

## Chapter 1 : David Hume: My Own Life (ePUB) - ebook download - english

*My Own Life By David Hume Edited by Jack Lynch The text comes from The History of England, from the Invasion of Julius C sar to the Revolution in , 8 vols. (London, ), vol. 1.*

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**Chapter 2 : The Life of David Hume, Esq. Written by Himself**

*The lesson I learned from reading his account of his life is: 1. To be honest with yourself, there is always a certain element of vanity. 2. Life takes a lot of twists and turns, but it is important to stay somehow detached and cheerful about all the changes, and keep working with the good spirit.*

You will find among my Papers a very inoffensive Piece, called My own Life, which I composed a few days before I left Edinburgh, when I thought, as did all my Friends, that my life was despaired of. There can be no Objection, that this small piece should be sent to Messrs Strahan and Cadell and the Proprietors of my other Works to be prefixed to any future Edition of them. My Own Life It is difficult for a man to speak long of himself without vanity; therefore, I shall be short. It may be thought an instance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this Narrative shall contain little more than the History of my Writings; as, indeed, almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations. The first success of most of my writings was not such as to be an object of vanity. I was born the 26th of April , old style, at Edinburgh. I was of a good family, both by father and mother: My family, however, was not rich, and being myself a younger brother, my patrimony, according to the mode of my country, was of course very slender. My father, who passed for a man of parts, died when I was an infant, leaving me, with an elder brother and a sister, under the care of our mother, a woman of singular merit, who, though young and handsome, devoted herself entirely to the rearing and educating of her children. I passed through the ordinary course of education with success, and was seized very early with a passion for literature, which has been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of my enjoyments. 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 unsurmountable aversion to every thing but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning; and while they fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was secretly devouring. My very slender fortune, however, being unsuitable to this plan of life, and my health being a little broken by my ardent application, I was tempted, or rather forced, to make a very feeble trial for entering into a more active scene of life. In , I went to Bristol, with some recommendations to eminent merchants, but in a few months found that scene totally unsuitable to me. I went over to France, with a view of prosecuting my studies in a country retreat; and I there laid that plan of life, which I have steadily and successfully pursued. I resolved to make a very rigid frugality supply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible, except the improvement of my talents in literature. After passing three years very agreeably in that country, I came over to London in . In the end of , I published my Treatise, and immediately went down to my mother and my brother, who lived at his country-house, and was employing himself very judiciously and successfully in the improvement of his fortune. Never literary attempt was more unfortunate than my Treatise of Human Nature. It fell dead-born from the press, without reaching such distinction, as even to excite a murmur among the zealots. But being naturally of a cheerful and sanguine temper, I very soon recovered the blow, and prosecuted with great ardour my studies in the country. In , I printed at Edinburgh the first part of my Essays: I continued with my mother and brother in the country, and in that time recovered the knowledge of the Greek language, which I had too much neglected in my early youth. In , I received a letter from the Marquis of Annandale, inviting me to come and live with him in England; I found also, that the friends and family of that young nobleman were desirous of putting him under my care and direction, for the state of his mind and health required it. My appointments during that time made a considerable accession to my small fortune. I then received an invitation from General St. Clair to attend him as a secretary to his expedition, which was at first meant against Canada, but ended in an incursion on the coast of France. Next year, to wit, , I received an invitation from the General to attend him in the same station in his military embassy to the courts of Vienna and Turin. I then wore the uniform of an officer, and was introduced at these courts as aid-de-camp to the general, along with Sir Harry Erskine and Captain Grant, now General Grant. These two years were almost the only interruptions which my studies have received during the course of my life: I passed them agreeably, and in good company; and my appointments, with my frugality, had made me reach a fortune, which I called

independent, though most of my friends were inclined to smile when I said so; in short, I was now master of near a thousand pounds. I had always entertained a notion, that my want of success in publishing the Treatise of Human Nature, had proceeded more from the manner than the matter, and that I had been guilty of a very usual indiscretion, in going to the press too early. I, therefore, cast the first part of that work anew in the Enquiry concerning Human Understanding, which was published while I was at Turin. But this piece was at first little more successful than the Treatise of Human Nature. On my return from Italy, I had the mortification to find all England in a ferment, on account of Dr. A new edition, which had been published at London of my Essays, moral and political, met not with a much better reception. Such is the force of natural temper, that these disappointments made little or no impression on me. I went down in , and lived two years with my brother at his country-house, for my mother was now dead. I there composed the second part of my Essays, which I called Political Discourses, and also my Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, which is another part of my treatise that I cast anew. Meanwhile, my bookseller, A. Millar, informed me, that my former publications all but the unfortunate Treatise were beginning to be the subject of conversation; that the sale of them was gradually increasing, and that new editions were demanded. However, I had fixed a resolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body; and not being very irascible in my temper, I have easily kept myself clear of all literary squabbles. These symptoms of a rising reputation gave me encouragement, as I was ever more disposed to see the favourable than unfavourable side of things; a turn of mind which it is more happy to possess, than to be born to an estate of ten thousand a year. In , I removed from the country to the town, the true scene for a man of letters. In , were published at Edinburgh, where I then lived, my Political Discourses, the only work of mine that was successful on the first publication. It was well received abroad and at home. In the same year was published at London, my Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals; which, in my own opinion who ought not to judge on that subject , is of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best. It came unnoticed and unobserved into the world. In , the Faculty of Advocates chose me their Librarian, an office from which I received little or no emolument, but which gave me the command of a large library. I then formed the plan of writing the History of England; but being frightened with the notion of continuing a narrative through a period of years, I commenced with the accession of the House of Stuart, an epoch when, I thought, the misrepresentations of faction began chiefly to take place. I was, I own, sanguine in my expectations of the success of this work. I thought that I was the only historian, that had at once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; and as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment: I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation; English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united in their rage against the man, who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. Millar told me, that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in the three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages not to be discouraged. I was, however, I confess, discouraged; and had not the war been at that time breaking out between France and England, I had certainly retired to some provincial town of the former kingdom, have changed my name, and never more have returned to my native country. But as this scheme was not now practicable, and the subsequent volume was considerably advanced, I resolved to pick up courage and to persevere. In this interval, I published at London my Natural History of Religion, along with some other small pieces: Hurd wrote a pamphlet against it, with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school. This pamphlet gave me some consolation for the otherwise indifferent reception of my performance. In , two years after the fall of the first volume, was published the second volume of my History, containing the period from the death of Charles I. This performance happened to give less displeasure to the Whigs, and was better received. It not only rose itself, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother. But though I had been taught by experience, that the Whig party were in possession of bestowing all places, both in the state and in literature, I was so little inclined to yield to their senseless clamour, that in above a hundred alterations, which farther study, reading, or reflection

engaged me to make in the reigns of the two first Stuarts, I have made all of them invariably to the Tory side. It is ridiculous to consider the English constitution before that period as a regular plan of liberty. In 1703, I published my History of the House of Tudor. The clamour against this performance was almost equal to that against the History of the two first Stuarts. The reign of Elizabeth was particularly obnoxious. But I was now callous against the impressions of public folly, and continued very peaceably and contentedly in my retreat at Edinburgh, to finish, in two volumes, the more early part of the English History, which I gave to the public in 1705, with tolerable, and but tolerable success. But, notwithstanding this variety of winds and seasons, to which my writings had been exposed, they had still been making such advances, that the copy-money given me by the booksellers, much exceeded any thing formerly known in England; I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native country of Scotland, determined never more to set my foot out of it; and retaining the satisfaction of never having preferred a request to one great man, or even making advances of friendship to any of them. As I was now turned of fifty, I thought of passing all the rest of my life in this philosophical manner, when I received, in 1706, an invitation from the Earl of Hertford, with whom I was not in the least acquainted, to attend him on his embassy to Paris, with a near prospect of being appointed secretary to the embassy; and, in the meanwhile, of performing the functions of that office. This offer, however inviting, I at first declined, both because I was reluctant to begin connexions with the great, and because I was afraid that the civilities and gay company of Paris, would prove disagreeable to a person of my age and humour: I have every reason, both of pleasure and interest, to think myself happy in my connexions with that nobleman, as well as afterwards with his brother, General Conway. Those who have not seen the strange effects of modes, will never imagine the reception I met with at Paris, from men and women of all ranks and stations. The more I resiled from their excessive civilities, the more I was loaded with them. There is, however, a real satisfaction in living at Paris, from the great number of sensible, knowing, and polite company with which that city abounds above all places in the universe. I thought once of settling there for life. I was appointed secretary to the embassy; and, in summer 1707, Lord Hertford left me, being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In the beginning of 1708, I left Paris, and next summer went to Edinburgh, with the same view as formerly, of burying myself in a philosophical retreat. But, in 1709, I received from Mr. Conway an invitation to be Under-secretary; and this invitation, both the character of the person, and my connexions with Lord Hertford, prevented me from declining. I returned to Edinburgh in 1710, very opulent for I possessed a revenue of £1. In spring 1711, I was struck with a disorder in my bowels, which at first gave me no alarm, but has since, as I apprehend it, become mortal and incurable. I now reckon upon a speedy dissolution. I possess the same ardour as ever in study, and the same gaiety in company. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at present. To conclude historically with my own character. I am, or rather was for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments; I was, I say, a man of mild dispositions, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men any wise eminent, have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked by her baleful tooth: My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct: I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself, but I hope it is not a misplaced one; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained. Letter from Adam Smith, Ll.

Chapter 3 : My Own Life, by David Hume ( )

*Anyone selling David Hume's "My Own Life" for \$4 should be shot. Try googling it, it's available online for free in several places. It's a brief essay, maybe pages long, that mostly recounts the history of the books he published.*

MOL 3 Katherine Falconer Hume realized that David was uncommonly precocious, so when his older brother went up to Edinburgh University, Hume went with him, although he was only 10 or There he studied Latin and Greek, read widely in history and literature, ancient and modern philosophy, and also did some mathematics and natural philosophy—what we now call natural science. The education David received, both at home and at the university, aimed at training pupils to a life of virtue regulated by stern Scottish Calvinist strictures. Prayers and sermons were prominent aspects of his home and university life. At some point, Hume read *The Whole Duty of Man*, a widely circulated Anglican devotional tract that details our duties to God, our fellow human beings, and ourselves. The intensity of developing his philosophical vision precipitated a psychological crisis in the isolated scholar. Here he read French and other continental authors, especially Malebranche, Dubos, and Bayle, and occasionally baited the Jesuits with arguments attacking their beliefs. By this time, Hume had not only rejected the religious beliefs with which he was raised, but was also opposed to organized religion in general, an opposition that remained constant throughout his life. In 1726, when he was only 23, he began writing *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Hume returned to England in 1726 to ready the *Treatise* for the press. Six years later, he stood for the Chair of Logic at Glasgow, only to be turned down again. Hume never held an academic post. A year later he became secretary to his cousin, Lieutenant General James St Clair, eventually accompanying him on an extended diplomatic mission in Austria and Italy. He also included material he had excised from the *Treatise*. Published in six volumes between 1757 and 1765, his *History* was a bestseller well into the next century, finally giving him the financial independence he had long sought. Friends and publishers persuaded him to suppress some of his more controversial writings on religion during his lifetime. In 1763, Hume accepted a position as private secretary to the British Ambassador to France. He became the rage of the Parisian salons, enjoying the conversation and company of famous European intellectuals. He was known for his love of good food and wine, as well as his enjoyment of the attentions and affections of women. Hume returned to Edinburgh in 1769. He spent considerable time revising his works for new editions of his *Essays and Treatises*, which contained his collected *Essays*, the two *Enquiries*, *A Dissertation on the Passions*, and *The Natural History of Religion*, but —significantly— not *A Treatise of Human Nature*. In 1769, Hume was diagnosed with intestinal cancer. He summarizes his project in its subtitle: *The ancient philosophers, on whom he had been concentrating, replicated the errors their natural philosophers made. He was convinced that the only way to improve philosophy was to make the investigation of human nature central—and empirical* HL 3. The problem with ancient philosophy was its reliance on hypotheses—claims based on speculation and invention rather than experience and observation. By the time Hume began to write the *Treatise* three years later, he had immersed himself in the works of the modern philosophers, but he found them disturbing, not least because they made the same mistakes the ancients did, while professing to avoid them. Their theories were too speculative, relying on a priori assumptions, and paying too little attention to what human nature is actually like. These systems, covering a wide range of entrenched and influential metaphysical and theological views, purport to have discovered principles that give us a deeper and more certain knowledge of ultimate reality. Metaphysics aids and abets these and other superstitious doctrines. His critique of metaphysics clears the way for the constructive phase of his project—the development of an empirical science of human nature—and Hume is not at all skeptical about its prospects. The new foundation is the scientific study of human nature. They are all human activities, so what we are able to accomplish in them depends on understanding what kinds of questions we are able to handle and what sorts we must leave alone. If we have a better grasp of the scope and limits of our understanding, the nature of our ideas, and the operations we perform in reasoning about them, there is no telling what improvements we might make in these sciences. We should expect even more improvement in the sciences that are more closely connected to the study of human nature: Although Hume does not mention him by name, Newton — is his hero. Any laws we discover must

be established by observation and experiment. Hume is proposing an empiricist alternative to traditional a priori metaphysics. His empiricism is naturalistic in that it refuses to countenance any appeal to the supernatural in the explanation of human nature. As a naturalist, he aims to account for the way our minds work in a manner that is consistent with a Newtonian picture of the world. Hume portrays his scientific study of human nature as a kind of mental geography or anatomy of the mind EHU 1. In the first section of the first Enquiry, he says that it has two principal tasks, one purely descriptive, the other explanatory. Hume, however, wants to go much further. But he emphasizes that while he will try to find the most general principles, rendering them as universal as possible, all of his explanations must be based completely on experience. Although philosophy, as an empirical enterprise, is itself bound by experience, this is not a defect in the science of human nature. The same is true for all the sciences: Explanations must come to an end somewhere. Hume is Newtonian in much more than method. He sees that Newton is significantly different from John Locke and the other Royal Society natural philosophers, because he rejects their mechanist picture of the world. By appealing to these same principles throughout, Hume gives an explanation of these diverse phenomena that enable him to provide a unified and economical account of the mind. Each piece is warranted by experience. The early modern period was the heyday of the investigation of the ideas of causation, moral good and evil, and many other philosophically contested ideas. Hume holds an empiricist version of the theory, because he thinks that everything we believe is ultimately traceable to experience. He begins with an account of perceptions, because he believes that any intelligible philosophical question must be asked and answered in those terms. He uses perception to designate any mental content whatsoever, and divides perceptions into two categories, impressions and ideas. Impressions include sensations as well as desires, passions, and emotions. He thinks everyone will recognize his distinction, since everyone is aware of the difference between feeling and thinking. Hume distinguishes two kinds of impressions: He calls them original because trying to determine their ultimate causes would take us beyond anything we can experience. Any intelligible investigation must stop with them. Impressions of reflection include desires, emotions, passions, and sentiments. They are essentially reactions or responses to ideas, which is why he calls them secondary. Perceptions—both impressions and ideas—may be either simple or complex. Complex impressions are made up of a group of simple impressions. My impression of the violet I just picked is complex. Among the ways it affects my senses are its brilliant purple color and its sweet smell. I can separate and distinguish its color and smell from the rest of my impressions of the violet. Hume initially distinguishes impressions and ideas in terms of their degree of force and vivacity. Impressions are more forceful and vivacious than ideas. At various times, Hume tries other ways of characterizing the difference between impressions and ideas, but he was never completely satisfied with them. Still, what he says works well enough to give us a handle on the felt differences between impressions and ideas. When Hume distinguishes impressions and ideas in terms of their relative force and vivacity, he is pointing out something that is generally true of them as a matter of fact. On occasion, in dreams or a high fever, ideas may approach the force and vivacity of impressions, but these are exceptions that prove the “empirical” rule. In general, impressions and ideas are so different that no one can deny the distinction. He argues first that there is a one-to-one correspondence between simple ideas and simple impressions. But he is so confident the correspondence holds that he challenges anyone who doubts it to produce an example of a simple impression without a corresponding simple idea, or a simple idea without a corresponding simple impression. Since he is certain they will fail, he concludes that there is a constant conjunction between simple impressions and simple ideas. There must be a causal connection between them, but do ideas cause impressions or do impressions cause ideas? Finally, he argues that experience tells us that simple impressions always precede and thus cause their corresponding ideas. To support this claim, he appeals to two sorts of cases. First, if you want to give a child an idea of the taste of pineapple, you give her a piece of pineapple to eat. You never go the other way round. He imagines someone who has had the same sorts of experiences of colors most of us have had, but has never experienced a certain shade of blue. Hume thinks that if he orders all the shades of blue he has experienced from the darkest to the lightest, he will see immediately that there is a gap where the missing shade should be. While scholars have wondered exactly how the person might supply the missing shade, he seems unconcerned with the details. For

Hume, once again the exception proves the "empirical" rule. As his diagnosis of traditional metaphysics reveals, Hume believes that the chief obstacle to our improvement in the moral or metaphysical sciences is the obscurity of the ideas, and ambiguity of the terms. Getting clear about the content of the ideas and the meanings of the terms we are investigating requires something else. He believes he has found a way to accurately determine their content—his account of definition. Begin with a term. Ask what idea is annexed to it. If there is no such idea, then the term has no cognitive content, however prominently it figures in philosophy or theology. If there is an idea annexed to the term, and it is complex, break it down into the simple ideas that compose it, and trace them back to their original impressions. If the process fails at any point, the idea in question lacks cognitive content. Hume uses his account of definition in his critical phase to show that many of the central concepts of traditional metaphysics lack intelligible content. He also uses it in his constructive phase to determine the exact meaning of our terms and ideas. This suggests that There is a secret tie or union among particular ideas, which causes the mind to conjoin them more frequently, and makes the one, upon its appearance, introduce the other. Hume identifies three principles of association: When someone shows you a picture of your best friend, you naturally think of her because the picture resembles her.

Chapter 4 : David Hume (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*To Adam Smith. May 3. You will find among my Papers a very inoffensive Piece, called My own Life, which I composed a few days before I left Edinburgh, when I thought, as did all my Friends, that my life was despaired of.*

Of sensation external 2. Of reflection internal Hume begins by dividing all mental perceptions between ideas thoughts and impressions sensations and feelings , and then makes two central claims about the relation between them. That is, for any idea we select, we can trace the component parts of that idea to some external sensation or internal feeling. This claim places Hume squarely in the empiricist tradition, and he regularly uses this principle as a test for determining the content of an idea under consideration. For example, my impression of a tree is simply more vivid than my idea of that tree. One of his early critics, Lord Monboddo " pointed out an important implication of the liveliness thesis, which Hume himself presumably hides. Most modern philosophers held that ideas reside in our spiritual minds, whereas impressions originate in our physical bodies. So, when Hume blurs the distinction between ideas and impressions, he is ultimately denying the spiritual nature of ideas and instead grounding them in our physical nature. In short, all of our mental operations "including our most rational ideas" are physical in nature. Hume goes on to explain that there are several mental faculties that are responsible for producing our various ideas. He initially divides ideas between those produced by the memory, and those produced by the imagination. The memory is a faculty that conjures up ideas based on experiences as they happened. For example, the memory I have of my drive to the store is a comparatively accurate copy of my previous sense impressions of that experience. The imagination, by contrast, is a faculty that breaks apart and combines ideas, thus forming new ones. Hume uses the familiar example of a golden mountain: As our imagination takes our most basic ideas and leads us to form new ones, it is directed by three principles of association, namely, resemblance, contiguity, and cause and effect. By virtue of resemblance, an illustration or sketch, of a person leads me to an idea of that actual person. The idea of one apartment in a building leads me to think of the apartment contiguous to "or next to" the first. The thought of a scar on my hand leads me to think of a broken piece of glass that caused the scar. As indicated in the above chart, our more complex ideas of the imagination are further divided between two categories. Some imaginative ideas represent flights of the fancy, such as the idea of a golden mountain; however, other imaginative ideas represent solid reasoning, such as predicting the trajectory of a thrown ball. The fanciful ideas are derived from the faculty of the fancy, and are the source of fantasies, superstitions, and bad philosophy. By contrast, sound ideas are derived from the faculty of the understanding "or reason" and are of two types: He dramatically makes this point at the conclusion of his Enquiry: When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? Commit it then to the flames: For it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion Enquiry, Principles of reasoning concerning relations of ideas involving demonstration: In his analysis of these issues in the Treatise, he repeatedly does three things. First, he skeptically argues that we are unable to gain complete knowledge of some important philosophical notion under consideration. Second, he shows how the understanding gives us a very limited idea of that notion. Third, he explains how some erroneous views of that notion are grounded in the fancy, and he accordingly recommends that we reject those erroneous ideas. Space On the topic of space, Hume argues that our proper notions of space are confined to our visual and tactile experiences of the three-dimensional world, and we err if we think of space more abstractly and independently of those visual and tactile experiences. Following the above three-part scheme, 1 Hume skeptically argues that we have no ideas of infinitely divisible space Treatise, 1. He accounts for this erroneous notion in terms of a mistaken association that people naturally make between visual and tactile space Treatise, 1. The idea of time, then, is not a simple idea derived from a simple impression; instead, it is a copy of impressions as they are perceived by the mind at its fixed speed Treatise, 1. The psychological account of this erroneous view is that we mistake time for the cause of succession instead of seeing it as the effect Treatise, 1. Necessary Connection between

Causes and Effects According to Hume, the notion of cause-effect is a complex idea that is made up of three more foundational ideas: If B were to occur before A, then it would be absurd to say that A was the cause of B. The broken window and the rock must be in proximity with each other. Priority and proximity alone, however, do not make up our entire notion of causality. For example, if I sneeze and the lights go out, I would not conclude that my sneeze was the cause, even though the conditions of priority and proximity were fulfilled. We also believe that there is a necessary connection between cause A and effect B. During the modern period of philosophy, philosophers thought of necessary connection as a power or force connecting two events. When billiard ball A strikes billiard ball B, there is a power that the one event imparts to the other. In keeping with his empiricist copy thesis, that all ideas are copied from impressions, Hume tries to uncover the experiences which give rise to our notions of priority, proximity, and necessary connection. The first two are easy to explain. Priority traces back to our various experiences of time. Proximity traces back to our various experiences of space. But what is the experience which gives us the idea of necessary connection? We have no external sensory impression of causal power when we observe cause-effect relationships; all that we ever see is cause A constantly conjoined with effect B. Neither does it arise from an internal impression, such as when we introspectively reflect on willed bodily motions or willing the creation of thoughts. These internal experiences are too elusive, and nothing in them can give content to our idea of necessary connection. This produces a habit such that upon any further appearance of A, we expect B to follow. He explains this mistaken belief by the natural tendency we have to impute subjectively perceived qualities to external things Treatise, 1. His explanation is lengthy, but involves the following features. Perceptions of objects are disjointed and have no unity in and of themselves Treatise, 1. We then conflate all ideas of perceptions, which put our minds in similar dispositions Treatise, 1. Consequently, we naturally invent the continued and external existence of the objects or perceptions that produced these ideas Treatise, 1. Lastly, we go on to believe in the existence of these objects because of the force of the resemblance between ideas Treatise, 1. Although this belief is philosophically unjustified, Hume feels he has given an accurate account of how we inevitably arrive at the idea of external existence. The psychological motivation for accepting this view is this: Appealing to both forces, we ascribe interruption to perceptions and continuance to objects Treatise, 1. Because of the associative principles, the resemblance or causal connection within the chain of my perceptions gives rise to an idea of myself, and memory extends this idea past my immediate perceptions Treatise, 1. These motives produce actions that have the same causal necessity observed in cause-effect relations that we see in external objects, such as when billiard ball A strikes and moves billiard ball B. In the same way, we regularly observe the rock-solid connection between motive A and action B, and we rely on that predictable connection in our normal lives. Suppose that a traveler, in recounting his observation of the odd behavior of natives in a distant country, told us that identical motives led to entirely different actions among these natives. In business, politics, and military affairs, our leaders expect predicable behavior from us insofar as the same motives within us will always result in us performing the same action. A prisoner who is soon to be executed will assume that the motivations and actions of the prison guards and the executioner are so rigidly fixed that these people will mechanically carry out their duties and perform the execution, with no chance of a change of heart Treatise, 2. One explanation is that people erroneously believe they have a feeling of liberty when performing actions. In the Treatise Hume rejects the notion of liberty completely. In the Enquiry, however, he takes a more compatibilist approach. Nothing in this definition of liberty is in conflict with the notion of necessity.

Skepticism In all of the above discussions on epistemological topics, Hume performs a balancing act between making skeptical attacks step 1 and offering positive theories based on natural beliefs step 2. In the conclusion to Book 1, though, he appears to elevate his skepticism to a higher level and exposes the inherent contradictions in even his best philosophical theories. He notes three such contradictions. One centers on what we call induction. Our judgments based on past experience all contain elements of doubt; we are then impelled to make a judgment about that doubt, and since this judgment is also based on past experience it will in turn produce a new doubt. Once again, though, we are impelled to make a judgment about this second doubt, and the cycle continues. One is our natural inclination to believe that we are directly seeing objects as they really are, and the other is the more philosophical view that we only ever see mental images or copies of external

objects. The third contradiction involves a conflict between causal reasoning and belief in the continued existence of matter. After listing these contradictions, Hume despairs over the failure of his metaphysical reasoning: The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another [Treatise, 1. He then pacifies his despair by recognizing that nature forces him to set aside his philosophical speculations and return to the normal activities of common life. He sees, though, that in time he will be drawn back into philosophical speculation in order to attack superstition and educate the world. However, during the course of his writing the Treatise his view of the nature of these contradictions changed. At first he felt that these contradictions were restricted to theories about the external world, but theories about the mind itself would be free from them, as he explains here: The essence and composition of external bodies are so obscure, that we must necessarily, in our reasonings, or rather conjectures concerning them, involve ourselves in contradictions and absurdities. When composing the Appendix to the Treatise a year later, he changed his mind and felt that theories about the mind would also have contradictions: Thus, in the Treatise, the skeptical bottom line is that even our best theories about both physical and mental phenomena will be plagued with contradictions. In the concluding section of his Enquiry, Hume again addresses the topic of skepticism, but treats the matter somewhat differently: He associates extreme Pyrrhonian skepticism with blanket attacks on all reasoning about the external world, abstract reasoning about space and time, or causal reasoning about matters of fact. Theory of the Passions Like many philosophers of his time, Hume developed a theory of the passions—that is, the emotions—categorizing them and explaining the psychological mechanisms by which they arise in the human mind. His most detailed account is in Book Two of the Treatise. Passions, according to Hume, fall under the category of impressions of reflection as opposed to impressions of sensation. He opens his discussion with a taxonomy of types of passions, which are outlined here: Calm reflective pleasures and pains 2.

**Chapter 5 : Essays Moral, Political, Literary (LF ed.) - Online Library of Liberty**

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Leaving aside his Enquiries, 1 which were widely read then as now, Hume is known today chiefly through his Treatise of Human Nature 2 and his Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion. The preparation and revision of his essays occupied Hume throughout his adult life. In his late twenties, after completing three books of the Treatise, Hume began to publish essays on moral and political themes. In , three additional essays appeared in a small volume published in Edinburgh and London. In , Hume issued a large number of new essays under the title Political Discourses, a work so successful that a second edition was published before the year was out, and a third in Volume 1 of this collection contains the Essays, Moral and Political and Volume 4 54 contains the Political Discourses. The two Enquiries are reprinted in Volumes 2 and 3. Hume retained the title Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects for subsequent editions of his collected works, but he varied the format and contents somewhat. A new, one-volume edition appeared under this title in , and other four-volume editions in and Two-volume editions appeared in , , , and Several new essays, as well as other writings, were added to this collection along the way. He worked on them continually from about until his death, in Nineteen of these date back to the two original volumes of Essays, Moral and Political 6 By , these essays from the original volumes would have gone through eleven editions. Twenty essays were added along the way, eight were deleted, and two would await posthumous publication. Though gravely ill in , Hume made arrangements Edition: One possibility was to say to him: Allow me a little time, that I may see how the Public receives the alterations. Jessop lists sixteen editions or reprintings of Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects that appeared between and Longmans, Green and Co. These bibliographical details are important because they show how highly the essays were regarded by Hume himself and by many others up to the present century. Some of the essays have been included in various collections, 14 but, leaving aside the present edition, no Edition: The essays are elegant and entertaining in style, but thoroughly philosophical in temper and content. They elaborate those sciences 6 morals, politics, and criticism 6 for which the Treatise of Human Nature lays a foundation. It was not simply a desire for fame that led Hume to abandon the Treatise and seek a wider audience for his thought. He acted in the belief that commerce between men of letters and men of the world worked to the benefit of both. Hume thought that philosophy Edition: It was the text used by T. The present edition contains material that was not in the edition of the Essays: Unless otherwise noted, these materials are reprinted here as they appear in Green and Grose and, unlike the Essays proper, Edition: A close comparison of their edition with that of shows, however, that it falls far short of the standards of accuracy that are adopted today in critical-text editing. At least 25 typographical errors in the edition are corrected silently by Green and Grose, who also corrected some of the Greek passages. Textual Notations Three types of notational symbols appear in the present text. A superscript arabic numeral indicates a footnote. In the Essays, Hume ranges far beyond the great works of philosophy into every area of scholarship. One finds abundant evidence of his reading in the Greek and Latin classics as well as of his familiarity with the literary works of the important English, French, Italian, and Spanish authors. He knew the important treatises on natural science, and he investigated the modern writings on political economy. He often refers to persons or events without explaining who or what they are. He frequently quotes in languages other than English, and often he fails to identify an author or the work from which he is quoting. He sometimes misquotes his sources or gives misleading citations. No doubt the informed Edition: Since it is hoped that this edition will be useful to beginning students and general readers, I have tended to prefer fullness in these annotations, even though much is included that will be known to specialists in one area or another of eighteenth-century studies. First, I have identified persons, places, and events to which Hume refers. Second, I have provided translations of foreign-language passages in those instances where Hume himself fails to translate them or give a close English paraphrase. Third, I have given citations for the many quotations or references that Hume leaves uncited. For the sake of uniformity, classical citations are given to the Loeb editions. A small superscript circle

by a word indicates that the meaning of that word is specified in the Glossary. Specifically, I used the eleventh, corrected and revised, edition London: Words are glossed sequentially rather than alphabetically, because their meanings are often related closely to the contexts in which they appear. Clarendon Press, ; 12 vols. These variants are collected at the end of this volume. Besides adding many new essays and deleting some old ones, Hume often made changes in the essays that he carried over from previous editions. A critical edition of a text is understood today as one that collates the copy-text with all other editions and gives an exhaustive record of variationsâ€”formal and materialâ€”in the texts. Two excellent examples are Peter H. Clarendon Press, 4 and the Glasgow Edition: Clarendon Press, ; Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, , whose general editors are R. Skinner and whose textual editor is W. Both editions contain exhaustive lists of variant readings. This task falls beyond the scope of the present edition of the Essays. Their list of variant readings is nonetheless quite extensive, and it must suffice for the present. The Huntington Library also provided the photocopy of the edition that was used in correcting the Green and Grose text. Lange, Assistant Curator of the Huntington Library, was especially helpful in answering several queries. Colleagues at the University of Georgia who provided assistance include Richard A. Gantz, and Nancy F. Professors LaFleur, Rubin, and Piper were willing, on numerous occasions, to help me with points of translation or historical detail. My research assistant, Myrna Nichols, shared in some of the editorial tasks. When I found it necessary to consult scholars at other universities, the following responded generously: Allan Bloom of the University of Chicago; J. Johnson of the University of Rochester; David M. Stocker of the University of Virginia; William B. Todd of the University of Texas; Frank W. Walbank of Cambridge University; and Thomas G. West of the University of Dallas. My wife, Eva Miller, has been helpful in more ways than I can possibly enumerate. The responsibility for such errors as might have entered in the editorial process is, of course, mine alone and not that of anyone whose help I have acknowledged. Rae, Keeper of Manuscripts, for his timely assistance in obtaining the necessary photocopy. My research on Hume has been aided and encouraged in many ways by the University of Georgia, especially by its libraries, which are directed by David Bishop, by the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, whose Dean is W. Jackson Payne, and by the Department of Political Science, which has been headed during the period of this research by Loren P. Beth and Frank J. Hayek, Leo Strauss, and Joseph Cropsey. The edition continues to serve as the copy-text, but a comparison with the edition was helpful in detecting typographical errors in the edition that might otherwise be indistinguishable. Cadell, in the Strand: Donaldson, at Edinburgh; two volumes. A comparison of the edition of Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary with that of shows that Hume reworked carefully the last edition that he prepared for the press, sometimes making substantial changes. Second, I have corrected the other writings reprinted in this volume against the appropriate copy-texts, thus ending all dependence on the unreliable edition of Green and Grose, save for the use of their apparatus of variant readings. Third, I have redesigned and corrected the Index of the first edition. Finally, I have made a few minor changes in the editorial apparatus. I am indebted to the following persons for suggestions that were helpful in preparing this revised edition: Stewart of the University of Lancaster.

**Chapter 6 : My Own Life and Correspondence of David Hume: Volume 1 & 2 in 2 (Illustrated) - Ebook pdf a**

*My Own Life - Ebook written by David Hume. Read this book using Google Play Books app on your PC, android, iOS devices. Download for offline reading, highlight, bookmark or take notes while you read My Own Life.*

Their latest post comments on the first From mid-December to mid-February, I will read one book in the series each night and post a blog entry about it the next morning. The fall of a tower, or the infusion of a poison, will destroy a man equally with the meanest creature; an inundation sweeps away every thing without distinction that comes within the reach of its fury. Nor can I see suicide outside of the context of terminal illness as anything other than selfish to those left behind. There is something about the act of suicide that is both cowardly and brave. In attempting to reach consensus on a series of aesthetic elements, Hume provides much of interest to writers. In tackling this subject, Hume wrestles with the same issue that, in a more banal context, ruins editorial meetings and makes communication on the internet often so calamitous and gives absurdists such as myself much fodder for satire about the human condition: There are certain terms in every language which import blame, and others praise; and all men who use the same tongue must agree in their application of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, simplicity, spirit in writing; and in blaming fustian, affectation, coldness, and a false brilliancy. But when critics come to particulars, this seeming unanimity vanishes; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expressions. In all matters of opinion and science, the case is opposite; the difference among men is there oftener found to lie in generals than in particulars, and to be less in reality than in appearance. It may irritate or confuse some, but there really is no objective reality when it comes to writing. That which was out of fashion in one generation is lauded as genius by the next. That which was popular is now seen as shallow or silly, or both. Sometimes, now, this happens within a few months or a year rather than a decade due to the instantaneous nature of our society. I would make a counter-argument for the modern age, however: Hume then continues on with an interesting discussion of the subjectivity of applied technique in writing, and how sometimes we value a work despite certain deformities in it—and in praising the whole, we thus also praise the defect. Something you often find, too, in business, where a successful project leads to codifying both what made it successful and what could have made it fail; this is then presented as The Ideal. As I read this passage, I thought to myself: Hume does clearly believe you can establish a standard of taste, but puts a lot of the onus of doing so on readers and critics being educated, careful, patient, and nuanced in their exploration of a particular piece of writing. This feels right to me, perhaps because I tire of seeing hasty readers blame their haste on the writer. Should we not strive to create the best possible work, with the best possible reader in mind, whatever the form that work, that reader takes? A reader or critic who lacks the background or the prior reading to appreciate a particular type of work should, perhaps, at least have the good sense to admit this, in my opinion. Taken as a whole, the essay is a fascinating conversation about the nature of creativity. Conclusion Hume represents a synthesis of strong, nuanced writing with strong, nuanced thought that achieves a rare balance of readability and deep content. Question for Readers If you had to create your own personal Standard of Taste, what would it include?

## Chapter 7 : Hume, David | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*Editor's note: Anticipating his death, Hume wrote My Own Life in April for inclusion in the next edition of his.*

Even so, any concerted effort long sustained necessarily awaited appropriate conditions: You need not doubt of my Perseverance. About his early work, so ebulliently described to Smith, Hume has much else to say, all of it in great confidence as to the rectitude and efficacy of his own procedure. To one friend he observes: Style, judgement, impartiality, care—everything is wanting to our historians; and even Rapin, during this latter period, is extremely deficient. The more I advance in my undertaking, the more am I convinced that the History of England has never yet been written, not only for style, which is notorious to all the world, but also for matter; such is the ignorance and partiality of all our historians. Rapin, whom I had an esteem for, is totally despicable. I may be liable to the reproach of ignorance, but I am certain of escaping that of partiality: The truth is, there is so much reason to blame and praise alternately King and Parliament, that I am afraid the mixture of both in my composition, being so equal, may pass sometimes for an affectation, and not the result of judgement and evidence. Five months later, on 28 October, he had come to the execution of the King, representing the final chapter of his original volume. That of the two last, to the Whigs. But we must endeavour to be above any Regard either to Whigs or Tories. Always responsive to critical commentary, but only when it did not run counter to his own principles, or to the dictates of history itself, Hume in later editions prudentially withdrew both of these passages in their entirety, and thus excised some interior text apparently beyond the immediate cause of complaint. So that the present reader may determine whether, at the very beginning of his work, Hume has maintained in suitable language his own impartial attitude these suppressed sections are now reprinted. These two species of religion, the superstitious and fanatical, stand in diametrical opposition to each other; and a large portion of the latter must necessarily fall to his share, who is so courageous as to control authority, and so assuming as to obtrude his own innovations upon the world. Hence that rage of dispute, which every where seized the new religionists; that disdain of ecclesiastical subjection; that contempt of ceremonies, and of all the exterior pomp and splendor of worship. However obstinate and uncomplying this species of religion, it necessarily received some alteration, according to the different situationEdition: In the electorates of Germany, in Denmark, and in Sweden, where the monarch was early converted, and, by putting himself at the head of the reformers, acquired authority amongst them; as the spirit of enthusiasm was somewhat tempered by a sense of order, episcopal jurisdiction, along with a few decent ceremonies, was preserved in the new establishment. In Switzerland and Geneva, which were popular governments; in France, Scotland, and the low countries, where the people reformed themselves in opposition to the prince; the genius of fanaticism displayed itself in its full extent, and affected every circumstance of discipline and worship. A perfect equality was established among the ecclesiastics; and their inflamed imagination, unconfined by any forms of liturgy, had full liberty to pour out itself, in wild, unpremeditated addresses to the Divinity. They were the preachers of Switzerland, France, and the low countries, who carried the reformation into England: But after the persecutions of Mary had chased abroad all the most obstinate reformers, who escaped her fury; they had leisure to imbibe a stronger tincture of the enthusiastic genius; and when they returned, upon the accession of Elizabeth, they imported it, in its full force and virulence, into their native country. That renowned Princess, whose good taste gave her a sense of order and decorum, and whose sound judgment taught her to abhor innovations, endeavored, by a steady severity, to curb this obstinate enthusiasm, which, from the beginning, looked with an evil aspect, both on the church and monarchy. By an act of parliament in , all persons above the age of sixteen, who were absent from church a month, or who, by word or writing, declared their sentiments against the established religion, were to be imprisoned, till they made an open declaration of their conformity. This if they refused during three months, they were to abjure the realm; and if they either refused such abjuration, or staid in England beyond the time limited, they were to suffer as felons, without benefit of clergy. History addresses itself to a more distant posterity than will ever be reached by any local or temporary theology; and the characters of sects may be studied, when their controversies shall be totally forgotten. Before the reformation, all men of sense and virtue wished impatiently

for some event, which might repress the exorbitant power of the clergy all over Europe, and put an end to the unbounded usurpations and pretensions of the Roman pontiff: But when the doctrine of Luther was promulgated, they were somewhat alarmed at the sharpness of the remedy; and it was easily foreseen, from the offensive zeal of the reformers, and defensive of the church, that all christendom must be thrown into combustion. It might have been hoped, that learning and knowledge, as of old in Greece, stealing in gradually, would have opened the eyes of men, and corrected such of the ecclesiastical abuses as were the grossest and most burthensome. But when the enraged and fanatical reformers took arms against the papal hierarchy, and threatened to rend from the church at once all her riches and authority; no wonder she was animated with equal zeal and ardor, in defence of such antient and invaluable possessions. At the same time, that she employed the stake and gibbet against her avowed enemies, she extended her jealousy even towards learning and philosophy, whom, in her supine security, she had formerly overlooked, as harmless and inoffensive. Hence, the severe check, which knowledge received in Italy: Hence, its total extinction in Spain: And hence, the slow progress, which it made, in France, Germany, and England. Mean while, the rage of dispute and the violence of opposition rivetted men more strongly in all their various delusions, and infected every intercourse of society with their malignant influence. The Roman pontiff, not armed with temporal force, sufficient for his defence, was obliged to point a-new all his spiritual artillery, and to propagate the doctrine of rebellion and even of assassination, in order to subdue or terrify his enemies. Priests, jealous and provoked, timorous and uncontrolled, directed all the councils of that sect, and gave rise to such events as seem astonishing amid the mildness and humanity of modern manners. And the dreadful tribunal of the inquisition, that utmost instance of human depravity, is a durable monument to instruct us what a pitch iniquity and cruelty may rise to, when covered with the sacred mantle of religion. The blind submission, which is inculcated by all superstition, particularly by that of the catholics; the absolute resignation of all private judgment, reason, and inquiry; these are dispositions very advantageous to civil as well as ecclesiastical authority; and the liberty of the subject is more likely to suffer from such principles than the prerogatives of the chief magistrate. The splendor too and pomp of worship, which that religion carefully supports, are agreeable to the taste of magnificence, that prevails in courts, and form a species of devotion, which, while it flatters the pampered senses, gives little perplexity to the indolent understandings, of the great. That delicious country, where the Roman pontiff resides, was the source of all modern art and refinement, and diffused on its superstition an air of politeness, which distinguishes it from the gross rusticity of the other sects. However one may regard these two influential religious movements, it must be conceded that Hume here betrays no unwonted partiality and is quite even-handed in his censure. Confronted by six massive quarto books, gradually appearing one or two at a time, even the most assiduous readers, as Hume anticipated, would become less and less interested, especially when each succeeding volume took them backward to epochs of lesser concern. Nonetheless, the complex printing records, when reduced to tabular form, disclose a total quarto issue hardly surpassed, in this period, for work of any kind.

*Donald T. Siebert David Hume's Last Words: The Importance of My Own Life A genuine and hearty pride, or self-esteem, if well conceal'd and well founded, is essential to.*

It may be thought an instance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this narrative shall contain little more than the history of my writings; as, indeed, almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations. The first success of most of my writing was not such as to be an object of vanity. I was born the twenty-sixth of April, , old style, at Edinburgh. I was of a good family, both by father and mother: My family, however, was not rich; and being myself a younger brother, my patrimony, according to the mode of my country, was of course very slender. My father, who passed for a man of parts, died when I was an infant, leaving me, with an elder brother and a sister, under the care of our mother, a woman of singular merit, who, though young and handsome, devoted herself entirely to the rearing and educating of her children. I passed through the ordinary course of education with success, and was seized very early with a passion for literature, which has been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of my enjoyments. 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. My very slender fortune, however, being unsuitable to this plan of life, and my health being a little broken by my ardent application, I was tempted, or rather forced, to make a very feeble trial for entering into a more active scene of life. In , I went to Bristol, with some recommendations to several eminent merchants; but in a few months found that scene totally unsuitable to me. I went over to France, with a view of prosecuting my studies in a country retreat; and I there laid that plan of life which I have steadily and successfully pursued. I resolved to make a very rigid frugality supply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible, except the improvements of my talents in literature. After passing three years very agreeably in that country, I came over to London in . In the end of , I published my Treatise, and immediately went down to my mother and my brother, who lived at his country house, and was employing himself very judiciously and successfully in the improvement of his fortune. Never literary attempt was more unfortunate than my Treatise of Human Nature. It fell dead-born from the press, without reaching such distinction as even to excite a murmur among the zealots. But being naturally of a cheerful and sanguine temper, I very soon recovered the blow, and prosecuted with great ardor my studies in the country. In , I printed at Edinburgh, the first part of my Essays. The work was favorably received, and soon made me entirely forget my former disappointment. I continued with my mother and brother in the country, and in that time recovered the knowledge of the Greek language, which I had too much neglected in my early youth. In , I received a letter from the Marquis of Annandale, inviting me to come and live with him in England; I found also that the friends and family of that young nobleman were desirous of putting him under my care and direction, for the state of his mind and health required it. I lived with him a twelve month. My appointments during that time made a considerable accession to my small fortune. I then received an invitation from General St. Clair to attend him as a secretary to his expedition, which was at first meant against Canada, but ended in an incursion on the coast of France. Next year, to wit, , I received an invitation from the general to attend him in the same station in his military embassy to the courts of Vienna and Turin. I then wore the uniform of an officer, and was introduced at these courts as aid-de-camp to the general, along with Sir Harry Erskine and Captain Grant, now General Grant. These two years were almost the only interruptions which my studies have received during the course of my life: I passed them agreeably, and in good company; and my appointments, with my frugality, had made me reach a fortune which I called independent, though most of my friends were inclined to smile when I said so: I had always entertained a notion that my want of success in publishing the Treatise of Human Nature had proceeded more from the manner than the matter, and that I had been guilty of a very usual indiscretion in going to the press too early. I, therefore, cast the first part of that work anew in the Inquiry concerning Human Understanding, which was

published while I was at Turin. But this piece was at first little more successful than the Treatise of Human Nature. On my return from Italy, I had the mortification to find all England in a ferment on account of Dr. A new edition, which had been published at London, of my Essays, Moral and Political, met not with a much better reception. Such is the force of natural temper, that these disappointments made little or no impression on me. I went down, in , and lived two years with my brother at his country house, for my mother was now dead. I there composed the second part of my Essays which I called Political Discourses, and also my Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, which is another part of my Treatise that I cast anew. Meanwhile, my bookseller, A. Millar, informed me, that my former publications all but the unfortunate Treatise were beginning to be the subject of conversation; that the sale of them was gradually increasing, and that new editions were demanded. Answers by reverends and right reverends came out two or three in a year; and I found, by Dr. However, I had fixed a resolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body; and not being very irascible in my temper, I have easily kept myself clear of all literary squabbles. These symptoms of a rising reputation gave me encouragement, as I was ever more disposed to see the favorable than unfavorable side of things; a turn of mind which it is more happy to possess, than to be born to an estate of ten thousand a year. In , I removed from the country to the town, the true scene for a man of letters. In were published at Edinburgh, where I then lived, my Political Discourses, the only work of mine that was successful on the first publication. It was well received at home and abroad. In the same year was published, at London, my Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals; which, in my own opinion who ought not to judge on that subject is, of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best. It came unnoticed and unobserved into the world. In , the Faculty of Advocates chose me their librarian, an office from which I received little or no emolument, but which gave me the command of a large library. I then formed the plan of writing the History of England; but being frightened with the notion of continuing a narrative through a period of seventeen hundred years, I commenced with the accession of the house of Stuart, an epoch when, I thought, the misrepresentations of faction began chiefly to take place. I was, I own, sanguine in my expectations of the success of this work. I thought that I was the only historian that had at once neglected present power, interest and authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; and as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment; I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation; English, Scotch, and Irish, whig and tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united in their rage against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I and the Earl of Strafford; and after the first ebullitions of their fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion. Millar told me that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in the three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages not to be discouraged. I was, however, I confess, discouraged; and had not the war been at that time breaking out between France and England, I had certainly retired to some provincial town of the former kingdom, have changed my name, and never more have returned to my native country. But as this scheme was not now practicable, and the subsequent volume was considerably advanced, I resolved to pick up courage and to persevere. In this interval, I published, at London, my Natural History of Religion, along with some other small pieces. Its public entry was rather obscure, except only that Dr. Hurd wrote a pamphlet against it, with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school. This pamphlet gave me some consolation for the otherwise indifferent reception of my performance. In , two years after the fall of the first volume, was published the second volume of my History, containing the period from the death of Charles I till the revolution. This performance happened to give less displeasure to the whigs, and was better received. It not only rose itself, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother. But though I had been taught by experience that the whig party were in possession of bestowing all places, both in the state and in literature, I was so little inclined to yield to their senseless clamor, that in above a hundred alterations, which further study, reading, or reflection engaged me to make in the reigns of the two first Stuarts, I have made all of them invariably to the tory side. It is ridiculous to consider the English

constitution before that period as a regular plan of liberty. In , I published my History of the House of Tudor. The clamor against this performance was almost equal to that against the history of the two first Stuarts. The reign of Elizabeth was particularly obnoxious. But I was now callous against the impressions of public folly, and continued very peaceably and contentedly, in my retreat at Edinburgh, to finish, in two volumes, the more early part of the English History which I gave to the public in , with tolerable, and but tolerable, success. But, notwithstanding this variety of winds and seasons, to which my writings had been exposed, they had still been making such advances, that the copy-money given me by the booksellers much exceeded anything formerly known in England; I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native country of Scotland, determined never more to set my foot out of it; and retailing the satisfaction of never having preferred a request to one great man, or even making advances of friendship to any of them. As I was now turned of fifty, I thought of passing all the rest of my life in this philosophical manner: I have every reason, both of pleasure and interest, to think myself happy in my connections with that nobleman, as well as afterwards with his brother, General Conway. Those who have not seen the strange effects of modes, will never imagine the reception I met with at Paris, from men and women of all ranks and stations. The more I resiled from their excessive civilities, the more I was loaded with them. There is, however, a real satisfaction in living at Paris, from the great number of sensible, knowing, and polite company with which that city abounds above all places in the universe. I thought once of settling there for life. I was appointed secretary to the embassy; and, in summer, , Lord Hertford left me, being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In the beginning of , I left Paris, and next summer went to Edinburgh, with the same view as formerly, of burying myself in a philosophical retreat. But in , I received from Mr. Conway an invitation to be undersecretary; and this invitation, both the character of the person, and my connections with Lord Hertford, prevented me from declining. I returned to Edinburgh in , very opulent for I possessed a revenue of one thousand pounds a year , healthy, and though somewhat stricken in years, with the prospect of enjoying long my ease, and of seeing the increase of my reputation. In spring, , I was struck with a disorder in my bowels, which at first gave me no alarm, but has since, as I apprehend it, become mortal and incurable. I now reckon upon a speedy dissolution. I possess the same ardor as ever in study, and the same gayety in company. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at present. To conclude historically with my own character: I am, or rather was for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments ; I was, I say, a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humor, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men, anywise eminent, have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked, by her baleful tooth; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury. My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct; not but that the zealots, we may well suppose, would have been glad to invent and propagate any story to my disadvantage, but they could never find any which they thought would wear the face of probability. I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself, but I hope it is not a misplaced one; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained.

**Chapter 9 : 60 in #34 - David Hume's On Suicide (Penguin's Great Ideas) - BORNE CENTRAL**

*In the final year of his life, the great Scottish philosopher, historian, and essayist David Hume (May 7, August 25, ) penned a short, beautiful autobiography titled My Own Life (public library) "a potent packet of wisdom on the measure of a life well lived, which became a major inspiration for the contemporary counterpart Oliver.*

Biography[ edit ] Early life and education[ edit ] Hume was the second of two sons born to Joseph Home of Ninewells , an advocate, and his wife The Hon. Throughout his life Hume, who never married, spent time occasionally at his family home at Ninewells in Berwickshire , which had belonged to his family since the sixteenth century. His finances as a young man were very "slender". His family was not rich, and, as a younger son, he had little patrimony to live on. He was therefore forced to make a living somehow. At first, because of his family, he considered a career in law , but came to have, in his words, "an insurmountable aversion to everything but the pursuits of Philosophy and general Learning; and while [my family] fancied I was poring over Voet and Vinnius , Cicero and Virgil were the Authors which I was secretly devouring". Due to this inspiration, Hume set out to spend a minimum of 10 years reading and writing. He soon came to the verge of a mental breakdown , suffering from what a doctor diagnosed as the "Disease of the Learned". Hume wrote that it started with a coldness, which he attributed to a "Laziness of Temper", that lasted about nine months. Later, some scurvy spots broke out on his fingers. Hume wrote that he "went under a Course of Bitters and Anti-Hysteric Pills", taken along with a pint of claret every day. Hume also decided to have a more active life to better continue his learning. Career[ edit ] At 25 years of age, Hume, although of noble ancestry, had no source of income and no learned profession. Hume described his "love for literary fame" as his "ruling passion" [24] and judged his two late works, the so-called "first" and "second" enquiries, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals , respectively, as his greatest literary and philosophical achievements, [24] asking his contemporaries to judge him on the merits of the later texts alone, rather than the more radical formulations of his early, youthful work, dismissing his philosophical debut as juvenilia: Hume was just 23 years old when he started this work and it is now regarded as one of the most important in the history of Western philosophy. However, the position was given to William Cleghorn [31] after Edinburgh ministers petitioned the town council not to appoint Hume because he was seen as an atheist. However, it was then that Hume started his great historical work The History of England. This took him fifteen years and ran to over a million words. During this time he was also involved with the Canongate Theatre through his friend John Home , a preacher. Often called the First Enquiry, it proved little more successful than the Treatise, perhaps because of the publishing of his short autobiography, My Own Life, which "made friends difficult for the first Enquiry". It was necessary in the s for his friends to avert a trial against him on the charge of heresy. However, he "would not have come and could not be forced to attend if he said he was not a member of the Established Church". He had published the Philosophical Essays by this time which were decidedly anti-religious. Even Adam Smith , his personal friend who had vacated the Glasgow philosophy chair, was against his appointment out of concern public opinion would be against it. In the following year "the Faculty of Advocates chose me their Librarian, an office from which I received little or no emolument, but which gave me the command of a large library". Once in England, Hume and Rousseau fell out. Here he wrote that he was given "all the secrets of the Kingdom". Anyone hankering for startling revelations or amusing anecdotes had better look elsewhere. Hume told him he sincerely believed it a "most unreasonable fancy" that there might be life after death. In his will he requests that it be inscribed only with his name and the year of his birth and death, "leaving it to Posterity to add the Rest". Get into the boat this instant". According to the logical positivists, unless a statement could be verified by experience, or else was true or false by definition i. Hume thought that we can form beliefs about that which extends beyond any possible experience, through the operation of faculties such as custom and the imagination, but he was sceptical about claims to knowledge on this basis. For example, experiencing the painful sensation of touching the handle of a hot pan is more forceful than simply thinking about touching a hot pan. Similarly, a person experiences a variety of taste-sensations, tactile-sensations, and smell-sensations when biting into an apple,

with the overall sensation again being a complex impression. Thinking about an apple allows a person to form complex ideas, which are made of similar parts as the complex impressions they were developed from, but which are also less forceful. Hume believes that complex perceptions can be broken down into smaller and smaller parts until perceptions are reached that have no parts of their own, and these perceptions are thereby referred to as being simple. For example, a person looking at an illustration of a flower can conceive of an idea of the physical flower because the idea of the illustrated object is associated with the idea of the physical object. The principle of contiguity describes the tendency of ideas to become associated if the objects they represent are near to each other in time or space, such as when the thought of one crayon in a box leads a person to think of the crayon contiguous to it. Finally, the principle of cause and effect refers to the tendency of ideas to become associated if the objects they represent are causally related, which explains how remembering a broken window can make someone think of the baseball that caused the window to shatter. Hume elaborates more on this last principle of cause and effect. As Hume wrote, induction concerns how things behave when they go "beyond the present testimony of the senses, or the records of our memory". With regard to demonstrative reasoning, Hume argues that the uniformity principle cannot be demonstrated, as it is "consistent and conceivable" that nature might stop being regular. As this is using the very sort of reasoning induction that is under question, it would be circular reasoning. According to Hume, we reason inductively by associating constantly conjoined events. It is the mental act of association that is the basis of our concept of causation. Matters of Fact are dependent on the observer and experience. They are often not universally held to be true among multiple persons. In these three branches he explains his ideas, in addition to comparing and contrasting his views to his predecessors. Next, Hume uses the Constructive Phase to resolve any doubts the reader may have while observing the Critical Phase. Associating ideas has become second nature to the human mind. This leads Hume to the third branch of causal inference, Belief. Belief is what drives the human mind to hold that expectancy of the future based on past experience. Throughout his explanation of causal inference, Hume is arguing that the future is not certain to be repetition of the past and the only way to justify induction is through uniformity. The logical positivist interpretation is that Hume analyses causal propositions, such as "A caused B", in terms of regularities in perception: Shall we rest contented with these two relations of contiguity and succession, as affording a complete idea of causation? Philosopher Simon Blackburn calls this a quasi-realist reading. This view is forwarded by, for example, positivist interpreters, who saw Hume as suggesting that terms such as "self", "person", or "mind" referred to collections of "sense-contents". They argue that distinct selves can have perceptions that stand in relations of similarity and causality with one another. Thus, perceptions must already come parcelled into distinct "bundles" before they can be associated according to the relations of similarity and causality. In other words, the mind must already possess a unity that cannot be generated, or constituted, by these relations alone. Instead, it is suggested by Strawson that Hume might have been answering an epistemological question about the causal origin of our concept of the self. According to his view, Hume is not arguing for a bundle theory, which is a form of reductionism, but rather for an eliminative view of the self. That is, rather than reducing the self to a bundle of perceptions, Hume is rejecting the idea of the self altogether. On this interpretation, Hume is proposing a "no-self theory" and thus has much in common with Buddhist thought. Hume is mainly considered an anti-rationalist, denying the possibility for practical reason as a principle to exist, although other philosophers such as Christine Korsgaard, Jean Hampton, and Elijah Millgram claim that Hume is not so much of an anti-rationalist as he is just a skeptic of practical reason. Reason of itself is utterly impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason. His views on ethics are that "[m]oral decisions are grounded in moral sentiment. Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason itself is utterly impotent in this particular. He wrote in the Treatise that in every system of morality he has read, the author begins with stating facts about the world, but then suddenly is always referring to what ought to be the case. Hume demands that a reason should be given for inferring what ought to be the case, from what is the case. This because it "seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others". His views are rooted in the work of Joseph Addison and Francis Hutcheson. However, a reliable critic of taste can be recognised as being objective, sensible and unprejudiced, and having extensive experience. Hume was

concerned with the way spectators find pleasure in the sorrow and anxiety depicted in a tragedy. He argued that this was because the spectator is aware that he is witnessing a dramatic performance. There is pleasure in realising that the terrible events that are being shown are actually fiction. Hume, to this end, was influenced greatly by the scientific revolution and by in particular Sir Isaac Newton. For if our actions were not necessitated in the above sense, they would "have so little in connexion with motives, inclinations and circumstances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other". But if our actions are not thus connected to the will, then our actions can never be free: Once this has been abandoned, Hume argues that "liberty and necessity will be found not to be in conflict one with another". Actions are, by their very nature, temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some cause in the character and disposition of the person who performed them, they can neither redound to his honour, if good; nor infamy, if evil. Human beings assess a situation based upon certain predetermined events and from that form a choice. Hume believes that this choice is made spontaneously. Hume calls this form of decision making the liberty of spontaneity.