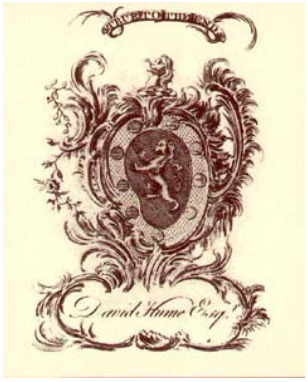

**The Minds of David Hume**
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# THE MINDS OF DAVID HUME[1]

Providing a theoretical reduction of the mind to a collection of perceptions is one thing; providing merely a lawful description of mental phenomena is another. While the former requires the latter, it is possible to provide a lawful description of mental phenomena that leaves open the question of the nature of the mind. In this paper I shall argue that Hume's conceptual move from the science of man in the Treatise to the science of human nature in the Enquiries consists of a rejection of a theory of mind in favor of a lawful description, and this provides nonstylistic grounds for his disavowal of the Treatise.[2]

## 1. Meta-Theory

One of Hume's tasks in the Treatise of Human Nature is to defend his bundle theory of mind. His stated objective in the Introduction to that work is to "explain the principles of human nature" (T xvi) and discover the "essence of the mind ... from careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations." (T xvii) In our examination of the Treatise, we shall find that there are systematic connections between his copy theory of ideas and his bundle theory of mind, and that the failure of the latter is sufficient to cast doubt on the former. The method Hume uses in constructing his theory of mind is "experimental," and he provides some remarks on the adequacy of such an experimental theory. It is with these that we shall begin.

Hume's meta-theoretical principles are of three kinds: principles governing the acceptability of theoretical terms, a principle of parsimony, and a principle of explanatory completeness. As we shall see, each of these kinds of principles is relevant to considerations of the acceptability and epistemic status of scientific theories.

It is clear that Hume accepts an empiricist theory of meaning, and, therefore, that any theoretical terms one employs in a scientific or philosophical theory must have its meaning assigned on the basis of experience. (cf. T 17-25 and E 21-22) This is a minimal condition for the intelligibility of a theory. Although a commitment to an empiricist theory of meaning does not entail that one must be directly acquainted with theoretical objects, it does place several constraints upon the theoretical terms one uses. In his discussion of Spinozism, Hume spells out some of these constraints. In his words:

> I say then, that since we may suppose, but never conceive a specific difference betwixt an object and impression; any conclusion we form concerning the connexion and repugnance of impressions, will not be known certainly to be applicable to objects; but that on the other hand, whatever conclusions of this kind we form concerning objects, will most certainly be applicable to impressions. The reason is not difficult. As an object is suppos'd to be different from an impression, we cannot be sure, that the circumstance, upon which we found our reasoning, is common to both, supposing we form the reasoning upon the impression. 'Tis still possible, that the object may differ from it in that particular. But when we first form our reasoning concerning the object, 'tis beyond doubt, that the same reasoning must extend to the impression: And that because the

> quality of the object, upon which the argument is founded, must at least be conceiv'd by the mind; and cou'd not be conceiv'd, unless it were common to an impression; since we have no idea but what is deriv'd from that origin. Thus we may establish it as a certain maxim, that we can never, by any principle, but by an irregular kind of reasoning from experience, discover a connexion or repugnance betwixt objects, which extends not to impressions; tho' the inverse proposition may not be equally true, that all the discoverable relations of impressions are common to objects. (T 241-242)

Hume's empiricist theory of meaning places constraints upon the descriptions one can offer of theoretical objects. Although the objects in one's theory need not be immediately observable, they cannot be "specifically different" (different in kind) from impressions, i.e., the characteristics assignable to theoretical objects must be characteristics of the same species or kind as one assigns to impressions.[3] Thus, properties such as motion or spin can be applied to theoretical objects, since such terms obtain their meaning in the domain of impressions: terms denoting nonempirical properties would be unintelligible.

But the passage is not concerned solely with the delimitation of the properties of theoretical objects to the empirically observable. It also raises issues regarding the construction and evaluation of a theory. Hume claims that, in constructing a theory, one cannot simply draw inferences from the properties of impressions to the properties of objects, since "'Tis still possible, that the object may differ from it in that particular." On the other hand, if one <u>begins</u> by constructing a theoretical description of objects,

one's reasonings regarding objects extends to one's reasonings concerning impressions, since it is on the basis of impressions that one assigns meanings to theoretical terms. What might be called 'Hume's principle of theoretical objects' allows one to examine the consistency of one's theoretical descriptions: if a claim is absurd with respect to the domain of impressions, the same claim is absurd with respect to the domain of theoretical objects, since the meaning of a theoretical term is derived from the domain of impressions.[4]

Finally, the passage suggests that Hume, like Locke and Bacon,[5] recognizes a distinction between three phases of a theoretical investigation. Although one might begin with observation, at a certain point one constructs an explanatory theory (hypothesis), and one then proceeds to examine the evidence in an attempt to confirm or refute that theory.

In addition to his principle of theoretical objects, Hume accepts a version of the principle of parsimony, contending that it is "an inviolable maxim in philosophy, that where any particular cause is sufficient for an effect, we ought to rest satisfied with it, and ought not to multiply causes without necessity." (T 578) Thus, in one's theory, one should attempt to discover the smallest number of different kinds of theoretical entities and natural laws that are sufficient to explain a certain domain of phenomena.

Finally, Hume holds that a theory must be explanatorily complete. The search for natural laws occurs at the level of observable phenomena: it follows the inductive principles sketched in the "Rules by which to Judge of Causes and Effects." (T 173-176) But if the theory is complete, it must

explain all phenomena of a particular kind, and, as we shall see, particularly the problematic cases. Since Hume takes Newtonian mechanics as a paradigm of a theory that is explanatorily complete (E 14-15), an adequate theory of mind must provide a similarly complete explanation of mental phenomena.

Evidence that Hume actually considers these the proper grounds for accepting a theory can be drawn from the Natural History of Religion. Commenting on the origins of polytheism, Hume indicates that primitive peoples posited a multiplicity of gods as the unknown cause of events. Contrasting this with the corpuscular hypothesis, he writes:

> Could men anatomize nature, according to the most probable, at least the most intelligible philosophy, they would find, that these causes are nothing but the particular fabric and structure of the minute parts of their own bodies and of external objects; and that, by a regular and constant machinery, all the events are produced, about which they are so much concerned. But this philosophy exceeds the comprehension of the ignorant multitude, who can only conceive the unknown causes in a general and confused manner; though their imagination, perpetually employed on the same subject, must labour to form some particular and distinct idea of them. The more they consider these causes themselves, and the uncertainty of their operation, the less satisfaction do they meet with in their researches; and, however unwilling, they must at least have abandoned so arduous an attempt, were it not for a propensity in human nature, which leads into a system, and gives them some satisfaction. (GG, 4: 316-317)

There are four reasons why the corpuscular hypothesis is superior to polytheism. (1) The theoretical entities (corpuscles) are wholly describable on the basis of the properties of impressions. The corpuscular hypothesis is consistent with both an empiricist theory of meaning and Hume's principle of theoretical objects. (2) The corpuscular hypothesis is simpler than the religious hypothesis, since it allows one to explain physical events solely on the basis of objects that are themselves physical. (3) The movements of the corpuscles can be explained on the basis of a limited number of natural laws, viz., the principles of Newtonian mechanics. (4) Assuming that the thesis of determinism is true (cf. T 406, E 92-93 and 108-116), such theoretical explanations would be complete.

One further point should be noted regarding the passage from the Natural History of Religion. Although Hume suggests that the corpuscular hypothesis is "the most probable, at least the most intelligible philosophy" (GG 4: 316), he does not claim that the theory could be known to be true. Nonetheless, as he indicates in his letter to John Stewart, the absence of intuitive or demonstrative certainty does not detract from either the truth of a belief (theory) or its certainty, although the kind of certainty differs from that of intuition or demonstration. (L 1: 187) This suggests that the most Hume would claim in favor of a theory is moral certainty,[6] that, in accordance with his meta-theoretical strictures, the theory in question provides the best explanation of a certain domain of phenomena.[7]

Given these meta-theoretical considerations, we are now in a position to turn to Hume's account of mind in the Treatise.

## 2. The Science of Man

Our discussion of the theory of mind Hume develops in the Treatise will focus on four questions. First, which entities are deemed primitive in his theory? Second, what are the putative natural laws that will allow one to explain mental phenomena on the basis of those primitive theoretical entities? Third, what evidence is deemed sufficient to establish the plausibility of the theory? Finally, did Hume consider his defense of the theory adequate?

The fundamental elements in Hume's theory are simple perceptions, and this class is subdivided into simple impressions and simple ideas. (cf. T 1) Although Hume initially presents the distinction between impressions and ideas in terms of the force and vivacity of impressions vis-à-vis ideas, one issue with which he is concerned is the relationship(s) between simple impressions and simple ideas. His copy theory of simple ideas is presented as a hypothesis to explain this relationship: simple ideas are caused by and resemble simple impressions. It is important to notice that the copy theory is presented as a causal hypothesis concerning the question "how [impressions and ideas] stand with regard to their existence, and which of the impressions and ideas are causes and which effects." (T 4) As Hume writes:

> 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 deriv'd from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent. (T 4)

Notice the scope of this claim. Hume contends that the examination of the question of the causal relationship between impressions and ideas is one of the fundamental issues of concern in the Treatise. The theory will be deemed adequate if and only if all simple ideas can be explained on the basis of simple impressions. The evidence for the copy theory that he provides in the remainder of the section is only preliminary. Even the case of the missing shade of blue will not provide evidence against the copy theory, so long as Hume's general theory can explain why the apparent counter-example is merely apparent.[8] Since such an explanation is based upon statements of natural laws and can be adequate if and only if one's statements of putative natural laws are true, we shall now turn to Hume's laws: the principles of the association of ideas.

"The qualities, from which this association arises, and by which the mind is after this manner convey'd from one idea to another, are three, viz. RESEMBLANCE, CONTIGUITY in time or place, and CAUSE and EFFECT." (T 11) Hume is concerned with the factual claim that when one perceives that two objects resemble, are contiguous, or are causally related, one's thought of one of these objects naturally leads the mind to think of the other. In this section his defense of that thesis is based upon nothing more than several observations that, in fact, when one perceives an object, one thinks of other objects that (a) resemble it, (b) are taken to be contiguous with it, or (c) are taken to be causally related to it. (T 11-13) His concerns are purely observational. At this point, there is no inference from one's observations to the relations that provide the "connections" between the perceptions in the mind. Indeed, even after he introduces the notion of

belief, and defines belief as "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 96), his discussion of the causes of beliefs is still posed in terms of observations of empirical facts: as a matter of empirical fact, he contends, the observation of an object (an impression) causes one to have ideas that resemble that object, ideas of objects that are contiguous in space and time with that object, or ideas of objects that are the causes or effects of that kind of object. (cf. T 98-106) At this stage, Hume has provided no positive account of the nature of the mind; he has done nothing more than provide inductive evidence that the principles of the association of ideas describe the operations of the mind.

Hume provides no positive account of the nature of mind prior to Part IV of Book I. There he describes the mind as "a heap or collection of *different perceptions*, united together by certain relations, and suppos'd, tho' falsely, to be endow'd with a perfect simplicity and identity." (T 207) Later he specifies the relations that obtain among these perceptions. He writes:

> The only question, therefore, which remains, is, by what relations this uninterrupted progress of our thought is produc'd, when we consider the successive existence of a mind or thinking person. And here 'tis evident we must confine ourselves to *resemblance* and *causation*, and must drop contiguity, which has little or no influence in the present case. (T 260)

The relations of resemblance, causation, and, to a lesser extent, contiguity, unite the perceptions in the mind. The question, then, is what, if anything, justifies Hume's contention that it is these, and only these, relations that obtain among the percep-

tions in the mind? Hume's answer rests upon two kinds of considerations: (1) the observational justification of the principles of the association of ideas, and (2) the presumed fact that the use of these principles will allow one to explain why one has those beliefs one has. Since belief is construed as the force and vivacity of ideas, and since ideas are held to be copies of impressions, Hume would be justified in claiming that the relations of association obtain among the perceptions in the mind only if all beliefs -- particularly, empirically problematic beliefs -- could be explained on the basis of the principles of the association of ideas.

Hume's test cases focus on the belief in the external world and beliefs in the existence of material and immaterial substance. One of Hume's objectives in Book I, Part IV of the Treatise is to explain why one holds such beliefs, even though none is warranted by the empirical evidence. In Section 2, he explains why one holds one of several beliefs regarding the existence of and identity of external objects. In Section 3, he explains why one believes in the existence of material substance, i.e., he explains why one believes that material objects are simple and perfectly identical through time. In Section 6, he explains why one believes that one's own mind is simple and perfectly identical through time, i.e., why one believes that the mind is a substance.[9] If the principles of the association of ideas provide the basis for successful explanations of these empirically problematic beliefs, Hume would have grounds for holding that the bundle theory of mind is justified, for the theory is both simpler and more intelligible than its closest rival, viz., the substratum theory of mind.[10] But is his explanatory program successful?

No. In the Appendix to the Treatise Hume indicates that in "the section concerning personal identity, I find myself involv'd in such a labyrinth, that, I must confess, I neither know how to correct my former opinions, nor how to render them consistent." (T 633) If Hume's objective in "Of Personal Identity" is to explain the belief in the perfect identity and simplicity of the mind (cf. T 253, 263, 633, 636), his lamentations in the Appendix are sufficient to indicate that he believed his explanation had failed. I have explained elsewhere why, even if his explanation of the belief in the perfect identity of the mind is acceptable, it will not allow one to explain the belief in the simplicity of the mind.[11] For our present purposes, suffice it to say that the several distinctions Hume draws regarding identity and the conceptual confusions regarding them cannot be drawn with the same consequences regarding simplicity. But the inability of Hume's theory to explain the belief in the simplicity of the mind indicates that the bundle theory lacks explanatory completeness, and, consequently, on Hume's own principles it is unacceptable.

## 3. The Science of Human Nature

We have seen Hume's attempt to develop a theory of mind in the Treatise fails on grounds of explanatory completeness. Although the Appendix to the Treatise suggests that he agonized over the inadequacies of his theory (T 633-6; cf. L 1: 38-9), there is no evidence that he was able to refurbish the bundle theory or to provide an alternative theory that would meet his meta-theoretical requirements. In turning to the Enquiries, we shall find that his "account of mind" there consists of nothing more

than a lawful description of the operations of the mind, a description that is independent of considerations of the nature of the mind. There are four ways in which this shift is manifest in the Enquiries. (1) Although Hume's objective is to provide an account of the mind, he makes no positive statement regarding the nature of the mind. His account is consistent with either a substance or a bundle theory of mind. (2) The evidence for the copy theory of ideas is independent of the principles of the association of ideas. (3) Explanations and predictions are made strictly at the level of phenomena. (4) Finally, there is an increased emphasis on natural laws.

As a proponent of the accurate and abstruse method for doing moral philosophy, Hume's task in the Enquiries is to "find those principles, which regulate our understanding, excite our sentiments, and make us approve or blame any particular object, action, or behaviour." (E 6) As this is stated, Hume appears to be concerned solely with the discovery of the laws governing thought, rather than to discover the "essence of the mind." (cf. T xvii) Further, given his reduction of the notion of 'force' to lawful regularity (E 69-70), Hume's extolment of Newton's success in "determin[ing] the laws and forces, by which the revolutions of the planets are governed and directed" and his hope for similar success with respect to the mind (E 14) can be understood as nothing more than a search for the laws governing thought. Hume's statement of his objectives in the first section of the second Enquiry also supports my contention that he is searching for nothing more than a lawful description of the activi-

ties of the mind. In stating his objective, he contrasts his own method with an alternative scientific method. He writes:

> The only object of reasoning [in morals] is to discover the circumstances on both sides, which are common to these qualities; to observe that particular in which the estimable qualities agree on the one hand, and the blameable on the other; and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and find those universal principles, from which all censure and or approbation are ultimately derived. As this is a question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instances. The other scientific method, where a general abstract principle is first established, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and conclusions, may be more perfect in itself, but suits less the imperfection of human nature, and is a common source of illusion and mistake in this as well as in other subjects. (E 174)

The objective of the second Enquiry is to discover those principles that describe the situations in which one actually approves or disapproves of an action or motive. It is nothing more than an attempt to construct inductive generalizations that describe experience, and in the body of the second Enquiry one finds little more than an extensive case study showing that, as a matter of fact, human beings approve of those actions and motives that are useful to themselves or others.[12] Hume contrasts this "experimental method" with one in which "a general abstract principle is first established, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and conclusions." (E 174) As we have seen, this is the method that Hume himself employs in the Treatise,

a method of establishing general principles (the principles of the association of ideas) and then explaining other phenomena (beliefs in the external world and substance) in an attempt to confirm the theory. Hume's distinction between the "experimental method" in the Enquiries and the "other scientific method," the method he himself had employed in the Treatise, provides strong evidence that he had consciously changed his philosophical objectives from giving an account of the nature of the mind to merely giving a lawful description of the operations of the mind.

If this is correct, then one should find that the several laws of thought proposed in the Enquiries, including the copy theory of ideas, are supported solely on the basis of inductive generalizations from experience. This is what one finds. Recall that in the Treatise Hume claimed a "full examination" of the adequacy of the copy theory of simple ideas "is the subject of the present treatise." (T 4) No such claim is made in the first Enquiry. If the copy theory were a part of a more general theory, then, although one might provide inductive evidence for the truth of the copy theory, the copy theory of ideas would be deemed adequate if and only if the theory of which it is a part were adequate. As we have seen, there is reason to believe that Hume considered the theory of mind he proposed in the Treatise inadequate, and with this, the copy theory of ideas was called into doubt. As in the first section of the Treatise, the Hume of the first Enquiry provides inductive evidence for the truth of the copy theory (E 19-20), but in the Enquiry, this is the only evidence he provides for the truth of the copy theory. The fact that he claimed no theoretical connection between the copy

theory of ideas and any other aspect of his account of mind suggests that there is a shift away from an account of the nature of the mind to a mere account of the laws governing thought.

One finds a similar shift with respect to the laws of the association of ideas. In the 1777 edition of the first Enquiry, Hume's evidence for the principles of the association of ideas is two-fold. First, he contends that "It is evident that there is a principle of connexion between the different thoughts or ideas of the mind, and that, in their appearance to the memory or imagination, they introduce each other with a certain degree of method and regularity." (E 23) His evidence for this is drawn from observations on various kinds of thinking and discourse. Second, he contends that "there appear to be only three principles of connexion among ideas, namely, Resemblance, Contiguity in time or place, and Cause or Effect." (E 24) The evidence for this claim is given in a single paragraph. Hume writes:

> That these principles serve to connect ideas will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original [resemblance]: the mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an enquiry or discourse concerning the others [contiguity]: and if we think of a wound, we can scarce forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it [cause and effect]. But that this enumeration is complete, and that there are no other principles of association except these, may be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own satisfaction. All we can do, in such cases, is to run over several instances, and examine carefully the principle which binds the different thoughts to each other, never stopping till we render

> the principle as general as possible. The more instances we examine, and the *more* care we employ, the more assurance we shall acquire, that the enumeration, which we form from the whole, is complete and entire. (E 24)

Hume's evidence for the principles of association is limited to a few instances plus a promissory note that further instances will bear out his hypothesis. Further, all the instances Hume provides are all drawn from one's immediate observations. This is all the evidence for the principles of the association of ideas in the 1777 edition of the first Enquiry. In the pre-1777 editions of the first Enquiry, Hume provided a more detailed examination of cases by examining the role of the association of ideas in narrative compositions, but, again, the cases involved are strictly based upon observation: the evidence for the acceptance of the rules of association is based strictly upon inductions from observable phenomena. (cf GG 4: 19n-23n)[13]

It is one thing to discover general rules. It is another thing to apply them and to ask what inferences can be drawn on the basis of the lawful description of a phenomenon. The issues we should consider are, Does the Hume of the Enquiries use the principles of the association of ideas to explain phenomena? If he does, are all the phenomena explained purely observable phenomena? And does he use these explanations to draw any inferences regarding the nature of the mind?

In the first Enquiry, Hume's sole use of the principles of the association of ideas is to explain the transfer of force and vivacity from impressions to ideas in belief contexts. Much of his evidence for this is drawn verbatim from the Treatise (E 51-53; cf. T 99-101), and even those portions that

differ in detail remain the same in spirit: there is an observable increase in the force and vivacity of an idea that follows an impression in a belief context. On the other hand, the use of the principles of association to explain such empirically problematic beliefs as the beliefs in the existence of an external world and the beliefs in material and immaterial substance is markedly absent in the Enquiries.

Is this absence of an attempt to explain problematic beliefs in the Enquiries symptomatic of a more general change in the Enquiries, or does it merely mark an attempt on Hume's part to popularize his writings? I believe they can reasonably be taken to mark a change in his philosophical objectives. It was on the basis of the putative success of the explanations of these problematic beliefs that Hume could claim his theory of mind provides the best explanation of mental phenomena and could infer that the mind is a bundle of perceptions. In the first Enquiry, no inference is made from the propriety of the principles of association to the nature of the mind. Allusions to the bundle theory of mind, which were so prominent in the Treatise (cf. T 207, 251, 264, 277), are strikingly absent in both the Enquiries and the Dissertation on the Passions. Further, Hume's invectives against the doctrine of substance, his metaphysical considerations regarding the nature of perceptions, and the discussion of mind-body interaction (T 232-250), have few counterparts in the Enquiries. Although he claims that the doctrine of material substance as "only a certain unknown, inexplicable something, as the cause of our perceptions; [is] a notion so imperfect, that no sceptic will think it worth while to contend against it" (E 155), in "Of the Idea of Necessary

Connexion" he refers to both mind and body as substances. (E 65) Hume's noncritical use of the term 'substance' in that context is, by itself, unimportant. But together with the absence of any positive account of the nature of the mind, it suggests that Hume considers his account of mind in the Enquiries to be nothing more than a lawful description of observable mental phenomena. Such an account leaves open the question of the nature of the mind. If this is correct, then it is plausible to suggest that Hume changed his philosophical objectives between the time he completed the first book of the Treatise and the time he wrote the Enquiries.[14]

## 4. The Disavowal of the Treatise

So far we have seen that there is a shift in Hume's philosophical objectives in going from the Treatise to the Enquiries. While the Hume of the Treatise attempts to infer the nature of the mind from observational and explanatory claims, the Hume of the Enquiries attempts to provide nothing more than a lawful description of the mind. Was this change in his philosophical objectives and the resultant account of mind a sufficient reason for Hume to disavow the Treatise?

If Hume disavowed the Treatise on philosophical grounds, it is only reasonable to assume that there is a subtle shift in one of the central issues of concern in both the Treatise and the Enquiries. Providing an account of mind was an objective that was central to these works. If my contention is correct that Hume recognized his bundle theory of mind lacked explanatory completeness and, as a consequence, he rejected it in favor of a mere

lawful description of the operations of the mind, this constitutes such a subtle shift. I consider this to provide prima facie evidence that Hume disavowed the Treatise due to the failure of his bundle theory of mind. But if this was Hume's reason for disavowing the Treatise, we should find some evidence for this in his several accounts of the failings of that work. It is to these that we shall now turn.

Even before the third book was published, Hume considered the Treatise a failure. In a letter to Hutcheson on 16 March 1740, where he expressed "some Impatience for a second Edition [of the Treatise] principally on Account of Alterations I intend to make in my Performance" (L 1: 38), Hume wrote:

> I wish I cou'd discover more fully the particulars wherein I have fail'd. I admire so much the Candour I have observd in Mr Locke, Yourself, & a very few more, that I woud be extremely ambitious of imitating it, by frankly confessing my Errors: If I do not imitate it, it must proceed neither from my being free of Errors, nor from want of Inclination; but from my real unaffected Ignorance. (L 1: 39)

The "Errors" to which Hume refers can only be understood as substantive errors, and his concern with the "particulars wherein I have fail'd" reminds one of the worries ultimately found in the Appendix on personal identity. Insofar as Hume recognized and desired to correct certain errors in the Treatise as early as 1740, one would expect him to correct them in any subsequent writings on the same subject. Since there was no second edition of the Treatise,

and if, as I have suggested above, the errors struck at the heart of his theory of mind, it is not surprising that he would disavow the earlier work.

Hume's more famous comments on the Enquiries vis-à-vis the Treatise are somewhat more ambiguous. His comment in "My Own Life" that "I had always entertained a notion, that my want of success in publishing the Treatise of Human Nature, had proceeded more from the manner than the matter" (GG 3:3) is often taken to be a stylistic comment. As Nelson has suggested, however, the "manner" involved might be philosophic, rather than literary, manner.[15] If my argument that Hume changed his philosophical objectives is sound, this would constitute a change in philosophic "manner."

A similar ambiguity is found in his letter to Gilbert Elliot of March or April 1751. There Hume wrote:

> I believe the philosophical Essays contain every thing of Consequence relating to the Understanding, which you woud meet with in the Treatise; & I give you my Advice against reading the latter. By shortening & simplifying the Questions, I really render them much more complete. Addo dum minuo. The philosophical Principles are the same in both: But I was carry'd away by the Heat of Youth & Invention to publish too precipitately. So vast an Undertaking, plan'd before I was one and twenty, & compos'd before twenty five, must necessarily be very defective. I have repented my Haste a hundred & a hundred times. (L 1: 158)

The ambiguous term here is "philosophical Principles." If by this term Hume means the content is the same in both the Treatise and the Enquiries, the claim is false. Although many of the issues Hume considered, and many of his positions regarding those

issues, are the same in both works, we have seen that there is a significant difference regarding his account of mind. Further, there are a number of issues discussed in the Treatise that are passed over without comment in the Enquiries, e.g., Hume's discussions of space and time. (T 27-65). If "philosophical Principles" refers to nothing more than his empiricist presuppositions, and not to his methodological presuppositions, they remain approximately the same, although, given the methodological shift, Hume's empiricism might be deemed even stronger in the Enquiries than it was in the Treatise. But the term "philosophical Principles" might also denote his principles of the association of ideas -- or those principles together with his general principles regarding those properties, objects, or actions one deems good -- which are exactly the same in both the Treatise and the Enquiries. It is worthy of notice that Hume often refers to general rules as principles, and even in the Introduction to the Treatise he indicated that he was attempting to "explain the principles of human nature." (T xvi, emphasis added) If my account of Hume's shift in objectives is correct, one can understand why he would claim that "By shortening & simplifying the Questions, I really render them much more complete," viz., the lawful description in the Enquiries provides as adequate an account of the mind as he believed to be available to human understanding. (cf. E 174) Thus, the evidence from these two well-known passages is consistent with my contention that Hume's disavowal of the Treatise rests upon a change in his account of mind.

But Hume's disavowal was also intended to constitute an answer to his critics. In the advertisement appended to the 1777 edition of his

Essays Moral, Political, and Literary, Hume publicly acknowledged his authorship of the Treatise only to disavow the work. Claiming that there were "some negligences in his former reasoning and more in expression," he complained that his critics had focused their attacks on his "juvenile" work. (GG 3: v) In his words:

> Yet several writers, who have honoured the Author's Philosophy with answers, have taken care to direct all their batteries against the juvenile work, which the Author never acknowledged, and have affected to triumph in their advantages, which, they imagined, they had obtained over it: A practice very contrary to all rules of candour and fair-dealing, and a strong instance of those polemical artifices, which a bigotted zeal thinks itself authorized to employ. Henceforth, the Author desires, that the following Pieces may alone be regarded as containing his philosophical sentiments and principles. (G 3: v)

Hume identified those "several writers" in a letter to his publisher, William Strahan, suggesting that the Advertisement "is a compleat Answer to Dr Reid and to that bigotted silly Fellow, Beattie." (L 2: 301) This seems to imply that by disavowing the Treatise, Hume undercut the basis for all Reid's and Beattie's criticisms. Such a claim seems incredible for two reasons. First, some aspects of Hume's philosophy that were criticized in both Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind and Beattie's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth -- the only critical works they had published by 1776 -- are doctrines common to both the Treatise and the first Enquiry. Reid, for example, was somewhat critical of Hume's account of belief and his inductive scepticism,[16] views that seem not to have changed

appreciably in the transition from the Treatise to the first Enquiry. Second, while most of Reid's criticisms were directed against the "author of the Treatise of Human Nature," Beattie took issue with "Mr HUME'S Essay on a particular providence and a future state,"[17] "Of National Characters,"[18] "Of Liberty and Necessity,"[19] the views of the second Enquiry,[20] as well as virtually everything Hume said in the first book of the Treatise. Beattie, at least, did not "direct all [his] batteries against the juvenile work."

Does this imply that either Hume was confused or simply attempting to save face in disavowing the Treatise? Perhaps. But there is a more sympathetic interpretation of Hume's disavowal. If one takes seriously Hume's contention that the disavowal of the Treatise is an answer to Reid and Beattie, it is reasonable to infer that the "answer" was limited to views that were peculiar to the Treatise.[21] Further, it seems reasonable to limit considerations to those issues in the Treatise that were discussed both in Reid's Inquiry and in Beattie's Essay. The one issue that fits both of these conditions is the bundle theory of mind. It is particularly with respect to this issue that both of those philosophers might be charged with "bigotted zeal." (GG 3: v)

In his Inquiry, Reid's criticisms of Hume's theory of mind are directed solely at the bundle theory. Although Reid sets the tone of his criticisms in the "Introduction,"[22] the bulk of criticisms are found in Section VI of Chapter 2. There Reid focuses on the theory of ideas in general and Hume's contention that perceptions are independent existents in particular. Beginning with the plea that "no offence may be taken in charging [Hume's bundle theory] or any other metaphysical

notions with absurdity, or being contrary to the common sense of mankind,"[23] he proceeds to argue that "Ideas seem to have something in their nature unfriendly to other existences."[24] Tracing the history of the "way of ideas," he indicates initially ideas were taken to be mental images of nonmental objects, but as reasoning regarding the nature of ideas became more acute, ideas played larger and larger roles in philosophical systems. Reid wrote, "But the triumph of ideas was completed by the Treatise of Human Nature, which discards spirits also, and leaves ideas and impressions as the sole existences in the universe."[25] Even if this were an accurate statement of Hume's position in the Treatise,[26] we have seen that the denial of material or immaterial substance plays little or no role in the account of mind Hume offers in the first Enquiry. Given the shift in Hume's account of mind in the Enquiries vis-à-vis the Treatise and the centrality of that account to those works, Reid's contentions that Hume's theory of mind is inconsistent with common sense[27] and capable of being believed only while in one's philosophical closet,[28] and Beattie's contention that Hume's theory of mind is nonsense, impious, and based upon a misrepresentation of common facts and a misuse of common words[29] might well have provoked Hume to repudiate the Treatise.

## 5. Conclusions

In this paper we have seen that Hume's recognition that his bundle theory of mind failed on explanatory grounds led to a shift in his philosophical objectives in the Enquiries. While the Treatise provides a theory of the nature of the mind, the Enquiries provides merely a lawful description of

the operations of the mind. Even though there is little question that Hume considered a bundle theory of mind more plausible than a doctrine of substance throughout his philosophical career,[30] the explanatory failure of his own account resulted in a shift away from theoretical reduction to mere description. Since Reid and Beattie were severely critical of Hume's bundle theory of mind, and since that account of mind officially was superseded in the Enquiries, I have argued that this shift in his account of mind provides nonstylistic grounds for Hume's disavowal of the Treatise.[31]

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1. References to Hume's works will be to David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd ed. revised by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); David Hume, An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding, in Enquiries concerning the Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, 3rd ed. revised by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); The Letters of David Hume, ed. J.Y.T. Greig, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932); and The Philosophical Works of David Hume, ed. Thomas Hill Green and Thomas Hodge Grose, 4 vols. (London, 1882; reprint edition Darmstadt, West Germany: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1964); David Hume, Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, ed. Norman Kemp Smith (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947). References to the Treatise (T), the Enquiries (E), the Letters (L), the Philosophical Works (GG) and the Dialogues (D) will be made parenthetically within the text of the paper.

2. Given the prominence of the claim that Hume was a Newtonian philosopher (see, for example, John Passmore, Hume's Intentions [London: Cambridge University Press, 1952], p. 43; Norman Kemp

Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume [London: Macmillan, 1941], p. 57; Charles Hendel, Studies in the Philosophy of David Hume, new edition [New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1963], p. 366; Anthony Flew, Hume's Philosophy of Belief [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961], p. 18; P.L. Gardiner, "Hume's Theory of the Passions," in David Hume: A Symposium, ed. D.F. Pears [London: Macmillan, 1963], p. 41; T.E. Jessop, "Some Misunderstandings of Hume," reprinted in Hume: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. V.C. Chappell [Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966]; James Noxon, Hume's Philosophical Development: A Study of His Methods, [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973], and Nicholas Capaldi, David Hume: The Newtonian Philosopher [Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975], especially pp. 49-70), this shift might be construed as a shift from Newtonian to Baconian methodological presuppositions, or might provide evidence that Hume's understanding of the strictures of the Newtonian method changed between the time he began the Treatise and the time he began the first Enquiry (cf. T 639; E 14), but to examine these issues is beyond the scope of the present paper.

3. There is some disagreement in the literature regarding Hume's use of "specifically different." On the basis of his claim at T 68 that "The farthest we can go towards a conception of external objects, when suppos'd specifically different from our perceptions, is to form a relative idea of them without pretending to comprehend the related objects," some commentators have contended that Hume's notion of specific difference is a difference in ontological kind. (See, for example, John W. Yolton, Perceptual Acquaintance from Descartes to Reid [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984], pp. 149-150, and Robert J. Fogelin, Hume's Skepticism in the Treatise of Human Nature [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985], p. 67.) On the other hand, Hume's clearest discussion of the distinction between numerical and specific identity -- and therefore between numerical and specific difference -- is found at T 257-258, and there he indicates that claims of specific identity are based upon resemblance among either impressions or objects. Whether or not Yolton and Fogelin are correct in claiming that one of Hume's uses of 'specific difference' concerns difference in ontological kind, it is clear that one of his uses of that

term is concerned with the more mundane differences based upon resemblances, e.g., differences between tables and chairs. We shall see that it is this second sense of 'specific difference' that is germane to the passage under consideration. (It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine the number of senses in which Hume used the term 'specific difference.')

4. Ronald Glass and I have discussed this in detail in "Hume on the Cartesian Theory of Substance," The Southern Journal of Philosophy 22 (1984): 497-508.

5. Cf. John Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding, ed. P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 4.12.13, p. 648, and Francis Bacon, The New Organon (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1964), pp. 121-272.

6. On 'moral certainty' cf. T 404, and see M. Jamie Ferreira, "Locke's 'Constructive Skepticism' -- A Reappraisal," Journal of the History of Philosophy 24 (1986): 211-222.

7. For discussions of justification by the best explanation, see Gilbert Harman, Thought (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 158-61; Paul R. Thagard, "The Best Explanation: Criteria for Theory Choice," Journal of Philosophy, 75 (1978): 76-92; Norwood Russell Hanson, Patterns of Discovery (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 85-90; and Norwood Russell Hanson, Observation and Explanation: A Guide to Philosophy of Science (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), pp. 63-67. Hanson suggests that the ground for the acceptability of a theory rests primarily upon its ability to explain puzzling phenomena or anomalies (Patterns of Discovery, p. 86; Observation and Explanation, pp. 65-66). As we shall see, one of the grounds Hume initially accepted as providing strong evidence in favor of his bundle theory of mind was its presumed ability to explain such anomalies as the (unevidenced) belief in the existence of mental and physical substance.

8. I have shown elsewhere that the missing shade of blue poses no serious problem to the copy theory. See my "Hume's Relative Ideas," Hume Studies VII (1981): 55-73.

9. I consider it beyond question that, whatever else one might argue he was doing in those sections, Hume was at least giving an explanation of certain beliefs. See T 187, 201-9, 220-21, 253, 259-63, 633, 635.

10. See T 232-44, and Flage and Glass, "Hume on the Cartesian Theory of Substance."

11. See my "Hume's Identity Crisis," The Modern Schoolman 58 (1980): 21-35.

12. It is worthy of note that Hume apparently considered the inductive program in the second Enquiry very successful, since he considered it, "of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best." (GG 3: 4, L, 1: 4; cf. L, 1: 227).

13. It should be acknowledged that the language of the pre-1777 Enquiry is somewhat ambiguous, and it is possible that it was only late in his life, that Hume concluded that a lawful description of the mind was the most for which one could reasonably hope. Note that the section begins as follows: "Instead of entering into detail of this kind, which would lead into many subtilties, we shall consider some of the effects of this connexion upon the passions and imagination; where we may open a field of speculation more entertaining, and perhaps more instructive, than the other." (GG 4: 19n; cf. GG, 23n) This might suggest that the kind of explanatory program in which he had engaged in the Treatise was viable in principle. His removal of the section from the final edition of the work suggests that he had concluded that it is improbable that an adequate theory of the nature of the mind could be discovered.

14. Nelson has recently argued that Hume's philosophical position underwent a more significant change, viz., the Hume of the Enquiries rejected metaphysics. (See John O. Nelson, "Two Main Questions concerning Hume's Treatise and Enquiries," Philosophical Review 81 [1972]: 333-350.) This seems too strong. If metaphysical inquiries concern the nature of objects, then the later Hume should make no claims regarding the nature or probable nature of objects. But in the Natural History of Religion Hume referred to the corpuscular hypothesis as "the most probable, at least the most intelligible philsophy" (GG 4: 316), and,

as Cummins has shown, there are few differences in the metaphysical positions of the first Enquiry vis-à-vis the Treatise (see Phillip D. Cummins, "Hume's Disavowal of the Treatise," Philosophical Review 82 [1973]: 371-9). My interpretation provides an account of a change in Hume's philosophy that allows for the continued acceptance of much of the metaphysics of the Treatise while explaining the absence of an account of the nature of the mind.

15. Nelson, "Two Main Questions concerning Hume's Treatise and Enquiry," p. 335.

16. See Thomas Reid, An Inquiry into the Human Mind, ed. Timothy J. Duggan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 244-246.

17. James Beattie, An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in The Philosophy of David Hume, series ed. Lewis White Beck (Edinburgh 1770; reprint edition New York: Garland Publishing, 1983), p. 115, cf. p. 487n-488n.

18. Beattie, Essay, pp. 479-482.

19. Beattie, Essay, pp. 308-326.

20. Beattie, Essay, pp. 422-435.

21. This requires that one not assume the disavowal is a "complete" answer to Reid and Beattie, in the sense that it is an answer to all their criticisms, but only that it is a sufficient answer.

22. Reid, Inquiry, pp. 14-15.

23. Reid, Inquiry, pp. 31-32.

24. Reid, Inquiry, p. 33.

25. Reid, Inquiry, p. 33; cf. p. 34; see also Beattie, Essay, pp. 266-267.

26. I have discussed the alleged phenomenalism of the Treatise elsewhere. See my, "Hume's Dualism," Nous 16 (1982): 527-541.

27. Reid, Inquiry, pp. 34-35.

28. Reid, Inquiry, pp. 35 and 36.

29. Beattie, Essay, 263-267.

30. In the Dialogues concerning Natural Religion Cleanthes provides some criticisms of the doctrine of mental substance that are reminiscent of the criticisms Hume had raised in Book I, Part IV, Section 5 of the Treatise. He is made to say, "A mind, whose acts and sentiments and ideas are not distinct and successive; one, that is wholly simple, and totally immutable; is a mind which has no thought, no reason, no will, no sentiment, no love, no hatred; or in a word, is no mind at all." (D 159) Notice that the concern here, as in Treatise I.iv.5, is basically with considerations of the intelligibility of the doctrine of substance.

31. I wish to thank Frederick Kronz and Ronald Glass for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. I am also indebted to Jane McIntyre, since it was a conversation with her that caused me to ask some of the questions addressed in this paper.