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Beryl Logan

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“Aiding the Ascent of Reason by the Wings of Imagination”: The Prospect of a Future State

BERYL LOGAN

In this paper, I will focus on two sections of otherwise extensively studied Humean texts that have received little or no attention in the scholarly literature. A substantial part of Part 12 of the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*¹ and Section XI of *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*²—also written in dialogue form—are concerned with similar doctrines: that the prospect of a future state, or afterlife, acts as the motivating influence on our earthly moral behaviour.

I will show that these two sections taken together fill out Hume’s criticisms of religious principles. The importance to human morality of the principle of the prospect of a future state is supported by Cleanthes in the *Dialogues* and by the opponents of Epicurus in the *Enquiry*. Philo in the *Dialogues* and the unnamed speaker in the *Enquiry* argue that the inference to the future state is not a legitimate one, and in doing so they contribute to the devaluing of the principles of organized religion to human lives. Support is given by these two speakers for the value of natural inclinations as a sufficient motivation or influence on our behavior, and Hume completes this proposal in the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.

My argument is as follows: I am claiming that there is a connection between the *Dialogues* and *Enquiry* sections that consists in their representing a two-pronged attack on the arguments for the prospect of an afterlife as a moral motivator. This attack is directed at both the form of the argument (i.e.,

its formal structure) and the content of the argument (i.e., its evidence). I maintain that this is the format of the attack that occurs in the *Dialogues*, and so my first task will be to discuss the format of the criticisms that Philo directs at Cleanthes' s Argument from Design in Parts 2 and 4 to 8 of the *Dialogues*, showing that Philo criticizes both the form and the content of that argument.

I then turn both to the arguments offered by Cleanthes (in Part 12 of the *Dialogues*) and by the opponents of Epicurus (in Section XI of the *Enquiry*) in support of the value of religious principles in motivating behaviour and to the counterarguments of Philo and Epicurus. I refer to the form and content of these arguments to show that the two sections together follow the format of Philo's two criticisms of the design argument in the *Dialogues*: first, the inference is not a just one, because its form contravenes the rules for correct argument form; and second, its content does not permit the inference from premise to conclusion.

Finally, I point out that in the process of arguing for the prospect of a future state as a motivator, Cleanthes makes the claim that the Deity's nature includes the feature of being just, in addition to the features of being intelligent and benevolent. Because we are told in the Introduction to the *Dialogues* that the debate being reported is concerned with the nature of the Deity, it is important to recognize all of the features for which Cleanthes argues.

Part I. Form and Content in the *Dialogues*

In the *Dialogues*, Philo criticizes Cleanthes's Argument from Design in two ways. In Part 2, he tells Cleanthes that his argument does not meet the requirements for analogical arguments: that is, his argument fails on its form. In Parts 4 through 11, it fails as to its content, as the data do not permit the conclusion drawn by Cleanthes.³

Cleanthes's analogical argument states that the world resembles a machine of human design, and just as machines have intelligent human designers, so too the world has an intelligent divine designer. The requirements for such arguments are constant conjunction, or repeated experience, and similarity of items compared.⁴ The design argument fails, according to Philo, because it lacks both features. In addition, it contains a fallacy, another failure of argument form. First, there is a lack of similarity between the world and machines:

Unless the cases be exactly similar, they repose no perfect confidence in applying their past observation to any particular phenomenon. . . . But surely you will not affirm, that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house, that we can with the same certainty infer a similar cause. . . . The dissimilitude is so striking, that the utmost you can

here pretend to is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption concerning a similar cause. (D 110–112)

Further, no constant conjunction is possible in this case, as the world is a single, unique item. There are not other worlds with which it can be compared to show that worlds are the kinds of things, as a species, that have intelligent designers, so as to conclude that this world also has an intelligent designer. Philo states:

When two species of objects have always been observed to be conjoined together, I can infer, by custom, the existence of one, wherever I see the existence of the other: And this I call an argument from experience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects, as in the present case, are single, individual, without parallel, or specific resemblance, may be difficult to explain. . . . To ascertain this reasoning, it were requisite, that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not sufficient surely, that we have seen ships and cities arise from human art and contrivance. (D 115)

Thus, Philo has shown Cleanthes that his argument fails to meet the requirements for analogical arguments: it exhibits neither relevant similarity between items compared nor repeated experience of the conjunction of items compared.

In addition, according to Philo, Cleanthes's argument commits the fallacy of composition: he claims that what is true of a part is true of the whole. Just because it is true that reason is a causal principle *in* the world does not mean that it is true that it is the causal principle *of* the world:

But can a conclusion, with any propriety, be transferred from parts to the whole?... Thought, design, intelligence, such as we discover in men and other animals, is no more than one of the springs and principles of the universe. . . . What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call thought, that we must thus make it the model of the whole universe? (D 113)

So Cleanthes argument fails on its form. In Parts 4–8 and 10–11, Philo shows Cleanthes that his argument also fails with respect to its content.⁵ Cleanthes's argument uses the data in the world to draw a conclusion that amounts to a proof about the nature of the Deity. Philo shows him in those parts that, with respect to the intelligence of the Deity (Parts 4–8), and the benevolence of the Deity (Parts 10 and 11), the data permit the drawing of a number of alternate conclusions and that each is as legitimate as any other. Philo suggests that as the world more resembles an animal, so it could have

arisen by the same generative principle as do animals (generation); the world also resembles a turnip, so it could have resulted by the same generative principle (propagation). Further, the world could have arisen by a blind, unguided force, with no generative principle at work. So with respect to the content of his argument, the data in the world, Cleanthes is not permitted to claim a conclusive proof of the intelligence of the Deity, and a suspense of judgment results.

Similarly, in Parts 10 and 11, Philo demonstrates that the data in the world, to which Cleanthes refers to claim that the Deity is benevolent, do not permit the drawing of any definitive conclusion:

There may four hypotheses be framed concerning the first causes of the universe: that they are endowed with perfect goodness, that they have perfect malice, that they are opposite and have both goodness and malice, that they have neither goodness nor malice. Mixed phenomena can never prove the two former unmixed principles. And the uniformity and steadiness of general laws seems to oppose the third. The fourth, therefore, seems by far the most probable. (D 169)

Therefore, with respect to the benevolence of the Deity being inferred from the data in the world, no conclusion may be drawn: a suspense of judgment results.

Thus Philo has shown Cleanthes the weakness of his argument: the data in the world, the content of Cleanthes's argument, do not support his conclusion that the Deity is intelligent or benevolent.

Having shown that Hume uses criticisms of both form and content to devastate the inference to the nature of the Deity, I turn now first to outline the arguments presented in Part 12 of the *Dialogues* and then to Section XI of the *Enquiry*, focusing on their form and content, to argue that these parts present a similar kind of analysis. This establishes the importance of the *Enquiry* argument to Hume's critique of religion.

Part II. The *Dialogues* and a Future State

Part 12 begins with both participants acknowledging that it is not possible to maintain the suspense of judgment to which Philo had brought Cleanthes with respect to the intelligence and benevolence of the Deity. However, Cleanthes urges, the design argument is the most acceptable system of cosmogony, and in order for us to act morally, we must have the principles of religion: "Religion, however corrupted, is better than no religion at all. . . . The proper office of religion is to regulate the heart of men, humanize their conduct, infuse the spirit of temperance, order, and obedience" (D 177). These principles have an influence over our conduct—they give us the proper tem-

perament, and influence us to act appropriately. One most important influence, Cleanthes claims, is the doctrine of a future state, which is "so strong and necessary a security to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it." His argument to support this claim is based on an analogy from experience: "For if finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great an effect, as we daily find: How much greater must be expected from such as are infinite and eternal?" (D 177).

Cleanthes is making two points here regarding the value of religion: first, that religion is necessary as an influence to our behavior, and second, that that influence is centred on the doctrine of a future state, whereby we are influenced to act appropriately in the finite world, this life, because we are motivated by the rewards expected in the infinite world, the afterlife.

Philo raises two criticisms of Cleanthes's position. He first shows Cleanthes that his inference from the fact that finite rewards and punishments have finite influence to the conclusion that infinite rewards and punishments have infinite influence is not justified, because such an inference is contrary to experience: as a matter of fact, the more remote and uncertain the object the less is the effect or influence. Philo rejects this claim by citing what we know from experience: "the smallest grain of natural honesty and benevolence has more effect on men's conduct, than the most pompous views, suggested by theological theories and systems" (D 178).

Philo's point, that the greater attachment or influence belongs to what is closest to us rather than what is more distant, is asserted by Hume in another context concerning our natural disposition. In Book III of the *Treatise*, "Of Morals," Hume argues that the rules and laws of justice are required to moderate our natural partiality to what is closest to us: "Now it appears, that in the original frame of our mind, our strongest attention is confin'd to ourselves; our next is extended to our relations and acquaintance; and 'tis only the weakest which reaches to strangers and indifferent persons" (T 488). The rules of justice are required to make us act appropriately and fairly to strangers, those distant from us, even though our natural inclination is to act with favor toward ourselves, family, and friends, those closest to us. So Cleanthes's claim that infinite rewards will exert greater influence on our behavior because of their grandeur is countered by Hume's claim that distance in fact lessens influence, and nothing is more distant than the infinite!

Second, Philo shows Cleanthes how, in fact, natural inclination serves as a far better regulator than religious principles, thus discounting the practical value of religion. Philo suggests a number of "pernicious consequences" that follow from superstition and enthusiasm, and he recounts a number of facts that indicate the failure of superstitious or enthusiastic fervor to motivate and influence.⁶ As superstition and enthusiasm are not "familiar motives of human conduct," they act only intermittently; fraud and falsehood dominate because the enthusiast is called upon to act "with seeming fervour" when in fact the

heart feels "cold and languid"; a focus upon personal salvation can "extinguish the benevolent affections" and lead to selfishness, as well as discourage charity. Further, Philo presents a litany of instances to illustrate the lack of influence of "the motives of vulgar superstition" on general conduct. In addition, the pernicious consequences of religion, "as it has commonly been found in the world," are absurdities, inconsistencies, and contradictions. The superiority of natural inclination as a motivator is shown by its incessant working, its constant presence, and its being part of "every view and consideration" of human conduct (D 178).

These criticisms attack Cleanthes's argument by making reference to the facts. Cleanthes had claimed that the doctrine of a future state is a motivator to our behavior because of the analogy between the influence of finite and infinite rewards on our behavior. Philo counters this claim by showing that, as a matter of fact, we are more attached to close and present things than to remote and uncertain ones. Religious principles do not, as a matter of fact, serve as effective motivators and influences. Cleanthes's inference is not supported by the data to which he refers, and in fact, another conclusion is drawn by Philo from the evidence. The conclusion that Cleanthes draws, then, is not just.

The nature of Philo's objections to Cleanthes's support for the doctrine of a future state to motivate and influence our behavior is to attack the content of his argument, the evidence that he presents in support of his conclusion.

I wish to digress here a moment to note an interesting difference in how Philo argues against the content of Cleanthes's argument here in Part 12 where the issue is morality, as opposed to those arguments in the earlier parts where the issue is the Deity's nature, a theological point. In the earlier parts, where Cleanthes had proposed an hypothesis, that of an intelligent designer, to account for the facts in the world, Philo criticized this position by showing that those same facts allowed for any number of alternate hypotheses, and that not only was it not the case that one position was more acceptable than the other, there was no way to decide between them. "A total suspense of judgment is here our only reasonable resource" (D 147). However, in the case of morality, Philo takes a definitive position with respect to our motivators: "Thus, the motives of vulgar superstition have no great influence on general conduct; nor is their operation very favourable to morality, in the instances, where they predominate" (D 180). The choice of natural inclination over religious principles is clearly supported by the facts. Philo is able to make such statements because of the topic under discussion. He had stated in Part 1 of the *Dialogues* that when our speculations are confined "to trade or morals or politics or criticism, we make appeals, every moment, to common sense and experience, which strengthen our philosophical conclusions" (D 101). Where the topic is morality, Philo feels confident in using the data of experience to draw

some strong conclusions—in the case of Part 12, that religious principles in general and the prospect of a future state in particular do not have an influence on our behavior. There is an alternate hypothesis to account for this influence that is supported by the facts, and so no suspense of judgement results from this discussion. Natural inclination is a strong motivator to our behaviour, and if we look to Hume's full treatments of morality in the *Treatise* and the second *Enquiry*, we find the moral sentiments serving as the basis for moral distinctions and evaluations.

We turn now to the arguments against a future state as found in the first *Enquiry*, to show that in this instance Hume is directing his assault on the form of the inference to a future state. Such an inference is, in fact, an unjust one, as it fails to meet the requirements of causal arguments.

Part III. The *Enquiry* and a Future State

In *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Hume includes a section entitled "Of a Particular Providence and of a Future State," presented as a dialogue between two speakers. One speaker takes the position of defending the view presumably taken by the historical Epicurus, that of "denying a divine existence, and consequently a providence and a future state, [which would] seem to loosen, in a great measure, the ties of morality, and may be supposed, for that reason, pernicious to the peace of civil society" (EHU 133–134). This speaker supposes himself to be Epicurus (EHU 134), and we will refer to him as such here.

In the *Dialogues*, it is generally accepted that Philo is speaking for Hume, so that the criticisms that Philo offers may be taken to reflect Hume's own position with respect to religious principles. A number of considerations point to the defender of Epicurus as presenting Hume's views, so that we can attribute *his* conclusions to Hume: for instance, the defender of this position utilizes the Humean doctrine of custom and experience as the great guide of life,⁷ and bases his criticisms upon Hume's analysis of cause and effect.⁸

Epicurus states that his concern is with showing that, as regards the effects on the public interest of questions concerning "the origin and government of worlds," they are "entirely indifferent to the peace of society and security of government" (EHU 135). It is Epicurus's claim that the inference to a future state as a means of securing the peace of society is not a legitimate one because it employs an "unjust" inference. His argument is based on two points: the lack of proportionality between effect and cause together with the lack of constant conjunction, and the illegitimacy of the inference from effect to cause and then cause to effect. Consistent with the present analysis, I claim that the argument does not adhere to the requirements for causal arguments, and that his criticisms are based on that lack of adherence.⁹ With respect to proportionality, he claims that we "can never be allowed to ascribe to the cause any

qualities, but what are exactly sufficient to produce the effect . . . if we ascribe to it farther qualities, or affirm it capable of producing other effects, we can only indulge the license of conjecture, and arbitrarily suppose the existence of qualities and energies, without reason or authority" (EHU 136). This represents an instance of violating the "rules of just reasoning" (EHU 136). If the cause is to be known only by the effect, as is the case with the Design Argument, then "we never ought to ascribe to it any qualities, beyond what are precisely requisite to produce the effect" (EHU 137). Given the gods as creators, then, we are entitled to infer of them that they possess only "that precise degree of power, intelligence, and benevolence, which appears in their workmanship" (EHU 137).

Also, constant conjunction between the cause and effect, a requirement for an argument from experience, is lacking, as the world is a unique effect and cannot be comprehended under any known species: "It is only when two species of objects are found to be constantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other " (EHU 148, cf. D 115). The inference from the effect to the cause in the case of the world and the Deity is not justified: as there is no other world and no other Deity, there is no basis upon which to infer that worlds and Deities stand in a causal relation.

Further, Epicurus claims, the inference from effect to cause and then cause to effect is unjust: we cannot first infer from the data in the world that the Deity is intelligent or benevolent (or just), and then, arguing from those attributes, make the further inference that a Deity whose nature includes those features would manifest those features more fully in a future state. As we may only infer that the gods possess the degree of any quality to the extent that it is manifested in the effect, it is mere hypothesis to suppose that "in distant regions of space or periods of time, there has been, or will be, a more magnificent display of these attributes, and a scheme of administration more suitable to such imaginary virtues" (EHU 137). However, Epicurus does not leave society without foundations. There is an alternative means to secure the regulation of our conduct, based on principles that, if argued consistently, are "solid and satisfactory" (EHU 135). Since that alternative employs a legitimate inference from past experience, we are justified in supporting that alternative.

The principle that Epicurus recommends over fallacious reasoning is custom or experience, the great guide of life: according to past experience, the virtuous life carries every advantage. The rewards of the virtuous life and the punishments of the vicious life are quite obvious to the well-disposed mind, and one's experience of past events can quite adequately serve to regulate one's behavior:

I acknowledge that, in the present order of things, virtue is attended with more peace of mind than vice, and meets with a more favourable reception from the world. I am sensible, that, according to the past

experience of mankind, friendship is the chief joy of human life, and moderation the only source of tranquility and happiness. (EHU 140)

So, while he denies the arguments to support providence and a future state, and a "supreme governor of the world, who guides the course of events, and punishes the vicious with infamy and disappointment, and rewards the virtuous with honour and success" (EHU 140), he supports the role of the natural process of causal reasoning to serve as a regulator of behavior:

The course of nature lies open to my contemplation as well as to [my antagonists]. The experienced train of events is the great standard, by which we all regulate our conduct. Nothing else can be appealed to in the field, or in the senate. Nothing else ought ever to be heard of in the school, or in the closet. In vain would our limited understanding break through those boundaries, which are too narrow for our fond imagination. (EHU 142)

In this paper I have based my arguments on attributing to Hume the views expressed by the defender of Epicurus in the dialogue of *Treatise* Section XI. I turn attention now to the other speaker, the "I" of the dialogue. In the third-to-last paragraph, this speaker declares:

Though I should allow your premises, I must deny your conclusion. You conclude, that religious doctrines and reasonings can have no influence on life, because they ought to have no influence; never considering, that men reason not in the same manner you do, but draw many consequences from the belief of a divine Existence. . . . Whether this reasoning of theirs be just or not, is no matter. Its influence on their life and conduct must still be the same. And, those, who attempt to disabuse them of such prejudices, many, for aught I know, be good reasoners, but I cannot allow them to be good citizens and politicians (EHU 147).

Hume seems to be acknowledging an important social role for the belief in a future state, in spite of the effective arguments against it presented by the defender of Epicurus. While Epicurus has argued that the tenets of religion cannot be justified by reason, the other speaker suggests that removing this belief is not beneficial to society. How can these two positions be reconciled?

I suggest that assistance with this passage can be gained by turning to the final paragraph of Book 3 of the *Treatise*.¹⁰ There, Hume distinguishes between the roles played by the anatomist and the painter. The anatomist dissects the human body and presents accurate pictures of the parts of the body, but does not "give his figures any graceful and engaging attitude or expression" (T 620).

That role is reserved for the painter, who makes them “engaging to the eye and imagination” (T 621).

The anatomist ought never to emulate the painter: nor in his accurate dissections and portraitures of the smaller parts of the human body, pretend to give his figures any graceful and engaging attitude or expression. . . . An anatomist, however, is admirably fitted to give advice to a painter; and 'tis even impracticable to excel in the latter art, without assistance of the former. We must have an exact knowledge of the parts, their situation and connexion, before we can design with any elegance or correctness.

In the arguments given in Section XI, Hume as the defender of Epicurus has acted as anatomist, dissecting the arguments, examining their accuracy as arguments, determining if they are sound. In the paragraph previously quoted from the *Enquiry* (EHU 148), Hume as this speaker is acting as painter, making reference to the responses of the passions that can influence the vulgar. Philosophy—as anatomy—can have little influence on the vulgar, as its “doctrines are not very alluring to the people” (EHU 147), and therefore there is little need to restrain it. The painter needs the anatomist, however, to set the principles upon which the painter may work. Humean reflection consists in anatomizing, to determine that the influence of the doctrine of a future state cannot come from rational assent because the arguments are not justifiable by reason, and then, by painting, to show that hold of the belief in a future state is nonrational but appeals to the imagination and sentiments, and thereby restrains the passions.

And thus the most abstract speculations concerning human nature, however cold and unentertaining, become subservient to practical morality; and may render this latter science more correct in its precepts, and more persuasive in its exhortations. (T 621)

The final section of this paper is concerned with showing that in both texts—implicitly in the *Dialogues* and overtly in the *Enquiry*—the arguments of Cleanthes and the opponents of Epicurus depend upon attributing to the Deity’s nature the feature of being just. As the purpose of Cleanthes’s design argument was to establish the nature of the Deity, showing that for Cleanthes this nature includes justice adds another feature to that nature.

Part IV. The Just Deity

In the *Dialogues*, Cleanthes argues for several features of the Deity: intelligence, benevolence, (in)finite power. However, implied in his arguments for the

future state is a further attribute: that of being a just Deity. In order for the prospect of infinite rewards and punishments to regulate our behaviour, the recipient must believe that rewards and punishments will be distributed, and that this distribution will be made in a fair and equitable manner.

This feature can be inferred in the following way. Cleanthes had claimed that as "finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great an effect, as we daily find: How much greater must be expected from such as are infinite and eternal?" This effect is that of influencing behaviour. As parents or teachers, for example, we regularly use rewards and punishments to influence the behaviour of our children or students. There is only a difference of degree, he is claiming, between the finite and the infinite, so that if finite rewards have a finite effect, which is known from our experience, infinite rewards will have an infinite effect. However, if rewards and punishments are to be effective in regulating behaviour, they must be seen by their recipients to be dispensed or distributed on the basis of justice. That is, those who are good will in fact be rewarded appropriately for the good they have done, and those who are bad will in fact be punished appropriately for the evil they have done; and these are what we consider to be the actions of a just individual. The dispensers of the finite rewards must be just with respect to the rewards and punishments they dispense, so that these finite rewards will have the correct finite influence; so then the dispenser of infinite rewards must be similarly just, although much greater in proportion, so that infinite rewards will have a proportionately much greater influence on our behaviour. Therefore, Cleanthes's Deity must be a just Deity, as well as an intelligent and benevolent one.

As this attribution is implied only in the *Dialogues*, there is no attempt on Philo's part to bring Cleanthes to a suspense of judgment with respect to this feature as he did in earlier parts with respect to the Deity's intelligence or benevolence. If we look to the *Enquiry* text, however, we find an argument presented by Epicurus that parallels those used by Philo in the *Dialogues* to achieve the suspense of judgment with respect to the Deity's intelligence and benevolence.

For Epicurus, if his opponents are to support the possibility of an afterlife of rewards and punishments to tighten the ties of morality and assure the peace of society, it must be the case that the Deity is regarded as being just. One "ought to expect some particular reward of the good, and punishment of the bad, beyond the ordinary course of events" given "a supreme distributive justice in the universe" (EHU 140). According to Epicurus, three hypotheses are possible: if there are only signs of distributive justice in the world, then one can ascribe justice to the Deity; if there are no signs, or only positive signs of injustice, then there is no reason to ascribe it to the Deity; and, if there signs of both justice and injustice, then we are only entitled to ascribe to the Deity that degree of justice that is actually at present found in the world and no more.¹¹

Conclusion

My intent in this paper was to show the importance of the arguments in Section XI of the *Enquiry* and Part 12 of the *Dialogues* in contributing to Hume's critique of the principles of religion. I showed the connection between these sections by analyzing Philo's criticisms of the design argument in the *Dialogues* in terms of his attack on both the form and the content of Cleanthes's argument. I showed that, taking Section XI and Part 12 together, the same kind of attack is directed against the prospect of a future state as an influence or motivating factor on our behaviour. This discounts a central tenet of religion—indeed, Cleanthes had stated in *Dialogues* Part 12 that it is “so strong and necessary a security to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it” (D 177)—and its value to human action. Once we can reject religious arguments as providing any direction to our moral lives, Hume can develop his moral theory based on human sentiments and natural inclinations, acting as the painter, rather than on the application of religious principles. This he accomplishes in the relevant section of *A Treatise of Human Nature* and *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.

NOTES

1. David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. Stanley Tweyman (London: Routledge, 1991), henceforth “D.”
2. David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 3rd ed. revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 138 (henceforth “EHU”).
3. A number of commentators have dealt with Philo's criticisms of the logical structure of Cleanthes's inference as well as the soundness of the conclusion he draws (see, for example, Nelson Pike's essay in his edition of the *Dialogues* [Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970], Tweyman's introduction to his edition, and my own *A Religion Without Talking: Religious Belief and Natural Belief in Hume's Philosophy of Religion* [New York: Peter Lang, 1993]), in much more detail than is done here. However, the current discussion is sufficient to draw the form and content criticisms to the reader's attention and to lead to the discussion in Part II of this paper.
4. Hume also discusses them in the *Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd ed. revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 142 (henceforth “T”), and the *Enquiry* (EHU 146).
5. I have not included a discussion of the arguments in Part 9, which focus on another feature of the Deity's nature, the modality of the Deity's existence. The focus of criticism in the *Dialogues* is on the design argument as Cleanthes presents it in Part 2. In Part 9, Demea offers the cosmological argument, which Cleanthes

criticizes, and this argument is not referred to in Part 12 of the *Dialogues* where Cleanthes continues his support of his original argument.

6. In his essay "On Superstition and Enthusiasm," Hume characterizes these two modes as "the corruptions of true religion." The basis of superstition is the weakness, fear, and ignorance of worshippers, who therefore need an intermediary, the priests, to approach God. Enthusiasm "arises from a presumptuous pride and confidence," so that worshippers who exhibit strong spirits and boldness of character, think they are "sufficiently qualified to *approach* the Divinity, without any human mediator." David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985).

7. "The experienced train of events is the great standard by which we all regulate our conduct. Nothing else can be appealed to in the field, or in the senate" (EHU 140).

8. "When we infer any particular cause from an effect, we must proportion the one to the other, and can never be allowed to ascribe to the cause any qualities, but what are exactly sufficient to produce the effect" (EHU 136).

9. At EHU 146, Epicurus refers to the legitimacy of inferring the nature of the Deity by analogy, directing his attention to the *form* of the argument: "it must evidently appear contrary to all rules of analogy to reason, from the intentions and projects of men, to those of a Being so different, and so much superior . . . But this method of reasoning can never have place with regard to a Being, so remote and incomprehensible, who bears much less analogy to any other being in the universe." See also EHU 148.

10. I am grateful to Stanley Tweyman for pointing out this passage to me and for our discussion on its importance to the passage in the *Enquiry*.

11. This is similar to the four hypotheses proposed by Philo in Part 11 of the *Dialogues*. The presence of evil in the world means that the Deity is not perfectly good; the presence of good in the world means that the Deity is not perfectly evil; that the world proceeds by uniform laws indicates that the Deity is not both good and evil; so from the data in the world we can only conclude that Deity has neither goodness nor malice—it is indifferent. However, Epicurus is not interested in drawing any conclusions as to which option is supported by the evidence, as his concern is not with the evidence, but only with setting out the rules by which the evidence is to be assessed.