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# What Does the Scientist of Man Observe?

*Janet Broughton*

In the introduction to the *Treatise*, Hume cautions the reader that the scientist of man cannot “go beyond experience” and “discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature.”<sup>1</sup> “[T]he only solid foundation we can give to this science,” he says, “must be laid on experience and observation” (T xvi). This methodological principle is a familiar Newtonian one; indeed Hume makes a point of saying it applies to “all the sciences” (T xviii), not just to the science of man. Although the principle is familiar, just what it enjoins is not clear. We are to renounce investigations that go “beyond experience,” and we are not to seek “ultimate” qualities. But exactly which investigations and qualities are these? The question is a difficult one for Newton as well as for Hume.

But Hume’s invocation of the familiar methodological principle raises two additional questions, ones that need not especially trouble Newton. When the scientist of *man* goes about his task of gathering “experience and observation,” what sort of thing is he to observe? And how is he to make his observations?

My main aim in this paper is to answer those two questions as they arise for the early stages of Hume’s investigation of human nature in the *Treatise*. I hope also to persuade the reader that these questions are more difficult, and more important, than they may at first seem, and that they are connected with even broader questions about the sort of project Hume undertook in the *Treatise*.

## “Perceptions”

Without explanation, Hume begins the *Treatise* proper by distinguishing between two kinds of “perceptions of the human mind” and draws the distinction according to how the perceptions “make their way into our thought or consciousness” (T 1). A few pages later, he asks which of these “impressions and ideas are causes and which effects” and then announces that the “*full* examination of this question is the subject of the present treatise” (T 4). The scientist of man, then, is to observe *perceptions in our consciousness*.

Most commentators assume therefore that Hume takes himself to be studying what Locke called ideas: states of awareness whose ‘immediate objects’ are dependent for their existence on the existence

of the states of awareness themselves, and can be the immediate objects of awareness for one mind only. Many commentators make the additional assumption that for Hume, the *proper* sphere of his scientific investigations is really just *his own* Lockean ideas. That is, the only form of experience the scientist of man may consult is *immediate* experience; the only appropriate form of observation he may undertake is introspection.

Kemp Smith disagrees. He claims that in the opening stages of the *Treatise*, Hume takes up a point of view that is "naively realistic."<sup>2</sup> Kemp Smith prefers this reading because he thinks it explains Hume's general tendency, in the early parts of book 1, to slide between talking about objects and talking about ideas; before part 4's "Of scepticism with regard to the senses," Kemp Smith claims, Hume himself occupies the position of the "vulgar" (for example, T 192), rather than that of the "philosophers." Kemp Smith reminds us that in part 4, after a long account of the position of the vulgar, Hume says that its inherent instability leads philosophers to

change their system, and distinguish, (*as we shall do for the future*) betwixt perceptions and objects. (T 211, emphasis added)

Only at *this* point, Kemp Smith says, does Hume adopt the Lockean theory of ideas.

I also oppose the standard view, but unlike Kemp Smith I do not see our central interpretative task here as that of deciding whether Hume began his investigation of human nature as a "naive realist" or as a Lockean theorist. For one thing, when Kemp Smith calls Hume a naive realist, he means that Hume begins by assuming that the Lockean is right about this much: when we see, hear, remember, and so on, we are "immediately" or "directly" aware of *something*—albeit objects, not ideas. But I do not think that Hume's account of the early phases of his investigation requires us to impute that assumption to him. I also see the choice Kemp Smith offers us as limiting in another way. For it focuses our attention just upon the metaphysical status of the objects of sense-perception. We might agree with Kemp Smith that on *that* score Hume does not begin with Lockean assumptions. But this would not tell us very much about the perceptions that constitute the observations the scientist of man makes. We want to know what he may train his attention upon, and the types of attention he may give his objects.

Hume sets out much of the basic theory of perceptions in part 1 of book 1, and what I want to do now is to conduct two case studies there. I want to observe the scientist of man at work observing whatever it is

that he observes, however it is that he observes it. The first case study concerns Hume's way of distinguishing between ideas of memory and ideas of imagination; the second, the implications of his copy-theory of ideas for innatism. In both of these central cases, I will argue, we need not and should not interpret Hume as observing Lockean ideas. We can make much better sense of how he theorizes by taking him to be theorizing about, and with the help of, our experiences of things. And this allows us to articulate more broadly what the scientist of man is up to.

### Memory and Imagination

Suppose I think of two houses: first the house I grew up in, and then the house I have been designing on the off-chance that some day I'll be able to build it. Suppose my first thought is that there were wasps in the attic and my second thought that the floors conceal radiant-heating units. The first thought is what Hume would call an idea of memory; the second what he would call an idea of imagination.

Notoriously, Hume makes two different distinctions between ideas of memory and those of imagination. The first he calls a "sensible difference":

the ideas of the memory are much more lively and strong than those of the imagination, ... the former faculty paints its objects in more distinct colours, than any which are employ'd 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 preserv'd by the mind steady and uniform for any considerable time. (T 9)

This difference in liveliness is itself complex, comprising a difference in distinctness, in manner of coming to mind, and in ease of keeping in mind. But all of these characteristics are, for Hume, alike in being "sensible"; this sort of difference is supposed to be like the similar difference between impressions and ideas, which "[e]very one of himself will readily *perceive*" (T 1-2, emphasis added).

The second difference between ideas of imagination and memory is that

the imagination is not restrain'd to the same order and form with the original impressions; while the memory is in a manner ty'd down in that respect, without any power of variation. (T 9)

Thus, crudely, my thought juxtaposing wasps and attic was preceded by juxtaposed impressions of wasps and attic, but my thought juxtaposing flooring and radiant-heating units was not preceded by juxtaposed impressions of flooring and of radiant-heating units.<sup>3</sup> Although this is not supposed to be a "sensible" difference, Hume does say,

'Tis *evident*, that the memory preserves the original form, in which its objects were presented ... The chief exercise of the memory is not to preserve the simple ideas, but their order and position ... this principle is supported by such a number of *common* and *vulgar* phaenomena, that we may spare ourselves the trouble of insisting on it any farther. (T 9, emphasis added)<sup>4</sup>

This feature of memory, then, is supposed to be perfectly obvious.

By making these two distinctions between memory and imagination, Hume is commonly thought to be committed to scepticism about memory. Suppose I want to know whether my current idea of wasps in the attic is a memory or not. I need to be able to *tell whether* the idea preserves the order of my original impressions or not. But nothing about the *current* idea tells me *that*. Nor can I appeal to past experience, for example, by saying that I saw the wasps in the attic. The question is whether my present position allows me to tell whether I *did* see the wasps in the attic (that my visual impressions juxtaposed wasps and attic, or whatever). I *can* say of my present idea that it is relatively lively. But its liveliness is a feature independent from its preservation of order, and so I can't tell just from the idea's having the first feature that it has the second.

Interpreters who think that Hume's account of memory leads so easily to this sceptical conclusion owe us an explanation of why Hume fails to *draw* the sceptical conclusion, why in fact he seems so cheerfully immune to it. I propose that instead of trying to cobble together some such explanation, we take Hume's cheerful non-scepticism as our datum and then tailor our interpretation of his investigation of memory to fit.

This requires, first, that we give up the view according to which the scientist of man examines his Lockean ideas through introspection. Although confinement to Lockean ideas is confinement to the "inner"—a denial that we perceive, or perceive "directly," objects independent from our perception—the kinds of consideration that could lead us to think we are confined to the inner would also lead us to think we are confined to our *present* Lockean ideas.<sup>5</sup> That is, the reasons for retreating from,

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I am aware (by seeing) of the wasps in the attic,

to, in Humean terms,

I am immediately aware of nothing but a very lively  
[wasps-in-attic] array of colour-patches,

would equally compel a retreat from,

I am aware (by remembering) of the wasps in the attic,

to

I am immediately aware of nothing but a current moderately  
lively [wasps-in-attic] array of colour patches.

Thus if we read Hume in the standard way, he ought in all consistency to have conceded scepticism about memory from the very start.

So let us give up the standard view. What, then, are we to say the scientist of man observes? More specifically, how do his observations allow him his cheerful immunity to scepticism about memory? In a very interesting paper,<sup>6</sup> James Noxon addresses just this question. I can explain my own view better if I first explain my reactions to Noxon's.

Noxon argues that for Hume the sensible and order-preserving features of memory-ideas are *not* independent; they are *causally* linked. (Roughly, the order of the original impressions causes greater strength and liveliness in subsequent ideas that fully resemble the original.) Noxon goes on to argue that the problem Hume's distinction between memory and imagination generates isn't the sceptical problem of telling whether a current idea is a memory, but is rather the scientific problem of explaining how we are ever caused to believe that a current idea is a memory. I won't pursue the putative scientific problem; I want instead to see how or why Hume, no stranger to scepticism, didn't acknowledge it here.

Noxon's view is this: the fact that Hume gives a causal theory linking the two features of memory-ideas reveals or amounts to a "general endorsement of the capacity of memory to recover the past";<sup>7</sup> he implies that for Hume, scepticism about memory would be senseless or incoherent.<sup>8</sup> But this view raises an obvious question. Why should the fact that Hume gives a causal theory of memory show that he thinks scepticism about memory is incoherent? Think of the "experience and observation" (T xvi) that would support such a theory:

impressions in order a-b are followed by lively idea of a-b;

impressions in order c-d are followed by lively idea of c-d (etc.);  
and perhaps,

impressions in order e-f are followed by languid idea of f-e  
(etc.).

From this the scientist of man will conclude that the order of impressions causes the liveliness of the idea that preserves that order. But nothing about this theorizing prevents us, or the scientist of man, from asking for the grounds of the scientist's claim to have *observed* this constant conjunction, and as long as we can ask that question, the original sceptical problem seems simply to come up all over again. After all, these putative observations take place over time, and for the scientist *now* to count the past impressions as being among his store of observations, he must be able to tell whether he remembers them; to do that, he must be able to tell whether his current lively idea preserves the order of his past impressions; and so on.

I imagine Noxon would respond by insisting that Hume implicitly blocks this re-raising of the sceptical problem, and blocks it by denying sense or coherence to it, given his commitment to doing science of man. But I don't find this response plausible. Hume denies sense or coherence to various specific ideas; for example, to the idea of there being something in an object that is just like what I think of when I think of necessary connection. But I do not think Hume ever denies sense or coherence to *scepticism* about something, least of all because it undercuts or is somehow incompatible with his project of producing scientific, causal theories about the workings of the human mind. In fact, some of his despair in part 4 arises from his conclusion that scepticism *does* conflict with the project he had undertaken.

So the fact that Hume gives a causal theory linking the two features of memory does not, I think, show that he regards scepticism about memory as *senseless*. But Hume may nonetheless think of scepticism about memory as somehow *not coming up*, or at least as not having to come up just here.

Now I can explain my own view. Hume begins the *Treatise* by studying our general pre-reflective beliefs, ideas and outlooks, *and by using them*, or at least using those among them that are, we agree, the most careful, attentively considered, and broadly speaking, reasonable. His method enjoins him to be an observer of human life, and we observe people's lives by listening to what they say and seeing what they do, both in their (our) relations to one another and in their (our) relations to various things and events. *Inter alia*, we remember what people said and did, and what things were where, and what happened.<sup>9</sup>

Thus Hume's procedure shows us that the *scientist of man* is to set about his investigations by presuming that memory is reliable. The point is not, as Noxon would have it, that the scientist ought to regard scepticism about memory as senseless. The point is rather that the scientist is supposed to begin his investigations by observing human life, and by observing it as any reasonable person would, by looking, listening, remembering, and so on.<sup>10</sup> Thus when the scientist lays out his evidence for saying that order-preserving ideas tend to be quite lively, he is doing science of man correctly by counting his past impressions as among his store of observations.

I hasten to say that I am not attributing to Hume the view that these various methodological assumptions or principles are made impervious to sceptical attack by their special status. In fact most of these principles—the correctness of memory is here in the minority—do come under sceptical attack as the scientific investigation progresses. It is, of course, a very important question why Hume thought scepticism arose at one stage of his inquiry and not at another. I cannot hope to answer that question here, but I do hope I am giving reasons for taking it seriously.<sup>11</sup> As for the part 1 section on memory and imagination, I am simply explaining Hume's otherwise puzzling failure to draw a sceptical conclusion about memory by saying that at this stage of his inquiry, drawing such a conclusion would be incompatible with the methodological precepts guiding his investigations.<sup>12</sup>

### Innatism and the Copy Theory

Hume devotes the first section of the *Treatise* to arguing 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). I will call this the copy theory. What exactly does it say? Impressions are the perceptions that enter our consciousness "with most force and violence"; ideas are "faint images" (T 1). The copy theory says at least that every simple faint perception is derived from an antecedent perception exactly like it, only livelier. This by itself would be remarkable if true, but it is not all of what Hume means. He also means the copy theory to say or imply that all our simple perceptions that are not themselves states of feeling or sensation are derived from states of feeling or sensation. That is (leaving out feeling, harmlessly I hope), for the copy theory to say what Hume means for it to say, he must also be able to say that the class of lively perceptions is identical with the class of sensations.

Barry Stroud argues<sup>13</sup> that Hume's need to identify lively perceptions with sensations comes out especially clearly in his claim that if the copy theory is true, then the theory that we have innate ideas

must be false. As Stroud puts it, someone could be an ardent innatist and happily concede that my relatively faint idea of God was preceded by an "earlier corresponding perception."<sup>14</sup> The earlier, livelier perception might, for example, have been a non-sensory state in which God revealed himself directly to a human intellect. Or it might have been someone's sudden realization that grasping the fact of one's own existence involves recognizing the existence of a perfect, infinite, independent creative being. The story is the innatist's to tell.

That much I think is true. The question is what Hume would have to mean by 'sensations' to put the copy theory into conflict with innatism. Stroud takes it that sensations would have to be instances of what we commonly call seeing something, hearing something, touching something, tasting something, or smelling something.<sup>15</sup> And he thinks that if this is what Hume needs sensations to be, then the copy theory is in trouble. He argues that the class of livelier perceptions simply *isn't* identical with the class of sensations (understood as instances of seeing something, etc.), and that Hume's prospects for finding some appropriate characteristic other than liveliness are dim. For Hume is committed, Stroud claims, to finding an "introspectible criterion" of sensation, one that can be discovered by "a straightforward inspection of the contents of the mind."<sup>16</sup> And the criterion must be introspectible because Hume, like Locke and Descartes, is committed to the theory that in being aware of anything, I am immediately aware only of the dependent contents of my own mind. (Stroud sees Hume as regarding this Lockean theory as uncontroversial for any reasonable person; he thinks that is why Hume did not begin the *Treatise* by arguing for it.)<sup>17</sup> So because Hume's search for a feature of perceptions that matches up with sensation is limited to the sphere of Lockean ideas, it is very unlikely to succeed. There just do not seem to be any introspectible features that are had by all and only the perceptions we have in having sensations. Thus Stroud sees Hume's commitment to the assumption that our perceptions are Lockean as preventing him from having a copy theory that can conflict with innatism in any interesting way.

I think that if Hume were committed to the assumption that our perceptions are Lockean, he would have a problem even worse than the one Stroud describes. I think that given such a commitment Hume would find it in principle *impossible* to delineate some class of perceptions and identify it with the class of sensations. The problem isn't just that introspection does not turn up a feature of perceptions that would delineate the class in the right way; the problem is that even if we *did* find such a feature, Hume couldn't identify the class of perceptions it delineates with the class of sensations. The reason is that Hume's commitment to the Lockean scheme would prevent him from

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finding out, as a scientist of man, what the class of sensations is. The Lockean scientist of man would investigate human nature by noting the characteristics of his own Lockean ideas, and noting them by introspection. He therefore could not lay claim to prior scientific information about which of his ideas are sensations, that is, which of them are part of his seeing, hearing (etc.) some non-ideational something.

By giving up the traditional, Lockean interpretation, we can read Hume as having coherent intentions and as offering relevant support to a copy theory that is in genuine conflict with innatism. We immediately remove the principled obstacle to noting which of our perceptions are sensations, that is, which are instances of seeing, hearing (etc.) something. The scientist of man is as entitled to identify our sensations as anyone is. Hume's citing of "phaenomena" that are "obvious" (T 4) and "plain" (T 5) makes perfectly good sense: the scientist of man may count among his observations of human life what happens when a child is given something scarlet, or a person is born blind, or a person has never tasted pineapple (T 5). He has discovered nothing (yet) to call his or our entitlement into question. And if he really could show that all our simple states of consciousness that are themselves not sensations (or feelings) are copied from simple sensations (or feelings), then he would have a copy theory that refuted the innatist claim that some of our simple states of consciousness are *not* derived from sensation (or feeling).

Shifting away from the Lockean reading in this way does point up two questions about Hume's project to which the Lockean interpreter had easy answers. The first is why Hume bothers to claim that our sensations have more force and liveliness than our other states of consciousness. The second is why Hume does not help himself to some physiology as he attempts to understand sensation and its place in human life. The Lockean can answer the first question by stressing Hume's need to find an *introspectible* feature belonging to sensations, and the second by saying that physiological objects cannot be introspected. But if we see Hume beginning his investigations without the Lockean assumption, we cannot of course give these answers to those questions.

Why is it important to Hume to claim that our sensations (and feelings, of course) have more force and liveliness than our other states of consciousness? I think the importance of this claim is not especially connected with Hume's methodology—with the assumptions and precepts guiding his investigations in the science of man—or even with the significance of the copy theory or the support Hume offers for it. Of course, liveliness of perceptions is one of the very first things Hume investigates, and with considerable relish he substitutes talk of lively

perceptions for talk of sensations (see esp. T 7). But I think the reason Hume talks about liveliness so soon and so often is that the liveliness of perceptions has such a central role to play *within* Hume's general theory of how human nature works. First, it plays much the same role that motion plays in a mechanical theory of physical things: it comes in degrees; under various circumstances it can be transmitted, in whole or in part, from one thing to another; and it accounts for change. Second, its character as *felt* is indispensable to Hume's eventual claim that, as he puts it much later on, "*belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures*" (T 183). Elsewhere I try to describe the deflationary significance Hume attaches to this claim;<sup>18</sup> for now it is enough to say, uncontroversially I assume, that it is significant to Hume.

I think the more difficult question is why Hume did not investigate the nature of impressions by investigating the physiology of sensation.<sup>19</sup> A little help comes from thinking of Hume's interest in "human life" (T xix) as an interest in what we might call human *mental* life, especially in what we think, feel and believe when our sensations and feelings have fallen into certain general and common patterns. It is perhaps relative to this interest that Hume says, "The examination of our sensations belongs more to anatomists and natural philosophers than to moral" (T 8).<sup>20</sup> But I do not think Hume is *simply* divvying up the territory: moral philosophers investigate mental life; natural philosophers investigate physical life. For he says that sensation "arises in the soul originally, from unknown causes" (T 7). Although this *might* mean that the physiological mechanisms of sensation are unknown *to scientists of man*, as falling outside their special sphere of investigation, I think the language of "unknown causes" links Hume's agnosticism about the causes of sensation to the general and methodological agnosticism he professes in the introduction and in section 4 of part 1. In both those places, the prohibition against speculating about unknown causes is equated with the prohibition against going beyond experience. Hume warns us that

we cannot go beyond experience; and any hypothesis, that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature, ought at first to be rejected as presumptuous and chimerical. (T xvii)

Nothing is more requisite for a true philosopher, than to restrain the intemperate desire of searching into causes, and having establish'd any doctrine upon a sufficient number of experiments, rest contented with that, when he sees a farther

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examination would lead him into obscure and uncertain speculations. (T 13)

So although apparently there is *something* about sensations that can be investigated, though more properly by a natural than a moral philosopher, there is *also* something about sensations of which we must remain ignorant.

What aspect of sensation would count as one of the “ultimate original qualities of human nature” (T xvii)? What are the “unknown causes” of sensation? Notice first that the answer to this question that would be given by the traditional interpreter—“states of the brain” or “physical objects”—is not so satisfactory after all. Hume says that what must remain unknown is some qualities “*of human nature.*” He puts the point by writing about the *causes* of sensation, but to the extent that this word puts us in mind of the physical events that cause sensations, it is, I think, misleading. In these passages, Hume is using “cause” interchangeably with “principle,” “quality,” “power” and “essence.” In part 1 of book 1, Hume I think would say that when I see a wasp, the wasp causes the sensation via some physiological mechanism that could be studied by anatomists. None of *that* needs (yet) to be “rejected as presumptuous and chimerical,” though the spheres of natural and moral philosophy do need to be delineated. What *would* need to be rejected are “speculations,” inevitably “obscure and uncertain,” about *why or how* those physiological mechanisms cause those sensations, or indeed any sensations or any states of consciousness at all. All that experience can tell us is what sensations we have, what the physiology of sensation is, and what our states of consciousness are. Experience cannot tell us the further why or how of it.<sup>21</sup>

So the scientist of man does not investigate the “causes” of sensation. He does not investigate the physiology of sensation, because that is someone else’s job; and he does not investigate the “qualities of human nature” in virtue of which physiological mechanisms bring about sensory states of consciousness, because that is to “go beyond experience.” These limitations need not be, and really should not be, understood as limitations imposed by some underlying assumption that the scientist of man studies Lockean perceptions.

Let me return now to the problem with which this section began. The problem was to explain how Hume could have thought the copy theory conflicted with innatism; in order to think this, he would have had to be able to claim that the class of his lively perceptions is identical with the class of his sensations, that is, with the class of instances of seeing something, hearing something, etc. He certainly does make this identification; he makes it quite cheerfully. What I have proposed is

that we take this cheerful identification as our datum and tailor our interpretation to fit. Once again, this requires that we stop thinking of Hume as observing his Lockean ideas by introspection. Instead, I have proposed, we ought to think of the scientist of man as being perfectly entitled to observe people seeing, hearing (etc.) things, and perfectly entitled to discriminate between perceptions that are sensations (seeing, hearing, etc., something) and those that are not.

Of course, Hume's investigation *eventually* forces upon him the "hypothesis ... of the double existence of perceptions and objects" (T 215) and "sceptical doubt" (T 218). Again, we face the question why Hume thought scepticism arose at one stage of his inquiry and not at another.<sup>22</sup> Let me end this paper by saying that to answer that question, I believe we must not only attend carefully to the assumptions and attitudes with which Hume begins his scientific investigation, but also recognize that his investigation is—even in the "*Treatise*"—an inquiry. It is a structured sequence of discoveries and reflections that Hume is narrating for his reader. In this paper, I have been exploring aspects of the method by which Hume launches his inquiry. But how a "voyage" begun so cheerfully should seem to end on a "barren rock" (T 264) is another story.

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1. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2d ed., rev., ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford, 1978), xvii (hereafter cited as "T").
2. Norman Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume* (London, 1949), 248. Annette Baier also disagrees with the usual interpretation; see *A Progress of Sentiments* (Cambridge, 1991), esp. chap. 2.
3. Of course, this is unacceptable, if for no other reason than that I may have seen heating units installed under flooring and still be imagining them. In *Hume's System* (New York, 1990), David Pears argues that Hume would have faced insuperable difficulties if he had tried to make this order-preserving feature of memory work; see chap. 3, esp. 37-39.
4. This last remark sounds odd. While it is true that if I (really) remember that p, then p, this is not a principle "supported by ... phaenomena" but is rather a principle that, as Hume might put it, unfolds the *idea* of memory.
5. The idea that the two types of confinement are linked is a popular one. See, for example, Bertrand Russell, *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits* (New York, 1948), 175-81.

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6. James Noxon, "Remembering and Imagining the Past," in *Hume: A Re-Evaluation*, ed. Donald Livingston and James King (New York, 1976), 270-95.
7. *Ibid.*, 277.
8. *Ibid.*, 276.
9. Pears ([above, n. 3], 37) says that Hume's theory of psychology is too primitive to provide for definite reference to the past experience of the person remembering it. I am uncertain exactly why he thinks this is so, and thus I am uncertain whether it is to the point to say, as I'd like to, that Hume's theory, though certainly "psychological," may well be broad enough to include whatever is needed for the fixing of reference by context.
10. This solves a problem raised by Baier's (above, n. 2) interpretation of Hume on memory. She grants that "[w]ere mental representations our only representations, their accuracy could not be investigated" (p. 46), but adds that their accuracy *can* be investigated because in addition to mental representations, we may consult "external representations" (p. 46), for example, portraits and, ultimately, "our social interpersonal world" (p. 47). But if the accuracy of our mental states, taken as a whole, needs to be investigated, then consulting portraits and so on will not block the sceptical conclusion, for our consultings would themselves be states whose "accuracy could not be investigated." What is needed—and what I think would be very congenial to Baier—is to extricate Hume from an initial position in which one could legitimately raise a question about the power of memory to provide us with mental states that accurately represent past experiences.
11. I explore this question further in "Hume's Skepticism about Causal Inferences," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 64 (1983): 3-18, and in an unpublished paper, "Skepticism and Naturalism in Book One of Hume's *Treatise*."
12. I think the same must be said about *Treatise* 1.3.5 and its attendant note in the appendix. The section and note are very hard to understand, but one thing is clear: the memorious man and his forgetful companion both eventually have, and know they have, memories of a certain "scene of action" (T 627). I suspect that *Treatise* 1.3.5, like other sections in part 3, is meant to give us a scientifically deflated, but still non-sceptical, understanding of human nature.
13. Barry Stroud, *Hume* (London, 1977), 31.
14. *Ibid.*
15. It is difficult to locate Hume's innatist target, and I should say that at least *some* potential targets do not appear to be committed to

denying that all our ideas are derived from our seeing, hearing, etc., something. Even Descartes, who does in the end deny this, makes innatist claims along the way that ignore this commonplace notion of sensation. In the Second Meditation, for example, he has bracketed the question whether in *this* sense we see (etc.) anything, but argues nonetheless that his ideas of himself and of a piece of wax are neither themselves ideas of sense nor derived from ideas of sense. For the purposes of this argument, he identifies ideas of sense simply by enumerating various qualities we are immediately aware of—colours, odours, and so on. In the Third Meditation he makes a meatier claim: our ideas of neither sensory qualities nor bodies nor ourselves are adequate to the construction of the idea of God, and in fact my idea of myself requires for *its* elaboration a *prior* idea of God. But in making this innatist claim, he is still identifying ideas of sense simply by enumerating qualities we are immediately aware of.

16. Stroud (above, n. 13), 33.
17. *Ibid.*, 26, for example. Ironically, Stroud cites as supporting evidence Hume's slide between talking about objects and about perceptions—the same slide Kemp Smith cited in support of the claim that Hume begins with “naive realism.”
18. In Broughton, “Skepticism and Naturalism” (above, n. 11).
19. In a private communication, Fred Wilson has pointed out that in general, early modern associationist psychologists neither found much explanatory use for physiology nor succeeded in using psychology to confirm the (largely speculative) physiology they did invoke. So the idea that Hume's focus needs explaining may be less compelling than I am otherwise inclined to think it is.
20. The question of what sort of physiological mechanisms Hume had in mind is helpfully addressed by John Wright in *The Sceptical Realism of David Hume* (Chicago, 1984), though I disagree with the broader position he is concerned to defend.
21. T 84 probably cannot be read in this way. It must somehow be understood as part of the general deflationary project of part 3.
22. In a recent article, Fred Wilson has argued that in “Of scepticism with regard to the senses,” Hume is defending a form of critical realism. Although I disagree with his reading of that section and do not think that his account of either the vulgar or the philosophical view quite fits the scientist of man in the early phases of the *Treatise*, I agree with Wilson entirely that *we* should not assume that *Hume* assumes the correctness of “subjectivism.” See “Was Hume a Subjectivist?” *Philosophy Research Archives* 14 (1988-89): 247-82.