



### **Reply to My Critics**

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A Symposium on David Owen, *Hume's Reason*

## Reply to My Critics

DAVID OWEN

I'd like to thank Don Garrett and Ted Morris, not just for these generous and interesting comments, but for their good will, encouragement and constructive criticism over the years I was writing *Hume's Reason*. And as I said in the book, much of the material contained therein was first presented in papers to the Hume Society. It is difficult to imagine a more critically sustaining audience.

### Section I

In his comments, Garrett presents a fair summary of the project of the book: briefly, to understand Hume's account of reason in light of the non-formal accounts developed by, *inter alia*, Descartes and Locke. He also lays out, more clearly than I could do myself and with the succinct perspicuousness that anyone familiar with Garrett's work will immediately recognize, eight substantial, interpretative theses that I put forward and defend, and pleasingly announces his agreement with all of them. He does, alas, identify four rather important areas of disagreement, and I would like to say a little in this section about the first three.

Garrett's first critical point concerns a very tendentious and difficult point in Hume scholarship: just what are Hume's views about body, and how are they constrained by his rigorous methodology?<sup>1</sup> In my book, I made the strong claim that

if experience is constituted by impressions, the cause of impressions cannot themselves be a subject for enquiry. So, for instance, we cannot sensibly ask whether our impression of a tree is caused by and represents a tree. Indeed, it is not even clear such a question makes sense, given Hume's methodology. (HR 72)<sup>2</sup>

Garrett agrees with a weaker version of this claim:

Hume emphasizes that the general supposition that bodies cause our impressions cannot be produced or defended by reason, and he also makes the related point that alternatives to that supposition cannot be refuted with certainty. There is, therefore, a good Humean sense in which the causes of our impressions of sensation cannot be strictly or certainly "known"; and one might add that, in light of this impossibility of success, it would not be "sensible" even to try to support that general supposition or to refute its alternatives. (Garrett 295)

So our disagreement lies only in this: I don't think it is clear that the question, whether our sense impressions are caused by bodies which they resemble, makes sense, given Hume's methodology. Garrett thinks it is clear that it does make sense, even though "the general supposition that bodies cause our impressions cannot be produced or defended by reason" (Garrett 295). I am glad that Garrett finds it clear; I find it baffling. Here's why.<sup>3</sup>

It is easy enough to find passages (Garrett gives reference to seven of them) where Hume speaks, not only as if the thought that bodies cause impressions makes sense, but also that we all (at least when we are in a certain sort of philosophical mode) believe it to be true. "To give a child an idea of scarlet or orange, of sweet or bitter, I present the objects, or in other words, convey to him these impressions" (T 5). It is perfectly clear what we all take this to mean, presuppose and/or imply: to convey to someone, whose relevant sense organs are functioning, the visual sense impression of "orange", we place in their visual field an orange-colored object. Through a process that can be examined by anatomists and natural philosophers (it would be inappropriate for moral philosophers to conduct such an investigation), the orange-colored object causes something distinct and quite different: an impression of orange. It is a matter of some debate what further relations hold between the physical object and the sense impression, e.g., does the sense impression resemble the object? It is undeniable that Hume speaks this way. Nonetheless, he is aware that there is a severe problem in doing so: such a picture requires that we think of physical objects or bodies as fundamentally different in kind from the perceptions of the mind. But, as Hume says,

since nothing is ever present to the mind but perceptions, and since all ideas are deriv'd from something antecedently present to the mind; it follows, that 'tis impossible for us so much as to conceive or form an idea of any thing specifically different from ideas and impressions. (T 67)

We are fooling ourselves when we think we have an idea of a physical object that is different in kind from our impressions and ideas. Garrett says that since "Hume recognizes the existence of beliefs about trees (as Owen allows that he does), then it follows for Hume that trees can be represented in thought" (Garrett 295). But if by "trees", Garrett means things that have an external existence from the mind, distinct from impressions and ideas, it is not at all clear to me that Hume thinks they can be represented in thought.

Hume is aware that when we, as philosophers, think about trees, we take ourselves to be thinking of something specifically different from perceptions. But this theory is so hopeless, he doesn't even discuss it in 1.4.2. Instead, he changes the subject to a discussion of the continued and distinct existence of items that are *not* specifically different from perceptions:

These are the only questions, that are intelligible on the present subject. For as to the notion of external existence, when taken for something specifically different from our perceptions [here there is a reference to 1.2.6, where the above passage from T 67 occurs], we have already shewn its absurdity. (T 188)

When he attacks the philosopher's view of double existence, he makes it clear, or at least as clear as anything is in this troublesome section, that the view he is attacking is not the dubiously coherent view of a double existence of perceptions and external bodies, but rather the double existence of two sets of perceptions:

Philosophers deny our resembling perceptions to be identically the same, and uninterrupted; and yet have so great a propensity to believe them such, that they arbitrarily invent a new set of perceptions, to which they attribute these qualities. I say, a new set of perceptions: For we may well suppose in general, but 'tis impossible for us distinctly to conceive, objects to be in their nature any thing but exactly the same with perceptions. (T 218)

The last sentence on its own is enough, surely, to show that it is at best unclear whether Hume thinks the supposition that impressions might be caused by objects specifically different from perceptions makes any sense. It looks as if Hume thinks we can suppose what is inconceivable. We often suppose that

impressions are caused by entities specifically different from them, but in doing so we suppose what is inconceivable and makes no sense.<sup>4</sup> Actually, this is less bizarre than might first appear. To mention a case discussed in the book (HR 109–110), when we construct a *reductio ad absurdum* to show that a particular proposition is necessarily false, we use that proposition as a premise, and infer a contradiction. In Humean terms, this is supposing something to be true, and then showing that it is inconceivable.

Garrett's second critical point involves my claim that demonstrations, for Hume, involve a greater amount of certainty than probable arguments. Garrett cites passages that suggest that Hume, at least in some places, thought that it was a matter of different kinds of certainty rather than a greater degree of certainty that is at stake. As a result, the degree or amount of certainty obtained by a probable argument can be as great as the degree or amount obtained by a demonstration. There is surely something right about this. Hume does not think that belief is the same sort of thing as knowledge, only less so.<sup>5</sup> The certainty that attaches to knowledge comes from the inconceivability of the alternatives, while the assent that attaches to belief is a matter of force and vivacity. So I think Garrett is right to correct me here, though I am pleased we agree on the main points that the "goodness" of a demonstration, or of a probable argument, is a matter of preservation of certainty rather than formal validity, and that Hume (and Locke's) distinction between a demonstrative and probable argument is not the same as our distinction between a deductive and inductive argument.

Nonetheless, I think it is going to be difficult to show that everything Hume says on this matter is consistent. On Garrett's view, Hume thinks that the results of probable arguments can be as certain, though of a different kind of certainty, as the results of demonstrations. But consider T 153. Hume there summarizes his account of belief as a matter of force and vivacity. Memory produces ideas with the most amount of force and vivacity, and hence "our confidence in the veracity of that faculty is the greatest imaginable, and equals in many respects the assurance of a demonstration." Hume goes on to say that "[t]he next degree of these qualities is that deriv'd from the relation of cause and effect; and this too is very great," especially in proofs (in Hume's technical sense of "proof", i.e., "when the conjunction is found by experience to be perfectly constant.") It certainly looks here as if Hume is claiming, with respect to certainty or confidence, that memory can, in many respects, equal demonstration, and that proofs have a lower degree than memory. So if he also holds that proofs can equal demonstration, he really is being inconsistent. Part of the problem is that Hume equates our feeling the force and vivacity of an idea with our assenting to a belief. He needs to distinguish these, and in general distinguish between the assent (which comes in degrees) we give to a belief or item of knowledge, and what causes that assent, i.e. the evidence or "evidentness."<sup>6</sup> In the case of knowledge, the evidence is inconceivability, while in

belief it is force and vivacity. With this distinction, which Hume needs in any case,<sup>7</sup> we can begin to sort out some of the difficulties just canvassed.

I now turn to Garrett's third set of "more central reservations" concerning "Owen's provocative interpretation of the conclusion of Hume's famous negative argument concerning probable (or, as we now say, 'inductive') inferences—namely, Hume's conclusion that these inferences are 'not determin'd by reason'" (Garrett 296). Garrett points out that I sometimes appear to interpret this conclusion as denying that probable "reasoning really involves a 'faculty of reason' at all," while elsewhere I take Hume to be "denying a particular *theory of how* the faculty of reasoning operates." The former claim is of course much too broad, if "faculty of reason" is taken to mean "any appeal to reason whatsoever," for then the absurd consequence would follow that probable inferences aren't reasonings at all. But if "faculty of reason" is taken to refer to the traditional conception of reason as an independent faculty functioning with its own distinctive sort of operations, then Hume does deny that probable inferences are explained by an appeal to such a faculty. I think I get this just about right in the last chapter of the book when I say:

We saw in earlier chapters that Hume's claim that we are 'not determin'd by reason', when we infer an effect from a cause amounts to the claim that reason, considered as a faculty with its own distinctive operations on our ideas, cannot explain how we make that inference. (HR 199)

Of course, the "distinctive operation" Hume was most concerned with was the movement from one idea to another via an intermediate idea. In his positive account, Hume treats reason as a faculty only in a very attenuated sense: the activities of reason, indeed of the understanding in general, are to be explained in terms of "the general and more establish'd properties of the imagination" (T 267). Hence, as he explains in two important footnotes (T 117–18, T 371), when he contrasts memory with the imagination, the imagination includes reason and the understanding. But "When I oppose it [the imagination] to reason, I mean the same faculty, excluding only our demonstrative and probable reasonings" (T 118, note).<sup>8</sup> What explains the movement of the mind from one idea to another in inference is not some unique activity of an independent faculty of reason, but simply the general properties of the imagination.<sup>9</sup>

Garrett and I have argued in print about Hume on induction more than once.<sup>10</sup> Although I will add a little to that dialogue below, the main thing I wish to do here is sketch the broad agreement, as I see it, we have on several issues in this controversial area.

Here are some important agreements:

(1) The argument in *Treatise* I iii 6, and in section 4 of the first *Enquiry*, is primarily about the production of belief by inference, and the role, if any, reason plays in it. Normative questions about justification, by and large, come elsewhere.

(2) One needs to establish just what is denied when Hume says we are not determined by reason when we make these inferences. Locke's account of demonstrative and probable reasoning (reasoning as inference from one idea to another via intermediate ideas) can help here.

(3) Hume thinks probable inferences are instances of reasoning.

(4) Points (2) and (3) pose the following question: how can an instance of reasoning be a process in which we are not determined by reason?

(5) Reasoning is inference, and the faculty of reason is the faculty that produces those inferences.

(6) Hume is also concerned to deny that, when we reason from an observed event to an unobserved event, the relation between those ideas is something that can be intuited. Hence the importance of the passages in section 4 of the *Enquiry* where he says things such as conclusions from experience "are not founded on reasoning, or any process of the understanding" (EHU 32).

(7) Having denied that the connection between the propositions or ideas is intuitive, Hume goes on to say that what is required is "a medium, which may enable the mind to draw such an inference, if indeed it be drawn by reasoning and argument" (EHU 34).

(8) Points (2), (6) and (7) seem to imply that if we were determined by reason "or any process of the understanding", then either the relation between the ideas is intuitive, or the relevant sort of medium would be available. It is clear that the "connexion . . . is not intuitive" (EHU 34). So the only question that remains is, what is it that Hume is ruling out when he says that "no one [will] be ever able to discover any connecting proposition or intermediate step"?

At this stage Garrett and I diverge. He thinks the relevant sort of medium or intermediate step would itself be an inference. When Hume denies that in

making inferences from the observed to the unobserved we are determined by reason, he is denying, according to Garrett, that we are caused to make that inference by some other inference. But inferences aren't typically explained by citing some other inference. They are explained by showing how one gets from one part of the inference to the other. Hume says:

If reason determin'd us, it wou'd proceed upon that principle, *that instances, of which we have had no experience, must resemble those, of which we have had experience, and that the course of nature continues always uniformly the same.* (T 89)

It doesn't seem easy to parse this as saying, "If reason determined us, some *other* inference would cause us to make the inference from the impression to the idea."<sup>11</sup> The question is whether the move from the impression to the idea is an inference at all, at least on the traditional view of reasoning that takes inference to involve the move from one idea to another via some intermediate step. It seems to me that Hume is saying something more like, "If reason determined us, the move from the impression to the idea would *be* an inference of the traditional sort. But if it were such an inference, some medium would have to bridge the gap between the impression and the idea." And I argued that, in the context of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theories of reasoning, this medium would be an intermediate idea. And the sort of intermediate idea required, if reason were to determine us, would be something like the idea of necessary connection or the Uniformity Principle.<sup>12</sup>

My account apparently suffers, along with most other plausible accounts of Hume's argument, from a grave disadvantage, a disadvantage avoided by Garrett's account. If I am right, it might appear that Hume equivocates to the point of disingenuousness when he uses the term "reason."<sup>13</sup> Sometimes (for instance in the argument we are discussing) he uses "reason" to mean "the inferential faculty, which employs intermediate ideas," but immediately after the argument, he uses "reason" in an apparently different way, as in "we may exert our reason without employing more than two ideas, and without having recourse to a third to serve as a medium betwixt them" (T 97, note). Garrett goes so far as to say, putting a particularly bad spin on the point, that if "Owen's interpretation is correct, it seems we must conclude that Hume, in an argument that he regarded as crucial to the understanding of the nature of reason, chose to use the term 'reason' not in his own sense but rather in a restricted sense in which he never used it before and never used it again" (Garrett 298).

This needn't follow from my interpretation. Garrett and I can both agree that Hume unequivocally uses "reason" to mean "the inferential faculty." But of course there are different accounts of faculties, and different accounts of how the faculty of reason produces inferences. Hume took the standard

account of how the faculty of reason produces inferences to be as follows: "Reasoning [is] the separating or uniting of different ideas by the interposition of others, which show the relation they bear to each other" (T 96, note). By and large, Hume accepted this as an account of demonstrative reasoning. The main point of his important argument is that such an account will not work for probable reasoning. It is the association of ideas produced by past experience that explains how we get from an impression of a cause to an idea of an effect. This is a new account of how reason, the inferential faculty, produces beliefs. Hence, "we may exert our reason without employing more than two ideas, and without having recourse to a third to serve as a medium betwixt them" (T 97, same note). Hume unequivocally uses "reason" to mean "the inferential faculty," but he has a new account of how that faculty works, at least with respect to probable reasoning. Does Garrett want to deny that Hume thinks he is giving a new account?

## Section Two

Garrett's last point, and the bulk of Morris's comments, concerns my treatment of Hume's account of warrant or epistemic merit. Morris's paper is the beginning of an entire re-thinking of the issue, and together with his recent paper "Hume's Conclusion,"<sup>14</sup> presents a new and important way of looking at what Hume was up to parts iii and iv of Book I of the *Treatise*. I won't be able to do justice to it here.

The question of the warrant of reason that concerns me in Hume arises for anyone who considers Hume to be more than simply a negative dogmatist about reason. If one interprets the arguments of I iii 6 ("Of the inference from the impression to the idea") and I iv 1 ("Of scepticism with regard to reason") as showing that reason is unwarranted and that the items of alleged knowledge and the beliefs that appear to be based on reason are unjustified, then the question doesn't arise. That is to say, no *further* question arises because the main question has already been answered: both probable and demonstrative reasoning are unwarranted and the beliefs that appear to be based on them are unjustified. But if one rejects this picture of Hume as the purely negative dogmatist, then the question is pressing. Hume relies heavily on probable arguments, as would any one who is trying to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects. And his works, even the works where these apparently crushing arguments about reason appear, have all the appearance of defending reason against superstition. What grounds this preference for reason?

In *Hume's Reason*, I argued that Hume didn't face this question in the *Treatise* until part iv of Book I, and that his answer was only sketchily developed in I iv 7. In contrast, Hume seems aware of the need to defend reason right from the very beginning of the first *Enquiry*, and throughout that work

consistently appeals to the moral and social utility of the right use of philosophy and reason.<sup>15</sup> Both Garrett and Morris agree, I think, that there is something right about this; it would be idle to pretend Hume doesn't make such an appeal. But Garrett thinks we can and should find in Hume "some epistemic approval for probable judgments that was independent of moral sentiment" (Garrett 300). Furthermore, Garrett thinks this is well developed, not just in the *Enquiry*, but also in the *Treatise*. Garrett locates it in the Title Principle.<sup>16</sup> Morris takes a different strategy, rejecting my account of the context in which the question of warrant arises. I said that the question is pressing for anyone who doesn't treat Hume as a negative dogmatist about reason and justification. But we mustn't think that just because Hume isn't a negative dogmatist about reason that the only alternative is to treat him as a positive dogmatist with a new account of reason whose warrant needs to be explained. Rather, Morris's strategy, if I understand it correctly, is to emphasize the skeptical side of Hume's skeptical solution: "The causal expectations that survive this process will be the ones we retain, not because they meet the requirements of some philosophical theory or because they satisfy some abstract dictates of reason, but because they yield beliefs that we think are more likely to be true than others that don't pass these tests" (Morris 319).

In the last chapter of *Hume's Reason*, I argued that Hume's discussion of education (T 115–117) and unphilosophical probability raise important issues about the warrant of reason that Hume seems to ignore. Briefly, Hume sees education, i.e., frequent repetition, as producing beliefs. Hume compares the effects of such "education" or brainwashing to the effect on liars of the frequent repetition of their lies: they come to believe them. Thus beliefs can be produced independently of the senses, memory or reason, the traditional faculties of the understanding. Such faculties are held to produce truths. If one wants truth, one will prefer the results of those faculties to the results of education or superstition. But Hume's account of reason treats it, not as some independent faculty, but merely as a subset of the properties of the imagination. Unlike a traditional faculty account, Hume's reason can't be guaranteed to bring truth with it. It is thus imperative for Hume to explain the difference between, say, reason and education, and why the one is more likely to produce truth than the other (or, at least, why we prefer one to the other.) I argued that Hume doesn't recognize this as a problem until he starts to explain beliefs, in I iv 2 ("Of scepticism with regard to the senses"), that he knows in advance to be false or even incoherent, and that he doesn't really face the issue until I iv 7 ("Conclusion of this book"). A good deal of the evidence for this is Hume's bland indifference to the problem in part iii, especially in the places, such as the discussion of education, where it most acutely arises. All Hume says is that results of education "are frequently contrary to reason" (that is to say, the beliefs produced by education sometimes conflict with beliefs produced by reason), and that education "is never upon that account recogniz'd by philoso-

phers" (T 117). Hume has a pressing need to explain this preference because "in reality [education is] built almost on the same foundation of custom and repetition as our reasonings from causes and effects" (T 117). Given his account of reason, Hume can't simply cite some special relation between reason and truth. He has to show that it holds, or give some other account of our preference for reason. Not only does Hume fail to do this, he fails to see that it needs to be done until after section 1 of part iv of Book I of the *Treatise*. This is in marked contrast to the *Enquiry*, or so I argued.

Morris has a bold and interesting response to this. I see the problem arising because I take it that philosophers, that is Hume and all of us, prefer the results of causal reasoning to beliefs produced by mere repetition, and that Hume not only fails to ground this and similar preferences in Book III, but that he is barred from grounding them by an appeal to truth. Morris questions Hume's identification with the philosophers, here and elsewhere. In the case of education, Morris maintains, Hume is virtually mocking the attempt of philosophers "to find a principled basis to reject beliefs that are the result of education, and that will systematically distinguish those (bad) beliefs from the (good) beliefs based on proper causal inference" (Morris 314). Given that both arise from the same foundation, it doesn't look as if this is going to be possible. Morris generalizes this point: "when Hume speaks of 'philosophy' or 'philosophers,' he almost never has his own position in mind" (Morris 312). It is unexceptional that Hume does not identify with "the modern philosophy" or "the antient philosophy." But Morris is claiming that almost every reference to "philosophy" is to a position with which Hume disagrees. If this is so, even the distinction between the wise and the vulgar is undermined. The vulgar follow the first sort of general rules, producing over-hasty generalizations and prejudices. The wise follow the second sort, which are derived from "the more general and authentic operations of the understanding" (T 150). But both are derived from the same source of unphilosophical probability. As Morris says, "if he [Hume] is correct, then the philosophers' attempts to provide an absolute means of partitioning off the legitimate principles of belief-formation from those that are illegitimate are doomed to failure" (Morris 317).

I have difficulties in seeing all these uses of "philosophy" and "philosophical" as marking out positions with which Hume disagrees. We, as philosophers attempting to be wise, do prefer the results of reason when they conflict with beliefs produced by education. Why else would Hume "make bold to recommend philosophy, and . . . not scruple to give it the preference to superstition of every kind or denomination" (T 271)? And Hume consistently does try to ground reason in the more "extensive and constant" operations of the imagination. The latter concept is introduced precisely to solve a problem apparently produced by Hume's system whereby "all reasonings are nothing but the effects of custom; and custom has no influence, but by invivening the imagination" (T 149). The problem is that it appears that "our

judgment and imagination can never be contrary"; the solution is to distinguish the trivial from the more extensive and constant properties of the imagination. The effects of the former are attributed to the imagination, and the latter to judgment or the understanding. Further evidence that Hume relies on this distinction comes in "Conclusion to this book," where Hume struggles with the fact that at least one trivial property of the imagination, "by which we enter with difficulty into remote views of things" (T 268), is required to save reason or the understanding, identified with "the general and more establish'd properties of the imagination" (T 267).

Morris supports his view by citing a passage where Hume explicitly says, Morris claims, that the distinction between judgment and the imagination, and hence the distinction between the results of probable reasoning and illicitly formed beliefs, is "contrary to true philosophy." The passage comes from the important footnote found on T 117–18, and is quoted in full by Morris. There Hume says "that the word, imagination, is commonly us'd in two different senses; and tho' nothing be more contrary to true philosophy than this inaccuracy, yet in the following reasonings I have often been oblig'd to fall into it." Morris takes this to mean that the distinction between the imagination and reason (the faculty that produces probable reasonings) is "contrary to true philosophy." But I don't think Hume was saying this at all. In traditional faculty psychology, one distinguished, *inter alia*, among faculties such as memory, imagination and reason. Hume rejects the account of independent faculties, and identifies reason with "the general and more establish'd properties of the imagination" (T 267). Nonetheless, he still needs to make the traditional contrasts between the imagination and memory, on the one hand, and between the imagination and reason on the other. On Hume's view, imagination is used expansively in the former contrast, and includes its general and established properties, i.e., includes reason. But sometimes, in order to make the traditional contrast between reason and the imagination, Hume has to use the term "imagination" in a way that excludes "our demonstrative and probable reasonings." Because of his new theory, he is forced into ambiguity in his use of the word "imagination." Such an ambiguous use of words is contrary to true philosophy. No harm comes, of course, if the ambiguity is clearly flagged, and Hume does so, here and in the parallel footnote on T 371.

There is much more in Ted Morris's paper that I would like to discuss. In particular, I am intrigued by the manner of his appeal to Hume's discussion of "Rules by which to judge of causes and effects." It is an important source for any complete discussion of what I have called "the problem of warrant," and I look forward to further discussion.<sup>17</sup>

## NOTES

A first version of these comments was presented to an "Author Meets Critics" session on *Hume's Reason* at the 27th Hume Conference held in Williamsburg, Virginia, July 2000, where the critics were Don Garrett and Ted Morris. I took advantage of the opportunity, and I would like to do so again here, to make a few repairs to, and point out some omissions in, *Hume's Reason*. See also the last note of this paper for some *errata*.

First of all, at least two people, whom I failed to mention in the preface, have read chapters of this book and have had many discussions with me on relevant topics over the years; they are Gideon Yaffe and Ed McCann. I thank them, and the (doubtless) others whom I also failed to mention. Secondly, I failed to identify a clear intellectual debt. I am sure it was only after I had read the section, "The heyday of ideas," in Ian Hacking's *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) that I began to realize just how seriously philosophers in the early modern period took ideas, and what a difference it made. From there, it was a very small jump to the thought that philosophers who took ideas so seriously were almost certainly going to have a rather different conception of reasoning, which involves the movement in thought from one idea to another, than we have today. This helped me formulate answers to some questions that I had been thinking about for some years: what did Hume mean by "reason" and "reasoning," and what precisely was Hume up to in the argument which we now call the argument about induction? What exactly was he denying when he denied that in such inferences we are determined by reason? Was that his last word on the subject? Those are the repairs. Now let me point some omissions which may take some years to make good. I am well aware, and should have said as much in the preface, that *Hume's Reason* does not cover all the topics which one might expect in a book of that name. As I said on page 1, "many of the most famous problems that Hume discusses and the positions that he advocates are couched in terms of reason." But one would look in vain in *Hume's Reason* for a sustained discussion of many such topics: reason and the passions, reason and moral distinctions, reason and religious belief (including belief in miracles), or reason and the standard of taste. Even if one stuck to topics found in Book I of the *Treatise*, one might expect some discussion of reason and the belief in body. I have elsewhere said a little on some of these topics, and below I say a little about our belief in bodies. I hope that I will eventually have something worthwhile to say about all of them. Perhaps the reader finds that the topics I do cover in *Hume's Reason*, summarized so well by Garrett, are worth discussing on their own, and that the discussion forms some sort of coherent whole.

1 Garrett rightly points out that his reservations about this point, with respect to the overall claims of the book, are relatively minor. Nonetheless, concerning Hume's philosophy in general, it is an important issue, and I am glad to say a little more about it here.

2 Page references of the form "HR n" are to *Hume's Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); those of the form "Garrett nn" are to Garrett's "Owen on Humean Reason," *Hume Studies* 26 (2000), 291–303; those of the form "Morris nn" to William Morris' "Humean Reason and the Problem of Warrant," *Hume Studies* 26 (2000), 305–321; those of the form "T nn" to David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd ed., revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon

Press, 1978); and those of the form “EHU nn” to David Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 3rd ed., revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

3 Kevin Meeker was surely correct when he reminded me that any proper discussion of this point would take into account Hume’s relation to Berkeley, something I am unable to do here.

4 As I mention in the book (HR 110, note 41), Kenneth Winkler argues that Hume’s claim that we can suppose what we cannot conceive was not uncommon in the eighteenth century, and that Price, for example, held that we could suppose contradictions, which are inconceivable. See his “The New Hume,” *Philosophical Review* 100 (1991), 160–1, note 14.

5 See my “Locke and Hume on Belief, Judgment and Assent”, forthcoming in *Topoi*.

6 See Garrett’s *Cognition and Commitment in Hume’s Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 228, and HR 184–88, for arguments in favor of treating Hume’s use of “evidence” as, by and large, meaning “evidentness”.

7 Hume actually makes this distinction in one place in the Appendix, at T 632: “A like reflection on general rules keeps us from augmenting our belief upon every encrease of the force and vivacity of our ideas.” It may well be that Hume also needs the distinction Garrett makes in note 10 of his paper.

8 Garrett notes my “generally deflationary reading of Hume on mental faculties” (Garrett 302, note 11). We agree on what I take to be the main issue: simple appeal to mental faculties is not explanatory. Garrett goes on to say that Hume needn’t reject “the postulation of further causal mechanisms that operate unperceived to produce these perceptions and their patterns.” At one level, this is completely unobjectionable, but one should bear in mind Hume’s advice to the “true philosopher . . . to restrain the intemperate desire of searching into causes.” The whole paragraph in which this comment occurs (T 12–13) is relevant to the issue at hand.

9 “Thus tho’ causation be a philosophical relation, as implying contiguity, succession, and constant conjunction, ‘tis only so far as it is a natural relation, and produces an union among our ideas, that we are able to reason upon it, or draw any inference from it.” (T 94)

10 See HR 132–4, where I briefly discuss Garrett’s important chapter “Reason and Induction”, found in his *Cognition and Commitment*, 76–95. For more detail, see my “Reason and Commitment,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 62 (2001): 191–6, and Garrett’s “Replies,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 62 (2001): 205–15.

11 As mentioned above, Hume says that no one will “ever be able to discover any connecting proposition or intermediate step, which supports the understanding in this conclusion.” It is not an argument that would link them; it is an idea or a proposition. He does go on to mention “argument” in the next sentence, but the argument that doesn’t exist, surely, is the argument that starts with an impression and finishes with an idea of the unobserved. It is not a separate argument or inference. Note that in the above paragraph, I ignore (as I did in *Hume’s Reason*, and as Hume did in the *Treatise*) the complication mentioned in points 6 through 8 above: Hume wants to rule out the possibility of an intuitive connection between the idea

and the impression even though his main target is the thought that the connection can be accounted for by a traditional piece of reasoning.

12 I thought that one of the attractive features of my treatment of Hume's argument was that it showed just what role the Uniformity Principle played: it is the sort of medium that would be required to get us from the impression to the idea if "reason determin'd us." But Garrett sees a problem for the Uniformity Principle in my account (Garrett 297). I think the problem disappears if one bears in mind that some ideas, for Hume, can be true or false, in more or less the same way propositions can. The Uniformity Principle can be available to us in reasoning only by being known or believed. We can no more make use of the Uniformity Principle in probable reasoning simply by entertaining it than we could appeal to the Pythagorean Theorem in geometrical reasoning without knowing whether it was true or false.

13 I think Barbara Winters was the first to point out that it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that Hume equivocated on "reason." See her "Hume on Reason," *Hume Studies* 5 (1979): 20–35.

14 *Philosophical Studies* 99 (2000): 89–110.

15 I suspect light might be shed on this issue by considering whether, and to what extent, Hume should be considered a virtue epistemologist. See Linda T. Zagzebski, *Virtues of the Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

16 For more detail than Garrett gives in his paper, see *Cognition and Commitment*, 234–237.

17 Thanks to Peter Millican and Kevin Meeker for helpful suggestions concerning the rewriting of this paper. And thanks to David Norton for help with following list of *errata*.

#### *Errata*

p. 65, note 4. The annotation (to Intro.8) is found on p. 425. For "eighteenth century" read "18th c."

p. 78, note 22. The annotation (to 1.1.4.6) is found on p. 429.

p. 84, note 1. The last sentence should read "See Norton and Norton (2000), Editor's Introduction, pp. 124–25, of which David Norton is the sole author."

p. 123, line 7. For "R of reason" read "R account of reason".

p. 132, 12 lines from bottom: replace 'cannot' with 'can'. Hume is "denying that such inferences can be explained . . ."

p. 136, note 35. The reference to the Editor's Introduction is to p. 138.

p. 162, note 25. The annotation (to 1.3.6.12) is found on p. 453.

p. 169, note 36. The reference to Norton and Norton (2000) is to 1.3.8.13 (p. 72) of the text of the *Treatise*.

p. 185, note 11. The page reference to Norton and Norton (2000) is to the glossary, p. 575.

- p. 198, 13 lines from bottom: the reference to T 105 should be to T 104.
- p. 213, last line of footnote 22. The reference to Ch. 7 n. 38 should be to the appendix of chapter 7.
- p. 225. In the list of references, for "Arnauld, Antione" read "Arnauld, Antoine".
- p. 225. In the list of references, the page references for Julia Annas's "Hume and Ancient Scepticism" are pp. 271–285.
- p. 228. In the list of references, Juha Sihvola's *Ancient Scepticism and the Sceptical Tradition* has appeared as *Acta Philosophica Fennica* 66 (2000).