any particular length and proportion of sides. It is easy to see, why philosophers are so fond of this notion of some spiritual and refined perceptions; since by that means they cover many of their absurdities, and may refuse to submit to the decisions of clear ideas, by appealing to such as are obscure and uncertain.
 - h. “But to destroy this artifice, we need but reflect on that principle so oft insisted on, that all our ideas are copied from our impressions. For from thence we may immediately conclude, that since all impressions are clear and precise, the ideas, which are copied from them, must be of the same nature, and can never, but from our fault, contain anything so dark and intricate. An idea is by its very nature weaker and fainter than an impression; but being in every other respect the same, cannot imply any very great mystery. If its weakness render it obscure, it is our business to remedy that defect, as much as possible, by keeping the idea steady and precise; and till we have done so, it is in vain to pretend to reasoning and philosophy.”
 - i. NOTE: This is a critical statement, and it is very important to understand what Hume is saying here. Ideas are “weaker” than impressions by his own definition. But, an idea at its zenith or most perfect state should be as clear as an impression we are experiencing at that moment. If your idea is weak, then the clarity of your vision is poor and you can’t build a philosophy upon it. He suggests that “it is our business to remedy that defect, as much as possible, by keeping the idea steady and precise.”
- i.
3. Return focus to the relations that Do NOT Change: Identity, Situations in Time and Place, and Causation.
- a. “... we ought not to receive as reasoning any of the observations we may make concerning **identity**, and the relations of time and place; since in none of them the mind can go beyond what is immediately present to the senses, either to discover the real existence or the relations of objects.”
 - b. “There is nothing in any objects to persuade us, that they are either always remote or always **contiguous**; and when from experience and observation we discover, that their relation in this particular is invariable, we, always conclude there is some secret cause, which separates or unites them.”
 - c. “It is only causation, which produces such a connection, as to give us assurance from the existence or action of one object, that it was followed or preceded by any other existence or action”
 - d. “Here then it appears, that of those three relations, which depend not upon the mere ideas, the only one, that can be traced beyond our senses and informs us of existences and objects, which we do not see or feel, is **causation**.”
4. Contiguity is a requirement for Causation (with some exceptions to be explained later)

- a. "It is impossible to reason justly, without understanding perfectly the idea concerning which we reason; and it is impossible perfectly to understand any idea, without tracing it up to its origin, and examining that primary impression, from which it arises."
 - b. "there is nothing existent, either externally or internally, which is not to be considered either as a cause or an effect; though it is plain there is no one quality, which universally belongs to all beings, and gives them a title to that denomination. The idea, then, of causation must be derived from some relation among objects; and that relation we must now endeavor to discover."
 - c. "I find in the first place, that whatever objects are considered as causes or effects, are contiguous; and that nothing can operate in a time or place, which is ever so little removed from those of its existence."
 - d. **"We may therefore consider the relation of contiguity as essential to that of causation; at least may suppose it such, according to the general opinion, till we can find a more {see Part 4, section 5} proper occasion to clear up this matter, by examining what objects are or are not susceptible of juxtaposition and conjunction."**
5. Juxtaposition in Time (succession) is also required for causation. The cause always comes before the effect.
 - a. "Some pretend that it is not absolutely necessary a cause should precede its effect; but that any object or action, in the very first moment of its existence, may exert its productive quality, and give rise to another object or action, perfectly co-temporary with itself."
 - b. "Now if any cause may be perfectly co-temporary with its effect, it is certain, according to this maxim, that they must all of them be so; since any one of them, which retards its operation for a single moment, exerts not itself at that very individual time, in which it might have operated; and therefore is no proper cause. The consequence of this would be no less than the destruction of that succession of causes, which we observe in the world; and indeed, the utter annihilation of time."
 6. The relations of Contiguity and Succession are not enough. Hume is frustrated and must find a hidden, third relation.
 - a. "Shall we then rest contented with these two relations of contiguity and succession, as affording a complete idea of causation? By, no means. An object may be contiguous and prior to another, without being considered as its cause. There is a necessary connection to be taken into consideration; and that relation is of much greater importance, than any of the other two above-mentioned."
 - b. "When I cast my eye on the known qualities of objects, I immediately discover that the relation of cause and effect depends not in the least on them. When I consider their relations, I can find none but those of contiguity and succession; which I have already regarded as imperfect and unsatisfactory."
 - c. "It is necessary for us to leave the direct survey of this question concerning the nature of that necessary connection, which enters into our idea of cause and effect; and endeavor to find some other questions, the examination of which will perhaps afford a hint, that may serve to clear up the present difficulty."
 7. Consider two important suppositions/questions:
 - a. "For what reason we pronounce it necessary, that everything whose existence has a beginning, should also have a cause."
 - b. "Why we conclude, that such particular causes must necessarily have such particular effects; and what is the nature of that inference we draw from the one to the other, and of the belief we repose in it?"

8. Why a cause is always necessary. Note that Hume does not conclude that a cause is always necessary at this point. Rather, he explains that none of the previous arguments sufficient to prove that there must be a cause for every effect. He asserts that all of the popular arguments assume too much.
- a. "It is a general maxim in philosophy, that whatever begins to exist, must have a cause of existence. This is commonly taken for granted in all reasonings, without any proof given or demanded. It is supposed to be founded on intuition, and to be one of those maxims, which though they may be denied with the lips, it is impossible for men in their hearts really to doubt of."
 - b. "All certainty arises from the comparison of ideas, and from the discovery of such relations as are unalterable, so long as the ideas continue the same. These relations are resemblance, proportions in quantity and number, degrees of any quality, and contrariety; none of which are implied in this proposition, Whatever has a beginning has also a cause of existence."
 - c. "We can never demonstrate the necessity of a cause to every new existence, or new modification of existence, without showing at the same time the impossibility there is, that anything can ever begin to exist without some productive principle"
 - d. **Hume proposes: "...we may satisfy ourselves by considering that as all distinct ideas are separable from each other, and as the ideas of cause and effect are evidently distinct, it will be easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment, and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle."**
 - e. Paraphrasing Berkley: "... to say that anything is produced, or to express myself more properly, comes into existence, without a cause, is not to affirm, that it is itself its own cause; but on the contrary in excluding all external causes, excludes a fortiori the thing itself, which is created. An object, that exists absolutely without any cause, certainly is not its own cause; and when you assert, that the one follows from the other, you suppose the very point in questions and take it for granted, that it is utterly impossible anything can ever begin to exist without a cause, but that, upon the exclusion of one productive principle, we must still have recourse to another."
 - f. Paraphrasing John Locke: "Whatever is produced without any cause, is produced by nothing; or in other words, has nothing for its cause. But nothing can never be a cause, no more than it can be something, or equal to two right angles. By the same intuition, that we perceive nothing not to be equal to two right angles, or not to be something, we perceive, that it can never be a cause; and consequently must perceive, that every object has a real cause of its existence."
 - g. **"I believe it will not be necessary to employ many words in showing the weakness of this argument, after what I have said of the foregoing. They are all of them founded on the same fallacy, and are derived from the same turn of thought. It is sufficient only to observe, that when we exclude all causes we really do exclude them, and neither suppose nothing nor the object itself to be the causes of the existence; and consequently can draw no argument from the absurdity of these suppositions to prove the absurdity of that exclusion. If everything must have a cause, it follows, that upon the exclusion of other causes we must accept of the object itself or of nothing as causes. But it is the very point in question, whether everything must have a cause or not; and therefore, according to all just reasoning, it ought never to be taken for granted."**

9. Hume asks a question and pursues an answer: “Why we conclude, that such particular causes must necessarily have such particular effects, and why we form an inference from one to another?”
- a. “When we infer effects from causes, we must establish the existence of these causes; which we have only two ways of doing, either by an immediate perception of our memory or senses, or by an inference from other causes; which causes again we must ascertain in the same manner, either by a present impression, or by an inference from their causes, and so on, till we arrive at some object, which we see or remember.”
 - b. “... without the authority either of the memory or senses our whole reasoning would be chimerical and without foundation. Every link of the chain would in that case hang upon another; but there would not be anything fixed to one end of it, capable of sustaining the whole; and consequently there would be no belief nor evidence. And this actually is the case with all hypothetical arguments, or reasonings upon a supposition; there being in them, neither any present impression, nor belief of a real existence.”
 - c. “In this kind of reasoning, then, from causation, we employ materials, which are of a mixed and heterogeneous nature, and which, however connected, are yet essentially different from each other. **All our arguments concerning causes and effects consist both of an impression of the memory or, senses, and of the idea of that existence, which produces the object of the impression, or is produced by it.** Here therefore we have three things to explain, viz. First, The original impression. Secondly, The transition to the idea of the connected cause or effect. Thirdly, The nature and qualities of that idea.
 - i. The Original Impression
 1. “As to those impressions, which arise from the senses, their ultimate cause is, in my opinion, perfectly inexplicable by human reason, and it will always be impossible to decide with certainty, whether they arise immediately from the object, or are produced by the creative power of the mind, or are derived from the author of our being.”
 - ii. Transition to the Idea
 1. Hume talks about this in the next section: “Of the inference from the Impression to the Idea”
 - iii. Nature and Quality of Ideas
 1. “When we search for the characteristic, which distinguishes the memory from the imagination, we must immediately perceive, that it cannot lie in the simple ideas it presents to us; since both these faculties borrow their simple ideas from the impressions, and can never go beyond these original perceptions.”
 2. “Since therefore the memory, is known, neither by the order of its complex ideas, nor the nature of its simple ones; it follows, that the difference betwixt it and the imagination lies in its superior force and vivacity.”
 3. “... the ideas of the memory are more strong and lively than those of the fancy.”
 4. “We are frequently in doubt concerning the ideas of the memory, as they become very weak and feeble; and are at a loss to determine whether any image proceeds from the fancy or the memory, when it is not drawn in such lively colors as distinguish that latter faculty.”

5. "...on the other hand an idea of the imagination may acquire such a force and vivacity, as to pass for an idea of the memory, and counterfeit its effects on the belief and judgment. This is noted in the case of liars; who by the frequent repetition of their lies, come at last to believe and remember them, as realities"
 6. **"Thus it appears, that the belief or assent, which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from the imagination. To believe is in this case to feel an immediate impression of the senses, or a repetition of that impression in the memory. It is merely the force and liveliness of the perception, which constitutes the first act of the judgment, and lays the foundation of that reasoning, which we build upon it, when we trace the relation of cause and effect."**
- d. Inference from Impression to Idea
- i. "...the inference we draw from cause to effect, is not derived merely from a survey of these particular objects, and from such a penetration into their essences as may discover the dependence of the one upon the other. There is no object, which implies the existence of any other if we consider these objects in themselves, and never look beyond the ideas which we form of them. Such an inference would amount to knowledge, and would imply the absolute contradiction and impossibility of conceiving anything different. But as all distinct ideas are separable, it is evident there can be no impossibility of that kind. When we pass from a present impression to the idea of any object, we might possibly have separated the idea from the impression, and have substituted any other idea in its room."
 - ii. **"It is therefore by experience only, that we can infer the existence of one object from that of another."**
 - iii. "The nature of experience is this. We remember to have had frequent instances of the existence of one species of objects; and also remember, that the individuals of another species of objects have always attended them, and have existed in a regular order of contiguity and succession with regard to them."
10. A New Relation Discovered! The relation of Constant Conjunction.
- a. "... we remember, to have seen that species of object we call flame, and to have felt that species of sensation we call heat. We likewise call to mind their constant conjunction in all past instances. Without any farther ceremony, we call the one cause and the other effect, and infer the existence of the one from that of the other."
 - b. "In all those instances, from which we learn the conjunction of particular causes and effects, both the causes and effects have been perceived by the senses, and are remembered But in all cases, wherein we reason concerning them, there is only one perceived or remembered, and the other is supplied in conformity to our past experience."
 - c. **"Thus in advancing we have insensibly discovered a new relation betwixt cause and effect, when we least expected it, and were entirely employed upon another subject. This relation is their constant conjunction. Contiguity and succession are not sufficient to make us pronounce any two objects to be cause and effect, unless we perceive, that these two relations are preserved in several instances."**

- d. "...this new-discovered relation of a constant conjunction seems to advance us but very little in our way. For it implies no more than this, that like objects have always been placed in like relations of contiguity and succession; and it seems evident, at least at first sight, that by this means we can never discover any new idea, and can only multiply, but not enlarge the objects of our mind."
 - e. **"From the mere repetition of any past impression, even to infinity, there never will arise any new original idea, such as that of a necessary connection; and the number of impressions has in this case no more effect than if we confined ourselves to one only."**
 - f. "Perhaps it will appear in the end, that the necessary connection depends on the inference, instead of the inference's depending on the necessary connection."
11. Does Experience Produce Ideas from Understanding, or Imagination?
- a. "Since it appears, that the transition from an impression present to the memory or senses to the idea of an object, which we call cause or effect, is founded on past experience, and on our remembrance of their constant conjunction, the next question is, Whether experience produces the idea by means of the understanding or imagination; whether we are determined by reason to make the transition, or by a certain association and relation of perceptions."
 - b. **"If reason determined us, it would proceed upon that principle, that instances, of which we have had no experience, must resemble those, of which we have had experience, and that the course of nature continues always uniformly the same."**
 - c. "Our foregoing method of reasoning will easily convince us, that there can be no demonstrative arguments to prove, that those instances, of which we have, had no experience, resemble those, of which we have had experience. We can at least conceive a change in the course of nature; which sufficiently proves, that such a change is not absolutely impossible. **To form a clear idea of anything, is an undeniable argument for its possibility, and is alone a refutation of any pretended demonstration against it.**"
12. What about probability?
- a. "Probability, as it discovers not the relations of ideas, considered as such, but only those of objects, must in some respects be founded on the impressions of our memory and senses, and in some respects on our ideas. **Were there no mixture of any impression in our probable reasonings, the conclusion would be entirely chimerical: And were there no mixture of ideas, the action of the mind, in observing the relation, would, properly speaking, be sensation, not reasoning. It is therefore necessary, that in all probable reasonings there be something present to the mind, either seen or remembered; and that from this we infer something connected with it, which is not seen nor remembered.**"
 - b. "The idea of cause and effect is derived from experience, which informs us, that such particular objects, in all past instances, have been constantly conjoined with each other: And as an object similar to one of these is supposed to be immediately present in its impression, we thence presume on the existence of one similar to its usual attendant. According to this account of things, which is, I think, in every point unquestionable, **probability is founded on the presumption of a resemblance betwixt those objects, of which we have had experience, and those, of which we have had none; and therefore it is impossible this presumption can arise from probability.** The same principle cannot be both the cause and effect of another; and this is, perhaps, the only proposition concerning that relation, which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain."
13. Hume refutes Locke's theory of "powers."

- a. "Should anyone think to elude this argument; and without determining whether our reasoning on this subject be derived from demonstration or probability, pretend that all conclusions from causes and effects are built on solid reasoning: I can only desire, that this reasoning may be produced, in order to be exposed to our examination. It may, perhaps, be said, that after experience of the constant conjunction of certain objects, we reason in the following manner. Such an object is always found to produce another. It is impossible it could have this effect, if it was not endowed with a power of production. The power necessarily implies the effect; and therefore there is a just foundation for drawing a conclusion from the existence of one object to that of its usual attendant. The past production implies a power: The power implies a new production: And the new production is what we infer from the power and the past production."
 - b. "It were easy for me to show the weakness of this reasoning, were I willing to make use of those observations, I have already made, that the idea of production is the same with that of causation, and that no existence certainly and demonstratively implies a power in any other object; or were it proper to anticipate what I shall have occasion to remark afterwards concerning the idea we form of power and efficacy."
 - c. "...it having been already proved, that the power lies not in the sensible qualities of the cause; and there being nothing but the sensible qualities present to us; I ask, why in other instances you presume that the same power still exists, merely upon the appearance of these qualities? Your appeal to past experience decides nothing in the present case; and at the utmost can only prove, that that very object, which produced any other, was at that very instant endowed with such a power; but can never prove, that the same power must continue in the same object or collection of sensible qualities; much less, that a like power is always conjoined with like sensible qualities."
14. Reason cannot lead us to the connection between cause and effect.
- a. **"Thus not only our reason fails us in the discovery of the ultimate connection of causes and effects, but even after experience has informed us of their constant conjunction, it is impossible for us to satisfy ourselves by our reason, why we should extend that experience beyond those particular instances, which have fallen under our observation."**
 - b. **"...this we may establish for a general rule, that wherever the mind constantly and uniformly makes a transition without any reason, it is influenced by these relations. Now this is exactly the present case. Reason can never show us the connection of one object with another, though aided by experience, and the observation of their constant conjunction in all past instances. When the mind, therefore, passes from the idea or impression of one object to the idea or belief of another, it is not determined by reason, but by certain principles, which associate together the ideas of these objects, and unite them in the imagination."**
15. Review: There are three principles uniting ideas:
- a. Resemblance
 - b. Contiguity
 - c. Causation
16. If there is a fourth principle, it would be habit.
- a. "There is indeed a principle of union among ideas, which at first sight may be esteemed different from any of these, but will be found at the bottom to depend on the same origin."

- b. "...because such a particular idea is commonly annexed to such a particular word, nothing is required but the hearing of that word to produce the correspondent idea; and it will scarce be possible for the mind, by its utmost efforts, to prevent that transition."
- c. "...from the constant conjunction the objects acquire an union in the imagination. When the impression of one becomes present to us, we immediately form an idea of its usual attendant; and consequently we may establish this as one part of the definition of an opinion or belief, that it is an idea related to or associated with a present impression."

17. Belief

- a. "The idea of an object is an essential part of the belief of it, but not the whole. We conceive many things, which we do not believe."
- b. "... not content with asserting, that the conception of the existence of any object is no addition to the simple conception of it, I likewise maintain, that the belief of the existence joins no new ideas to those which compose the idea of the object."
 - i. Example: "When I think of God, when I think of him as existent, and when I believe him to be existent, my idea of him neither increases nor diminishes."
- c. "It will not be a satisfactory answer to say, that a person, who does not assent to a proposition you advance; after having conceived the object in the same manner with you; immediately conceives it in a different manner, and has different ideas of it. This answer is unsatisfactory; not because it contains any falsehood, but because it discovers not all the truth. It is contest, that in all cases, wherein we dissent from any person, we conceive both sides of the question; but as we can believe only one, it evidently follows, that the belief must make some difference betwixt that conception to which we assent, and that from which we dissent. We may mingle, and unite, and separate, and confound, and vary our ideas in a hundred different ways; but until there appears some principle, which fixes one of these different situations, we have in reality no opinion: And this principle, as it plainly makes no addition to our precedent ideas, can only change the manner of our conceiving them."
 - i. NOTE: Hume dances around what I think is a problem with his philosophy here. If experience creates impressions, then two persons who experience the exact same event "should" have the same impressions. But clearly past impressions and understanding augments the depth of understanding, or the detail perceived in any given moment. The two persons, if their ages are greatly different, will experience the event in an entirely different way.
- d. "Our ideas are copied from our impressions, and represent them in all their parts. When you would any way vary the idea of a particular object, you can only increase or diminish its force and vivacity. If you make any other change on it, it represents a different object or impression."
- e. **"So that as belief does nothing but vary the manner, in which we conceive any object, it can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity. An opinion, therefore, or belief may be most accurately defined, a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression."**
- f. "Reason can never satisfy us that the existence of any one object does ever imply that of another; so that when we pass from the impression of one to the idea or belief of another, we are not determined by reason, but by custom or a principle of association."
- g. "But belief is somewhat more than a simple idea. It is a particular manner of forming an idea: And as the same idea can only be varied by a variation of its degrees of force and vivacity; it follows upon the whole, that belief is a lively idea produced by a relation to a present impression, according to the foregoing definition."

- h. **“I conclude, by an induction which seems to me very evident, that an opinion or belief is nothing but an idea, that is different from a fiction, not in the nature or the order of its parts, but in the manner of its being conceived. But when I would explain this manner, I scarce find any word that fully answers the case, but am obliged to have recourse to every one's feeling, in order to give him a perfect notion of this operation of the mind. An idea assented to feels different from a fictitious idea, that the fancy alone presents to us: And this different feeling I endeavor to explain by calling it a superior force, or vivacity, or solidity, or firmness, or steadiness. This variety of terms, which may seem so unphilosophical, is intended only to express that act of the mind, which renders realities more present to us than fictions, causes them to weigh more in the thought, and gives them a superior influence on the passions and imagination.”**
 - i. “The imagination has the command over all its ideas, and can join, and mix, and vary them in all the ways possible. It may conceive objects with all the circumstances of place and time. It may set them, in a manner, before our eyes in their true colors, just as they might have existed. But as it is impossible, that that faculty can ever, of itself, reach belief, it is evident, that belief consists not in the nature and order of our ideas, but in the manner of their conception, and in their feeling to the mind.”
 - j. **“I confess, that it is impossible to explain perfectly this feeling or manner of conception. We may make use of words, that express something near it. But its true and proper name is belief, which is a term that every one sufficiently understands in common life. And in philosophy we can go no farther, than assert, that it is something felt by the mind, which distinguishes the ideas of the judgment from the fictions of the imagination.”**
 - k. “It gives them more force and influence; makes them appear of greater importance; infixes them in the mind; and renders them the governing principles of all our actions.”
 - l. “If one person sits down to read a book as a romance, and another as a true history, they plainly receive the same ideas, and in the same order; nor does the incredulity of the one, and the belief of the other hinder them from putting the very same sense upon their author. His words produce the same ideas in both; though his testimony has not the same influence on them.”
18. The Causes of Belief: “what bestows the vivacity on the idea.”
- a. “I would willingly establish it as a general maxim in the science of human nature, that when any impression becomes present to us, it not only transports the mind to such ideas as are related to it, but likewise communicates to them a share of its force and vivacity.”
 - b. **“All the operations of the mind depend in a great measure on its disposition, when it performs them; and according as the spirits are more or less elevated, and the attention more or less fixed, the action will always have more or less vigor and vivacity. When therefore any object is presented, which elevates and enlivens the thought, every action, to which the mind applies itself, will be more strong and vivid, as long as that disposition continues”**
 - i. Example: “upon the appearance of the picture of an absent friend, our idea of him is evidently enlivened by the resemblance, and that every passion, which that idea occasions, whether of joy or sorrow, acquires new force and vigor.”
 - ii. Example: “The ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion may be considered as experiments of the same nature. The devotees of that strange superstition usually plead in excuse of the mummeries, with which they are upbraided, that they feel the good effect of those external motions, and postures, and actions,

in enlivening their devotion, and quickening their fervor, which otherwise would decay away, if directed entirely to distant and immaterial objects. We shadow out the objects of our faith, say they, in sensible types and images, and render them more present to us by the immediate presence of these types, than it is possible for us to do, merely by an intellectual view and contemplation.”

iii. Example: “It is certain, that distance diminishes the force of every idea, and that upon our approach to any object; though it does not discover itself to our senses; it operates upon the mind with an influence that imitates an immediate impression. The thinking on any object readily transports the mind to what is contiguous; but it is only the actual presence of an object, that transports it with a superior vivacity.”

iv. Example: “No one can doubt but causation has the same influence as the other two relations; of resemblance and contiguity. Superstitious people are fond of the relics of saints and holy men, for the same reason that they seek after types and images, in order to enliven their devotion, and give them a more intimate and strong conception of those exemplary lives, which they desire to imitate.”

c. “It is certain we must have an idea of every matter of fact, which we believe. It is certain, that this idea arises only from a relation to a present impression. It is certain, that the belief super-adds nothing to the idea, but only changes our manner of conceiving it, and renders it more strong and lively. The present conclusion concerning the influence of relation is the immediate consequence of all these steps; and every step appears to me sure end infallible. There enters nothing into this operation of the mind but a present impression, a lively idea, and a relation or association in the fancy betwixt the impression and idea; so that there can be no suspicion of mistake.”

d. “I find, that an impression, from which, on its first appearance, I can draw no conclusion, may afterwards become the foundation of belief, when I have had experience of its usual consequences. We must in every case have observed the same impression in past instances, and have found it to be constantly conjoined with some other impression. This is confirmed by such a multitude of experiments, that it admits not of the smallest doubt.”

19. Custom

a. “... the belief, which attends the present impression, and is produced by a number of past impressions and conjunctions; that this belief, I say, arises immediately, without any new operation of the reason or imagination. Of this I can be certain, because I never am conscious of any such operation, and find nothing in the subject, on which it can be founded. Now as we call everything custom, which proceeds from a past repetition, without any new reasoning or conclusion, we may establish it as a certain truth, that all the belief, which follows upon any present impression, is derived solely from that origin.”

b. “I therefore change the first impression into an idea; and observe, that though the customary transition to the correlative idea still remains, yet there is in reality no belief nor persuasion. A present impression, then, is absolutely requisite to this whole operation; and when after this I compare an impression with an idea, and find that their only difference consists in their different degrees of force and vivacity, I conclude upon the whole, that belief is a more vivid and intense conception of an idea, proceeding from its relation to a present impression.”

c. **“Thus all probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation. It is not solely in poetry and music, we must follow our taste and sentiment, but likewise in philosophy.**

When I am convinced of any principle, it is only an idea, which strikes more strongly upon me. When I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from my feeling concerning the superiority of their influence. Objects have no discoverable connection together; nor is it from any other principle but custom operating upon the imagination, that we can draw any inference from the appearance of one to the existence of another."

- i. Example: "A person, who stops short in his journey upon meeting a river in his way, foresees the consequences of his proceeding forward; and his knowledge of these consequences is conveyed to him by past experience, which informs him of such certain conjunctions of causes and effects. But can we think, that on this occasion he reflects on any past experience, and calls to remembrance instances, that he has seen or heard of, in order to discover the effects of water on animal bodies? No surely; this is not the method, in which he proceeds in his reasoning. The idea of sinking is so closely connected with that of water, and the idea of suffocating with that of sinking, that the mind makes the transition without the assistance of the memory. The custom operates before we have time for reflection. The objects seem so inseparable, that we interpose not a moment's delay in passing from the one to the other."

20. Belief founded on a strong idea?

- a. "... we find in some cases, that the reflection produces the belief without the custom; or more properly speaking, that the reflection produces the custom in an oblique and artificial manner."
- b. "It may be said, that not only an impression may give rise to reasoning, but that an idea may also have the same influence; especially upon my principle, that all our ideas are derived from correspondent impressions. For suppose I form at present an idea, of which I have forgot the correspondent impression, I am able to conclude from this idea, that such an impression did once exist; and as this conclusion is attended with belief, it may be asked, from whence are the qualities of force and vivacity derived, which constitute this belief? And to this I answer very readily, from the present idea. For as this idea is not here considered, as the representation of any absent object, but as a real perception in the mind, of which we are intimately conscious, it must be able to bestow on whatever is related to it the same quality, call it firmness, or solidity, or force, or vivacity, with which the mind reflects upon it, and is assured of its present existence. The idea here supplies the place of an impression, and is entirely the same, so far as regards our present purpose."

21. About Memory, Second-Hand Knowledge and Habits.

- a. "... it may be said, that if all the parts of that hypothesis be true, viz. that these three species of relation are derived from the same principles; that their effects in informing and enlivening our ideas are the same; and that belief is nothing but a more forcible and vivid conception of an idea; it should follow, that that action of the mind may not only be derived from the relation of cause and effect, but also from those of contiguity and resemblance. But as we find by experience, that belief arises only from causation, and that we can draw no inference from one object to another, except they be connected by this relation, we may conclude, that there is some error in that reasoning, which leads us into such difficulties."
- b. "I form an idea of Rome, which I neither see nor remember; but which is connected with such impressions as I remember to have received from the conversation and books of travelers and historians. This idea of Rome I place in a certain situation on the idea of an

object, which I call the globe. I join to it the conception of a particular government, and religion, and manners. I look backward and consider its first foundation; its several revolutions, successes, and misfortunes. All this, and everything else, which I believe, are nothing but ideas; though by their force and settled order, arising from custom and the relation of cause and effect, they distinguish themselves from the other ideas, which are merely the offspring of the imagination.”

- c. “A poet, no doubt, will be the better able to form a strong description of the Elysian fields, that he prompts his imagination by the view of a beautiful meadow or garden; as at another time he may by his fancy place himself in the midst of these fabulous regions, that by the feigned contiguity he may enliven his imagination.”
- d. “Contiguity and resemblance have an effect much inferior to causation; but still have some effect, and augment the conviction of any opinion, and the vivacity of any conception.”
- e. “To begin with contiguity; it has been remarked among the Mahometans as well as Christians, that those pilgrims, who have seen Mecca or the Holy Land, are ever after more faithful and zealous believers, than those who have not had that advantage. A man, whose memory presents him with a lively image of the Red-Sea, and the Desert, and Jerusalem, and Galilee, can never doubt of any miraculous events, which are related either by Moses or the Evangelists. The lively idea of the places passes by an easy transition to the facts, which are supposed to have been related to them by contiguity, and increases the belief by increasing the vivacity of the conception. The remembrance of these fields and rivers has the same influence on the vulgar as a new argument; and from the same causes.”
- f. “It is universally allowed by the writers on optics, that the eye at all times sees an equal number of physical points, and that a man on the top of a mountain has no larger an image presented to his senses, than when he is cooped up in the narrowest court or chamber. It is only by experience that he infers the greatness of the object from some peculiar qualities of the image; and this inference of the judgment he confounds with sensation, as is common on other occasions.”
- g. “No weakness of human nature is more universal and conspicuous than what we commonly call Credulity, or a too easy faith in the testimony of others; and this weakness is also very naturally accounted for from the influence of resemblance. When we receive any matter of fact upon human testimony, our faith arises from the very same origin as our inferences from causes to effects, and from effects to causes; nor is there anything but our experience of the governing principles of human nature, which can give us any assurance of the veracity of men. But though experience be the true standard of this, as well as of all other judgments, we seldom regulate ourselves entirely by it; but have a remarkable propensity to believe whatever is reported, even concerning apparitions, enchantments, and prodigies, however contrary to daily experience and observation.”
- h. “Other effects only point out their causes in an oblique manner; but the testimony of men does it directly, and is to be considered as an image as well as an effect. No wonder, therefore, we are so rash in drawing our inferences from it, and are less guided by experience in our judgments concerning it, than in those upon any other subject.”
- i. **“Of this there is a remarkable instance in the universal carelessness and stupidity of men with regard to a future state, where they show as obstinate an incredulity, as they do a blind credulity on other occasions. There is not indeed a more ample matter of wonder to the studious, and of regret to the pious man, than to observe the**

negligence of the bulk of mankind concerning their approaching condition; and it is with reason, that many eminent theologians have not scrupled to affirm, that though the vulgar have no formal principles of infidelity, yet they are really infidels in their hearts, and have nothing like what we can call a belief of the eternal duration of their souls. For let us consider on the one hand what divines have displayed with such eloquence concerning the importance of eternity; and at the same time reflect, that though in matters of rhetoric we ought to lay our account with some exaggeration, we must in this case allow, that the strongest figures are infinitely inferior to the subject: And after this let us view on the other hand, the prodigious security of men in this particular: I ask, if these people really believe what is inculcated on them, and what they pretend to affirm; and the answer is obviously in the negative. As belief is an act of the mind arising from custom, it is not strange the want of resemblance should overthrow what custom has established, and diminish the force of the idea, as much as that latter principle increases it. A future state is so far removed from our comprehension, and we have so obscure an idea of the manner, in which we shall exist after the dissolution of the body, that all the reasons we can invent, however strong in themselves, and however much assisted by education, are never able with slow imaginations to surmount this difficulty, or bestow a sufficient authority and force on the idea. I rather choose to ascribe this incredulity to the faint idea we form of our future condition, derived from its want of resemblance to the present life, than to that derived from its remoteness. For I observe, that men are everywhere concerned about what may happen after their death, provided it regard this world; and that there are few to whom their name, their family, their friends, and their country are in any period of time entirely indifferent. And indeed the want of resemblance in this case so entirely destroys belief, that except those few, who upon cool reflection on the importance of the subject, have taken care by repeated meditation to imprint in their minds the arguments for a future state, there scarce are any, who believe the immortality of the soul with a true and established judgment; such as is derived from the testimony of travelers and historians.”

- j. “The Roman Catholicks are certainly the most zealous of any sect in the Christian world; and yet you'll find few among the more sensible people of that communion who do not blame the Gunpowder-treason, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew, as cruel and barbarous, though projected or executed against those very people, whom without any scruple they condemn to eternal and infinite punishments. All we can say in excuse for this inconsistency is, that they really do not believe what they affirm concerning a future state; nor is there any better proof of it than the very inconsistency.”
- k. “We may add to this a remark; that in matters of religion men take a pleasure in being terrified, and that no preachers are so popular, as those who excite the most dismal and gloomy passions.”
- l. “...custom, to which I attribute all belief and reasoning, may operate upon the mind in invigorating an idea after two several ways. For supposing that in all past experience we have found two objects to have been always conjoined together, it is evident, that upon the appearance of one of these objects in an impression, we must from custom make an easy transition to the idea of that object, which usually attends it; and by means of the present impression and easy transition must conceive that idea in a stronger and more lively manner, than we do any loose floating image of the fancy. But let us next suppose, that a mere idea alone, without any of this curious and almost artificial preparation, should frequently make its appearance in the mind, this idea must by degrees acquire a

facility and force; and both by its firm hold and easy introduction distinguish itself from any new and unusual idea.”

22. Education and Belief

- a. “All those opinions and notions of things, to which we have been accustomed from our infancy, take such deep root, that it is impossible for us, by all the powers of reason and experience, to eradicate them; and this habit not only approaches in its influence, but even on many occasions prevails over that which a-rises from the constant and inseparable union of causes and effects. Here we most not be contented with saying, that the vividness of the idea produces the belief: We must maintain that they are individually the same. The frequent repetition of any idea infixes it in the imagination; but could never possibly of itself produce belief, if that act of the mind was, by the original constitution of our natures, annexed only to a reasoning and comparison of ideas.”
- b. **“I am persuaded, that upon examination we shall find more than one half of those opinions, that prevail among mankind, to be owing to education, and that the principles, which are thus implicitly embraced, overbalance those, which are owing either to abstract reasoning or experience. As liars, by the frequent repetition of their lies, come at last to remember them; so the judgment, or rather the imagination, by the like means, may have ideas so strongly imprinted on it, and conceive them in so full a light, that they may operate upon the mind in the same manner with those, which the senses, memory or reason present to us.”**
- c. “But as education is an artificial and not a natural cause, and as its maxims are frequently contrary to reason, and even to themselves in different times and places, it is never upon that account recognized by philosophers; though in reality it be built almost on the same foundation of custom and repetition as our reasonings from causes and effects.”
- d. “But though education be disclaimed by philosophy, as a fallacious ground of assent to any opinion, it prevails nevertheless in the world, and is the cause why all systems are apt to be rejected at first as new and unusual. This perhaps will be the fate of what I have here advanced concerning belief, and though the proofs I have produced appear to me perfectly conclusive, I expect not to make many proselytes to my opinion.”
- e. “The conversation of those who have acquired a habit of lying, though in affairs of no moment, never gives any satisfaction; and that because those ideas they present to us, not being attended with belief, make no impression upon the mind.”
- f. **“Poets themselves, though liars by profession, always endeavor to give an air of truth to their fictions; and where that is totally neglected, their performances, however ingenious, will never be able to afford much pleasure.”**
- g. “But if we compare together all the phenomena that occur on this head, we shall find, that truth, however necessary it may seem in all works of genius, has no other effect than to procure an easy reception for the ideas, and to make the mind acquiesce in them with satisfaction, or at least without reluctance.”
- h. “Poets have formed what they call a poetical system of things, which though it be believed neither by themselves nor readers, is commonly esteemed a sufficient foundation for any fiction.”
- i. **“This mixture of truth and falsehood in the fables of tragic poets not only serves our present purpose, by showing, that the imagination can be satisfied without any absolute belief or assurance; but may in another view be regarded as a very strong confirmation of this system. It is evident, that poets make use of this artifice of**

borrowing the names of their persons, and the chief events of their poems, from history, in order to procure a more easy reception for the whole, and cause it to make a deeper impression on the fancy and affections. The several incidents of the piece acquire a kind of relation by being united into one poem or representation; and if any of these incidents be an object of belief, it bestows a force and vivacity on the others, which are related to it. The vividness of the first conception diffuses itself along the relations, and is conveyed, as by so many pipes or canals, to every idea that has any communication with the primary one. This, indeed, can never amount to a perfect assurance; and that because the union among the ideas is, in a manner, accidental: But still it approaches so near, in its influence, as may convince us, that they are derived from the same origin."

- j. "...belief not only gives vigor to the imagination, but that a vigorous and strong imagination is of all talents the most proper to procure belief and authority. It is difficult for us to withhold our assent from what is painted out to us in all the colors of eloquence; and the vivacity produced by the fancy is in many cases greater than that which arises from custom and experience. We are hurried away by the lively imagination of our author or companion; and even he himself is often a victim to his own fire and genius."
 - k. "Every chimera of the brain is as vivid and intense as any of those inferences, which we formerly dignified with the name of conclusions concerning matters of fact, and sometimes as the present impressions of the senses."
 - l. "...the feelings of the passions are very different when excited by poetical fictions, from what they are when they are from belief and reality."
 - m. "Where an opinion admits of no doubt, or opposite probability, we attribute to it a full conviction: though the want of resemblance, or contiguity, may render its force inferior to that of other opinions. It is thus the understanding corrects the appearances of the senses, and makes us imagine, that an object at twenty foot distance seems even to the eye as large as one of the same dimensions at ten."
23. Some difficulties arising from belief
- a. Time required to reach a conclusion
 - i. "The probabilities of causes are of several kinds; but are all derived from the same origin, viz. the association of ideas to a present impression. As the habit, which produces the association, arises from the frequent conjunction of objects, it must arrive at its perfection by degrees, and must acquire new force from each instance, that falls under our observation. The first instance has little or no force: The second makes some addition to it: The third becomes still more sensible; and it is by these slow steps, that our judgment arrives at a full assurance. But before it attains this pitch of perfection, it passes through several inferior degrees, and in all of them is only to be esteemed a presumption or probability. The gradation, therefore, from probabilities to proofs is in many cases insensible; and the difference betwixt these kinds of evidence is more easily perceived in the remote degrees, than in the near and contiguous."
 - b. Integrating contrary or opposing causes
 - i. "... philosophers observing, that almost in every part of nature there is contained a vast variety of springs and principles, which are hid, by reason of their minuteness or remoteness, find that it is at least possible the contrariety of events may not proceed from any contingency in the cause, but from the secret operation of contrary causes."

- ii. "From the observation of several parallel instances, philosophers form a maxim, that the connection betwixt all causes and effects is equally necessary, and that its seeming uncertainty in some instances proceeds from the secret opposition of contrary causes."
- c. Habit
 - i. "We find from common experience, in our actions as well as reasonings, that a constant perseverance in any course of life produces a strong inclination and tendency to continue for the future; though there are habits of inferior degrees of force, proportioned to the inferior degrees of steadiness and uniformity in our conduct."
 - ii. **"When we follow only the habitual determination of the mind, we make the transition without any reflection, and interpose not a moment's delay betwixt the view of one object and the belief of that, which is often found to attend it. As the custom depends not upon any deliberation, it operates immediately, without allowing any time for reflection."**
 - iii. "First we may observe, that the supposition, that the future resembles the past, is not founded on arguments of any kind, but is derived entirely from habit, by which we are determined to expect for the future the same train of objects, to which we have been accustomed."
 - iv. "But, secondly, when in considering past experiments we find them of a contrary nature, this determination, though full and perfect in itself, presents us with no steady object, but offers us a number of disagreeing images in a certain order and proportion. The first impulse, therefore, is here broke into pieces, and diffuses itself over all those images, of which each partakes an equal share of that force and vivacity, that is derived from the impulse. Any of these past events may again happen; and we judge, that when they do happen, they will be mixed in the same proportion as in the past."

24. Correcting Errors with the Association of Ideas

- a. **"Let men be once fully persuaded of these two principles, that there, is nothing in any object, considered in itself, which can afford us a reason for drawing a conclusion beyond it; and, that even after the observation of the frequent or constant conjunction of objects, we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those of which we have had experience; I say, let men be once fully convinced of these two principles, and this will throw them so loose from all common systems, that they will make no difficulty of receiving any, which may appear the most extraordinary."**

25. General Rules and Analogy

- a. "According to the hypothesis above explained all kinds of reasoning from causes or effects are founded on two particulars, viz., the constant conjunction of any two objects in all past experience, and the resemblance of a present object to any one of them. The effect of these two particulars is, that the present object invigorates and enlivens the imagination; and the resemblance, along with the constant union, conveys this force and vivacity to the related idea; which we are therefore said to believe, or assent to."
- b. "In those probabilities of chance and causes above-explained, it is the constancy of the union, which is diminished; and in the probability derived from analogy, it is the resemblance only, which is affected. Without some degree of resemblance, as well as union, it is impossible there can be any reasoning: but as this resemblance admits of

many different degrees, the reasoning becomes proportionably more or less firm and certain.”

26. Belief based on Fading Vivacity and the Truth of Statements

- a. “The argument, which we found on any matter of fact we remember, is more or less convincing according as the fact is recent or remote; and though the difference in these degrees of evidence be not received by philosophy as solid and legitimate; because in that case an argument must have a different force to day, from what it shall have a month hence; yet notwithstanding the opposition of philosophy, it is certain, this circumstance has a considerable influence on the understanding, and secretly changes the authority of the same argument, according to the different times, in which it is proposed to us. A greater force and vivacity in the impression naturally conveys a greater to the related idea; and it is on the degrees of force and vivacity, that the belief depends, according to the foregoing system.”
- b. “...a man may receive a more lively conviction from a probable reasoning, which is close and immediate, than from a long chain of consequences, though just and conclusive in each part.”
- c. **“It is evident there is no point of ancient history, of which we can have any assurance, but by passing through many millions of causes and effects, and through a chain of arguments of almost an immeasurable length. Before the knowledge of the fact could come to the first historian, it must be conveyed through many mouths; and after it is committed to writing, each new copy is a new object, of which the connection with the foregoing is known only by experience and observation. Perhaps, therefore, it may be concluded from the precedent reasoning, that the evidence of all ancient history must now be lost; or at least, will be lost in time, as the chain of causes increases, and runs on to a greater length. But as it seems contrary to common sense to think, that if the republic of letters, and the art of printing continue on the same footing as at present, our posterity, even after a thousand ages, can ever doubt if there has been such a man as Julius Cæsar; this may be considered as an objection to the present system. If belief consisted only in a certain vivacity, conveyed from an original impression, it would decay by the length of the transition, and must at last be utterly extinguished: And vice versa, if belief on some occasions be not capable of such an extinction; it must be something different from that vivacity.”**
- d. “Every new probability diminishes the original conviction; and however great that conviction may be supposed, it is impossible it can subsist under such re-iterated diminutions.”

27. Belief based on General Rules

- a. “... it is the nature of custom not only to operate with its full force, when objects are presented, that are exactly the, same with those to which we have been accustomed; but also to operate in an inferior degree, when we discover such as are similar; and though the habit loses somewhat of its force by every difference, yet it is seldom entirely destroyed, where any considerable circumstances remain the same.”
- b. “In almost all kinds of causes there is a complication of circumstances, of which some are essential, and others superfluous; some are absolutely requisite to the production of the effect, and others are only conjoined by accident. Now we may observe, that when these superfluous circumstances are numerous, and remarkable, and frequently conjoined with the essential, they have such an influence on the imagination, that even in the absence of the latter they carry us on to the conception of the usual effect, and give to that conception a force and vivacity, which make it superior to the mere fictions

of the fancy. We may correct this propensity by a reflection on the nature of those circumstances: but it is still certain, that custom takes the start, and gives a bias to the imagination.”

- c. “It may, therefore, be concluded, that our judgment and imagination can never be contrary, and that custom cannot operate on the latter faculty after such a manner, as to render it opposite to the former. This difficulty we can remove after no other manner, than by supposing the influence of general rules. We shall afterwards take notice of some general rules, by which we ought to regulate our judgment concerning causes and effects; and these rules are formed on the nature of our understanding, and on our experience of its operations in the judgments we form concerning objects.”

28. Summary of the Influence of Cause and Effect on Associations of Ideas

- a. “There may two definitions be given of this relation, which are only different, by their presenting a different view of the same object, and making us consider it either as a philosophical or as a natural relation; either as a comparison of two ideas, or as an association betwixt them.”
 - i. **“We may define a cause to be an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in like relations of precedency and contiguity to those objects that resemble the latter.”**
 - ii. **“A cause is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it, that the idea, of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other.”**
- b. “I find only, that like objects are constantly placed in like relations of succession and contiguity. Again, when I consider the influence of this constant conjunction, I perceive, that such a relation can never be an object of reasoning, and can never operate upon the mind, but by means of custom, which determines the imagination to make a transition from the idea of one object to that of its usual attendant, and from the impression of one to a more lively idea of the other.”
- c. “For as our idea of efficiency is derived from the constant conjunction of two objects, wherever this is observed, the cause is efficient; and where it is not, there can never be a cause of any kind.”
- d. **“We may now be able fully to overcome all that repugnance, which it is so natural for us to entertain against the foregoing reasoning, by which we endeavored to prove, that the necessity of a cause to every beginning of existence is not founded on any arguments either demonstrative or intuitive. Such an opinion will not appear strange after the foregoing definitions. If we define a cause to be an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in a like relation of .priority and contiguity to those objects, that resemble the latter; we may easily conceive, that there is no absolute nor metaphysical necessity, that every beginning of existence should be attended with such an object. If we define a cause to be, An object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it in the imagination, that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other; we shall make still less difficulty of assenting to this opinion. Such an influence on the mind is in itself perfectly extraordinary and incomprehensible; nor can we be certain of its reality, but from experience and observation.”**
- e. **“...we can never have reason to believe that any object exists, of which we cannot form an idea. For as all our reasonings concerning existence are derived from causation, and as all our reasonings concerning causation are derived from the**

experienced conjunction of objects, not from any reasoning or reflection, the same experience must give us a notion of these objects, and must remove all mystery from our conclusions.”

- f. “I need not observe, that a full knowledge of the object is not requisite, but only of those qualities of it, which we believe to exist.”
 - g. “According to the precedent doctrine, there are no objects which by the mere survey, without consulting experience, we can determine to be the causes of any other; and no objects, which we can certainly determine in the same manner not to be the causes. Anything may produce anything. Creation, annihilation, motion, reason, volition; all these may arise from one another, or from any other object we can imagine. Nor will this appear strange, if we compare two principles explained above, that the constant conjunction of objects determines their causation, and that, property speaking, no objects are contrary to each other but existence and non-existence. Where objects are not contrary, nothing hinders them from having that constant conjunction, on which the relation of cause and effect totally depends.”
29. Hume’s Rules Governing His Metaphysics (A Summary)
- a. “Since therefore it is possible for all objects to become causes or effects to each other, it may be proper to fix some general rules, by which we may know when they really are so.
 - i. Rule 1 - The cause and effect must be contiguous in space and time.
 - ii. Rule 2 - The cause must be prior to the effect.
 - iii. Rule 3 - There must be a constant union betwixt the cause and effect. It is chiefly this quality, that constitutes the relation.
 - iv. Rule 4 - The same cause always produces the same effect, and the same effect never arises but from the same cause. This principle we derive from experience, and is the source of most of our philosophical reasonings. For when by any clear experiment we have discovered the causes or effects of any phenomenon, we immediately extend our observation to every phenomenon of the same kind, without waiting for that constant repetition, from which the first idea of this relation is derived.
 - v. Rule 5 - There is another principle, which hangs upon this, viz. that where several different objects produce the same effect, it must be by means of some quality, which we discover to be common amongst them. For as like effects imply like causes, we must always ascribe the causation to the circumstance, wherein we discover the resemblance.
 - vi. Rule 6 – The following principle is founded on the same reason. The difference in the effects of two resembling objects must proceed from that particular, in which they differ. For as like causes always produce like effects, when in any instance we find our expectation to be disappointed, we must conclude that this irregularity proceeds from some difference in the causes.
 - vii. Rule 7 - When any object increases or diminishes with the increase or diminution of its cause, it is to be regarded as a compounded effect, derived from the union of the several different effects, which arise from the several different parts of the cause. The absence or presence of one part of the cause is here supposed to be always attended with the absence or presence of a proportionable part of the effect. This constant conjunction sufficiently proves, that the one part is the cause of the other. We must, however, beware not to draw such a conclusion from a few experiments. A certain degree of

heat gives pleasure; if you diminish that heat, the pleasure diminishes; but it does not follow, that if you augment it beyond a certain degree, the pleasure will likewise augment; for we find that it degenerates into pain.

viii. Rule 8 - The eighth and last rule I shall take notice of is, that an object, which exists for any time in its full perfection without any effect, is not the sole cause of that effect, but requires to be assisted by some other principle, which may forward its influence and operation. For as like effects necessarily follow from like causes, and in a contiguous time and place, their separation for a moment shows, that these causes are not complete ones.

- b. "Our scholastic head-pieces and logicians show no such superiority above the mere vulgar in their reason and ability, as to give us any inclination to imitate them in delivering a long system of rules and precepts to direct our judgment, in philosophy. All the rules of this nature are very easy in their invention, but extremely difficult in their application; and even experimental philosophy, which seems the most natural and simple of any, requires the utmost stretch of human judgment. There is no phenomenon in nature, but what is compounded and modified by so many different circumstances, that in order to arrive at the decisive point, we must carefully separate whatever is superfluous, and enquire by new experiments, if every particular circumstance of the first experiment was essential to it."
 - c. "If this be the case even in natural philosophy, how much more in moral, where there is a much greater complication of circumstances, and where those views and sentiments, which are essential to any action of the mind, are so implicit and obscure, that they often escape our strictest attention, and are not only unaccountable in their causes, but even unknown in their existence?"
30. Hume asserts that his metaphysics of the mind is correct because it works both for animals and men. He claims that no other system can claim the same.
- a. "Next to the ridicule of denying an evident truth, is that of taking much pains to defend it; and no truth appears to me more evident, than that beasts are endowed with thought and reason as well as men. The arguments are in this case so obvious, that they never escape the most stupid and ignorant."
 - b. "We are conscious, that we ourselves, in adapting means to ends, are guided by reason and design, and that it is not ignorantly nor casually we perform those actions, which tend to self-preservation, to the obtaining pleasure, and avoiding pain. When therefore we see other creatures, in millions of instances, perform like actions, and direct them to the ends, all our principles of reason and probability carry us with an invincible force to believe the existence of a like cause."
 - c. "It is from the resemblance of the external actions of animals to those we ourselves perform, that we judge their internal likewise to resemble ours; and the same principle of reasoning, carried one step farther, will make us conclude that since our internal actions resemble each other, the causes, from which they are derived, must also be resembling."
 - d. **"When any hypothesis, therefore, is advanced to explain a mental operation, which is common to men and beasts, we must apply the same hypothesis to both; and as every true hypothesis will abide this trial, so I may venture to affirm, that no false one will ever be able to endure it."**
 - e. "The common defect of those systems, which philosophers have employed to account for the actions of the mind, is, that they suppose such a subtlety and refinement of thought, as not only exceeds the capacity of mere animals, but even of children and the

common people in our own species; who are notwithstanding susceptible of the same emotions and affections as persons of the most accomplished genius and understanding.”

- f. “It is necessary in the first place, that there be some impression immediately present to their memory or senses, in order to be the foundation of their judgment.”
- g. **“Now let any philosopher make a trial, and endeavor to explain that act of the mind, which we call belief, and give an account of the principles, from which it is derived, independent of the influence of custom on the imagination, and let his hypothesis be equally applicable to beasts as to the human species; and after he has done this, I promise to embrace his opinion.”**
- h. “...if my system be the only one, which can answer to all these terms, it may be received as entirely satisfactory and convincing. And that it is the only one, is evident almost without any reasoning. Beasts certainly never perceive any real connection among objects. It is therefore by experience they infer one from another. They can never by any arguments form a general conclusion, that those objects, of which they have had no experience, resemble those of which they have. It is therefore by means of custom alone, that experience operates upon them.”
- i. **“Nothing shows more the force of habit in reconciling us to any phenomenon, than this, that men are not astonished at the operations of their own reason, at the same time, that they admire the instinct of animals, and find a difficulty in explaining it, merely because it cannot be reduced to the very same principles. To consider the matter aright, reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls, which carries us along a certain train of ideas, and endows them with particular qualities, according to their particular situations and relations. This instinct, it is true, arises from past observation and experience; but can anyone give the ultimate reason, why past experience and observation produces such an effect, any more than why nature alone should produce it? Nature may certainly produce whatever can arise from habit: Nay, habit is nothing but one of the principles of nature, and derives all its force from that origin.”**