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Chapter 1 : Robert Sugden, David Hume's Treatise of Human Nature - PhilPapers

A Treatise of the Philosophy of the Human Mind V1: Being the Lectures of the Late Thomas Brown by Thomas Ph.D. Brown (Author), Levi Hedge (Editor).

His first book, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, was published in when he was only Not one review was written about that book for years after it came out. Eventually one short review of it was published several years later in an obscure philosophical journal, written by a philosopher no one had ever heard of. That was the one published review of the *Treatise*. Only a few decades ago it was somehow discovered that Hume himself wrote that review and submitted it to the journal under an assumed name. Because that book had been such a failure at gaining any readers, Hume decided to recast the whole of it into a much shorter and more palatable book, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, published ten years later in when he was 37 years old. Hume apparently believed that people would find that idea so unpalatable that it would be best if he just left it where it was, in the *Treatise*. Cause and effect The idea that events are caused, i. We believe that events do not "just happen," but that some set of causes has brought each event about. We believe that even if we do not know what the causes are for a given event, still some cause or causes must have brought this event into being. Every time we ask "Why? This belief is one of the absolutely essential fundamental underpinnings of our entire worldview. So fundamental is this belief that if it were to be somehow undermined, much of our entire worldview could suddenly become highly doubtful. When we say that one event causes another - for example, flipping the light switch causes the light to go on - we are, according to Hume, claiming that there is some "necessary connection" between flipping the light switch and the light going on. When we say that event A "causes" event B, we are saying that event A and event B are not just accidentally occurring next to each other in time, but that the two events are connected with each other in some necessary way. I would probably not say that one event caused the other. I am more likely to say that the two events - first scratching my ear and then immediately afterwards a bird hitting the window - just happened to be immediately contiguous with each other. We would likely say that those two events are simply contiguous events, not necessarily connected or causally connected events. What Hume wants us to consider here is where our idea of cause and effect comes from. So Hume asks us to look very closely at our experience to see if we truly do experience causing going on. Perhaps a story can help us here, a story that is true as best as I remember it and is in any case highly illustrative. Thirty-five or forty years ago there was a major power failure in New York City and all the lights in the entire city went out. It happened late on an autumn afternoon just about dusk, and the power failure lasted for many hours. Exactly nine months later all the local hospitals were literally overwhelmed with OB admissions. On the afternoon in question, a little four year old boy was playing out in his front yard. On this particular afternoon, the boy was testing his limits by venturing out toward the telephone pole at the far edge of the front yard. His mother had always told him to never go near the telephone pole perhaps it was so that he would not go outside the yard. But what he had always heard his mother say was "Never touch the telephone pole," so of course he never had. But on this particular afternoon his mother was not watching him quite as closely as she normally did, and he was slowly sneaking over toward the pole to see if maybe he could get away with touching the forbidden pole. He finally noticed a moment when his mother was not watching and he went over and touched the pole. And at that instant all the lights in New York City went out. The boy then "knew," of course, why his mother had told him to never touch the pole. Touching the pole had obviously caused all the lights in the city to go out. As much as his parents consoled him later, and as much as they assured him that his touching the pole had not caused all the lights to go out, still he "knew" and believed that his touching the pole had caused all the lights go out. Now this association of two events touching the pole and all the lights going out is actually much like every other case in which we associate two events and believe that one caused the other. What Hume would want us to do, however, is to closely examine whether we just theorize and then believe that event A caused event B like the little boy did, or whether we actually

experience event A causing event B. All we ever experience is that first one event occurs touching the pole and then immediately following it another event occurs the lights go out. We never experience the first event actually doing the causing. We never experience the "necessary connection" between the two events. Instead, no matter how many times the two events occur contiguously with each other, we still never directly experience any actual causing. All we actually ever experience is events that are "regularly contiguous" with each other. Even though we may want to believe that one event makes another event happen, still we never experience the making going on between the first event and the second. Now suppose we extend our story just a bit further: He is distressed by this memory for years, and eventually has to go into therapy for it. His therapist works with him for years, all to no avail. Finally the therapist tells the young man that he will never get over this guilt and anxiety until he again goes out to that same telephone pole and physically touches it one more time. Then he will see that touching the pole does not cause the lights to go out. So he and the therapist go out to the old neighborhood, find the exact same telephone pole, and with much fear and trembling the young man slowly walks toward the pole. When he finally gets close to it, with much anxiety he slowly reaches out touches the pole. And again all the lights in New York City go out. So now the boy is absolutely convinced that touching the pole makes the lights go out, and again he is overcome with anxiety and guilt. We can only guess what becomes of him in the rest of his life, but we can be sure that he never lets go of his belief that touching the pole caused the lights to go out, no matter what rational people tell him. Hume believes that we are all the same way. We continue to go on believing in the existence of cause and effect even though no one has ever experienced causing happening, and even though rational people like Hume, Kant, Schopenhauer, etc continue to show us that the whole idea of cause and effect is merely a theoretical construct made up in human minds. It has, these Philosophers assure us, absolutely no basis in experience. The arguments which provide the foundation for this position are spelled out very clearly in his Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, and are readily accessible to anyone interested in reading them. But if Hume is correct in this assessment of the idea of cause and effect, this is significant indeed. Many of the sciences, for example, which have seen their primary work as "the search for causes," would find themselves in need of re-definition if Hume is correct. Self What is a self, an identity, a mind, and where does the idea of such a thing even come from? Locke believed in the existence of minds, and so did Berkeley. Now Hume is going to wonder what a mind, or self, is. The ancients had raised the question in the following way: In ancient Greece there was a famous ship tied up in the harbor so that people could come see it and could bring their children to walk on its decks much like today people want to walk on the USS Missouri, or on the ship on which their father fought in WWII, etc. This ship was famous because it had fought in an important battle. Over the years, however, as the ship aged, its rigging had to be replaced, and then its masts had to be replaced. There was nothing left from the original ship. And yet during all those years and afterwards the sign on the dock still said "This is the ship that fought in the famous battle," and all the parents still brought their children and told them "This is the ship that fought in the famous battle. Is it actually the same ship or not? Are the parents telling their children the truth or not? If there is not one molecule of material from the original ship remaining because everything has been slowly replaced, should the sign in front of it still say "This is the famous ship," or should it say "This is a replica of the famous ship? If you say that it is the same ship even though all the physical materials have been replaced, then the question becomes: What is it that has persisted throughout all the physical changes? And that is a bit like the question of self, or mind, or identity. In actuality, of course, all the molecules in our bodies are changing all the time. Biologists tell us that all the molecules in our bodies are completely replaced every seven years. So are we the same "self" that we were seven years ago? When we say "I remember when I was nine years old," we are expressing the belief that we are essentially the same self that we were at age nine. We have changed a lot, and have had many new experiences, but we are still essentially the same person. I have the same parents that that nine-year-old had, have some of the same history that that nine-year-old had, etc. We believe we are the same person, but the question then becomes what is the self or mind or soul that has persisted through all the physical changes?

Hume again asks whether this concept of self or mind is a purely theoretical construct which has no basis in actual reality, or if it is an idea based on experience. Hume believes that ideas not based on experience are pure fluff, have no basis in reality, and ought to be thrown out. So is the idea of self based on experience or not? There are some philosophers. For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception. A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk I, part vi Hume says that since we never have any experience of self, there is no justification for claiming that there is any such thing. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and in a perpetual flux and movement They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place, where these scenes are represented. All we are our sensations and perceptions, says Hume. You will recall that Locke believed in four different kinds of existents things, perceptions, minds, and God and that Berkeley believed in two different kinds of existents perceptions and minds, God being an infinite mind. Hume believes in only one kind of existent, namely perceptions. We usually think of perceptions as existing somehow "inside" minds, much like furniture exists inside a living room or beans exist inside a jar. But Hume says that what we have done here is just made up the concept of a mind, or self, so that we would have something for our sensations and perceptions to exist in. But perhaps a self, or mind, is actually much more like a galaxy than like a living room. A galaxy, as you know, is not a thing inside of which there are stars, planets and other bodies. It is the swirling stars and bodies alone which make up the galaxy. Without the stars and bodies there would be no galaxy.

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2 X The British Isles, Scotland, 2 X Southern Italy, The World, Europe, England & Wales, 2 X Northern Italy, France, West India Islands, Asia Minor, Switzerland.

In that work he argues for the view that we should interpret scripture solely on its own terms by carefully studying it, not with any concepts or doctrines that cannot themselves be derived from the text. If we do this, he thought, it would turn out that many things we believe or are told by religious authorities about God and the universe could be shown to be false. He starts off by saying: Thus the things whose characteristics a man knows must have come from some prior source. So, if man has the idea of God, then God must exist before this thought, because man cannot create an idea of his own imagination [3]. Therefore, God is just the sum of all the substances of the universe [6]. God is the only substance in the universe, and everything is a part of God. Political philosophy[edit] *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* was published anonymously. Now since we have the rare good fortune to live in a commonwealth where freedom of judgment is fully granted to the individual citizen and he may worship God as he pleases, and where nothing is esteemed dearer and more precious than freedom, I think I am undertaking no ungrateful or unprofitable task in demonstrating that not only can this freedom be granted without endangering piety and the peace of the commonwealth, but also the peace of the commonwealth and piety depend on this freedom. Yet both theories differ in their conclusions. This right includes everything that he desires and he is able to obtain. As a result, my own natural right is the equivalent of my individual strength or power. Moreover, according to Spinoza the notions of right and wrong have no meaning before society, since in the natural state there are no common norms, only individual desires which can bring some people to dominate other weaker people. How can civil society exist if people are only dominated by their own impulse to live? First, through the action of affections, the same ones that are described in the *Ethics*. In a similar fashion, human needs will also play a role: Society brings me protection and security. We see hence that Spinoza, while incorporating in his work Hobbesian arguments the argument of fear, develops a distinct analysis that will bring him to different conclusions: Here individuals never entirely renounce their individual right of nature. If in the *Theologico-Political Treatise* Spinoza refers to the notion of a pact that would be at the root of civil society, this notion disappears in the *Political Treatise*. People are not brought to form a society by their free will, but rather by their affections, or domination a great number of individuals gathered through the authority of an unusually strong or charismatic man could also be a way to explain the birth of civil society. They are not passive subjects under the power of an absolute sovereign, but rather citizens that bring their own strength to the State. These affirmations have some political implications. Here, individual rights exist only because we, as individuals, benefit from the power of our entire group. Individual or subjective rights do not exist outside of a state, out of an organised society. To understand that well, we have to remember that according to Spinoza the government or society there is no difference between them are nothing else and do not exist without the individual conatuses of the individuals that are gathered in social entities. Individuals hold a part of their natural right in the civil state. They cannot restrain themselves from judging about the state of things as they wish, and any action that would go against this tendency can induce social unrest. It follows that the state must restrain itself from any action that could jeopardise its own integrity, as condemning determinate opinions can. Thus, we can distinguish Hobbes and Spinoza through the way they see the normal operation of the state. For Hobbes, the object of the state is to preserve peace through security and fear if needed. According to Spinoza, that kind of peace would not be a true peace but only the absence of unrest. True peace implies a state of things where individuals can accomplish and realise their potentialities, where there is a minimum peace of mind. This is why Spinoza favors states that are organised so that citizens can participate in the elaboration of laws, as a way to improve their quality, and in the operation of the state. The vocabulary of Spinoza shows a modification of the way philosophers see politics compared to the Antiquity. Spinoza goes beyond this way of seeing things. There is

not a better government in this sense: According to him, one should rather aim to design better institutions: For example, in Monarchy there should be an official Council of the king, whose members are chosen formally, and whose opinions form a set of possible decisions for the king. This system makes public and transparent through a formal process a matter of fact, the existence of a circle of advisers around the king. He says the following: The first thing that constitutes the actual being of a human Mind is nothing but the idea of a singular thing which actually exists. E2P11 [note 1] [16] He then argues that it follows that "the human Mind is a part of the infinite intellect of God. Jonathan Bennett claims that "Spinoza mainly saw emotions as caused by cognitions. He tells us in the Preface: The Affects, therefore, of hate, anger, envy, etc. And therefore they acknowledge certain causes, through which they are understood, and have certain properties, as worthy of our knowledge as the properties of any other thing, by the mere contemplation of which we are pleased. He certainly claims that there is a kind of freedom, namely, that which is arrived at through adequate knowledge of God, or, what is the same: But in the last two propositions of Part Two of The Ethics, P48 and P49, he explicitly rejects the traditional notion of free will. In E2P48, he claims: In the Mind there is no absolute, or free, will, but the Mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another, and this again by another, and so to infinity. With that being the case, human freedom of a kind which would extricate us from the order of physical causes is impossible. However, Spinoza argues, we still ought to strive to understand the world around us, and in doing so, gain a greater degree of power, which will allow us to be more active than passive, and there is a sense in which this is a kind of freedom. Early in The Ethics Spinoza argues that there is only one substance, which is absolutely infinite, self-caused, and eternal. He calls this substance "God", or "Nature". In fact, he takes these two terms to be synonymous in the Latin the phrase he uses is "Deus sive Natura". By substance I understand what is in itself and is conceived through itself, i. E1D3 [16] This means, essentially, that substance is just whatever can be thought of without relating it to any other idea or thing. For example, if one thinks of a particular object, one thinks of it as a kind of thing, e. Attributes[edit] Spinoza defines "attribute" as follows: By attribute I understand what the intellect perceives of a substance, as constituting its essence. E1D4 [16] From this it can be seen that attributes are related to substance in some way. Spinoza thinks that there are an infinite number of attributes, but there are two attributes for which Spinoza thinks we can have knowledge. Namely, thought and extension. When we understand a particular thing in the universe through the attribute of thought, we are understanding the mode as an idea of something either another idea, or an object. Extension[edit] The attribute of extension is how substance can be understood to be physically extended in space. Particular things which have breadth and depth that is, occupy space are what is meant by extended. Modes[edit] Modes are particular modifications of substance, i. Spinoza gives the following definition: By mode I understand the affections of a substance, or that which is in another through which it is also conceived. E1D5 [16] Substance monism[edit] The argument for there only being one substance in the universe occurs in the first fourteen propositions of The Ethics. Except God, no substance can be or be conceived. E1P14 [16] Spinoza takes this proposition to follow directly from everything he says prior to it. It allows Spinoza to avoid the problem of interaction between mind and body, which troubled Descartes in his Meditations on First Philosophy. This can be seen directly from Axiom 3 of The Ethics: From a given determinate cause the effect follows necessarily; and conversely, if there is no determinate cause, it is impossible for an effect to follow. I pass, finally, to the remaining Part of the Ethics, which concerns the means or way, leading to Freedom. Here, then, I shall treat of the power of reason, showing what it can do against the affects, and what Freedom of Mind, or blessedness, is. This constitutes a rejection of teleological, or final causation, except possibly in a more restricted sense for human beings. He expresses this proposition as follows: The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. E2P7 [16] His proof of this proposition is that: The knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of its cause. E1A4 [16] The reason Spinoza thinks the parallelism follows from this axiom is that since the idea we have of each thing requires knowledge of its cause, this cause must be understood under the same attribute. Further, there is only one substance, so whenever we understand some

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chain of ideas of things, we understand that the way the ideas are causally related must be the same as the way the things themselves are related, since the ideas and the things are the same modes understood under different attributes. That is, unlike the empiricists who rejected knowledge of things as they are in themselves in favour of knowledge merely of what appears to the senses, to think we can have a priori knowledge, knowledge of a world external from our sense perceptions, and, further, that this is tantamount to knowledge of God. Every idea that in us is absolute, or adequate and perfect, is true. E2P34 [16] Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge which inadequate, or mutilated and confused, ideas involve. This may be explained in the following way. Spinoza argues that "All ideas, insofar as they are related to God, are true. E2P32 [16] On the other hand, Spinoza argues: And so there are no inadequate or confused ideas except insofar as they are related to the singular Mind of someone. This is the source of falsehood. Three kinds of knowledge[edit] Spinoza discusses the three kinds of knowledge in E2P40s2. The third kind of knowledge[edit] This can be referred to as Intuition, but it means something rather technical for Spinoza. And this kind of knowing proceeds from an adequate idea of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things. This is evident from the following claim: As far as good and evil are concerned, they also indicate nothing positive in things, considered in themselves, nor are they anything other than modes of thinking, or notions we form because we compare things to one another. E4, Preface [16] It is also apparent from this that he is a kind of subjectivist about moral values.

Chapter 3 : lecture: introduction to David Hume

A treatise on the philosophy of the human mind: being the lectures , Volume 1 Item Preview.

In modern times, we can broadly identify the "moral" explanations with religion, political ideology, ethics, aesthetics, and so on, or in most general terms the judgement of values, of preferences -- good versus bad, right versus wrong, better versus worse, and so on. The "natural" explanations, in contrast, are more clearly identified with the hard sciences, focusing on the material facts of the physical Universe -- where we may have preferences in our considerations, but the facts remain the same no matter what our values are. A storm is caused by an angry god; or maybe the storm is an angry god. Primitives typically had a solid grasp of the actual facts of events themselves, they had to in order to survive, but their explanations of them were essentially aesthetic: That made a certain sense, such explanations being simple and easy to understand, with an event being part of a script of the gods, and humans playing out roles in that script. With the emergence of modern science, a line between the two domains began to be drawn, with the sciences performing observations of the Universe to determine its laws, its underlying mechanisms. Scholars finally understood that, when it comes to physical facts, a comfortable story was amusing but of no practical use, incapable of advancing our understanding of physical realities beyond what we knew to begin with. Could the empirical approach of Newton and the other early scientists be applied to moral subjects? However, while Hume demonstrated that the experimental method could be applied to both moral and material thinking, in doing so he demonstrated that there was still a dividing line between the two that was problematic to cross in either direction. In an essay titled "My Own Life" penned near the end of his days, he spoke of his ancestry with evident pride: I was of a good family, both by father and mother: David was one of three children; the eldest was his brother John, and he had an elder sister, also named Katherine like her mother. The elder Katherine never remarried, instead focusing on raising her children and running the family estate, David remembering her with affection and respect as "a woman of Singular merit" in his later life. He grew up in affluence if not luxury, the "manor" of the estate being much more a large farmhouse than a palace. The family also owned a flat in Edinburgh, about 64 kilometers 40 miles away. David Hume was seen as bright from his youth -- his mother judging him "uncommonly wake-minded", meaning he was sharp, this remark being misinterpreted by some as saying he was "weak-minded" -- and when his brother John went to Edinburgh University, David followed him, it seems from records in early -- the usual entrance age was 14, but David was only about There was an expectation that David would go into law, that being a tradition for the Home family, but that was not to be. As David put it: My studious disposition, my sobriety, and my industry, gave my family a notion that the law was a proper profession for me; but I found an insurmountable aversion to every thing but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning; and while they fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was secretly devouring. END QUOTE David was still diligent in his studies of law; in his later life he would draw up legal documents for friends, and a strong sense of legal argument would underlie his writings. I found that the moral philosophy transmitted to us by antiquity laboured under the same inconvenience that has been found in their natural philosophy, of being entirely hypothetical, and depending more upon invention than experience: This, therefore, I resolved to make my study, and the source from which I would derive every truth in criticism as well as morality. I believe it is a certain fact, that most of the philosophers who have gone before us, have been overthrown by the greatness of their genius, and that little is required to make a man succeed in this study, than to throw off all prejudices either for his own or for those of others. The destruction of the family flat by fire in was possibly a factor in the end of his formal education, the Humes then finding new lodgings in Edinburgh. Thinking that he needed to get out of his intellectual cloister, in he took a job for a few months as a clerk with a Bristol sugar merchant. He wrote very simply that he found "that scene totally unsuitable to me", curing him forever of any desire to be a tradesman -- though it appears he found his employer disagreeable, so focused on making money as to be not merely indifferent to but

contemptuous of any other questions in the world. Despite his distaste for commerce, there was nothing lazy about David Hume; as his far-ranging output of writings would prove, he was both energetic and ambitious. To make a start in publication Hume then moved to France, ultimately settling down in La Fleche, a little village in Anjou province noted for its Jesuit college. There he could live cheaply -- he survived on a stipend from the Ninewells estate, estimated to be about 50 pounds sterling a year, just enough to scrape by on -- while he devoured French philosophy, had occasional intellectual sparring matches with the Jesuits, and struggled to put his ideas on paper. Incidentally, after Hume departed Scotland to work in England, one Agnes Galbraith went to the ecclesiastic authorities to complain that David Hume had got her pregnant and then skipped the country. The authorities questioned Galbraith at length; she was well-known to them as lacking in morals and truthfulness, and she ended up being disciplined without the Hume family being bothered about the matter. Although London was a hotbed of philosophical discourse at that time, he still worried about getting published and the reception his work might face -- "castrating" his manuscript of controversial elements to avoid the censure of Bishop Joseph Butler, then a prominent figure in philosophical circles. Hume was, as was his inclination, understated when he said the TREATISE "fell still-born from the press" -- it would be possibly more accurate to say it was murdered, such critical reception as it attracted being overwhelmingly negative. A tale went around that one critic savaged Hume so badly that he, Hume, looked up the critic and threatened him with a sword. The story is implausible: Hume was far more cheerful than not, having his fits of spleen but never inclined to violence; more significantly, at the time of the reported incident, he had retreated to Ninewells to mend his wounds and work on his next project. The TREATISE was certainly no best-seller but John Noon, his publisher, who was apparently perfectly happy with small printings as long as they paid for themselves, had no problems dealing with Hume later. His references to mathematical thinking, his "system of space and time", were a fiasco; later he would attempt to publish an essay in such a style, but the publisher rejected it after a mathematician explained it was full of holes, and Hume never tried anything like it again. That was somewhat to be expected, since his arguments were to a degree radical, and certainly contrary to the conventional wisdom, breeding antagonism. His only way to approach these questions was effectively behavioral; after all, what else was the question of philosophy, of what we think and believe, all about? In terms of things that might be judged true or not, Hume divided them into "matters of relation" and matters of observable fact of the physical Universe. By "matters of relation", he simply meant a propositional system such as math, with defined concepts and rules. In such cases, it was possible to obtain absolute proofs -- if not always so, since a propositional system can run itself into contradictions and blind alleys. As far as matters of observable fact, Hume took the obvious "empiricist" point of view, in that we could only know about matters of observable fact by, duh, what we can reliably observe of them -- "reliable" in the sense that any honest and competent skeptic can make the same observations and get the same results. We can think that anything might exist, or think that it might not; the only way to know if it does or not is to go check. No matter how insistent people are in thinking that something does or does not exist, no matter what supposedly logical arguments they make to support their beliefs to that effect, they can only honestly know the existence of something by seeing if it really does exist. Logical arguments about what exists can be no more valid than their premises as obtained by observation, and their conformance of their results to observations. The premises may not be relevant or correct, and cannot be known to be entirely or even substantially complete. Any perceived mathematical precision of such arguments is irrelevant, since it only reflects the consistency of the arguments to their own premises. We can prove anything is true in theory by the proper selection of assumptions; whether it is true in the material world can only be determined from the evidence. Impressions were direct perceptions of the external world, along with the drives and emotions that exist in our internal mental world. Ideas were ultimately derived from impressions, abstractions of them -- for example, the idea of pain is not the same thing as pain itself. We may remember an injury that caused us great pain, we may remember the particular qualities of the pain, but thankfully we do not honestly experience the agony again. Having obtained a set of ideas based on impressions, then we can use those ideas as "building blocks"

to generate new ideas: We can alter the properties of an idea. We can combine different ideas. Chimeras like mermaids are common in mythology, while inventions and recipes can be devised by taking familiar ideas and putting them together in various new ways. There are two limits to the process of imagination. The first is obvious, though there are still some who have problems with it: The second is less so: Blind people cannot visualize color, deaf people have no concept of music, the ideas are meaningless to them. Any attempt to describe something completely outside our experience is an exercise in empty rhetoric; we cannot provide a useful description of it, and nobody who listens to such a description will be any the wiser for it. Along with the modification of ideas by imagination, we also can establish relationships between them. We see resemblances, for example between a worm and a snake; proximity, for example knowing that we will be able to find both a hammer and a saw in a hardware store; and, last but not least, cause and effect, causality. Causality is fundamental to human thinking: What we actually see as cause and effect is the interaction of two objects that, by all observation, are otherwise independent. We have no way of knowing what this interaction is without experience of it; we just observe the interaction repeatedly, and then infer a cause and effect relationship from it, constructing a theoretical model to describe it. The bottom line is that our comprehension of the world around us is not at root based on reasoning, but on observation, and in no way does the process of observation and modeling provide absolute proof of a causal relationship. In our observations, we have no ability to check every instance of the interaction that ever happened; we have no way to know if the interaction will work in the future. We do use reasoning in the construction and interpretation of our models of the real world, but again they can only be as valid as their assumptions, and are only as useful as they are verified to be by observation. It is still asserted that Hume was denying causality and induction, but he would have laughed in response. Can we prove the Sun will come up tomorrow morning? No, but so what? We assume it does so anyway, and we need make no defense of that belief. Hume then analyzed the notion of "belief". He tried to define it, but admitted that we all know what it means: A declaration of belief provides no factual information at all, except that somebody believes something. Yes, we might have rational reasons to believe something, but people also tend to believe what is convenient. Hume astutely pointed out that people have a particular inclination to ignore the factual and believe the sensationalistic, because of the emotional charge they get out of it. Yes, we may do things for rational reasons, but then only because we prize our rationality. Others may simply not care. His scheme of morals was entirely secular. While we certainly do perform rational analyses of moral actions using basic principles, as Hume had it those basic principles were largely derived from human feeling and custom, and any analysis based on them could not be assured to come to an answer predictable by any rigorous logic. The basis for this assertion was that, as established in Book II, humans were motivated to action, not by reasoning, but by emotion, "sentiment". That can imply no contradiction with reasoning, since reasoning cannot provide us with a particular basis for doing anything. The facts cannot tell us what we want, they simply inform us of the options. We may want things that are entirely unrealistic, and settle for what meager approximation we can get of it. Is there a law of nature that shows murder is wrong? There are things we admire about people; there are things we despise. We each have our feelings of what is right and what is wrong; by an "intercourse of sentiments", we establish a common moral custom. Morality is also supported by a positive aspect, what Hume referred to as "sympathy" -- in that humans, as social animals, have an instinct to cooperate, however imperfectly that instinct may be balanced against self-interest in practice. Ultimately we also are, in effect, shareholders in our society, and properly wish to support the common good, like we wish to improve our households. Morality is also not just about the rights we owe to others; it is at least as importantly about the rights others owe to us, a balancing of our own rights and interests versus those of the collective, formalized in civil law and custom. The bindings of society are based on mutual cooperation; although Hume believed people could be honestly altruistic, he did not see that as a necessary basis for society. These essays were a varied lot, some of them so trivial that Hume threw them out in later publications -- but they brought him to public attention, beginning the establishment of his reputation as a leading European man of letters. They did much to raise his spirits in his philosophical endeavours. Hume worked hard at his writing, but

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having set out to become a scholar, he greatly wanted an academic position. When a chair of philosophy at the University of Edinburgh went vacant in 1751, Hume lobbied to fill it, but now his enemies came out of the woodwork, accusing him of being an atheist and "hyperskeptic" -- that is, skeptical of everything, all the time, what the scholarly of the time referred to as "Pyrrhonians". The first charge was more or less true, religious conformists caring little about distinctions between different grades of nonbelief, but the second was not.

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Chapter 4 : Baruch Spinoza (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

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Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: Reviewed by Gareth B. Thomas Aquinas has too often been focused on learning, by imitation, to speak his philosophical language. Many of those who have mastered the lingo then, quite understandably, disdain translation into the now current language of philosophy. One result of all this is that Thomistic insights are too often lost on the Thomistically illiterate. A second is that Thomistic claims are far less likely to be subjected to the scrutiny accorded the views of modern philosophers. His Aquinas, while not exactly our own contemporary, is nevertheless willing and able to translate his scholastic terminology into the present-day philosophical vernacular and to debate our contemporaries on their own terms. Questions of the First Part Prima pars of St. Thomas. Three of its four chapters concern the human mind. The last considers life after death, including questions about personal identity and the resurrection. They offer helpful scholarly and linguistic information, as well as insightful connections to philosophy before and after Aquinas, including interestingly relevant points from the philosophy of the last half of the 20th century. Thus, according to a standard reading of St. Thomas, the human soul is not a substance, but rather a subsisting thing. Denying that it is a substance signals that, without a body, it is only an incomplete thing, which will be made complete again at the resurrection. There follows an interesting discussion of subsistence and separability. Aquinas is here appealing to the familiar Aristotelian doctrine that a severed hand is only homonymously a hand. He points out that Aquinas himself distinguishes between being in the mind concretely and being in the mind intentionally 57 , which distinction seems to undermine the force of the argument. Thus even if being concretely F rules out being concretely G, it need not rule out being intentionally G. The mind is capable of x. The conclusion would then be that the mind is not material. Pasnau discusses, briefly, the support Leibniz tries to give this argument and then adds: But Chapter 4 comes as something of a surprise. Although, as Pasnau shows, Thomistic views on these questions develop naturally out of what is presented in Questions 75 and especially 76, neither abortion nor euthanasia is explicitly discussed anywhere in the Treatise on Human Nature. Pasnau has at least a partly political motive for including a full discussion of St. Thomas. He notes that interest in the philosophy of Aquinas is often directly connected with sympathy for the Roman Catholic Church. On the face of it, Aquinas seems to have made a grave philosophical mistake in burdening his discussion of human freedom by accepting the concept of the will. But Aristotle, like ancient philosophers more generally, seems not to have had the concept of the will. It is principally Augustine who introduced that concept into Western philosophy. Arguably Aristotle was better off in his attempt to give an account of free or voluntary action without having to say what a free will is, or would be. Either the free action of the will must somehow be thought to erupt into the world uncaused, a thought unfriendly to both science and morality, or else its freedom must somehow be considered compatible with its having been caused to act. Neither horn of this dilemma has been thought to be very welcome. And a generally acceptable escape route between the horns of this dilemma has proved elusive. But there are numerous qualifications and caveats. But Pasnau points out that Aquinas immediately adds: And, of course, there are many more topics of philosophical interest in his book than I have been able to cover. But perhaps I have said enough to make my general characterization of his book plausible. This book is one of the most philosophically engaging treatments of Aquinas to appear in recent years. Several of its characteristics make it especially engaging. First, it is written in the style of a current philosophy article, not in the style of a purely scholarly study. Second, it is studded with references to philosophy from all periods, including the last half of the 20th century. These assessments come, not just at the ends of chapters, but all along the way. Pasnau reveals himself to be a deeply informed and generally Aquinas-friendly expositor and critic. But he never pretends that something is clearer than he really thinks it

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is, or more defensible than he considers it to be. The reader soon gains confidence that the interpretations offered here will be informed by, not just a careful reading of QQ of the Prima pars, but also by a mature conception of the philosophy of St. More important, it is also a work that can be read with profit and enjoyment by anyone at all interested in the views of St. Thomas on the basic questions of philosophy.

Chapter 5 : [] The Life of Hume, to

Get this from a library! A treatise on the philosophy of the human mind: being the lectures of the late Thomas Brown. Vol. 1. [Thomas Brown; Levi Hedge] -- These lectures contain many new and original views of the phenomena of thought, and an improved classification of the various states of mind.

It is possible that Spinoza, as he made progress through his studies, was being groomed for a career as a rabbi. But he never made it into the upper levels of the curriculum, those which included advanced study of Talmud. And then, on July 27, 1656, Spinoza was issued the harshest writ of herem, ban or excommunication, ever pronounced by the Sephardic community of Amsterdam; it was never rescinded. No doubt he was giving utterance to just those ideas that would soon appear in his philosophical treatises. In those works, Spinoza denies the immortality of the soul; strongly rejects the notion of a transcendent, providential God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and claims that the Law was neither literally given by God nor any longer binding on Jews. To all appearances, Spinoza was content finally to have an excuse for departing from the community and leaving Judaism behind; his faith and religious commitment were, by this point, gone. Within a few years, he left Amsterdam altogether. By the time his extant correspondence begins, in 1663, he is living in Rijnsburg, not far from Leiden. While in Rijnsburg, he worked on the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, an essay on philosophical method, and the Short Treatise on God, Man and His Well-Being, an initial but aborted effort to lay out his metaphysical, epistemological and moral views. By this time, he was also working on what would eventually be called the Ethics, his philosophical masterpiece. When Spinoza died in 1677, in The Hague, he was still at work on his Political Treatise; this was soon published by his friends along with his other unpublished writings, including a Compendium to Hebrew Grammar. Ethics The Ethics is an ambitious and multifaceted work. It is also bold to the point of audacity, as one would expect of a systematic and unforgiving critique of the traditional philosophical conceptions of God, the human being and the universe, and, above all, of the religions and the theological and moral beliefs grounded thereupon. What Spinoza intends to demonstrate in the strongest sense of that word is the truth about God, nature and especially ourselves; and the highest principles of society, religion and the good life. Despite the great deal of metaphysics, physics, anthropology and psychology that take up Parts One through Three, Spinoza took the crucial message of the work to be ethical in nature. It consists in showing that our happiness and well-being lie not in a life enslaved to the passions and to the transitory goods we ordinarily pursue; nor in the related unreflective attachment to the superstitions that pass as religion, but rather in the life of reason. To clarify and support these broadly ethical conclusions, however, Spinoza must first demystify the universe and show it for what it really is. This requires laying out some metaphysical foundations, the project of Part One. From these, the first proposition necessarily follows, and every subsequent proposition can be demonstrated using only what precedes it. References to the Ethics will be by part *V*, proposition *p*, definition *d*, scholium *s* and corollary *c*. In propositions one through fifteen of Part One, Spinoza presents the basic elements of his picture of God. God is the infinite, necessarily existing that is, uncaused, unique substance of the universe. There is only one substance in the universe; it is God; and everything else that is, is in God. A substance is prior in nature to its affections. Two substances having different attributes have nothing in common with one another. In other words, if two substances differ in nature, then they have nothing in common. If things have nothing in common with one another, one of them cannot be the cause of the other. Two or more distinct things are distinguished from one another, either by a difference in the attributes [i]. In nature, there cannot be two or more substances of the same nature or attribute. One substance cannot be produced by another substance. It pertains to the nature of a substance to exist. Every substance is necessarily infinite. The more reality or being each thing has, the more attributes belong to it. Each attribute of a substance must be conceived through itself. God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists. But this, by proposition 7, is absurd. Therefore, God necessarily exists, *q*. No attribute of a

substance can be truly conceived from which it follows that the substance can be divided. A substance which is absolutely infinite is indivisible. Except God, no substance can be or be conceived. This proof that God is an infinite, necessary and uncaused, indivisible being is the only substance of the universe proceeds in three simple steps. First, establish that no two substances can share an attribute or essence Ip5. Then, prove that there is a substance with infinite attributes i. It follows, in conclusion, that the existence of that infinite substance precludes the existence of any other substance. For if there were to be a second substance, it would have to have some attribute or essence. But since God has all possible attributes, then the attribute to be possessed by this second substance would be one of the attributes already possessed by God. But it has already been established that no two substances can have the same attribute. Therefore, there can be, besides God, no such second substance. If God is the only substance, and by axiom 1 whatever is, is either a substance or in a substance, then everything else must be in God. As soon as this preliminary conclusion has been established, Spinoza immediately reveals the objective of his attack. But how far they wander from the true knowledge of God, is sufficiently established by what has already been demonstrated. Much of the technical language of Part One is, to all appearances, right out of Descartes. But even the most devoted Cartesian would have had a hard time understanding the full import of propositions one through fifteen. Spinoza was sensitive to the strangeness of this kind of talk, not to mention the philosophical problems to which it gives rise. When a person feels pain, does it follow that the pain is ultimately just a property of God, and thus that God feels pain? God is now described not so much as the underlying substance of all things, but as the universal, immanent and sustaining cause of all that exists: According to the traditional Judeo-Christian conception of divinity, God is a transcendent creator, a being who causes a world distinct from himself to come into being by creating it out of nothing. God produces that world by a spontaneous act of free will, and could just as easily have not created anything outside himself. The existence of the world is, thus, mathematically necessary. It is impossible that God should exist but not the world. This does not mean that God does not cause the world to come into being freely, since nothing outside of God constrains him to bring it into existence. But Spinoza does deny that God creates the world by some arbitrary and undetermined act of free will. God could not have done otherwise. There are no possible alternatives to the actual world, and absolutely no contingency or spontaneity within that world. Everything is absolutely and necessarily determined. In nature there is nothing contingent, but all things have been determined from the necessity of the divine nature to exist and produce an effect in a certain way. Things could have been produced by God in no other way, and in no other order than they have been produced. There are, however, differences in the way things depend on God. They include the most general laws of the universe, together governing all things in all ways. From the attribute of extension there follow the principles governing all extended objects the truths of geometry and laws governing the motion and rest of bodies the laws of physics ; from the attribute of thought, there follow laws of thought understood by commentators to be either the laws of logic or the laws of psychology. Particular and individual things are causally more remote from God. More precisely, they are finite modes. There are two causal orders or dimensions governing the production and actions of particular things. On the other hand, each particular thing is determined to act and to be acted upon by other particular things. Thus, the actual behavior of a body in motion is a function not just of the universal laws of motion, but also of the other bodies in motion and rest surrounding it and with which it comes into contact. It is an ambiguous phrase, since Spinoza could be read as trying either to divinize nature or to naturalize God. There are, Spinoza insists, two sides of Nature. First, there is the active, productive aspect of the universe God and his attributes, from which all else follows. Strictly speaking, this is identical with God. There is some debate in the literature about whether God is also to be identified with *Natura naturata*. Outside of Nature, there is nothing, and everything that exists is a part of Nature and is brought into being by Nature with a deterministic necessity. Because of the necessity inherent in Nature, there is no teleology in the universe. God or Nature does not act for any ends, and things do not exist for any set purposes. All the prejudices I here undertake to expose depend on this one: I, Appendix God is not some goal-oriented planner who then judges things by how well they conform to his

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purposes. Things happen only because of Nature and its laws. People] findâ€”both in themselves and outside themselvesâ€”many means that are very helpful in seeking their own advantage, e. And knowing that they had found these means, not provided them for themselves, they had reason to believe that there was someone else who had prepared those means for their use. For after they considered things as means, they could not believe that the things had made themselves; but from the means they were accustomed to prepare for themselves, they had to infer that there was a ruler, or a number of rulers of nature, endowed with human freedom, who had taken care of all things for them, and made all things for their use. And since they had never heard anything about the temperament of these rulers, they had to judge it from their own. Hence, they maintained that the Gods direct all things for the use of men in order to bind men to them and be held by men in the highest honor. So it has happened that each of them has thought up from his own temperament different ways of worshipping God, so that God might love them above all the rest, and direct the whole of Nature according to the needs of their blind desire and insatiable greed. Thus this prejudice was changed into superstition, and struck deep roots in their minds. I, Appendix A judging God who has plans and acts purposively is a God to be obeyed and placated. Opportunistic preachers are then able to play on our hopes and fears in the face of such a God. They prescribe ways of acting that are calculated to avoid being punished by that God and earn his rewards. Nor does God perform miracles, since there are no, and cannot be, departures whatsoever from the necessary course of nature. This would be for God or Nature to act against itself, which is absurd. The belief in miracles is due only to ignorance of the true causes of phenomena.

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