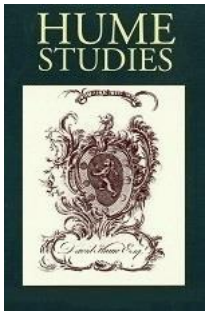


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*Hume Studies* vol. 40, no. 2 (2014), pp. 279–300.

Hume Studies
Volume 40, Number 2, 2014, pp. 279–300

# Loeb's "Standard" Questions about Hume's Concept of Probable Truth

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It is an honor to receive such extensive comments from Louis Loeb ("Setting the Standard," *Hume Studies* 40 [this issue]), whose work I admire and from whom I have learned much. In particular, his landmark 2002 book, *Stability and Justification in Hume's "Treatise"* and his 2010 collection of essays, *Reflection and the Stability of Belief: Essays on Descartes, Hume, and Reid* (both published by Oxford University Press) are essential reading for anyone who wants to understand early modern epistemology. Some of what I have learned from him is reflected in the book on which he is now commenting (Garrett, *Hume*) which is not, of course, to say that he approves of all of the uses I make of his work, nor that I agree with everything he says about mine.

My book has a number of different aims, about which I say a bit more in my reply to Peter Millican (Garrett, "Millican's Questions"). Loeb's comments, however, are very helpfully focused on my treatments of what I take to be two partially overlapping classes of Humean concepts—that is, of the mental entities that Hume himself calls "abstract ideas." These two classes of concepts are the *sense-based* (including concepts of colors, sounds, tastes, and smells, but also BEAUTY and DEFORMITY, VIRTUE and VICE, CAUSATION, and PROBABILITY) and the *normative* (including BEAUTY and DEFORMITY, VIRTUE and VICE, TRUTH and FALSEHOOD, and PROBABLE TRUTH and PROBABLE FALSEHOOD). In addition to occupying chapters 4 and 5, my treatments of them constitute a good deal of the backbone for the rest of the book and of what Loeb calls the "new interpretation" (243) that it provides.

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In the first section of his paper, Loeb provides a partial sketch of my account of these two kinds of concepts (including a helpful chart of their partial overlap). In doing so, he attends especially to the role played by "standards of judgment" for various sense-based concepts—hence the title of his paper—and to what I call "semantic ascent"[1] in relation to the epistemically normative concepts TRUTH and PROBABLE TRUTH. The remaining four sections of his paper are devoted to critical questions and objections specifically about my treatment of PROBABLE TRUTH as a (mediately[2]) sense-based concept governed by a standard of judgment. These questions concern, in order, the role of semantic ascent and the standard of judgment for PROBABLE TRUTH in overcoming "Pyrrhonian" skepticism in favor of "mitigated" skepticism (section 2); the role of "convergence" in relation to the standard of judgment for PROBABLE TRUTH (section 3); the relation of the belief in bodies (that is, "continu'd and distinct existences") to the standard of judgment for PROBABLE TRUTH (section 4); and the analogy between PROBABLE TRUTH and VIRTUE as sense-based concepts in relation to standards of judgment (section 5). To facilitate reference and comparison, I will divide my reply into five corresponding sections. In the hope that it will provide useful context, however, I will preface my specific replies by noting some general points of agreement and disagreement that influence how he and I see the answers to the questions he raises.[3]

First, Loeb and I agree that a process of "correction," related in some way both to standards and to rules, plays an important role both in Hume's moral theory and in his epistemology. Second, we agree that the pleasures offered by stable belief and the pains involved in doubt and vacillation play important and distinctive roles in Hume's explanation of the normative evaluation of beliefs. Third, we agree that Hume accords beliefs a defeasible antecedent authority even in the absence of any non-question-begging arguments for their truth. These are important matters, and I am rendered more confident about them—through a sympathetic mechanism that Hume himself notably explored—by Loeb's concurring judgments.

On the other hand, Loeb and I disagree about three important matters as well. First, we disagree about the basis of this defeasible authority. He locates its original source in a *methodological* stance of accepting pre-theoretic intuitions. This stance is then supported, he holds, by two Humean theories: (1) a theory of belief according to which all beliefs possess a certain *steadiness*, *other things being equal*, just in virtue of being beliefs and (2) a philosophical theory of doxastic justification that closely connects justification with *stability* understood as *steadiness of influence*, *all things considered*. In my view, in contrast, Hume recognizes this defeasible authority because the capacity for the felt "liveliness" (that is, "force and vivacity") of belief when conceiving a possible matter of fact itself constitutes for him a kind of (correctible) *sense of probability* that is in crucial ways analogous to what he calls "the sense of beauty" and "the moral sense." This, I take it, is what Hume means when he writes, "Thus all probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation. 'Tis

not solely in poetry and music, we must follow our taste and sentiment, but likewise in philosophy. When I am convinc'd of any principle, 'tis only an idea, which strikes more strongly upon me" (T 1.3.8.12; SBN 103), and "*[B]elief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures*" (T 1.4.1.8; SBN 183).

Second, Loeb and I disagree about the relation of priority in Hume between the epistemically normative evaluation of *beliefs* and the epistemically normative evaluation of *faculties* or *belief-producing mechanisms*. In Loeb's view, Hume epistemically evaluates individual beliefs only by *first* evaluating the faculties and mechanisms that produce them—specifically, for the typical *stability* of the beliefs that they generate, and not for the truth or probability of truth of those beliefs. This seems to require that we cannot think about individual beliefs in a normatively epistemic way at all until we have first formed a conception of "stability" for beliefs and have then distinguished and classified the various faculties and operations that produce them. In my view, in contrast, Hume epistemically evaluates faculties and operations only by first epistemically evaluating—for truth or probable truth—the beliefs to which they typically give rise. My approach finds an obvious parallel in the way in which the original and primary objects of aesthetic evaluation for Hume are artifacts, performances, or natural objects themselves, not the artistic or natural agents or processes that produce them. Loeb's approach, in contrast, makes the normative relation between beliefs and faculties somewhat more like the normative relation Hume proposes between actions and the features of character that produce them.

Finally, Loeb and I disagree about what belief itself *is* for Hume. In his view, Humean belief is a disposition to act in certain ways and also to have various other mental manifestations of that disposition, manifestations that include—but only as some among others—lively ideas. In my view, in contrast, Hume holds that beliefs are, in the first instance, lively ideas themselves, although he certainly emphasizes that they can affect action and also recognizes a derivative sense of 'belief' that refers to a standing disposition to have such lively ideas. This difference between us results largely from how literally we take Hume's frequent and explicit declarations that belief "is" or "is constituted" by the liveliness of ideas (see section 5) and also from how we read his treatment of the phenomenology of "poetical enthusiasms" that are not beliefs (T 1.3.10.10–12; SBN 134–35).

## 1. Introductory Overview

Loeb's introductory overview is concise and, on the whole, accurate. In order to forestall misunderstandings in later sections, however, some elaborations are necessary.

The first elaboration concerns *idealization* in Humean sense-based concepts generally. The development of sense-based concepts, I argue, involves four elements that may be considered as overlapping stages:

- *repeated activation* (of a basic sensibility resulting in characteristic and distinctive mental responses to stimuli)
- *initial generalization* (via the association of a "general term" with an *exemplar* idea and a *revival set* of resembling ideas)
- *natural correction* (via the natural development and application, in reaction to divergent applications of the term, of a "standard of judgment" adopted as authoritative, *plus* a set of subsidiary "rules for judging" what objects would produce the characteristic response in accordance with the standard)
- *relational attribution* (of a conceptual role consisting in accepted inferences and other mental transitions)

Loeb focuses chiefly on the third element, natural correction, and especially on the standard of judgment, which, as I describe it, always has in principle two parts: a "point of view" *from which* to feel a response and a set of respondent "qualities" *with which* to feel a response. To illustrate from non-epistemic cases, we may note that Hume's essay "Of the Standard of Taste" specifies the standard of judgment for BEAUTY as consisting of a point of view "cleared of all prejudice" and a set of respondent qualities consisting of "strong sense," "delicate sentiment," and extensive past "practice" and "comparison." The same essay also specifies the standard of judgment for colors as "day-light" (the point of view) to a human being "in health" (the respondent qualities).

Concerning the respondent qualities, Loeb writes, "Though one could stipulate that the 'ideal' point of view is that on which humans converge, it is an interpretive question whether, for Hume, humans would converge on a standard involving endowments that are optimal or perfect" (244). To be clear, the standard of judgment for a sense-based concept is authoritative for correct applications of the concept as long as (and to the extent that) it remains the standard, and in that sense its components are always *semantically ideal* for that concept at that time. What is an open question is whether such qualities must be "optimal," or even valued at all, in one or more non-semantic dimensions of value. "Strong sense" and "health" are certainly valued, for example, although the degrees of them required by the standards of judgment for BEAUTY and BLUE, respectively, need not be "perfect." While the standard of judgment for morals will require sympathy and a strong moral sense, both of which are also conducive to virtue itself, the standard does not require perfection of moral character in the respondent. Hence, the elements of the standard are "idealized" or "standardized" for their purpose,

but are not necessarily "ideal" more generally. (A related observation will prove important later in relation to "the senses" and the probable truth of the belief in body.)

A second elaboration concerns my use of the term 'resistance to global error' in relation to the application of sense-based concepts. I argue that the causal origin of such concepts in distinctive mental responses makes it particularly *difficult*, other things being equal, for all of humanity to be *globally* misguided in its application of the concepts. For example, it would be difficult to explain how everything humanity always took to be blue was in fact red or uncolored, how every work of art that it took to be beautiful was in fact "deformed" or neither beautiful nor deformed, or how every character humanity took to be virtuous was in fact vicious or neither virtuous nor vicious. I also argue that Hume appreciates this fact, and that its application to PROBABLE TRUTH helps to explain what many have taken to be his remarkable overall confidence in the most basic and pervasive beliefs of "common life" (for example, that there is a world of bodies that will continue to behave as they have in the past) even in the face of the skeptical considerations that Loeb calls Hume's "doubt-inducers" (247). In this way, resistance to global error helps to explain *why* Hume grants to belief the antecedent authority that Loeb allows that he does. In the book I emphasize, however, that even global error about the application of a sense-based concept is *possible* for Hume. (In fact, I emphasize that Hume takes this possibility very seriously indeed for PROBABILITY in *Treatise* 1.4.7,[4] before ultimately rejecting it; he also mentions it in relation to "the reality of moral distinctions" at the beginning of the second *Enquiry*.) I fully grant that error by most people about *a good many* applications of a sense-based concept is very possible, as is error by *some* people about *most* applications of a sense-based concept.

A third elaboration concerns my use of the terms 'wise' and 'wisdom' in relation to PROBABILITY. In treating PROBABILITY as a sense-based concept, I argue, Hume *in effect* recognizes a standard of judgment for PROBABILITY consisting in a point of view of extensive experience (typically relativized to shared or individual circumstances[5]) together with an idealized set of inferential qualities or traits. These traits include propensities to the psychological operations that Hume calls "the probability of causes," the "probability of chances," and "analogy." It is reasonable to assume that they also include a readiness to reflect on one's own beliefs in light of one's accumulating experience. At the same time, these traits include the *absence* of those operations that Hume specifically calls "unphilosophical probabilities" as well as the absence of such other commonly rejected operations as "credulity," "superstition," "enthusiasm," "education" (that is, indoctrination), and bias due to personal preference or wishful thinking. I use Hume's term 'wisdom' to designate this specific set of traits, and not simply as a term of vague or generic epistemic approval, as Loeb's discussion might otherwise suggest—although, because the

specific traits in question are themselves valued both epistemically and morally, 'wisdom' *is* for Hume also a term of approval.

A fourth elaboration concerns what Loeb calls, in discussing my interpretation, "the standard of judgment for PROBABLE TRUTH" (247). As he mentions, the domain of possible matters of fact that can be *probable* to at least some degree—for example, *that the weather will be rainy tomorrow*—is of course extremely broad and can directly concern very many different kinds of things (including various kinds of bodies and perceptions). A small but distinctive *subset* within this broad domain is composed of those possible matters of fact that consist in *a belief's being true* (that is, in a lively idea's representing accurately, by corresponding to how things actually are). While the broad concept PROBABILITY is not itself a normative one—we in no way praise the expected rainfall by calling it "probable"—the narrower mediate concept of PROBABLE TRUTH, as applied to beliefs, *is* normative in my reading of Hume. When Loeb writes, in discussing my book, of "the standard of judgment for PROBABLE TRUTH," what he is referring to is just the standard of judgment for the broader immediate concept PROBABILITY, but as applied to the possible matter of fact of a belief's being true.

A fifth elaboration concerns all normative concepts generally. In summarizing my claim that there are for Hume four recognizable elements (and overlapping stages) in a concept's acquisition of *normative status*, Loeb lists them as "shared appreciation and deprecation [through pleasure and pain], interpersonal consequences [through effects on the passions], personal engagement [to promote or restrain], and our understanding of their positive and negative value" (245). This description of the last element will no doubt seem uninformative at best and question-begging at worst. This element, as I describe it, is instead the specific process by which the general term associated with a concept comes to be, as Hume sometimes memorably puts it, "taken in a good sense" or its opposite—which I gloss as the acquisition by the concept of a distinctive practical *conceptual role* consisting in accepted and approved inferences and other mental transitions (to passions, volitions, and actions). Such a conceptual role is to be understood on the model of the more specifically *inferential roles* that he ascribes to concepts more generally in *Treatise* 1.1.7.14 (SBN 23).

A sixth elaboration concerns epistemically normative concepts more specifically. Loeb declares, "TRUTH [is] an odd candidate for an *epistemic* concept in Hume. In my view, the texts Garrett cites (*Hume*, 152–53, 163) show that we direct approbation at *opinions* or *beliefs* we regard as true . . . not at truth itself" (246). I do not see the oddness to which Loeb refers. At the outset of the first *Enquiry*, Hume describes it as a central task of philosophy to "fix . . . the foundation of morals, reasoning, and criticism" and to "determine the source" of the distinctions between "truth and falsehood, vice and virtue, beauty and deformity" (EHU 1.2; SBN 6).[6] In each of these three normative domains, Hume thinks, we value a *subject* for

its possession of a valued *quality*: persons for their virtues, works of art for their beauty, and beliefs for their truth or probable truth. Admittedly, we may not value ideas for their truth or probable truth in the very same way when those ideas are merely entertained and are not beliefs, but the account of the normativity of TRUTH and the parallel account of the normativity of PROBABLE TRUTH that I attribute to Hume (in chapter 5) readily serve to explain that difference. Similarly, I expect Hume would say, we do not value the courage of lions, the friendliness of dogs, the cleanliness of cats, or the industry of ants in the same moral way in which we value those traits in human beings.

Loeb then continues, "I think REASONABLENESS or JUSTIFICATION better candidates for normative epistemic concepts. Garrett has substantial arguments against these proposals, though he allows that cognates of 'just' are *derivatively* normative concepts" (246). Just to be clear, I do not contrast *epistemically* normative concepts with *derivatively* normative concepts; rather, in each domain of value, including the epistemic, I take Hume to recognize both *fundamentally* normative and *derivatively* normative concepts. The arguments to which Loeb alludes are textual arguments that Hume regards the epistemic normativity of REASONABLENESS and JUSTIFICATION as derivative from that of TRUTH and PROBABLE TRUTH, much as he regards the moral normativity of RIGHT (as a concept applying to actions) as derivative from that of VIRTUE, and the aesthetic normativity of ARTISTIC GENIUS as derivative from that of BEAUTY. I concede—and emphasize—that not all epistemologists, moralists, and critics would agree with Hume about what the fundamental normative concepts of their domains are or even about whether there *is* some small number of fundamentally normative concepts within it.

A final elaboration concerns semantic ascent and descent. In semantic ascent, as Loeb notes, the mind moves from a belief about a possible matter of fact to a (higher-order) belief about that belief's truth or probable truth; in semantic descent, the mind moves from a belief about a belief's truth or probable truth to the (lower-order) belief itself. However, Loeb does not explain *why* I hold that semantic ascent and descent are natural and almost inevitable in Hume's cognitive psychology. According to Hume's theory of belief as liveliness, a *belief-that-p* is a lively idea {p}.[7] Given his correspondence theory of truth (for matters of fact), the basic form[8] of a *belief-that-{p}-is-true* is a lively idea representing the correspondence of reality with that idea—namely {p&{p}}. But a *belief-that-{p}-is-true* results from a *belief-that-p* simply by reflecting on one's having the lively idea {p}—that is, by forming a lively idea of that idea—while also retaining that original lively idea. Semantic descent is even more natural and irresistible than semantic ascent, because a basic *belief-that-{p}-is-true* literally contains a *belief-that-p* as a part, a part that can readily be separated by mental attention. As I argue in the book, parallel points apply to the case of semantic ascent to, and descent from, a *belief-that-{p}-is-probably-true*. I do not argue that Hume specifically discusses semantic ascent and descent, but rather

that the mechanisms just described are clearly implied by his accounts of belief and truth, and that the best explanation of what Hume does say about the limited force (both psychological and normative) of skeptical considerations concerning the veracity of our faculties appeals to them.

## 2. The Doubt-inducers and Their Mitigation

As Loeb remarks, I interpret the various skeptical considerations that Hume adduces in the final section of *Treatise* Book 1 and the final section of the first *Enquiry* as probable arguments—based on empirical discoveries about reason and other cognitive faculties, such as the senses and memory—for the conclusion that the cognitive faculty or faculties in question largely deliver beliefs that are not probably true. Although I call these arguments "skeptical considerations," Loeb calls them "doubt-inducers," and I will follow his usage here. I count five doubt-inducers in the final section of *Treatise* Book 1 and identify a partly overlapping list of seven in the final section of the first *Enquiry*. On my interpretation, Hume does not seek to rebut these second-order considerations directly, for they are unobjectionable in their own terms as probable arguments; rather he recognizes that they are opposed by further and more favorable probability considerations derived by semantic ascent from the first-order deliverances of those same cognitive faculties—operating as a sense of probability—concerning the probability of the possible matters of fact in which we believe.

It is essential to emphasize that there are for Hume no *a priori* normative epistemic principles that dictate what the result of such conflict between opposing probable arguments about the veracity of our faculties *must* be. Bringing to bear the point of view and respondent qualities of the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY, however, he reports—in the final section of *Treatise* Book 1 and again in the final section of *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*—that the result is, on the whole, a diminution but not an annihilation of the probable truth of the deliverances of reason and our other cognitive faculties. This outcome is a crucial part of what Hume calls "mitigated scepticism"—that is, the "*degree* of doubt, and caution, and modesty, which, in all kinds of scrutiny and decision, *ought* for ever to accompany a just reasoner" (EHU 12.24; SBN 162; emphases added). Loeb's most basic critical question about this account is, "Why should our everyday judgments largely trump or outweigh the doubt-inducers?" (250).

Choosing for simplicity to discuss semantic ascent and descent in the case of truth rather than probable truth, Loeb introduces this question by writing, "Suppose I believe that *p* and also believe that this belief is due to nefarious antitruthers who indoctrinate me with falsehoods. In such a case, I will ascend to the *belief-that-{p}-is-<u>false</u>*" (248). Such a mental transition is not, however, a case of semantic ascent as I have defined it; rather it is a case of an inference by universal

instantiation from what is *already* a general second-order belief ("my beliefs are the result of anti-truthers indoctrinating me with falsehoods") to produce an *equally* second-order belief about an instance of it ("{p} is false"). A genuine semantic ascent to a *belief-that-{p}-is-false* would instead require transition from a first-order *belief-that-not-p*; but there is no such original first order belief to be the source of ascent in the case described. (Of course, such a first-order belief might *subsequently* be produced by semantic *descent* from *belief-that-{p}-is-false*.)

Loeb goes on to postulate that "ascent in belief is psychologically natural *only if there are no countervailing considerations*" (248, emphasis in original). For the reasons given in section 1 above, I hold that semantic ascent itself is *always* natural and very difficult to resist in Hume's doxastic psychology. Whether a *belief-that-{p}-is-true* would *persist* or *prevail* if confronted with contrary or countervailing considerations concerning the idea {p} or its truth, is a further and quite separate question. Note, however, that my argument for this depends on the generally accepted interpretation of Humean belief as, in the first instance, occurrent lively belief—an interpretation that Loeb rejects in favor his own distinctive dispositional interpretation, as I noted at the outset. Indeed, on his view of Hume, a belief that does not "steadily" persist to some extent is no belief at all.

Loeb also proposes that the doubt-inducer derived from Hume's examination of "the modern philosophy" in *Treatise* 1.4.4 does not fit my interpretation because it concerns not a second-order conclusion about probable truth but rather a first-order conclusion that "there are no bodies." I think this is not accurate as a reading of the doubt-inducer described in *Treatise* 1.4.7.4 (SBN 265), which is quite clearly about the problem of reconciling the likely *veracity* of two cognitive "operations": that which "makes us reason from causes and effects" and that which "convinces us of the continu'd existence of external objects." In fact, I don't agree that Hume ever simply concludes that "it is probable that no extended bodies exist" (249), but I will discuss Hume's views about bodies further in section 4. For the present, it is sufficient to note that it is no particular problem for my account if Hume temporarily reaches a first-order conclusion about the existence of bodies that conflicts with his other first-order beliefs about them. For *any* direct conflict between contrary beliefs requires that the beliefs be at the same level—whether first, second, or other. Semantic ascent and descent are simply explanations of how beliefs that are originally at *different* levels can give rise to corresponding beliefs that are at the *same* level and are hence capable of directly weighing against each other in a "standard observer" occupying or embodying the standard of judgment for probability.

To return to the main issue, however, the "should" in Loeb's question—"Why should our everyday judgments largely trump or outweigh the doubt-inducers?"—is ambiguous between a descriptive causal reading and a normative reading. Let us consider first the descriptive causal version of the question. In discussing the

interactions of "contrary passions," Hume explains that they "succeed each other alternately, when they arise from different objects"; "mutually destroy each other, when they proceed from different parts of the same [object]"; and "subsist both of them, and mingle together, when they are deriv'd from the contrary and incompatible chances or possibilities, on which any one object depends" (T 2.39.17; SBN 443). On the descriptive reading, Loeb seems to be seeking a comparable causal principle through which the liveliness characteristic of first-order probable beliefs would, upon semantic ascent, "largely" overcome the liveliness derived from skeptical second-order probable arguments. Loeb helpfully observes that a high level of abstractness of ideas—such as the second-order doubt-inducers must involve in virtue of their generality—can be a hindrance to strong belief for Hume; but he also rightly emphasizes that Hume thinks we often succeed, at least partially, in governing our first-order beliefs by second-order "general rules." The relative weakness in combat of the doubt-inducers presumably derives at least partly from the fact that they are arguments from the probability of chances or the probability of causes below the level of what Hume calls "proof" (that is, uniform and pervasive regularities), whereas many of the first-order beliefs do result from proofs, or from other cognitive faculties, in accordance with features of the imagination that he calls "permanent, irresistible, and universal," such as, for example, "the customary transition from causes to effects, and from effects to causes" (T 1.4.4.1; SBN 225). As Hume remarks, beliefs resulting from these "irresistible" features are conducive to personal survival; hence, their persistence is entirely to be expected, given what we observe about the adaptation of means to ends throughout living nature.

To the normative version of Loeb's question, the basic answer is simply that PROBABLE TRUTH is a fundamental epistemically normative concept for human beings; that the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY is authoritative for judgments of probability; and that the second-order beliefs derived from first-order beliefs by semantic ascent largely do prevail in this standard point of view, although not without some significant diminution as a result of the conflict—a diminution that will then be passed downward, as mitigated skepticism, by semantic descent. That Hume does regard such irresistible beliefs as *properly* prevailing is indicated by his well-known remark to Gilbert Elliot about what is commonly called "the argument from design" in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*: "I cou'd wish that Cleanthes' Argument coud be so analys'd as to be render'd quite formal & regular. The Propensity of the mind towards it, *unless that Propensity were as strong & universal as that to believe in our Sense & Experience*, will still, I am afraid, be esteem'd a suspicious Foundation" (Hume to Elliot, 10 March 1751, in *Letters*, 155,emphasis added). Also worth noting in this connection is Cleanthes's application to probability of a principle concerning the relation between standards of judgment and rules that he treats as familiar from aesthetics (as discussed in chapter 9):

> Some beauties in writing we may meet with, which seem contrary to rules, and which gain the affections, and animate the imagination, in opposition to all the precepts of criticism, and to the authority of the established masters of art. And if the argument for Theism be, as you pretend, contradictory to the principles of logic; its universal, its irresistible influence proves clearly, that there may be arguments of a like irregular nature. Whatever cavils may be urged; an orderly world, as well as a coherent, articulate speech, will still be received as an incontestable proof of design and intention. (DNR 3.8; 155)[9]

That is to say, if a characteristic response is *so* fixed that anyone occupying or embodying the standard of judgment would still feel it in its full force, the rules for judging must be accommodated to this fact. Notably, the character Philo does not dispute this general principle.

There remains, however, a related epistemological question. Given that the point of view and respondent qualities of the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY can be difficult to attain, how can Hume be confident that he knows which sentiments of liveliness *will* prevail in others (or perhaps even in himself) when considering the doubt-inducers from that position—especially when (as Loeb and I agree) sense-based concepts allow for a certain amount of "blameless diversity" in reaction when the elements of the standard are compatible with multiple responses? This is surely a good question, but we can construct a reply on Hume's behalf. First, he regards only some of the doubt-inducers that he surveys as his own original discoveries. In the case of those that are not, he can rely in part on what he takes to be the reactions of other "wise" individuals who have been exposed to them (see section 1 above). Even in the case of the doubt-inducers that *are* new discoveries, he can appeal to the common experience of reasoners who report resistance to *other* skeptical arguments that they have taken to be properly constructed in their own terms. In either case, he can rely on the continued purposive actions of those exposed to skeptical arguments as evidence that their positive first-order beliefs, at least, were not entirely undermined by semantic descent from victorious second-order skeptical conclusions. Furthermore, he can also regard his own recital of the doubt-inducers as a challenging public *experiment* in the science of human nature to determine whether his readers find them more undermining that he does.

## 3. Convergence

Loeb writes variously of convergence on "standards," on "operations," on "views," and (frequently) on "judgments." I use the term 'convergence' *only* to describe the process of converging on the acceptance of a point of view and a set of respondent qualities—which may include capacities to engage in particular mental operations

from that point of view—to serve as the standard of judgment for a sense-based concept. This is the process that constitutes the third stage in the development of such concepts, as noted above in section 1. The natural impetus to this development, Hume holds, is the frequency of disturbing disparities in classifications made with an abstract idea as the result of differences in point of view or respondent qualities. For that reason, convergence on a standard may be expected to allow for greater agreement in judgment in many cases, but I do not call this greater agreement in judgment "convergence," and there is no reason to suppose that it must result in agreement on any particular judgment. In particular, shared acceptance of a standard of judgment for PROBABILITY no more guarantees agreement on any particular judgment of probability than agreement with Hume's essay "Of the Standard of Taste" guarantees agreement on any particular aesthetic judgment. This is true despite the fact that, outside the potentially wide range of "blameless diversity," the explanation for a disagreement in the application of a sense-based concept must be explicable in terms of different relations to the standard. (Note that one such difference among many others, especially relevant to probability, may involve relativization as described in section 1 above.) Loeb suggests that a transitory change in felt degree of belief (either upward or downward) with respect to the conclusions of doubt-inducers must entail a change in the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY itself. But it is a crucial consequence of "natural correction" in all sense-based concepts that temporary or local variations in felt response need not alter even the particular conceptualized judgments that we hold, let alone the standards of judgment that we accept. Such variations will be discounted when they do not survive full reflection.

Related to this, Loeb asks "whether the endowments with which to be responsive in the standard point of view include, or ought to include, a degree of reflection that has access to the doubt-inducers" (253) To my mind, this question is parallel to the question of whether the standard of judgment for colors includes a degree of healthy visual acuity that has access to the small crystals in porphyry, or whether the standard of judgment for beauty includes a degree of delicacy of sentiment that can distinguish an imperfect rhyme from a perfect rhyme. The answer to all three questions is affirmative; but of course this answer does not yet determine *what* judgment—about the ultimate force of doubt-inducers in conflict with other arguments, the overall color of porphyry, or the beauty of a particular poem with imperfect rhymes—will result from the standard if these things are actually perceived.

More pointedly, Loeb asks why we should think that Hume does regard the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY as yielding a final verdict in favor of a consistent mitigated skepticism rather than a verdict in favor of a perspectivalism or contextualism that is friendlier to recurring Pyrrhonism. This is an adapted version of a common interpretive question, of course, and there are more reasons for

thinking that consistent mitigated skepticism is Hume's final outcome than can be listed here, but the most notable include these: (1) the introduction to the *Treatise* promises without qualification to provide secure foundations for the sciences; (2) the final section of *Treatise* Book 1 narrates a confrontation with skepticism that results in the adoption of the "Title Principle" and a hope to have contributed to "the advancement of knowledge"; (3) there is no hint of skepticism or even of oscillation of belief anywhere in Books 2 or 3 of the *Treatise*; and (4) Hume's only other sustained review of doubt-inducers, in the first *Enquiry*, ends with a thoroughgoing endorsement of mitigated skepticism and a flat rejection of Pyrrhonian skepticism (described there less as a source of inevitable oscillation than as something that contributes to mitigated skepticism through a one-time "tincture"), together with a careful delineation of the (quite extensive) boundaries of knowledge. Although Hume rightly emphasizes in the *Treatise* that actual degrees of liveliness—much like the strength of moral and aesthetic feelings—will continue to vary with the considerations on which we focus, he nowhere endorses or even formulates either perspectivalism or contextualism as an epistemological view (nor, for that matter, as a view about beauty or virtue either). Loeb describes a further alternative view according to which the justification of beliefs would simply be *identified* with their having *high average stability* over time, but he rightly rejects this as "less than satisfying" as an interpretation of Hume (259).

A yet further question concerns the extent to which everyone actually *has* converged on acceptance of a common standard of judgment for PROBABILITY. Loeb writes, "To the extent that humans *are* contentedly credulous or superstitious, there is no convergence on a standard that *excludes* credulity and superstition" (254, emphasis in original). In parallel fashion, a critic of Hume's "Of the Standard of Taste" might object: "To the extent that humans *are* contented consumers of clichéd doggerel that appeals only to those who lack practice and comparison, there is no convergence on a standard that incorporates practice and comparison and thereby *excludes* clichéd doggerel as lacking beauty."

This is a serious issue, but Hume's reply to both should be along the same lines. Since convergence on *acceptance* of a standard does not entail jointly occupying or embodying a standard, many people may *accept* a standard as authoritative without themselves coming close to embodying it and hence without qualifying as good judges in terms of it. Of these, a considerable number will often rightly defer to persons better placed, while others will think they are closer to embodying the standard than they really are. The latter may easily reject credulity and superstition as such without realizing how credulous and superstitious their own beliefs are; similarly, many may reject clichés in principle without recognizing how full of clichés their own favorite works are. Yet it should not be denied that still others may positively reject features of the common standard of judgment, especially when the concept in question is a normative one. They may be seen

as operating with a somewhat different concept—in epistemology, in aesthetics, in morals—which they would *prefer* had normative status. At any given time, of course, some features of a standard of judgment—and hence the precise nature of the concept itself—may well be contested, while other features are agreed upon as a matter of course. As concepts with contested standards go, PROBABILITY is arguably more contested than color concepts and less contested than aesthetic concepts.

Loeb speculates, "Perhaps what matters is convergence on a standard of judgment in the long run" (255) It is important to distinguish, however, change in judgments that result from improvements in embodying an accepted standard of judgment (for example, by broadening our capacity for sympathy in the moral case) from changes in the standard of judgment itself. Because concepts are entities existing in time, I suggest in the book, they can certainly undergo changes of the latter kind—and it is reasonable to think that the concepts of BEAUTY, VIRTUE, and PROBABILITY actually have undergone changes of this kind in the course of their histories. How much a concept can change in this way while still remaining "the same concept" is a question of numerical identity that, like many such questions in Hume, lacks sharp boundaries. This does not mean, however, that the "real" standard of judgment for a concept now is either whatever the standard *will actually become* or *would under some circumstances become* for some successor version of the concept—although of course the user of a normative sense-based concept now might be very interested in the question of whether he or she might come to prefer to grant normative status to a successor concept.

Loeb also sees "a damaging problem" for "Garrett's Hume" (255) in the operation that Hume calls "education" in a pejorative sense of the term—that is, the enlivening of ideas, and hence production of belief, by sheer repetition. I confess that I do not see the problem. What Hume sometimes praises under the name 'education' involves a certain amount of ordinary inference from first-hand experience and acceptance of expert testimony based on a probable judgment about the credibility of the testifier. While many people hold beliefs strongly influenced by "education" in the more pejorative sense, few can be found who will consider a susceptibility to belief enhancement through sheer repetition to be part of the standardized qualities they accept for judgments of probability, since they will deny the probable truth of the beliefs of others that they regard as acquired in this way; most will hold on to their own indoctrinated beliefs while proposing a different origin (perhaps "education" in a more positive sense) for them.

Near the conclusion of his discussion of convergence, Loeb writes, "For Garrett's Hume, the respondent qualities encompassed in the standard of judgment for probability are 'those of a "wise" man,' who 'proportions his belief to the evidence.' This is uninformative; most anyone could agree on a standard formulated in terms of concepts as think as 'wise man' and 'evidence' (256). As I have indicated in section 1, I am *not* using 'wisdom' in a thin sense; on the

contrary, it incorporates many specific traits, including the propensity to apply the "probability of causes"—a propensity that Hume calls, in the quoted phrase, "proportion[ing] his belief to the evidence." To avoid even the appearance of begging the question, I generally use 'experience' rather than 'evidence' in my own descriptions of the standard. Hume is nonetheless entitled to use the term 'evidence' as he does in the quoted phrase from section 10 of the first *Enquiry*, for (as I argue in the book) that term is systematically ambiguous for him in just the way that some other terms related to sense-based concepts—notably color terms, 'virtue', 'beauty', and 'power'—are. Each of these terms, for Hume, can designate either the characteristic mental response of a sense-based concept *or* the quality of a stimulus that is picked out ("denominated") by the sense-based concept. This is why, for example, he can say *both* that virtue is a feeling in the breast of the observer and a trait in the virtuous person herself.

Finally, Loeb writes that it would be an "alternative" to my interpretation to see causal inference as "epistemically worthy 'going in' or 'out of the gate,'" with "convergence" (in judgments?) then being "optimized" (257). As I noted at the outset, however, conceiving of the capacity to feel liveliness in ideas as a "sense of probability" offers the beginning of an explanation of *how* beliefs can have such defeasible epistemic merit from the outset, while the standard of judgment for probability, along with the rules that help us to implement it, explains *what* valuable quality is being optimized—namely, probable truth—and *how* it is optimized. Agreement of belief on what is not probably true—or even *stable* individual belief in what is not probably true—is in itself of no epistemic value.

## 4. Belief in Body

Loeb poses, by my count, three main questions about my interpretation of Hume on the belief in body. The first question is whether the "vulgar" view about bodies, which treats impressions themselves as "continu'd and distinct existences" and which Hume declares to be false, constitutes a counterexample to my claim about the resistance to global error of probability judgments (see section 1 above). The answer to this question, I feel confident, is "no." It should first be emphasized that, on my reading, the vulgar are right, not wrong, to treat as highly probable the general belief *that there are bodies*. Hume regularly treats "the senses" as a reliable source of information about the existence of bodies. His letter to Elliot, cited above in section 2, indicates that this is because the "propensity" to believe in bodies as a result of sensation is so "strong and universal"—I would say so strong and universal as to be inevitably incorporated into the standard of judgment.

It is true that the vulgar's naïve-realist *version* of the belief in bodies can be shown to be false by experiments in the "natural philosophy" of sense perception, but this is a version that the vulgar accept simply by not making a systematic

distinction between impressions and objects; it is not one that they explicitly *formulate* in distinction from a more philosophical representational realism about bodies. Furthermore, the experimental probable reasonings against the vulgar view are found fully convincing from the standard of judgment for probability, as the many philosophers who have considered them can attest, and subsequent casual neglect of the distinction between impressions and objects can always be convincingly removed by attention. To be sure, the basic reasons behind resistance to global error may also imply that a distinctive but especially pervasive mistake, such as the vulgar version of the belief in bodies, should always have a special and substantive explanation. However, Hume provides such an explanation in a detailed account of the process that gives rise to it as well as the powerful arguments that refute it. He also emphasizes that the question of exactly what intrinsic qualities bodies really have is a substantial embarrassment to modern philosophers—much as questions about the intrinsic features of the quantum world are to contemporary philosophers, we might add. In both cases, the question of which of the specific alternatives is most probable arguably involves a certain amount of blameless diversity. None of this, however, prevents the more general belief *that there are bodies* from being probably true.

The second question concerns the mental operation that Loeb calls "Identity Misattribution" (that is, the tendency to mistake successions of related things for an invariable and uninterrupted thing), which according to Hume is essential to the psychological process that produces all belief in bodies. Concerning this operation, Loeb writes: "The standard of judgment implicit in the vulgar belief in body approves reliance on Identity Misattribution" (259). I do not understand this sentence, as individual beliefs do not have their own standards of judgment implicit in them, nor do standards of judgment "approve" their own components. However, his question, I take it, is whether Identity Misattribution is a respondent quality included in the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY. He finds the question especially pressing because, as he rightly emphasizes, this operation also plays a role in the "fiction" of material and immaterial substances that Hume rejects.

Certainly Hume does not suppose that a tendency to Identity Misattribution *as such* is one of the respondent qualities that we agree to include in the standard of judgment for PROBABILITY. Indeed, Hume considers this operation to be his own discovery—other users of the concept of PROBABILITY have not even been aware that it existed. What *is* included by conventional agreement in the standard of judgment is the ability to use the faculty that Hume calls "the senses." Much as he regards "the memory" as a faculty of having lively ordered ideas in such a way as to provide beliefs about the past, so too he regards "the senses"—which he often pairs with "the memory"—as a faculty of having impressions of sensation in such a way as to provide beliefs about bodies. (For clear examples of Hume using 'the senses' in this way in the *Treatise* see T 1.2.4.23, 1.2.5.26, 1.3.4.2, 1.3.6.3, 1.3.9.3,

1.3.14.9, 1.3.14.25, 1.4.7.3, and 1.4.7.10; SBN 47, 64, 83, 87–88, 107–108, 159, 167, 265, 269–70.)

Hume's discovery that the operation of "the senses" in fact includes, as a sub-operation, an instance of Identity Misattribution does not require that a propensity to Identity Misattribution in all *other* possible circumstances must now be included retroactively in the standard. That is up to users of the concept, and surely they will not be moved to include it. Identity Misattribution is, by itself, still subject to epistemic criticism, as involving confusions and conflations. As I remarked in section 1, however, the respondent qualities of a standard of judgment need not be "ideal" in all respects. Similarly, Hume's discovery that the operation of probable reasoning includes as a sub-operation an instance of "custom," which is the same operation that in other circumstances leads to "education" in the pejorative sense equivalent to "indoctrination," does not require that we now retroactively incorporate susceptibility to indoctrination into the respondent qualities of the standard. No more would the discovery that an element of discord, ugly in itself, was nevertheless essential to the overall beauty of a musical composition require that a love of all discord be incorporated into the standard of judgment for BEAUTY.

The third question concerns the relation of the belief in bodies to causal inference—that is, to probable reasoning. Loeb writes, "How can we square the [EHU 4.4; SBN 26] claim Garrett cites—that all our reasonings concerning matters of fact are founded on causal inference—with the claim that the belief in body is founded on Identity Misattribution, a propensity that is not a form a probable reasoning?" (260). Loeb goes on to explain the basis of the problem as he sees it: the existence of a body is always a matter of fact, but "Hume's thesis is . . . that causal inference—Garrett's 'probable reasoning'—is the *only* source of epistemically reputable belief in matters of fact" (261, emphasis added). I deny that Hume holds this thesis. Instead, he regards both the memory and the senses as non-reasoning sources of epistemically reputable belief about matters of fact as well. That is why the passage I cited from *Enquiry* 4.4 reads, "By means of that relation [of cause and effect] alone can we go beyond the evidence of our memory *and senses*" (emphasis added). Although Loeb suggests that the senses provide information *only* about impressions of sensation, this reading is not sustained by a survey of Hume's uses of the term 'the senses' even in the very section of the *Enquiry* in question. On the contrary, he is especially clear in that section that the senses "inform us" about such matters as the "colour, weight, and consistence of bread," and not merely about our own sensations (EHU 4.16; SBN 32); 'inform us' is the very same phrase that Loeb rightly identifies as a term of "epistemic success" when Hume applies it to causal inference. Even the very question of "the veracity of the senses" that Hume raises in section 12 of the *Enquiry* makes sense only on this broader understanding of their scope. Moreover, as Hume emphasizes in *Treatise* 1.4.2, causal reasoning alone

could not get us very far at all if it were *not* able to operate legitimately on information from the senses about enduring bodies as well as about our own perceptions.

Once again, it is true that, in the operation of the senses, Hume recognizes a sub-operation involving Identity Misattribution that is not itself a function of the senses but of (what I have called) the narrow or "unreasoning" imagination, just as in the operation of probable reasoning he recognizes a sub-operation—namely a "customary transition"—that is not itself a function of reason but instead of the unreasoning imagination. Loeb finds this way of thinking about faculties and their sub-operations unsatisfactory. Be that as it may; however, it is Hume's way and, I have argued in the book, the only way that can make sense of what he says about them. Loeb's alternative, which emerges only in his section 5, by his own admission requires Hume (rather implausibly, I would say) to mean one thing by 'reason' at the beginning and the end of his crucial discussion of probable inference in *Treatise* 1.3.6 and something quite different in the middle (267–68). Millican notes in his contribution that he has now rejected the idea that Hume operates with multiple senses of 'reason' (Millican, "Skepticism"). I discuss Hume's classification of the faculties and their operations further in my reply to him (Garrett, "Millican's Questions").

Loeb concludes his discussion of the belief in body by endorsing a proposal made by John Immerwahr: that Hume came to realize, in the first *Enquiry*, that his reliance on Identity Misattribution in the *Treatise* was a fundamental failure, given his "decided epistemic preference for causal inference" (263), and that this realization explains its absence from the later work. In fact, of course, a large number of specific mental operations from the *Treatise* are missing from the *Enquiries*. These include Identity Misattribution but also, for example, the attribution of fictitious distances, the formation of the idea of identity itself, and the liveliness-transfer of sympathy. Such operations may be absent simply because they are not needed for the narrower scope of the *Enquiries* or because Hume had lost confidence in his explanations of them or for some other reason. I do not see, however, that his account of the belief in bodies in the *Treatise*, whether ultimately convincing or not, constitutes a fundamental failure for his overall epistemological scheme.

## 5. PROBABLE TRUTH as Sense-Based—the Analogy to VIRTUE

In his final section, Loeb takes up more directly the question of whether, in Hume's philosophy, PROBABILITY (and hence also PROBABLE TRUTH) is a sense-based concept in a way that makes it analogous to color concepts, to VIRTUE and VICE, and to BEAUTY and DEFORMITY. Loeb expresses this question by asking whether PROBABLE TRUTH is a "robustly sense-based concept"—which he also describes as a concept that "sets its own standard of judgment." Citing Mark Johnston's treatment of response-dependence, he defines a robustly sense-based concept as one for which "the

conditions of application . . . include facts about human responses essentially," and he gives this as an example: "Ascriptions of color are judgments that an object is fit to produce particular color sensations" (264).

My own characterization of sense-based concepts in Hume is simply that they have the four developmental elements I summarized above in section 1, and my arguments about PROBABILITY and PROBABLE TRUTH as sense-based concepts depend only on their having those elements. (Incidentally, I agree, and note in the book, that Hume uses the term 'standard' in such a way that the standards of judgment for sense-based concepts are a subset of all the "standards" for judging things that there are.) I can accept Loeb's general characterizations of "robustly sense-based concepts" as metaphorical or imprecise glosses on that account, but the specific example he gives is inapt: Hume does not regard ascriptions of color as (causal) judgments *that* an object is fit to produce particular color sensations any more than he regards ascriptions of virtue as judgments *that* a person is apt to produce sentiments of moral approbation. Immediate sense-based concepts, I argue in the book, do not contain other concepts as semantic components; accordingly, to apply such a concept is not make a judgment the subject matter of which is the causal production of feelings. (Nor is the concept's own standard of judgment the subject matter of such a judgment.) It was partly to avoid such confusions that I chose the term 'sense-based' rather than 'response-dependent'.

Similarly, in discussing my choice of terminology, Loeb writes forebodingly,

> Yet, elaborating his preferred term—'sense-based'—Garrett writes, "the concepts in question pick out qualities that, as things stand, *do produce* a characteristic response" (*Hume*, 144, [Loeb's] emphasis added). In this characterization, the conceptual role of the response in fixing the conditions of application disappears. This slippage will prove important. (264)

There is no slippage, however. Sense-based concepts arise when things, through their qualities, produce a characteristic mental response, and the standards of judgment for the resulting concepts certainly help to determine their proper application. However, the fact that *those* qualities produce *those* mental responses—for example, that surface reflectance properties produce those impressions we call "sensations of color," that the usefulness and agreeableness of character traits produce the distinctive pleasure we call "moral approbation," and that conformity to past experience produces liveliness of ideas—is obviously a contingent causal matter.

Loeb judges that I have "made no showing" (265) that PROBABILITY is a robustly sense-based concept. My attempt to show this consists simply in my attempt to show that each of the elements of my characterization of such concepts applies to PROBABILITY. His objections seem to focus on the first of the elements—the claim that the liveliness of ideas, constitutive of belief, is a distinctive mental response

that stimulates the development of a concept of probability. He notes that I appeal to a passage cited previously in this regard:

> All probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation. It is not solely in poetry and music we must follow our taste and sentiment, but likewise in philosophy. When I am convinc'd of any principle, 'tis only an idea, which strikes more strongly upon me. When I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from my feeling concerning the superiority of their influence. (T 1.3.8.12; SBN 103)

Tellingly, he objects that I take this passage "literally"; in contrast, he is obliged to say that Hume "needlessly overstates the difference between intellection and custom" (269) To my mind, Hume's account of the causal origins of judgments of probability—through the probability of chances, the probability of causes, and analogy—in which this passage occurs strongly confirms my interpretation. Passages indicating that "natural correction"—the third element in the development of a sense-based concept—also occurs include *Treatise* 1.3.10.12 (SBN 632) and *Treatise* 1.3.13.9 (SBN 148).

Loeb's primary objection, however—not surprisingly—is to my more basic claim that the liveliness of ideas is for Hume constitutive of belief at all. Loeb concedes that Hume does make this claim himself, but he reports that Hume does so only once: "the very essence of belief consists in the force and vivacity of the conception" (T 1.4.2.24; SBN 199).[10] Remarkably, he does not mention Hume's own official definition of 'belief,' in the section of the *Treatise* devoted to the "nature . . . of belief": "An opinion, therefore, or belief may be most accurately defin'd, A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96; other important and obvious passages include T 1.3.5.7, 1.3.7.6, 1.3.8.15, 2.3.6.10, App. 2, App. 3, App. 7; SBN 86, 97, 105, 427, 624, 624, 627; and also, EHU 5.11, 5.12, 6.4, 6.3; SBN 48, 49, 58, 57[11]). Most remarkably, Loeb himself later cites (267), in a somewhat different context, another powerful passage that actually employs the language of "constitution," yet without noting its significance for the question of what constitutes belief: "Thus it appears upon the whole, that every kind of opinion or judgment . . . is deriv'd entirely from the force and vivacity of the perception, and that these qualities *constitute* in the mind, what we call the BELIEF in the existence of any object" (T 1.3.13.19; SBN 153; emphasis added).

Loeb also takes issue with my reference to liveliness as a "sentiment" of belief, citing James Ward Smith to the effect that Hume cannot maintain his view about the respective roles of reason and sentiment in morals if he grants that belief is itself a sentiment. But of course, the use of the term 'sentiment' to describe belief is entirely Hume's own. Loeb rightly notes two occurrences of 'sentiment of belief' in the first *Enquiry*; but in the *Treatise* Hume also clearly refers to particular beliefs

as "sentiments" (T 1.2.2.3, 1.4.2.14, and 1.4.2.50; SBN 30–31, 193, 213–14) and also to belief generally as a "sentiment" (T App. 2; SBN 624). What Smith's argument shows is only that Hume has both (1) a technical sense of 'sentiment', in which the term designates an impression of reflection of a kind calmer than "passions" and which is therefore attributed to the faculty of "taste"; and (2) a broader sense in which it can be used for any kind of feeling. (In EHU 1.2 [SBN 17], he even uses the term 'sentiment' for impressions of sensation such as those of heat.) Similarly, Hume's previously cited remark that "all probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation" (T 1.3.8.12; SBN 103) employs a broader sense of 'sensation' than that which encompasses only impressions of sensation—and does so without seriously undermining Hume's distinction between seeing and (merely) believing. As Loeb grants, however, the important question for my interpretation is not whether belief is to be called a "sentiment" but whether it is a characteristic felt response to stimuli as required for the first element ("repeated activation"); after all, Hume never specifically describes color impressions as "sentiments," yet color concepts are sense-based if any are. That Hume does sometimes call the liveliness of belief a "sentiment" is just further evidence that he sees an important analogy between the liveliness of ideas, on the one hand, and sentiments of beauty and virtue, on the other.

To be sure, that PROBABILITY is a sense-based concept, based on a sense of probability, is not a common thought; rather, Hume's having it is one mark of his great originality. I sincerely thank Louis Loeb for the opportunity that his detailed and penetrating comments have provided me to try to explain further its nature and implications.

## NOTES

1 Loeb himself helpfully suggested this term for the phenomenon in earlier discussion.

2 I say "mediately" because the concept is a particular application—in this case, to the truth of beliefs—of the immediately sense-based concept PROBABILITY.

3 In listing these points, I draw both on his present paper and on his previous writings.

4 References to the *Treatise* are to Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Norton and Norton, hereafter cited in the text as "T" followed by Book, part, section, and paragraph number, and to *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Selby-Bigge, rev. by Nidditch, cited in the text as "SBN" followed by the page number.

5 Thus, Hume writes of "experience" as "the true standard" for probable judgment (T 1.3.9.12; SBN 113). I argue that Hume recognizes in some cases a similar relativization of virtue and vice to cultures and circumstances.

6 References to the first *Enquiry* are to Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Beauchamp, hereafter cited in the text as "EHU" followed by section and

paragraph number, and to David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Selby-Bigge, rev. by Nidditch, hereafter cited in the text as "SBN" followed by page numbers.

7 As Loeb notes, I use brackets as a device for naming ideas, as I use small capital letters as a device for naming concepts.

8 I say "basic" because there will also be, in Hume's psychology, a conceptualized version of *belief-that-{p}-is-true* that involves an abstract idea of truth. Similar considerations apply to it, although they are somewhat more complicated to state.

9 References to the *Dialogues* are to Hume, *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, ed. Kemp Smith, hereafter cited in the text as "DNR" followed by part and paragraph, followed by page number.

10 I myself do not invest as much significance as Loeb does in Hume's uses of the locution 'the essence of.' Hume typically uses it quite broadly to refer to any fact about a thing that explains its most notable features. Nevertheless, this particular passage does seem quite powerful.

11 This list of passages is derived from unpublished work by Michelle Dyke.

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