

Hume
Carnegie Mellon University
Fall 2015

INSTRUCTOR Dr. Kevin Zollman
email: kzollman@andrew.cmu.edu
office: Baker Hall 161E
office hours: by appointment

DESCRIPTION David Hume was a prominent Scottish philosopher of the 18th century. One of the most famous “empiricists,” his thought has deeply influenced contemporary philosophy. Many philosophers, including Immanuel Kant, Rudolph Carnap, and Charles Sanders Pierce credit Hume as a major intellectual precursor to their own work.

Before there was a word for it, Hume was a social scientist. He was as much of a psychologist, economist, sociologist, and anthropologist as he was a philosopher. In this course, we will read almost all of Hume's largest and most philosophically complete work, *A Treatise on Human Nature*. The *Treatise* covers a lot of philosophical ground; Hume weighs in on almost every philosophical problem of his day and creates a few new ones along the way.

COURSE OBJECTIVES By the end of the course, you will have a deeper understanding of the philosophical problems Hume addresses as well as Hume's approach to those problems. Of course, you need not agree with Hume. In fact, you can think he's full of it. But, by the end of the course, you should be able to say *why* you think that.

Along the way, you will also develop general philosophical ability. By the end of the course, you should be better able to understand arguments both in and out of philosophy. In combination with other courses taken at this university, this should leave you better able to judge whether or not you agree with a argumentative position taken by another.

READINGS David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Dover Philosophical Classics

All other readings provided on blackboard

GRADING 10 % Class participation
30% Three 5-page papers plus argument diagram

Class participation will be self-evaluated at the end of each class.

You will be allowed three absences throughout the semester. Unless you can excuse *all* your absences with legitimate excuses, no additional absences will be allowed. Plan accordingly.

PAPERS During this course you will need to write three papers which describe an argument Hume puts forward to defend a particular philosophical position. Then, I want you to critically engage with that argument. “Critical engagement” means that either you disagree with Hume, you defend Hume against a potential objection, or you buttress Hume’s conclusion with an additional argument Hume didn’t consider.

Your papers must also be accompanied by an argument diagram of the argument you are considering. If you haven’t seen argument diagramming before, a link is available on blackboard.

I will give a selection of example topics for the first paper, which you can use or come up with one of your own. But as a general rule, the more narrow the topic, the better.

MISCONDUCT AND PLAGIARISM Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. If you commit an act of plagiarism you will fail the course and will be reported to central administration. Are you unsure about what is plagiarism? Look at plagiarism.org.

LATE WORK If you are having trouble finishing the work on time contact me before the due date and we can discuss arrangements and penalties for late work. Unless serious misfortune befell you, I will not accept late work if you don’t approach me before hand.

Date	Topic
Sept 1	Introduction
Sept 3	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditation I
Sept 8	Introduction and Book I, Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the origin of our ideas • Division of the subject • Of the ideas of memory and imagination • Of the connection or association of ideas • Of relations • Of modes and substances • Of abstract ideas
Sept 10	Book I, Part II Sections I – VI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the infinite divisibility of our ideas of space and time • Of the infinite divisibility of space and time • Of the other qualities of our ideas of space and time • Objections answered • The same subject continued • Of the idea of extence and of external existence
Sept 15	Rosemary Newman, “Hume on Space and Geometry”
Sept 17	Book I, Part III Sections I – VI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of knowledge • Of probability; and of the idea of cause and effect • Why a cause is always necessary • Of the component parts of our reasonings concerning cause and effect • Of the impressions of the senses and memory • Of the inference from the impression to the idea
Sept 22	Louis Loeb, “Psychology, epistemology, and skepticism in Hume's arguments about induction”
Sept 24	Book I, Part III Sections VII – X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the nature of the idea or belief • Of the causes of belief • Of the effects of other relations and other habits • Of the influence of belief
Sept 29	Book I, Part III Sections XI – XVI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the probability of chances • Of the probability of causes • Of unphilosophical probability • Of the idea of necessary connection • Rules by which to judge of causes and effects • Of the reason of animals

Date	Topic
Oct 1	Chris Lorkowski, "Hume: Causation"
Oct 6	Book I, Part IV Section I – II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of scepticism with regard to reason • Of scepticism with regard to the senses
Oct 8	Book I, Part IV Sections III – IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the ancient philosophy • Of the modern philosophy
	Robert Fogelin, "Hume's Skepticism"
FIRST PAPER DUE	
Oct 13	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> Excerpt from Meditation VI Elisabeth of Bohemia and Rene Descartes, "Correspondence" Excerpts
Oct 15	Book I, Part IV Sections V – VII <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the immateriality of the soul • Of personal identity • Conclusion
Oct 20	Jane McIntyre, "Hume and the Problem of Personal Identity"
Oct 22	Book II, Part I, Sections I – III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division of the subject • Of pride and humility; their objects and causes • Whence these objects and causes are derived
Oct 27	Book II, Part I, Sections IV-VII <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the relations of impressions and ideas • Of the influence of these relations on pride and humility • Limitations of this system • Of vice and virtue
Oct 29	Book II, Part I, Section XI, Part II, Sections I – III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the love of fame • Of the objects and causes of love and hatred • Experiments to confirm this system • Difficulties solved
Nov 3	Book II, Part II, Sections IV, VI-VII <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the love of relations • Of benevolence and anger • Of compassion
Nov 5	Jane McIntyre "Hume's Passions"

Date	Topic
Nov 10	Book II, Part III, Sections I – III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of liberty and necessity • The same subject continued • Of the influencing motives of the will
Nov 12	Paul Russell, “Hume on Free Will”
SECOND PAPER DUE	
Nov 17	Book III, Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral distinctions not derived from reason • Moral distinctions derived from a moral sense
Nov 19	Book III, Part II, Sections I-V <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice whether a natural or artificial virtue • Of the origin of justice and property • Of the rules that determine property • Of the transference of property by consent • Of the obligation of promises
Nov 24	Book III, Part II, Section VI-IX <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some further reflections concerning justice and injustice • Of the origin of government • Of the source of allegiance • Of the measure of allegiance
Dec 1	Book II, Part II, Section X-XII <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the objects of allegiance • Of the laws of nations • Of chastity and modesty
Dec 3	Alasdair MacIntyre, “Hume on Is and Ought”
Dec 8	Book III, Part III, Sections I – VI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the origin of the natural virtues and vices • Of greatness of mind • Of goodness and benevolence • Of natural abilities • Some farther reflections concern the natural virtues • Conclusion
Dec 10	Jacqueline Taylor, “Justice and the foundations of social morality in Hume's Treatise”
FINAL DAY	THIRD PAPER DUE