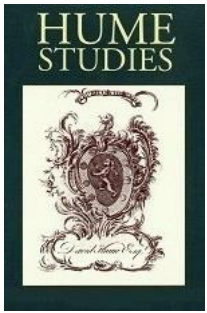

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Abstract: This paper assesses Hume's theory of belief by considering a puzzle about the nature of counterfeit belief. Counterfeit beliefs include states brought on by poetry, which possess the same phenomenological properties as beliefs but still fail to count as beliefs (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630–31). I argue that a dispositional interpretation can give an account of the difference between belief and counterfeit belief, but most common versions of the occurrent state view cannot. Nonetheless, I argue that the occurrent state view can be revised to accommodate the problem of counterfeit belief. On my version of the occurrent state interpretation, beliefs are lively ideas—that is, occurrent states—that are related to a present impression in an appropriate way. Because counterfeit beliefs are not appropriately related to a present impression, they do not count as beliefs.

In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume defines a belief as "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSZION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96; emphases in original).[1] He offers variations on this definition throughout the work, writing, for instance, that "belief is a more vivid and intense conception of an idea, proceeding from its relation to a present impression" (T 1.3.8.11; SBN 103) and that his "general position" is "that an opinion or belief is *nothing but a strong and lively idea deriv'd from a present impression related to it*" (T 1.3.8.15; SBN 105–106). Lest his readers misunderstand, Hume endeavours to clarify these notions of "vivac-

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ity" and "liveliness" by appealing to a cluster of other notions, such as "solidity," "firmness," and "stability," "facility," and "force" (T 1.3.7.7, 1.3.8.15, 1.3.9.16; SBN 628–29, 105–106, 115–16) and by characterizing changes in the degrees of these qualities as changes in the "*manner* of our conceiving" an idea (T 1.3.7.4; SBN 95–96), the "manner of forming an idea" (T 1.3.7.6; SBN 97), or the "conception of an idea" (T 1.3.8.11; SBN 103).

Hume himself seems to have been dismayed by this variety of vocabulary. In the *Appendix* to the *Treatise*, he remarks that while he "cannot add any new arguments" to the ones he gave in the original edition (*App.* 9; SBN 627), he has now found that some of his "expressions have not been so well chosen, as to guard against all mistakes in the readers" (*App.* 1; SBN 623). He thus finds it necessary to reiterate his definition of belief and to pen several new "passages" and "illustrations" to be inserted into the text of the *Treatise* (*App.* 9; SBN 627). In one of these passages, Hume explains that not only does he regard the problem of belief as "one of the greatest mysteries of philosophy," but he has also found "a considerable difficulty in the case" of belief, such that "even when I think I understand the subject perfectly, I am at a loss for terms to express my meaning" (T 1.3.7.7; SBN 628–29). As a result, he is forced to resort to a "variety of terms, which may seem so unphilosophical" (T 1.3.7.7; SBN 628–29). Still, this emphasis on choice of expressions and variety of terms suggests that insofar as Hume takes his theory of belief to need the further commentary he gives it in the *Appendix* and in the new passages, it is because he has had difficulty finding the right *language* to describe it—not because he has found it to be seriously flawed as a piece of *philosophy*.[2]

Like Hume, interpreters have also been troubled by the *Treatise*'s "unphilosophical" variety of terminology for describing belief. But unlike Hume, they have tended to suppose that this variety reflects not just the challenge of selecting the right word, but a deeper tension in Hume's underlying view. Some of Hume's terms, such as "liveliness" and "vivacity," seem well-suited to characterizing the phenomenological properties of occurrent mental states.[3] Others, such as "force," "firmness," "solidity," and "steadiness," seem better suited to describing the influence and effects of belief on the other operations of the mind.[4]

This apparent tension in Hume's vocabulary has given rise to two dominant strands of interpretation.[5] The first strand, recently defended and developed by Jennifer Smalligan Marušić, has it that Hume's beliefs are "lively ideas," where such ideas are understood as phenomenally conscious mental states. (In keeping with common practice in the literature, I call these "occurrent states."[6]) According to the other leading interpretation, most prominently defended by Louis Loeb, Hume holds instead that beliefs are dispositions whose manifestations include, but are not limited to, the having of such ideas. In Loeb's view, the tensions in Hume's vocabulary for describing belief reflect his attempt to covertly articulate and develop a *dispositional* theory of belief within a more restrictive philosophical

tradition, according to which all mental phenomena are occurrent mental states.[7] Loeb's interpretation, if correct, would account for Hume's varying ways of describing belief while attributing to him a consistent and plausible theory, albeit one that is not always expressed in the most consistent of ways. According to Marušić's view, in contrast, whatever features of belief we are tempted to explain in terms of dispositions should be explained only in terms of the phenomenological features of occurrent states, which are sufficient for belief.[8]

In this paper, I attempt to adjudicate between the occurrent state and dispositional interpretations by considering a puzzle about the nature of "counterfeit" belief. This is a state experienced in the throes of "poetical enthusiasm," which possesses immense degrees of the phenomenological features characteristic of belief and yet is only "the mere phantom of belief" (T 1.3.10.10–11; SBN 630–31).[9] The puzzle is how Hume can both treat these phenomenological features as characteristic of belief and yet deny that a state that has them is a belief. I argue that the solution to this puzzle is readily available on Loeb's dispositional interpretation but remains mysterious on Marušić's version of the occurrent state view.[10]

Nonetheless, there is a new version of the occurrent state view that can accommodate the phenomenon of counterfeit belief. On this interpretation, beliefs are occurrent mental states that not only have a particular phenomenology, as Marušić's view requires, but also have a particular causal history that is not always reflected in the phenomenological features of the resulting occurrent state. As a result, these phenomenological features are necessary but not sufficient for belief. Because counterfeit beliefs have these phenomenological features but lack the requisite causal history, they do not satisfy Hume's criteria for belief.

My interpretation has an advantage over Marušić's version of the occurrent state view in that it can more easily account for counterfeit belief. It is also superior in certain respects to Loeb's dispositional view because it derives its emphasis on belief's causal history from Hume's official definition of a belief as "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). One advantage of my view over Loeb's is therefore that it accounts for puzzling features of the text by construing them as Hume's attempts to spell out and perhaps further develop his own explicit and official definition of belief, rather than as covert attempts to modify it in the face of problems.

The Occurrent State and Dispositional Interpretations

I begin with a brief overview of the debate. On Marušić's interpretation, Humean beliefs are certain occurrent mental states—ideas—with certain phenomenological properties.[11] These phenomenological properties are "introspectible features of belief" that "do not determine the intentional content of the belief"; that is, they determine "how believing feels, but not what a belief is about."[12] These properties

include not only "vivacity" and "liveliness," but also "firmness" and "stability." On Loeb's interpretation, in contrast, belief is a "steady disposition to characteristic manifestations or typical effects on thought (hence including occurrent or conscious states), the passions, and action (verbal and nonverbal)."[13]

The appeal of Marušić's occurrent state interpretation is obvious enough: Hume's official definition of a belief as "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96) is clearly much better suited to picking out an occurrent state than a disposition.[14] Hume does, after all, define a belief as an *idea*, which is an occurrent mental state. Moreover, there seem to be several passages in which Hume uses the vocabulary of "force," "firmness," "stability," and "steadiness" not to describe dispositions, as Loeb's view would suggest, but rather the phenomenological properties of occurrent mental states, as in *App.* 7–8 (SBN 626–27). In some such passages, Hume writes as if the characteristic effects of belief are grounded in these phenomenological properties.[15] For instance, Hume writes that "[t]he effect, then, of belief is to raise up a simple idea to an equality with our impressions, and bestow on it a like influence on the passions," but that "[t]his effect it can only have by making an idea approach an impression in force and vivacity" (T 1.3.10.3; SBN 119–20; cf. *App.* 3; SBN 624–25).

The appeal of the dispositional view, in contrast, is not so obvious, and so it will be helpful to review some of the considerations that support it. The main appeal of the dispositional view, on which I focus here, derives from its ability to explain why Hume treats *steadiness* as essential to belief.[16] The importance of steadiness comes out in Hume's account of belief formation, which is a process of "infixing" an idea with force and vivacity (T 1.3.5.6, T 1.3.7.4, T 1.3.9.5, T 1.4.4.1; SBN 85–86; 95–96; 109; 225–26). What results from infixing is steadiness, which, Loeb argues, is most naturally understood as a dispositional property.[17] After all, steady belief is one that has steady effects on thought, the passions, and imagination (T 1.3.7.7; SBN 628–29).[18] This can suggest that belief just is a steady disposition to these effects.[19] The importance of steady dispositions is reinforced by Hume's account of the *causes* of belief, particularly his claim that the relation of resemblance does not produce belief when it operates independently of cause and effect (T 1.3.9.6; SBN 109–110). Resemblance is a "fluctuating and uncertain" principle (T 1.3.9.6; SBN 109–110) that fails to infix ideas in the mind, unlike the relation of cause and effect, which presents "fixt and unalterable" objects (T 1.3.9.7; SBN 110).[20] Thus the difference between the products of these relations can look more like a difference in the stability of dispositions rather than in phenomenological properties.[21]

The debate is difficult to adjudicate. Both Loeb and Marušić concede that Hume's *official* definitions treat beliefs as occurrent mental states.[22] Their debate is about whether Hume should be read as implicitly appealing to dispositions when he describes the steadiness of the effects of belief or whether this steadiness can be explained in terms of the phenomenological properties of occurrent states.

This debate, however, cannot be resolved on purely textual grounds. For nearly all Loeb's textual evidence can be re-interpreted in line with the occurrent state view. By way of illustration, consider T 1.3.7.7 (SBN 628–29), where Hume argues that "an opinion or belief is nothing but an idea, that is different from a fiction . . . in the *manner* of its being conceiv'd." Hume cannot explain this "manner" except by having "recourse to every one's feeling":

> An idea assented to *feels* different from a fictitious idea, that the fancy alone presents to us: And this different feeling I endeavour to explain by calling it a superior *force*, or *vivacity*, or *solidity*, or *firmness*, or *steadiness*. This variety of terms, which may seem so unphilosophical, is intended only to express that act of the mind, which renders realities more present to us than fictions, causes them to weigh more in the thought, and gives them a superior influence on the passions and imagination. . . . [I]t is something *felt* by the mind, which distinguishes the ideas of the judgment from the fictions of the imagination. It gives them more force and influence; makes them appear of greater importance; infixes them in the mind; and renders them the governing principles of all our actions. (T 1.3.7.7; SBN 628–29)

While Loeb is right that this passage characterizes belief with reference to its effects, as a dispositional account might do,[23] this is not the end of the story. As Marušić puts it, this passage can also seem to suggest that "it is in virtue of the feeling, the thing 'felt by the mind,' that beliefs have more force and influence, appear more important, and serve as governing principles."[24] The passage identifies the effects of belief only to explain them in terms of the phenomenological properties—the "feeling"—of beliefs, which are naturally taken to be occurrent mental states.[25] A similar move can be made for the other passages which Loeb adduces in support of his interpretation.[26] But this fact alone is not sufficient to supplant the dispositional interpretation. Loeb allows that Hume's official view is an occurrent state theory, and it is only charitable to suppose that Hume has written a text that is at least consistent with that theory. The real debate must be about the direction in which the spirit of Hume's remarks point, whatever the letter may be.[27]

Counterfeit Belief

But how to assess the spirit of these remarks? The strategy I pursue here is to consider the problem of counterfeit belief.[28] This problem arises from some of the passages that Hume finds it necessary to append to his discussion of belief in later editions.[29] In these passages, Hume argues that there are some mental states, such as "poetical enthusiasm," which possess an immense degree of vivacity but nonetheless

fail to count as beliefs (T 1.3.10.9–11; SBN 123, 630–31). In such states, "how great soever the pitch may be, to which this vivacity rises, 'tis evident, that in poetry it never has the same *feeling* with that which arises in the mind, when we reason . . . 'tis still the mere phantom of belief" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 123, 630–31). But if the ideas of poetical enthusiasm have such a great amount of the phenomenological feature—vivacity—in terms of which Hume defines belief, how could they fail to count as beliefs?

As Loeb recognizes, the dispositional view can give an easy explanation of these cases. The ideas of counterfeit belief, while they resemble beliefs in their vivacity, do not result from stable dispositions, but from unsteady flights of fancy. Thus they are not manifestations of genuine belief.[30] Hume may be read as reasoning in this way when he writes that belief and counterfeit belief are "somewhat of the same kind: But the one is much inferior to the other, both in its causes and effects" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 632).

It is more difficult for Marušić's version of the occurrent state view to explain cases of counterfeit belief. The ideas that arise from poetry have the greatest possible degree of the phenomenological feature—vivacity—in virtue of which ideas count as beliefs, and yet they are not beliefs. In fact, they may have even *more* of this phenomenological feature: "A poetical description may have a more sensible effect on the fancy, than an historical narration. . . . It may seem to set the object before us in more lively colours" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 631).[31] Thus it is not obvious how appealing to the phenomenological features of the ideas of poetical vivacity will help distinguish them from genuine beliefs.

Still, it is worth considering what responses are available to Marušić's interpretation. The most natural move, I suspect, is to appeal to Hume's remark, quoted above, that poetical enthusiasm "never has the same *feeling* with that which arises in the mind, when we reason" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630). This remark might provide the basis for a distinction between two *kinds* of vivacity: the vivacity that characterizes belief, and the vivacity that characterizes counterfeit belief. Alternatively, the remark might be taken to make a distinction between vivacity and *feeling*, where beliefs and counterfeit beliefs are alike in vivacity but different in feeling, but where both vivacity and feeling are phenomenological features of occurrent states in virtue of which they may count as beliefs.[32] Marušić might then argue that it is a difference in phenomenological properties—of either of these kinds—that grounds the distinction between belief and counterfeit belief, just as her version of the occurrent state interpretation requires.

The first problem with this move is that it appeals to a distinction that plays no role in Hume's official definition of belief, which defined belief only as an idea with force and vivacity. This definition did not present belief as an idea having a *particular kind* of force or vivacity. At the least, the absence of the relevant distinc-

tion from the official definition of belief would make it surprising to discover that Hume's considered view crucially depends upon it.

In any case, there is a second and more serious problem for this approach. It is not obvious that the very passage cited in support of this move (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630–31) intends to make the suggested distinction at all. For while the passage *does* distinguish between feeling and vivacity (in contrast to the official definition of belief), it assigns them different roles than do the revised versions of Marušić's view sketched above. In this passage, Hume seems to be arguing that what grounds the distinction between the vivacity of poetry and of belief is the *origin* of that vivacity, and that any phenomenological differences in "feeling" only *arise from our observation of* that *causal origin*. Our first clue that this is Hume's meaning arises from the fact that he introduces his remarks about the different "feeling" of poetry only as an elaboration of the claim that "the vivacity they bestow on the ideas is not deriv'd from the particular situations or connexions of the objects of these ideas, but from the present temper and disposition of the person" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630). This claim about how the vivacity involved in counterfeit belief is "deriv'd" is a claim about its *causal origin*, and how it differs from the causal origin of the vivacity involved in genuine belief.

After making this point, Hume of course proceeds, as we have seen, to describe a difference in "feeling" that belongs to ideas whose vivacity is derived in the peculiar way that is characteristic of counterfeit belief, concluding that "the ideas it [a poetical description] presents are different to the *feeling* from those, which arise from the memory and judgment" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 631). Importantly, however, these remarks are not Hume's last word on how differences of "feeling" belong to counterfeit belief. He follows them up with the claim that

> I cannot forbear observing, that the great difference in their feeling proceeds in some measure from reflection and *general rules.* We observe, that the vigour of conception, which fictions receive from poetry and eloquence, is a circumstance merely accidental, of which every idea is equally susceptible; and that such fictions are connected with nothing that is real. This observation makes us only lend ourselves, so to speak, to the fiction: But causes the idea to feel very different from the external establish'd perswasions founded on memory and custom. (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 631–32)

It is important to see that this passage suggests that the way in which poetical vivacity "feels" different from the vivacity of belief is *not* a phenomenological property of the lively idea in question. Rather, this "feeling" stems from our "observation" and "reflection," in line with "general rules," on the "accidental" circumstances of its causal history.[33] This observation "makes us" act and even "*feel*" in certain ways.

Importantly, this "feeling" is *not* identical with the "vigour of conception," which is what Hume says we observe and reflect on and what gives rise to the "feeling" when we do so. In other words, the feeling that Hume is describing is one that is subsequent to, rather than identical with, the phenomenological properties of the ideas enlivened in episodes of poetical vivacity. That the relevant feeling is not among those original phenomenological properties is reinforced by Hume's insistence that counterfeit beliefs can have the greatest possible vivacity ("how great soever the pitch may be, to which this vivacity rises"), where this vivacity is the phenomenological property in virtue of which an idea is a belief: whatever the "feeling" Hume describes is, it is consequent on the peculiar vivacity of poetical enthusiasm, not a component of it.[34] The "feeling" to which Hume refers is therefore not fundamental to the nature of belief, but a feeling that arises only under certain conditions.

The implication is that this "feeling" is *not* a second kind of vivacity, as suggested on the first revised version of Marušić's interpretation. Moreover, to the extent that it is a genuine difference in feeling, it is a difference in feeling that appears in a very different place in the theory than we might have thought: it is the result of *reflecting on* the first-order "vigour of conception" of an idea—not a component of that vigour itself. The upshot is that it is not obvious how an occurrent state interpretation like Marušić's can appeal to these subsequent, observation- and reflection-based feelings to differentiate between belief and poetical vivacity.[35] Before we reflect on it, a counterfeit belief is phenomenologically indistinguishable from a genuine belief. The most a defender of Marušić's view could say is that such a counterfeit belief really is a genuine belief at this initial stage, but that it *becomes* a counterfeit belief when we reflect on it. The problem, of course, is that it ought to have been a counterfeit belief all along. In contrast, it is much easier to see how a dispositional interpretation like Loeb's can account for the importance of our observation of and reflection on the causal origins of our lively ideas. A defender of that view can argue that an idea is a belief when we are disposed to "lend" ourselves to it and "feel" in a certain way upon the observation of its causal history.

A New Version of the Occurrent State Interpretation

But once again, this is not the end of the story. My aim is to show that Hume's appeal to our "observation" of the causal history of poetical vivacity, while compatible with a dispositional interpretation, also opens the way to a revised version of the occurrent state view. In what follows, I defend the view that a belief is a vivacious idea, understood as an occurrent mental state, which is *appropriately related* to a present impression. This interpretation, like Marušić's, is based on Hume's official definitions of a belief, according to which it is "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). My interpreta-

tion, however, departs from Marušić's in that it insists on the importance of the requirement that a belief be "RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION."[36] The fact that Hume includes this requirement in his *definition* suggests that he is not merely offering an interesting supplementary fact about how beliefs originate, but saying what they *are*.

We can get a better idea of what this criterion amounts to by considering a passage from 1.3.7, the chapter which is concerned with "the nature of the idea or belief"—that is, with what a belief *is*. In this passage, Hume begins by arguing that the difference between an idea that is believed and an idea that is not believed cannot be located in any differences in the idea—in "the parts or composition of the idea, which we conceive"—but rather in the "*manner*, in which we conceive it" (T 1.3.7.2; SBN 94–95). In the course of illustrating this distinction between the "parts or composition" of an idea and our "manner" of conceiving it, Hume finds himself comparing belief in two kinds of proposition:

> I therefore ask, wherein consists the difference betwixt believing and disbelieving any proposition? The answer is easy with regard to propositions, that are prov'd by intuition or demonstration. In that case, the person, who assents, not only conceives the ideas according to the proposition, but is necessarily determin'd to conceive them in that particular manner, either immediately or by the interposition of other ideas. Whatever is absurd is unintelligible; nor is it possible for the imagination to conceive any thing contrary to a demonstration. But as in reasonings from causation, and concerning matters of fact, this absolute necessity cannot take place, and the imagination is free to conceive both sides of the question, I still ask, *Wherein consists the difference betwixt incredulity and belief?* since in both cases the conception of the idea is equally possible and requisite. (T 1.3.7.3; SBN 95)

In this passage, Hume begins by identifying what it is to believe a demonstrable proposition that can be "prov'd by . . . demonstration"—in the language of the *Enquiry*, a relation of ideas. He claims that a belief in a demonstrable proposition involves an "absolute necessity" of conceiving the ideas of the proposition "in that particular manner"; this arises from the fact that the contrary of the proposition is inconceivable. This explanation of belief is meant to illustrate a distinction made in the previous paragraph between "the parts or composition of the idea, which we conceive" and the "*manner*, in which we conceive it" (T 1.3.7.2; SBN 94–95): in the case of belief in relations of ideas, the relevant manner is the manner of absolute necessity. But this way of unpacking the distinction poses a problem. The problem is that "absolute necessity" is unavailable in beliefs in matters of fact, and "the imagination is free to conceive both sides of the question." Consequently,

absolute necessity of conceiving cannot be the manner of conceiving that is characteristic of belief in a proposition that is not a relation of ideas. Hume must look elsewhere to explain what manner of conceiving is involved in belief in a matter of fact. That it is a *manner* he is after is clear: "this principle, as it plainly makes no addition to our precedent ideas, can only change the *manner* of our conceiving them" (T 1.3.7.4; SBN 96).

But even though Hume is forced to abandon "absolute necessity" as a characterization of the manner of conceiving involved in belief in matters of fact, he does not give up on the language of necessity altogether. It recurs in his explanation of why the relations of resemblance and contiguity do not yield belief:

> But tho' I cannot altogether exclude the relations of resemblance and contiguity from operating on the fancy in this manner, 'tis observable that, when single, their influence is very feeble and uncertain. . . . nor is there any reason, why, upon the return of the same impression, we shou'd be determin'd to place the same object in the same relation to it. There is no manner of necessity for the mind to feign any resembling and contiguous objects; and if it feigns such, there is as little necessity for it always to confine itself to the same, without any difference or variation. And indeed such a fiction is founded on so little reason, that nothing but pure *caprice* can determine the mind to form it; and that principle being fluctuating and uncertain, 'tis impossible it can ever operate with any considerable degree of force and constancy. . . . The relation of cause and effect has all the opposite advantages. The objects it presents are fixt and unalterable. The impressions of the memory never change in any considerable degree; and each impression draws along with it a precise idea, which takes its place in the imagination, as something solid and real, certain and invariable. The thought is always determin'd to pass from the impression to the idea, and from that particular impression to that particular idea, without any choice or hesitation. (T 1.3.9.6–7; SBN 109–110)

In this passage, Hume applies the language of "necessity" and "determination" to our manner of conceiving of a matter of fact, just as he did for relations of ideas in T 1.3.7.3 (SBN 95). Here, however, he uses the lack of necessity and determination in the operations of the relations of resemblance and contiguity to explain why their products do not count as beliefs. Whereas the mind has no necessity to conceive resembling or contiguous objects, the mind *does* experience a necessity and determination to conceive the ideas involved in causal inference and to do so "without any difference or variation." It cannot, for instance, choose whether or not to conceive the idea of the effect when it has already conceived the idea of the cause; there can be no "choice or hesitation" once the idea of the cause has

been conceived. The conception involved in causal reasoning is therefore one with a "manner of necessity."[37] This recalls what he said about the manner of conception involved in belief about relations of ideas, where the mind was "necessarily determin'd to conceive them in that particular manner" (T 1.3.7.3; SBN 95). What Hume now adds is that in causal inference too, the mind is determined to conceive the believed idea in a particular way: "without difference or variation." This is included in its manner of conception.

One lesson to be drawn from these passages is that the "manner of conception" that Hume refers to in his many explications of his definition of belief (T 1.3.7.4, T 1.3.7.5, T 1.3.7.6, T 1.3.8.6; SBN 95–96, 96, 97; 101) can be understood as including the mental operation by which an idea comes to be conceived. So understood, it is a "manner" in which various relations—including cause and effect, but not resemblance and contiguity—are said to be "operating on the fancy" (T 1.3.9.6; SBN 109). When Hume spells out this manner in the case of cause and effect, he talks about how these operations go: they are operations in which "each impression draws along with it a precise idea," in which there is no "difference or variation" and in which "thought is always determin'd to pass from the impression to the idea" (T 1.3.9.7; SBN 110).[38] In sum, a lively idea can be a belief only when the mind has come to conceive it in the relevant manner—that is, when it is determined to do so in a certain order, as part of a certain sequence, in a certain context. When it does not so conceive it, there is no belief.

It bears emphasizing that Hume's discussion of such manners of conceiving is not some marginal phenomenon. It is an important component of his official definitions. For instance, he writes that "as belief does nothing but vary the manner, in which we conceive any object, it can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). Once we realize that the relevant manner of conceiving includes the operation by which an idea is conceived, we can see that this operation or manner is picked up by the official definition that follows in the next sentence of T 1.3.7.5 (SBN 96): "An opinion, therefore, or belief may be most accurately defin'd, A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). Against the background I have been sketching, we can see that this claim that the lively idea must be "related to or associated with" a present impression is a crystallization of the previous sentence's claim that the lively idea in question must have its liveliness "bestowed" upon it in a particular "manner" of conceiving. The reference to being "RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH" is not the introduction of a new consideration, but simply a spelling out of what has just been said in the previous sentence and hinted in the earlier paragraphs of the chapter, particularly T 1.3.7.3 (SBN 95). In including this claim in his definition of belief, Hume is indicating that merely having liveliness is not sufficient for being a belief; in addition, this liveliness must also have arisen in a particular manner.

This interpretation is reinforced by the summarizing remarks a few paragraphs later, where Hume explains that "belief is somewhat more than a simple idea. 'Tis a particular manner of forming an idea: And as the same idea can only be vary'd by a variation of its degrees of force and vivacity; it follows upon the whole, that belief is a lively idea produc'd by a relation to a present impression, according to the foregoing definition" (T 1.3.7.6; SBN 97).

In this summarizing passage, too, Hume keeps the liveliness and vivacity of an idea distinct from its process of formation. He associates the operation of *formation* with its "manner" of conceiving, referring to this as the idea's "manner of forming." He then associates the liveliness and vivacity of an idea with the respects in which the idea itself can be "vary'd." Finally, he brings these two claims together in a reprisal of his "foregoing" official definition, claiming that "belief is a lively idea produc'd by a relation to a present impression." In context, it is fairly clear that he intends this definition to pick up on *both* of the claims he has just made. Hume does not just mention that the idea that is a belief is "related to" a present impression, but says that it is "produc'd" by such a relation, and does so immediately after referring to an idea's "manner" of conceiving as its manner of "forming," emphasizing that he is making a claim about the idea's causal origin. There is good reason, therefore, to take *both* an idea's phenomenological properties and its "manner" of being formed to be essential to its status as a belief.

More details about this manner of conception are found in T 1.3.8, where Hume explains exactly how force and vivacity are transferred from the "present impression" to the idea to which it is related, resulting in belief:

> I wou'd willingly establish it as a general maxim in the science of human nature, *that when any impression becomes present to us, it not only transports the mind to such ideas as are related to it, but likewise communicates to them a share of its force and vivacity*. All the operations of the mind depend in a great measure on its disposition, when it performs them; and according as the spirits are more or less elevated, and the attention more or less fix'd, the action will always have more or less vigour and vivacity. When therefore any object is presented, which elevates and enlivens the thought, every action, to which the mind applies itself, will be more strong and vivid, as long as that disposition continues. Now 'tis evident the continuance of the disposition depends entirely on the objects, about which the mind is employ'd; and that any new object naturally gives a new direction to the spirits, and changes the disposition; as on the contrary, when the mind fixes constantly on the same object, or passes easily and insensibly along related objects, the disposition has a much longer duration. Hence it happens, that when the mind is once enliven'd by a present impression, it proceeds to form a more lively idea of the related objects,

> by a natural transition of the disposition from the one to the other. The change of the objects is so easy, that the mind is scarce sensible of it, but applies itself to the conception of the related idea with all the force and vivacity it acquir'd from the present impression. (T 1.3.8.2; SBN 98–99)

Keeping in mind what I have suggested about taking Hume's "manners" of conceiving or forming to include the operations by which we come to have ideas as beliefs, we can read this passage as giving an account of the mechanisms of vivacity transmission involved in manners of conceiving or forming. Vivacity is not transmitted directly from the impression to the idea, because the "operations of the mind depend in a great measure on its disposition, when it performs them." (The language of "dispositions" is not here being used, in Loeb's sense, to refer to a disposition to certain effects. It refers to the present spirits, constitution, or arrangement of the mind.) Such a disposition can be shorter or longer. It is longest when either "the mind fixes constantly on the same object, or passes easily and insensibly along related objects." This mention of the mind fixing constantly on the same object seems to look ahead to passages, like the one quoted above, in which cause and effect is said to be the relation that encourages the mind to fix itself firmly—necessarily, even—on a single idea (T 1.3.9.6–7; SBN 109–110). This passage from T 1.3.8.2, then, suggests that differences in manners of conceiving can be traced to the different ways that vivacity can be transmitted from the present impression to the idea.

This, then, is the kind of process to which Hume refers in his official definition of a belief, which I have unpacked as containing *two* criteria: a lively idea and a manner of conceiving. Recall that Hume states the definition as follows: "So that as belief does nothing but vary the manner, in which we conceive any object, it can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity. An opinion, therefore, or belief may be most accurately defin'd, A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). On my interpretation, to say that a lively idea is "related to" a present impression is to say that it derives its liveliness from the impression in a specific way, that is, via a process of vivacity transmission in which the mind is "necessitated" to conceive of that idea when confronted with the present impression whose vivacity is being transmitted. When such a transmission is lacking, a lively idea cannot be considered a belief. It is for this reason, I suggest, that Hume goes to the trouble of including this emphasis on manners of conceiving and relations to a present impression in his *definition* of belief.

All my emphasis on this definition may be thought to lead to a problem for my interpretation. In particular, it might be thought to provide ammunition to a defender of Marušić's occurrent state interpretation. A defender of that view might argue that Hume only includes talk of manners and relations in his official

definition of belief because these manners and relations have *phenomenological consequences*. Perhaps, it might be argued, when Hume writes that "as belief does nothing but vary the manner, in which we conceive any object, it can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96), what he means to suggest is that believed ideas differ from non-believed ideas simply in virtue of the phenomenological properties that result from their manners of conception. While it may be true that a belief would not be lively were it conceived in a different way, this manner of conceiving is simply a necessary condition for and not *constitutive* of what it is to be a belief. On this version of Marušić's interpretation, Hume would introduce a belief's manner of conception only to put all the emphasis on the phenomenological consequences of this conception.

While this is certainly a possible reading of the passage, it faces two problems, both of which I have already alluded to. First, it gives insufficient weight to the context of the passage, in which Hume's definition of belief in matters of fact arises via an analogy to belief in relations of ideas, where the manner of conceiving that constitutes belief clearly includes an operation that is distinct from the phenomenological features of the resulting ideas (T 1.3.7.3; SBN 95). Second, this reading cannot account for the complex phenomenology of poetical vivacity, where any phenomenological differences—the difference in "feeling" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630–31, T 1.3.10.11; SBN 631–32)—between beliefs and counterfeit beliefs depend on our *subsequent* "observation" of and "reflection" on the causal origins of the lively ideas involved, and are not simply manifestations of the liveliness of those ideas (as I argued above). To take Hume's talk of manners of conceiving and processes of vivacity transmission simply to specify necessary conditions for lively ideas therefore undermines our ability to make sense of his discussion of poetical vivacity.

The next step is to show exactly how my interpretation reads this discussion of poetical vivacity. First, however, I want to take note of a passage that may be thought to pose a problem for my overall line of interpretation.[39] This passage, which occurs in T 1.3.5.7, prior to Hume's full account of the nature of belief, contains some mysterious and difficult remarks about certain impressions of the senses:

> Thus it appears, that the *belief* or *assent*, which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from the imagination. To believe is in this case to feel an immediate impression of the senses, or a repetition of that impression in the memory. 'Tis merely the force and liveliness of the perception, which constitutes the first act of the judgment, and lays the foundation of that reasoning, which we build upon it, when we trace the relation of cause and effect. (T 1.3.5.7; SBN 86)

This passage seems to suggest that some impressions—those of the senses—are *beliefs*, or perhaps, that to believe is to have an impression of the senses.[40] This suggestion may seem to pose a problem for my claim that belief requires an appropriate sort of history. The problem is that Hume thinks these impressions belong to a kind that "arises in the soul originally, from unknown causes" (T 1.1.2.1; SBN 7; cf. T 1.3.5.2; SBN 84). But if these impressions arise from *unknown* causes, it is not clear whether these causes involve what I have been calling an "appropriate relation" to a present impression. This seems to be a problem for my interpretation.

Part of the difficulty in understanding the T 1.3.5.7 passage, however, is that it is not clear how literally we can take some of the claims it makes or how much importance to ascribe to them in connection with my project here. At a minimum, we need to be wary of the apparent implication that some beliefs are impressions—and especially the relevance of this implication to Hume's later investigation into "*the nature of the idea or belief*" in 1.3.7. This later chapter, we have seen, offers an official definition that makes clear that the beliefs under consideration there are *ideas*, not impressions (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96; T 1.3.8.11; SBN 103). Whereas T 1.3.5.7 may seem to offer an account of belief that is broad enough to include impressions, the later chapters treat only *ideas* as beliefs. As a result, any claims that T 1.3.5.7 might be making about *impressions* that are beliefs do not directly contradict my interpretation of the later chapters.

Moreover, it is not obviously even Hume's project to provide an account of belief that unifies these two phenomena. By the time he is giving his official accounts of belief, his focus is no longer on the puzzles of T 1.3.5.7. Of course, we may well wonder whether he could offer such a unified account and what it would look like. The best resource for constructing such an account may in fact be T 1.3.5.7's emphasis on the *vivacity* of the belief associated with the senses: "the *belief* or *assent*, which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present" (T 1.3.5.7; SBN 86). This emphasis on the vivacity of believed impressions continues in the remark that "[t]o believe is in this case to feel an immediate impression of the senses" (T 1.3.5.7; SBN 86). Indeed, "['t]is merely the force and liveliness of the perception" (T 1.3.5.7; SBN 86).[41] This interest in the connection between the belief associated with certain impressions and their vivacity may suggest that believed impressions and believed ideas may well have something in common that justifies treating them as instances of a wider phenomenon—even if they raise different puzzles that require different answers.[42]

Counterfeit Belief and the New Occurrent State Interpretation

Now, I want to show how my new version of the occurrent state interpretation can give a straightforward account of Hume's discussion of poetical vivacity. It can do so by making the right kind of vivacity transmission (an "appropriate

relation") central to the definition of belief. This means it can easily allow that there are lively ideas that are related to present impressions in non-standard ways and that therefore do not count as belief. In fact, this seems to be what Hume has in mind when he writes that the "union among the ideas in poetry is, in a manner, accidental" (T 1.3.10.7; SBN 122) and that "the vigour of conception, which fictions receive from poetry and eloquence, is a circumstance merely accidental" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 631–32). In contrast, in normal cases, the vivacity "arises from a customary conjunction with a present impression" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630–31). Similarly, he writes that in both "poetry and madness . . . the vivacity they bestow on the ideas is not deriv'd from the particular situations or connexions of the objects of these ideas, but from the present temper and disposition of the person" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630–31).[43]

According to these passages, the operations involved in poetical vivacity disrupt the usual process by which an idea comes to be lively. In the usual case, the continuance and liveliness of the mind's disposition depends on the relations between its ideas. But in poetical vivacity, the ideas on which the disposition depends are enlivened independently of connections between its ideas—that is, "in a manner, accidental." The disposition then passes this non-standardly acquired liveliness onto other ideas, willy nilly.[44] Poetical vivacity is thus a "short-circuiting" of the usual processes of vivacity transmission. The relation between poetical vivacity and a present impression is *not* an appropriate one, such as that of cause and effect, by which the mind is determined to conceive a particular idea when it has conceived the lively impression.[45]

What this reveals is that Hume's talk of a lively idea's being "related to" a present impression is normative: a lively idea is only a belief insofar as it acquires its liveliness via an appropriate relation to a present impression. As we saw above, we can become aware of this normative relation by observation and reflection and so cause ourselves to experience a difference in "feeling" (T 1.3.10.10, T 1.3.10.11; SBN 630–31, 631–32).[46] But this, we have seen, is not to say that this downstream difference of feeling is what makes a lively idea of poetical vivacity fail to count as a belief; rather, it is the lack of an appropriate relation.

Exactly how Hume ultimately cashes out this notion of an appropriate relation between a present impression and a believed idea is open to debate. In the core case of belief resulting from casual inference, the relevant relation is one in which the mind is determined to conceive an idea of the effect upon having a present impression of the cause. But there may be other appropriate relations. If so, having an appropriate relation will be necessary for belief, but having this particular one will be sufficient. In any case, some parts of the *Treatise* show some signs of starting to carry out the project of identifying what the relevant relation might be, in at least one case moving away from an extremely strict conception of this relation while still holding onto the spirit of the strategy suggested by the

official definition.[47] Hume's discussion of education indicates that if "a mere idea alone . . . shou'd frequently make its appearance in the mind, this idea must by degrees acquire a facility and force; and both by its firm hold and easy introduction distinguish itself from any new and unusual idea" (T 1.3.9.16; SBN 115–16). Even though this mode of transmitting vivacity does not involve all the features of the more standard case, Hume is nonetheless adamant that it is a case of "that custom, to which I attribute all belief and reasoning," which "operate[s] upon the mind in invigorating an idea after two several ways" (T 1.3.9.16; SBN 115–16), of which education is one. In fact, Hume takes it that this second kind of custom provides an "additional confirmation" of the original hypothesis about belief (T 1.3.9.16; SBN 115–16).

This way of proceeding suggests not that the right process of vivacity transmission is not essential to belief, but rather that Hume is open-minded about how this process must look. It seems to be part of his ongoing project—originally prompted by the official definition and its reference to an appropriate relation—to find out what the possibilities are. Indeed, the very fact that Hume bothers to distinguish different kinds of vivacity transmission based on custom suggests that an appropriate relation of *some* sort is an important component of his definition; if it was not, it would be enough for him to argue that the ideas that result from education are phenomenologically similar to those that result from causal inference.

Moreover, the remarks on education just quoted provide some guidance as to what the relevant kind of vivacity transmission may be like. Hume seems to think that both causal inference and education involve "frequent repetition" (T 1.3.9.17; SBN 116). He also thinks that "the only particular, in which these two kinds of custom agree" is the one expressed in the supposition that if "a mere idea alone, without any of this curious and almost artificial preparation, shou'd frequently make its appearance in the mind, this idea must by degrees acquire a facility and force; and both by its firm hold and easy introduction distinguish itself from any new and unusual idea" (T 1.3.9.16; SBN 116). What the two kinds of custom share is that some impression or idea "frequently make[s] its appearance in the mind" and in this way has an "easy introduction." The point is that both kinds of custom involve a regular and orderly process of frequent repetition—in contrast to the "circumstance merely accidental" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 631) that is characteristic of poetical enthusiasm. In this way, education as well as causal inference may count as an appropriate relation, despite the fact that it can sometimes produce some false beliefs (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117).[48] In any case, what is important to take away from both Hume's discussion of causal inference and his discussion of education is simply that *some* such regular process of vivacity transmission is essential to belief, where this process can be spelled out in various ways. In all cases, however, Hume is engaged in the project of implementing a strategy first suggested by the official definition.[49]

However Hume ultimately completes his project of working out all of these details concerning how vivacity is transmitted and what counts as an appropriate relation, what is important for my interpretation is simply that he takes the right process of vivacity transmission to be an essential criterion for belief. It is by insisting on the importance of this criterion, and the investigative strategy it recommends to Hume, that my view is able to account for Hume's discussion of poetical vivacity more straightforwardly than Marušić's competing version of the occurrent state interpretation.

This aspect of my view, however, might be thought to be in tension with some of Hume's remarks elsewhere in the *Treatise*.[50] I have argued that ideas with the phenomenological properties characteristic of belief can be related in appropriate and inappropriate ways to lively impressions, and that only ideas related appropriately count as beliefs. I have also argued that one such appropriate relation is *cause and effect*. Taken together, these claims may seem to conflict with Hume's "[r]ules by which to judge of causes and effects" (T 1.3.15; SBN 173). Rule 4 has it that "The same cause always produces the same effect, and the same effect never arises but from the same cause" (T 1.3.15.6; SBN 173). Since I have said that beliefs and counterfeit beliefs may be alike in their phenomenological features, I may seem to have said that they count as instances of the "same effect." By Rule 4, they should have the "same causes." But I have said that they do not, since only genuine beliefs are appropriately caused by a present impression. Indeed, Hume himself says that genuine and counterfeit beliefs have different causes, despite sharing some phenomenological features: while they "are somewhat of the same kind," "the one is much inferior to the other, both in its causes and effects" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 632).

It is important to recognize, however, that Rule 4 cannot be true without qualification. For Rules 5 and 6 acknowledge that there may be cases where the causes are the same and the effects are not, or where the effects are the same and the causes are not:

> 5. There is another principle, which hangs upon this, *viz.* that where several different objects produce the same effect, it must be by means of some quality, which we discover to be common amongst them. For as like effects imply like causes, we must always ascribe the causation to the circumstance, wherein we discover the resemblance.
>
> 6. The following principle is founded on the same reason. The difference in the effects of two resembling objects must proceed from that particular, in which they differ. For as like causes always produce like effects, when in any instance we find our expectations to be disappointed, we must conclude that this irregularity proceeds from some difference in the causes. (T 1.3.15.7–8; SBN 174)

The objection was that my interpretation implies that some like effects are produced by unlike causes. This seemed to contradict Rule 4. Rule 5, however, suggests that this is permissible, so long as we take there to be "some quality, which we discover to be common amongst them" (T 1.3.15.7; SBN 174)—that is, that the relations by which beliefs and counterfeit beliefs are related to present impressions have something in common. And this they do: both involve *vivacity* and a process of vivacity transmission. In virtue of having this common cause, beliefs and counterfeit beliefs may be like effects, in line with both Rules 4 and 5.

A similar response can be made to another version of this objection. This version of the objection has it that my interpretation violates Rule 4, but in the opposite direction. The problem arises from the fact that Hume thinks that genuine and counterfeit beliefs have different effects. As we have seen, he is explicit that "the one is much inferior to the other, both in its causes and effects" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 632). His analogy between the ideas and the passions produced by poetry also makes this clear: "A passion, which is disagreeable in real life, may afford the highest entertainment in a tragedy, or epic poem. In the latter case it lies not with that weight upon us: It feels less firm and solid: And has no other than the agreeable effect of exciting the spirits, and rouzing the attention" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 631). The *effects* of counterfeit and genuine belief clearly differ. By Rule 4, if counterfeit and genuine belief are the causes of these different effects, they should also differ. But, I have argued, they are alike in their phenomenological properties.

What this objection shows is that it would be wrong to say that the *only* or *complete* causes of the relevant effects (for example, "rouzing the attention," and so on) are the vivacious ideas involved in belief and counterfeit belief. Since their effects differ, the causes (when fully specified) must differ too. By Rule 6, this means that we need to look more widely to see what must be specified as the full cause of these effects: "we must conclude that this irregularity proceeds from some difference in the causes" (T 1.3.15.8; SBN 174). Once again, there is a ready candidate for this difference: the various elements of the *causal history* of beliefs and counterfeit beliefs. As we have seen, beliefs differ from counterfeit beliefs in that beliefs are appropriately related to vivacious impressions, whereas counterfeit beliefs are formed by a different mechanism. My suggestion is that differences in this mechanism are likely to be responsible for differences in the effects of beliefs and counterfeit beliefs. Indeed, Hume says that "[w]here the vivacity arises from a customary conjunction with a present impression; tho' the imagination may not, in appearance, be so much mov'd; yet there is always something more forcible and real in its actions, than in the fervours of poetry and eloquence" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 631). Hume is linking the effects of a genuine belief with its full causal history, where this history includes the fact that it "arises from a customary conjunction." This is in line with Rule 6. The upshot is that these "rules by which to judge of causes and effects" are not a threat to my view.

It is important to be clear about what is involved in saying that a belief or counterfeit belief's full causal history is responsible for its distinctive effects. This is not to say (as someone might fear) that some cause in the past is operating, rather spookily, at a temporal distance from its effects.[51] The causal history is rather one that continues from the past into the time at which we have the idea that is a belief—one that might be said to "overlap" with that belief. That this is the kind of causal history Hume has in mind is clear from his account of the "*causes of belief*" in T 1.3.8, where he emphasises that "[a]ll the operations of the mind depend in a great measure on its disposition, when it performs them" (T 1.3.8.2; SBN 98)—that is, such operations, including those involved in belief, depend on a disposition that is present at the time "when it performs them." Indeed, the distinctive effects of belief only continue so long as the very disposition that is responsible for belief continues: "[w]hen therefore any object is presented, which elevates and enlivens the thought, every action, to which the mind applies itself, will be more strong and vivid, as long as that disposition continues" (T 1.3.8.2; SBN 98).

Because I have located the causal history by which beliefs differ from counterfeit beliefs within dispositions of this sort, and because these dispositions continue during the time when we have our beliefs, my view does not imply that this causal history somehow acts from a temporal distance to produce the distinctive effects of belief. Indeed, this line of argument reveals that Hume has good reason to require that the impression to which the idea of belief is related be a "present" impression (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96)—one that remains present and so allows the disposition to continue.[52] Hume thus writes that "the continuance of the disposition depends entirely on the objects, about which the mind is employ'd; . . . when the mind is once enliven'd by a present impression, it proceeds to form a more lively idea of the related objects, by a natural transition of the disposition from the one to the other" (T 1.3.8.2; SBN 98–99).

Concluding Remarks

By way of conclusion, I want to note some of the advantages of my interpretation over rival interpretations. We have already seen how it succeeds in making sense of more of the details of Hume's account of poetical vivacity than does Marušić's view. However, as I noted above, Loeb's dispositional interpretation can also give an account of the poetical vivacity passages. So, which interpretation is to be preferred? Because my focus here has been on how we can use Hume's discussion of poetical vivacity to understand his account of belief, I cannot consider all the large-scale considerations that may be favourable to Loeb's overall approach. However, I wish to draw attention to two considerations, more closely connected with poetical vivacity, that speak in favour of my interpretation. The first arises from the fact that while both views give a principled reason for Hume's refusal to

treat poetical vivacity as a belief, my view can derive its principled reason from Hume's *official* definition and related passages—including Hume's associated strategy for investigating belief—and specifically their references to manners of conceiving. In contrast, Loeb's principled reason has its roots outside these official definitions, in the notion of a steady disposition. To the extent that we prefer an interpretation that both fits well with the letter of Hume's text and also captures something important about how his argument proceeds, this is one small advantage for my interpretation.

Second, by locating my principled reason in manners of conceiving, where these manners are taken to include mental operations by which the lively ideas involved in belief are *caused*, my interpretation can assign a special importance to Hume's decision to devote an entire chapter specifically to the "causes of belief" (T 1.3.8; SBN 98ff.). These causes, understood as processes of vivacity transmission, turn out to be essential to belief as it was defined in T 1.3.7 (SBN 96). In contrast, Loeb can only explain Hume's attention to the causes of belief as an account of the causes—for example, infixing—required to produce a stable disposition to certain *effects*. On his view, the causes of belief are only important insofar as they explain what is really essential to belief: that there are certain effects in certain circumstances. On my view, in contrast, Hume's discussion of the causes of belief is central to his project of defining belief itself. My view has an advantage over Loeb's in that it can explain how Hume's discussion of the causes of belief is central to the project suggested by that definition.

Even so, it is worth recalling some of the other considerations that support Loeb's approach. In addition to pointing to the poetical vivacity passages, Loeb also draws on a set of more general tendencies he observes in *Treatise* 1.3.5–10. First, Hume's claims that causal inference results in *belief*, and that such inferences are *justified*, are frequently intertwined.[53] For instance, Hume's claim that the relation of cause and effect produces beliefs but that the relation of resemblance does not is bound up with the claim that beliefs which arise via causal inference are justified but that states which arise via resemblance are unjustified. The reason, Loeb suggests, is that Hume thinks that "establishing that the states produced by a psychological mechanism are beliefs is to establish that they are justified, other things being equal."[54] In T 1.3.9, for instance, Hume "dignifies" beliefs arising from causal inference with the title of "realities" and refers to ideas arising from contiguity and resemblance as "merely the offspring of the imagination" (T 1.3.9.3–4; SBN 108). In the same passage, he writes that causal inference "brings us acquainted" with existences beyond the senses and memory—a formula, Loeb suggests, that "implies success."[55] Hume thus tends to suppose both that there is a psychological mechanism that produces a property that is necessary for being a *belief* but sufficient (other things being equal) for being a *justified* belief, and that

the fact that a belief results from causal inference is sufficient (other things being equal) for its being *justified*.

These tendencies, Loeb argues, require an explanation. This is easily forthcoming on an interpretation of beliefs as *stable* dispositions. The basic idea is that *causal inference* is a psychological mechanism that produces a property—stability—that is necessary for belief and sufficient for justified belief. Consider the alternative mechanisms associated with resemblance, which is a "fluctuating and uncertain" principle (T 1.3.9.6; SBN 109) that fails to infix ideas in the mind and therefore does not produce a stable disposition. But if stable dispositions just are beliefs, and if stability is not only necessary for being a belief but also sufficient for being a justified belief, other things being equal, then it makes sense for Hume to claim that resemblance does not produce belief. Resemblance, after all, does not produce stability. In contrast, the relation of cause and effect presents the mind with "fixt and unalterable" objects and therefore produces a stable disposition (T 1.3.9.7; SBN 110), the stability of which is sufficient for justified belief. On the dispositional interpretation, it thus makes sense for Hume to intermingle these claims. Mental states produced by the relation of cause and effect are stable dispositions that, in virtue of their stability, generally count both as beliefs and as justified beliefs, other things being equal.[56]

Loeb's interpretation, however, is not the only one that can make sense of this tendency. My interpretation can make the same move, while adhering more closely to Hume's definition of belief as an occurrent state. Loeb's observation is that Hume has a tendency to assume that showing that some mental states arise from the relation of cause and effect amounts to showing that they have a property (stability) that is both necessary for being a belief and sufficient for being a justified belief, other things being equal. My view can say that this tendency amounts to showing that some relations between the occurrent state and a vivacious impression are *appropriate*. This appropriateness is both necessary for belief and sufficient for being a justified belief, other things being equal.[57] On my interpretation, these relations are just part of the definition of belief, rather than the causal history by which some other property that is a component of that definition—stability—comes to be. Once again, if what we are looking for is an interpretation that situates the details of Hume's account of belief in relation to his official definition of belief, my way of making sense of these passages may be preferred.

NOTES

I am grateful to Ken Winkler and Michael Della Rocca for their insightful comments on many drafts of this paper, and to the audience at the Princeton-Penn-Columbia Graduate Conference in the History of Philosophy for their helpful questions.

1 Citations of the *Treatise* are from 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 Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Selby-Bigge, rev. by Nidditch, cited in the text as "SBN" followed by the page number.

2 Hume's presentation of his theory of belief in the *Appendix* thus differs markedly from his discussion of personal identity there: whereas he admits that he has been unable to "discover any theory, which gives me satisfaction" regarding *personal identity* (*App.* 20; SBN 636), he apparently is conscious of no major reservations about his theory of *belief*, at least so far as its overall content is concerned.

3 For a different set of worries raised by these terms, see Price, *Belief*, 165–66. Price remarks that Hume's preference for the word "lively," with its too-literal connotations of vivid images, was "unfortunate" and has "naturally mislead his readers."

4 For this tension, see MacNabb, *David Hume*, 72, 78; Everson, "Difference between Feeling and Thinking," 404–408.

5 Other scholars have suggested that that this variety of vocabulary reflects deeper inconsistencies in Hume's underlying theory of belief. See Stroud, *Hume*, 73–75; Passmore, *Hume's Intentions*, 102–103; Broackes, "Hume, Belief, and Personal Identity," 187–210. See especially Broackes, who has appealed to variations in Hume's language to argue that Hume actually offered *three* distinct conceptions of belief (188).

6 For taking occurrent states just to be "conscious" ones, cf. Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, quoted on page 62.

7 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 66–68.

8 Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?"

9 Hume says that the "poet has a counterfeit belief" (SBN 123); in the revised paragraph given in the *Appendix*, he reformulates this as the claim that it is the "mere phantom of belief" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630). Nothing of importance turns on Hume's change of phrasing here. My emphasis is only on the argument that he uses to support the rephrased version.

10 While I use Loeb's and Marušić's interpretations as my two main representatives of the two strands of interpreting Hume's theory of belief, I consider several alternative views in the footnotes. See especially note 35.

11 This is related to a view expressed by Garrett, on which vivacity is "a particular immediately experienced feature of perceptions" (*Hume*, 38). Later, Garrett argues, drawing on T 1.3.8.12 (SBN 103), that "the capacity to feel liveliness in conceiving possible matters of fact" is a "sense of probability" (137). Importantly, however, Garrett does not identify belief with this capacity (which he takes to be a "primitive sensibility" but with the *feeling* that it is a capacity *for*: "[t]his very feeling, in Hume's view, constitutes the mind's basic belief" (137), and the associated capacity is a "capacity to feel the liveliness constitutive of belief" (137). In making this liveliness constitutive of belief, this view is similar to Marušić's, and so risks counting poetical enthusiasm as a belief. Garrett does recognize that our sense of probability, like the moral sense, is subject to correction by various rules (140), as it seems to be in the case of poetical enthusiasm (cf. my note 33). But this still implies that the poetical ideas with the right vivacity level are beliefs, but

beliefs that are subject to correction. On my view, in contrast, they are not beliefs at all.

12 Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 169.

13 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 69.

14 Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 174.

15 Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 170–74.

16 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 65–69.

17 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 68.

18 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 69. Other commentators who have observed this tendency include MacNabb, Everson, Price, and Armstrong. See Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 69n15.

19 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 70.

20 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 72.

21 I discuss other considerations that support Loeb's interpretation in the concluding remarks.

22 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 66–67; Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 156.

23 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 69.

24 Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 171 (my emphasis).

25 Cf. *Appendix* 7 (SBN 626): "The *effects* of belief, in influencing the passions and imagination, can all be explain'd from the firm conception." Marušić also points to *Appendix* 8 (SBN 627).

26 For more examples, see Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 173–74.

27 Marušić provides a second line of argument for her view, which I find unconvincing (Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 160ff.). The argument is that Hume takes belief and its phenomenological properties to play a role in influencing our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that could not be played by anything other than an occurrent state with those phenomenological properties. More specifically, she argues that interpreting beliefs as dispositions is incompatible with Hume's view that beliefs explain feelings and behaviour in virtue of being among the *causes* of feelings and behaviours, which are considered as the *effects* of belief (T 1.3.10.2–3; SBN 188–19). To see this, suppose that beliefs are dispositions, and dispositions are law-like correlations of circumstances and behaviours (Marušić offers two suggestions for what dispositions might be, but I focus on this suggestion because it seems to be more in line with Hume's general approach and with Loeb's remarks on the topic). Then, she argues, a behaviour could not be explained in virtue of being *caused* by the belief with which it is associated, since the behaviour would instead partially *constitute* the belief. But this argument is doubtful. For Marušic's interpretation of dispositions as lawlike correlations is motivated by the thought that dispositional beliefs might be analogous to causal powers, like gravity, which Hume identifies with a pattern of effects (*Enquiry*

7.1nD; SBN 60; Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 161). But Hume is happy to call gravity a "cause." In his discussion of probability, for instance, he remarks that we should take account of "[c]ertain causes, such as gravity, solidity, a cubical figure, &c. which determine it a die to fall, to preserve its form in its fall, and to turn up one of its sides" (T 1.3.11.10; SBN 128). Elsewhere, Hume speaks of gravity as a "cause" with "parts" (T 1.3.12.16; SBN 136) and refers to it as a "quality" that "hinders" the human body "from mounting in the air" (T 1.4.2.20; SBN 196). So there seems to be a perfectly good sense of "cause" on which gravity, and dispositional beliefs modelled after gravity, can be a cause.

28 For the original statement of the puzzle, see Price, *Belief*, 172–73. It has also been endorsed by Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 70–71. Cf. Kamooneh, "Hume's Beliefs," 54.

29 Because these passages were added to later editions and originally appeared in the *Appendix* to the *Treatise*, it may be thought that there is no problem of counterfeit belief. The spirit of Hume's remarks in the *Appendix*, however, indicates that he means these new passages to fit well with—and perhaps to adjust the language of—his original account of belief. For instance, Hume writes that "I cannot add any new arguments; tho' perhaps my reasoning on this whole question, concerning cause and effect, wou'd have been more convincing, had the following passages been inserted in the places, which I have mark'd for them. I have added a few illustrations on other points, where I thought it necessary" (*App.* 9; SBN 627). Moreover, Hume begins the *Appendix* by noting that "some of my expressions have not been so well chosen, as to guard against all mistakes in the readers; and 'tis chiefly to remedy this defect, I have subjoin'd the following appendix" (*App.* 1; SBN 623). These passages indicate, as I noted in the introduction, that Hume takes the main flaw in his theory of belief to be his way of expressing it, rather than the content of the theory itself. To the extent that the additional passages (including those pertaining to counterfeit belief) are intended to improve the expression of the theory, there is reason to expect them to be susceptible to being interpreted in a way that is consistent with that theory. This is so even if the modes of expression in the new passages seem to us as if they are better suited to describing a very different theory than the one Hume originally propounded; the task then is to see what features of the original account they might be intended to draw out.

30 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 70–71.

31 Kamooneh also makes this point against traditional occurrent state interpretations ("Hume's Beliefs," 52). I criticize Kamooneh's own alternative in note 35.

32 I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this way of framing the objection.

33 It is in this respect that Hume thinks that "the understanding corrects the appearance of the senses" as "like reflection on reflection on *general rules* keeps us from augmenting our belief upon every encrease of the force and vivacity of our ideas" (T 1.3.10.12; SBN 632). Hume also refers to this correction by way of analogy to the moral sense (T 3.1.1.16; SBN 582). On my interpretation, these corrections may pertain to the feelings that we have as a result of certain mental states ("momentary appearances," as he calls them at T 3.1.1.15; SBN 582), when we have reflected on their origins.

34 In this respect, poetical vivacity also differs from another kind of case discussed by Marušić, in which the phenomenological properties of beliefs cause certain effects so commonly that we tend to confuse the effects with the phenomenological properties that cause them (Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 177–78). These cases differ in that the "feeling" Hume describes in the case of poetical vivacity is itself among the effects of a lively idea and our observation of it, rather than an aspect of that idea's liveliness.

35 A version of this objection can also be made to Everson's "functional" and Kamooneh's "dual aspect" interpretations of Hume's beliefs. On Kamooneh's interpretation, "'a belief is both a mental state with a discernible felt quality and a dispositional state which actually or potentially stirs the passions and causes behavior" ("Hume's Beliefs," 54). Kamooneh acknowledges that belief and counterfeit belief are alike in the "phenomenal intensity" of their vivacity, and so attributes the difference between them to a difference in the causal or dispositional aspects of their vivacity (52). He cites T 1.3.10.10 (SBN 630–31) for the claim that "[t]here is something *weak* and imperfect amidst all that seeming vehemence of thought and sentiment which attends the fictions of poetry'" and comments that "'[w]eak' here has to be understood as having few causal powers and being unable to 'excite our passions'" (49), that is, as referring to the dispositional effect of vivacity. The problem with this interpretation is that two sentences after this remark, Hume cashes out the weakness of poetical vivacity in comparison with belief as a difference of "feeling" (T 1.3.10.11; SBN 631–32) and suggests that this difference in feeling results from observation and reflection, and so is consequent on whatever properties make a counterfeit belief fail to count as a belief. Thus whether this feeling is a phenomenological or a dispositional one is irrelevant to the question of whether the state whose observation results in this feature is itself an occurrent state or a disposition. I also endorse Marušić's worries that Kamooneh's interpretation does not do enough to explain the connection between the two aspects of belief that it identifies (Marušić, "Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief"? 171–72). On Everson's interpretation, in contrast, "force" and "vivacity" are "functional" terms, in that "[o]ne 'perception' has greater force or vivacity than another if it is such as to produce a stronger effect on the mind" ("Feeling and Thinking," 406). But even if the ideas of poetical enthusiasm do differ from beliefs in their functional properties, an account that makes this difference the basis for their failure to qualify as beliefs does not do justice to Hume's more sophisticated explanation of the basis for this difference in functional properties in terms of our observation of some fact—the accidental nature—about the ideas of poetical vivacity and their origin.

36 Marušić quotes this part of Hume's definition, but does not assign any particular significance to it. For instance, she begins her paper by noting that "Hume defines 'belief' as 'a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression' (*Treatise* 1.3.7.5)" and comments that "[t]his definition suggests that believing is an occurrent mental state, such as judging, or thinking about something in a particular manner" ("Does Hume Hold a Dispositional Account of Belief?" 151). Marušić does not appeal to this part of the definition later in her paper.

37 I do not take my interpretation to depend on a particular way of understanding this necessity and determination, just on the claim that Hume's argument proceeds by drawing an analogy between this necessity and that experienced in conceiving of relations of ideas. My point is simply one about Hume's procedure in the passage.

38 For an alternative way of understanding these "manners" of conception, see Broackes, "Hume, Belief, and Personal Identity," 181.

39 I am grateful to two anonymous reviewers for calling my attention to this interesting case.

40 It also raises difficult questions about memory that I do not pursue here.

41 Cf. T 1.3.9.17: "[W]e must not be contented with saying, that the vividness of the idea produces the belief: We must maintain that they are individually the same" (SBN 116).

42 Some resources for constructing a unified account might be found Hume's talk of "belief" as opposed to "a belief." While Hume's use of this vocabulary is hard to systematize, he does seem to use "belief" for the general phenomenon and "a belief" for particular instances of it, including ideas that are beliefs. The phenomenon may well be more general than the topic of Hume's official definition of "a belief" in T 1.3.7.5 (SBN 96), though it includes such ideas (cf. T 1.3.7.6; SBN 97). If the general phenomenon is associated with *vivacious impressions*, it may also be possible to allow that believed impressions are beliefs because they too are associated with vivacious impressions: themselves.

43 The state of "madness" receives less discussion than that of poetical enthusiasm. It is first mentioned at T 1.3.10.9 (SBN 123), where Hume remarks that "[n]or will it be amiss to remark, that as a lively imagination very often degenerates into madness or folly, and bears it a great resemblance in its operations; so they influence the judgment after the same manner, and produce belief from the very same principles." (As the editors of the *Oxford Philosophical Texts* edition observe, "they" refers to "the operations of the imagination" mentioned at the end of the previous clause [459].) Hume's point is that because the operations of a lively imagination resemble madness and folly, they can also influence the judgment in a way that is in some respects similar to the way in which madness and folly operate. In the standard case, these influences of a lively imagination of course include belief and its usual effects, but in non-standard cases emphasized in this paragraph, they may include a variety of other special effects. The point is that all of these effects can be produced by an increase in vivacity. Hume's strategy is to help his reader appreciate the effects of an increase in vivacity in general by examining the effects of an increase in vivacity in special cases like this one, where these effects are much more obvious. Whether or not Hume intends to count these special effects as genuine beliefs is not the main focus of the passage, which is concerned to explore what these effects are like. Hume's position on madness does become somewhat clearer in the passages added in the *Appendix*, where he seems to assimilate his account of madness to poetical vivacity. He writes that "this is common both to poetry and madness, that the vivacity they bestow on the ideas is not deriv'd from the particular situations or connexions of the objects of those ideas, but from the present temper and disposition of the person. But how great soever the pitch may be, to which this vivacity rises, 'tis evident, that in poetry it never has the same *feeling*" (T 1.3.10.10; SBN 630). At least here, Hume seems willing to treat madness as somewhat similar to poetry, but does not develop the point at great enough length to attribute a firm position to him.

44 For details on the dispositions, see the end of this section.

45 The point, then, is not that the ideas involved in poetical enthusiasm lack causes, but that these causes are inappropriate ones.

46 Whether we can be *mistaken* about whether we are believing will depend in part on how usual this kind of reflection is; if it always requires us to make use of "general rules" of the kind Hume sketches, it may not be especially common, but if it is just the ordinary reflection we engage in when reading poetry and conceiving ourselves as readers relating to the text, it may be quite the norm. If so, occasions on which we are so deceived will be rare, even if they are possible.

47 I thus take Hume's discussion of education and his discussion of the more standard cases to be applications of a single strategy, first suggested by the formulation of the official definition, but then deployed and developed in different ways in different contexts.

48 The fact that an appropriate relation produces some false beliefs does not make it fail to count as an appropriate relation. An appropriate relation is just one that is suited for producing belief, not one that produces only justified beliefs. As Loeb has noted, sometimes "Hume moves, without further argument, from the claim that causal inference produces belief to the claim that it produces justified belief" (*Stability and Justification*, 77). The way to reconcile this claim with Hume's discussion of education is, as Loeb has noted, to say that "where Hume seeks to establish that a belief is not justified, all things considered, he will need to provide a separate or additional argument, beyond an argument for its status as the product of a belief-forming mechanism" (77). Although this point is made in the context of Loeb's dispositional interpretation, it also fits well with my own: ideas inculcated by education share with beliefs formed by causal inference an appropriate process of formation, and so count as beliefs, and yet enough is suspect about certain beliefs inculcated by education that not all of them will count as justified, as Hume points out at T 1.3.9.19 (SBN 117).

49 Nonetheless, it is certainly surprising to see Hume apparently dropping the requirement that the appropriate causal history for belief must involve a "present impression" (T 1.3.7.5; SBN 96). One possible explanation is that Hume recognizes that education is an "artificial and not a natural cause" (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117), and so one that requires a parallel but not an identical account to the natural case. On this interpretation, we may take the official definition of belief to describe the appropriate relation that holds in the natural case, and then see Hume as taking this official definition to specify a *strategy* for investigating the artificial cases—one that includes looking for what appropriate relations they involve and their similarity to the standard case. Hume himself ends with the remark that education is "built *almost* on the same foundation of custom and repetition as our experience or reasonings from causes and effects" (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117; emphasis added).

50 I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for raising this objection.

51 I am grateful to two anonymous reviewers for drawing my attention to this worry.

52 I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

53 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 73.

54 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 65.

55 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 63.

56 Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 65 and 73.

57 I only mean to argue here that if Loeb is right that Hume thinks that a certain necessary condition for belief is, other things being equal, sufficient for justified belief, then my interpretation can make the same move. Whether Hume himself actually goes this far is beyond the scope of this paper. Whether he *ought* to do so depends in part on whether an adequate account can be given of the "other things being equal" clause. Loeb himself prefers a view on which "[t]he "other things being equal" qualification is . . . cashed out substantively, with reference to conditions in which states are infixed but nevertheless unsteady in their influence due to the *operation of other mechanisms*" (Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 80, emphasis added). My view may likewise read Hume as working to identify the features of the causal history of a belief that are sufficient to show that it is a justified belief, other things being equal, and then as working out what else may interfere with this. An appropriate causal history may be one that has a certain order and regularity; these are common to the histories of beliefs based on causal inference and beliefs deriving from education. But while education and causal inference are similar, they are not the same; education is "built *almost* on the same foundation of custom and repetition as our experience or reasonings from causes and effects" (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117; emphasis added). Thus we may say that the features that are common to education and causal reasoning are sufficient for justified belief, other things being equal, but not for justified belief, *all things considered*. A further argument can then be provided that a specific belief (for example, one acquired through education) is not justified even when its history has these features (for such arguments, cf. Loeb, *Stability and Justification*, 78ff; cf. note 48). Hume provides such an argument when he notes that education's "maxims are frequently contrary to reason, and even to themselves" (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117) and casts doubt on the all things considered appropriateness of the history that produces such maxims, observing that education "is a merely artificial and not a natural cause" (T 1.3.9.19; SBN 117).

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