



DAVID HUME

Beliefs & Influence on Enlightenment

ABSTRACT

David Hume, renowned English philosopher of the 18th century, inspired modern philosophy. Throughout his lifetime, Hume altered history and the development of philosophy through science.

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HUA Capstone

David Hume: Beliefs, Influence & Enlightenment

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Introduction

The Enlightenment during the 18th century created new philosophical thinkers, scientific discoveries, and religious separation from thought. Philosophers viewed the Enlightenment as, “...not a historical period, but a process of social, psychological or spiritual development, unbound to time or place,” where for the first-time growth of one’s mind was becoming acceptable (Bristow 2017, 1). Human intelligence became important and along with it the questioning and rejection of traditional norms. Separation from religion and the diminishing power of the church allowed people to think freely for themselves. Secularism began to circulate in society as religion lost its hold amongst the population. The Enlightenment gave birth to skepticism towards authority and religion. Hume is known for his skepticism found in his, *A Treatise in Human Nature* and *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding* (1739-40), where he implores science over religion for advancement. One of Hume’s most significant contributions to the Enlightenment period was empiricism and his theory of the mind. Knowledge was able to expand from the confines of religion and instead come to embody experiences. Therefore, everyone was entitled to their own experiences and could think individually about how the events affected them without the concept of a deity knowing all before yourself. Hume shone a light on how he believed the processes of the human mind

worked. He explored the definitions of ideas, decisions, experience, and causal inference. Additionally, Hume expanded upon morality and how human beings can form morals from powerful emotions. Hume drew upon other philosophers' ideas such as John Locke and influenced others like Immanuel Kant and modern philosophy.

However, the effects of Hume's contributions were not only felt by the subject of philosophy, but also within political and historical ideas. Hume, through his work, was able to construct a philosophy on the idea of justice. The realm of politics and authority were now being challenged by Hume's views. As for history, Hume wholly altered the traditional and conventional ways of writing history as it had been done in the past. Hume's scope of history became broader than other historians and allowed him to account for issues beyond a singular event. These contributions allowed him to become one of the most impactful English philosophers of the 18th century.

Hume's Life

In the Spring of 1711, David Hume was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, to a relatively fortunate family. He spent his childhood in the town of Ninewells about forty miles away from Edinburgh (Harris 2015, 35). After Hume's second birthday, his father passed away and his mother raised him for the remainder of his childhood. Precociously intelligent, Hume began to study languages and natural science at the University of Edinburgh around the age of 10 or so. During his childhood, Hume was exposed to very traditional religious practices such as prayer and sermons. Although Hume's family aspired for him to become a lawyer, he continued his passion for philosophy at the University of Edinburgh. However, in 1727, Hume suffered a mental breakdown thus affecting his ability to concentrate, read without becoming anxious, and his expression of thought to others. After his three-year intensive University program was over,

Hume moved to France and began writing *A Treatise of Human Nature* in 1734 (Morris and Brown 2014, 1). *A Treatise* allowed Hume to express his new philosophical ideas and reflections after his mental breakdown subsided. (Harris 2015, 37) Hume passed away on August 25, 1776, in New Town of Edinburgh possibly due to a bowel disorder diagnosed in the Spring of 1775 (Berry 2013, 21).

Hume as a “Man of Letters”

Notably, Hume’s family did not have a massive amount of wealth but could support Hume financially into adulthood. Therefore, Hume never had to write for money which gave him the freedom to write his works and letters without fearing for his survival. According to *Hume: An Intellectual Biography*, by James A. Harris, head professor of philosophy at St. Andrew’s University, Hume became a “Man of Letters” and was able to fully immerse himself in his passion for writing fully. Hume’s letters served to rise above everyday life and break down the barriers of class and religious differences. Hume states that, “Our connection with each other, as men of letters, is greater than our differences as adhering to different sects or systems,” meaning those of class or religious affiliation can rise above the societal norms that plagued the population through letter correspondence (Harris 2015, 24).

However, not many of Hume’s letters have survived to the present day. Remaining letters have given insight about struggles with his health, philosophical interests, and denial of a chair position at the University of Edinburgh. Hume’s “...earliest surviving letter of July 1727 refers to his time [at Ninewells] spent reading classical philosophy [Cicero] and poetry [Virgil] rather than legal texts” (Berry 2013, 4). Hume’s earliest letter is particularly significant because the written dialogue attests to Hume’s passion for philosophy and signals his intention to leave the legal profession behind.

While Hume began writing *A Treatise* in 1734, letter correspondence between him and a physician illustrates his, "...activity and state of mind in the 1720s..." (Berry 2013, 4). Through this correspondence, Hume explains his mental health issues, particularly earlier in his life. Hume's bout with mental instability influenced his philosophy and how he formulated ideas on human nature and experience. Mental illness allowed Hume to strive for a deeper understanding of thoughts and emotions.

Hume continued using his writing abilities to assert his thoughts and in one instance combat misconceptions about himself. When going up against another candidate for a position at Edinburgh University in 1745, Francis Hutcheson, a prominent philosopher at the time, opposed Hume. Moreover, Hume's philosophical ideas led Hutcheson and other faculty members to label him as an atheist. Due to these accusations, Hume published a pamphlet refuting the misconceptions they had of him (Berry 2013, 8). Hume's writings allowed misinterpretations based on beliefs and social status to dissipate. Therefore, Hume's pamphlet exemplified his belief in attempting to break the stigma placed upon him by other intellectuals.

Hume's letters illustrate a complicated political outlook, for he critiques both Tory and Whig parties on their respective challenges and faults. However, the political parties did not take too kindly to Hume's writing suggestions to improve mutual intentions and move past gripes with each other. In 1764, Hume writes, "some hate me because I am not a Tory, some because I am not a Whig, some because I am not a Christian and all because I am a Scotsman" Hume highlights his frustration of the negative connotation he carries from not being English, political, and religious despite his historical achievements for Britain (Berry 2013, 14).

Although Hume published *A Treatise* (1739-40), the absence of praise from the public left Hume considerably disappointed. Therefore, Hume resorted to writing essays to gain reader

interest with a publication of *Essays Moral and Political* in 1741. After the publication, Hume became a “...professional man of letters,” (Berry 2013, 6). Hume wrote his autobiography entitled *My Own Life* (1776) where he continues to present himself as a “Man of Letters” and analyzes the success of his previous writings.

Hume’s History

After the British Revolution in 1747, Scotland struggled to transform their feudal practices into a capitalist economy. Scotland began to feel an overwhelming sense of inferiority with regards to England. Scots believed the English were so far advanced they were, “...too modern to need an Enlightenment...” (Davidson 2003, 276). However, Hume successfully disentangled himself from getting involved in with the political and social implications of Scotland. From Hume’s contributions of historical works written for Britain, he successfully rebranded himself from his Scottish nationality. Hume’s works in history carried such significance that the, “...British Library differentiated [Hume] then (as it still does) as David Hume, the historian” (Spencer 2013, 1).

Dissatisfied with merely observing isolated events in history, Hume sought to redefine how history should be composed and analyzed. Hume transcended the limits on human understanding imposed by the tendency of most written history to focus solely on a singular event. Instead, Hume began “...shifting focus away from the actions of individual historical agents and towards general principals able to explain long-term and large-scale social, political, economic, and cultural change,” which allowed him to explore all consequences of an event (Harris 2015, 20). Hume published a six-volume account of British history entitled, *The History of England* (1754-1761) (Harris 2015, 32). Oddly enough, it was Hume’s in-depth historical accounts that first made him rich before his philosophy (Harris 2015, 24). Because he was not a

very religious man, Hume rarely integrated discussion of religion into his histories. However, he did write *The History of Natural Religion* (1757), which does conclude that religion is very much incorporated into human beings like any passionate emotion (Harris 2015, 22).

Hume's Influences

Much of Hume's inspiration came from Isaac Newton, a 17th century mathematician and physicist. Through Newton's discoveries, science advanced and continued to be of influence in the Enlightenment period. Answers for the questions of motion, gravity, and calculus evolved how people thought about the world around them. Consequently, "The Science of Man" and the idea of humans being superior to nature without needing knowledge of God began to take hold. Hume's focus on the science of humanity was geared more towards the mind including human thoughts and ideas. Hume's *Treatise* highlighted "Newtonianism of the Human Mind" which embodied Hume's notion of how to apply science towards human nature and to advance philosophy. His works continued to follow a scientific pattern of thinking with deep reflections on human nature and reason (Harris 2015, 11). For Hume, "...reason is attributed to other animals as well; belief is shown to be grounded in custom and habit; and free will is denied." which shows Hume's critique of knowledge from his separation of these ideas (Bristow 2017, 1). Additionally, Hume's work embodied Newton's belief of inference. For both men, events can be predicted from previous experience and results. Therefore, Hume's "causal inference" and dismissal of miracles to occur shows "Newtonian" influence (Schliesser 2008, 1). Natural science became a priority and later influenced David Hume's approach to how the scientific model could improve philosophy. Therefore, Hume reconceives the conduct of philosophy as a science through observation, experience and understanding of cause and effects (Berry 2013, 26).

According to Hume, Francis Bacon, an English Philosopher in the 16th century “pointed out at a distance the road to true philosophy” (Berry 2013, 13). Bacon’s influence on Hume led him to write many of his historical works as a decentralized piece of philosophical work. Hume historical works strived, “...to influence contemporary thinking and policy,” (Berry 2013, 13).

On the subject of human knowledge, Hume adhered closely to the views of 17th century philosopher John Locke. Both men agreed that knowledge must come from experience and human beings are not born with any prior knowledge. Therefore, our minds are, “...a sort of blank slate on which experience writes” (Uzgalis 2018, 1). Both Locke and Hume regard “experiences” as either sensations or reflections. Furthermore, Locke and Hume are bound together by their mutual belief in philosophical empiricism as compared to rationalism. Rationalism is knowledge that is acquired solely based on reason and less so on experiences. Empiricism comes directly from Locke and Hume’s emphasis on experience as the sole source of knowledge (Markie 2017, 1). However, Hume and Locke do not see eye to eye on their concepts of ideas and the meaning of thoughts (Uzgalis 2018, 1). Their faith in God further divides them as Hume is often considered a skeptic, while Locke places some belief in God and portrays religious beliefs within his political writings (Uzgalis 2018, 1).

Before Hume and the beginning of modern philosophy came Thomas Hobbes, who was a 16th century philosopher with similar ideas on empiricism and sensation. Hobbes’s influence on Hume is visible in the third section of *A Treatise* entitled “Morals”. “Morals” furthers Hume’s inquiry and concepts of justice and political theories. The influence of Hobbes presents itself in Hume’s ideas of property and government interference (Moss 2010, 2). Hobbes is also a believer in causality and empiricism. Alternatively, Hume expands on causality in his works relating to

events and the mind (Duncan 2017, 1). Overall, Hobbes was more influential upon Hume's political and economic ideas rather than his study of human nature and the mind.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, more commonly known as Lord Shaftsbury, was an influential philosopher in the 17th century whose ideas continued to expand throughout the 18th century. Lord Shaftsbury is significant because Hume had read his work, notably, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711). From this reading, the young Hume decided to adopt a stoic lifestyle and heavily study Shaftsbury's ideas on the senses and how to form character. However, Hume soon moved away from Lord Shaftsbury's thoughts after his mental breakdown. Instead of studying the ancients as Shaftsbury had done, Hume was compelled to move towards creating his new philosophy. The early influences of Hume's new philosophy came from Bernard Mandeville and Pierre Bayle due to their, "...skepticism about the conceptions of human nature...and to their skepticism about Stoicism" (Harris 2015, 26). Shaftsbury's concept of knowledge differs from Hume since he believes, "... claims that all humans naturally (or instinctively) possess (or are imprinted with) a sense of right and wrong" rather than developed by experience as Hume would assert (Gill 2017, 1).

Bernard Mandeville was prominent in the 17th and 18th century since he was a medical doctor with extensive training (Jack 2004, 1). However, he wrote regularly and had the idea of humans as inherently selfish, thriving on praise, and craving luxury. Hume sets out to refute this theory and Mandeville's rationalism in his *A Treatise* (Morris 2017, 1). Pierre Bayle, a French philosopher of the 17th century, incorporated religious beliefs and faith into his philosophy. Bayle explored the ideas of tolerance, skepticism, and the question of evil. According to *Pierre Bayle* by authors Michael Hickson and Thomas Lennon, Hume may have been influenced by Bayle's religious inquiries, the concept of a soul, and identity (Lennon and Hickson 2017, 1).

Consequently, Hume's influences allowed for a deeper understanding and theories of knowledge, faith and the mind.

Hume's First Work

A Treatise of Human Nature: Being An Attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning Into Moral Subjects was David Hume's first written work finished at the age of twenty-seven and published in 1739-40. Hume's muse for the *A Treatise* and early philosophy came from, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, by Lord Shaftsbury, a philosopher, which served as a guide to the beginning of Hume's philosophical thoughts and ideas (Harris 2015, 26). *A Treatise* is comprised of three sections: "Understanding," "Passions," and "Morals" and is one of Hume's most influential works. Hume expressed that through this work he had "entered upon a new scene of thought" (Noonan 1999, 2). However, "The *Treatise* was no literary sensation..." during the eighteenth century and later affected his ability to hold an academic position at Edinburgh University where he had studied (Morris 2017, 1). *A Treatise* led to others believing that David Hume was not religiously inclined which was still controversial despite the Enlightenment's increased secularized nature.

In the introduction and first section, "Understanding," Hume questions the standards of philosophy in the eighteenth century and set forth his theory of thoughts and ideas. First and foremost, Hume challenged recent and contemporary natural philosophers for their failure to bring modern science to bear on human nature itself. He reflects on the fact that, "It is evident, that all sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature" (Hume 2009, 9). Evidently, Hume believed in scientific progress, achievable through the analysis of human nature and man. Hume states, "Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion, are in some measure dependent on the science of man..." showing the centralized topic of Hume's philosophy in

combination with scientific methods (Hume 2009, 9). Furthermore, Hume's idea shows his connection with the beliefs of Isaac Newton and science. For philosophy to be revived, "... [Hume] argues that it is by following the methods of Newton and by developing a science of human nature..." (Mounce 2002, 15). The discoveries and successes of natural philosophy influenced Hume's urging for the science of man to be the center of his new philosophical ideas (Schliesser 2007, 1).

Human understanding and perception are vital to the growth of philosophy; Hume furthers the human mind in the section *Understanding* with an emphasis on impression and perception. Hume asserts that "Impressions may be divided into two kinds, those of sensation and those of reflection" (Hume 2009, 26). Sensation is the perceptions humans receive from their souls with no known origin, while reflection is from our ideas and experiences before new impressions. The *Treatise* goes on to explain that after we perceive these impressions, "...a copy is taken into the mind..." which then manifests itself into what Hume defined as an idea. Although Hume drew upon John Locke's ideas, Hume believed in "...restoring the word, idea, to its original sense, from which Mr. Locke perverted, in making it stand for all perceptions" Hume asserted the significant difference between ideas and impressions. Impressions are copies of what humans perceive and ideas are created from experience and analysis of the impression. (Noonan 1999, 54). Notably, after the pivotal moments of sensation and reflection memories are formed in the human mind, allowing for these ideas to be archived and used as experiences for future impressions. Memories are events happening in one's mind after an experience.

Hume analyzes a seven-part philosophical model for human thought essential to knowledge and associations. The initial part of relation is a resemblance, which does not always have to conjure an idea. Next, there is identity, which he explains, "Of all relations the most

universal is that of identity, being common to every being whose existence has any duration” (Hume 2009, 36). Space and time are the subsequent relations, easily comparable and universal. Following space and time, are numbers and quantities which provide an ultimate concrete comparison to one another through mathematics and observation respectively. Simply put, ideas can only exist or not exist. Lastly, the relationship between cause and effect pertains to events and experience. The concept of philosophical relation correlates to the chapter “Of Knowledge and Probability” which utilizes the seven steps of relation to analyze the cause of any event and how we can believe unseen events. Hume states, “...it is evident cause and effect are relations, of which we receive information from experience...” (Hume 2009, 119). In *Philosophical Guidebook to Hume on Knowledge*, the author, Harold Noonan, finds Hume’s answer to questions of causation in a concept he calls “causal inference” (Noonan 1999, 91). Breaking down the term further, causal is the cause of an effect, and inference is based on prior knowledge; Hume uses this principle to make an argument for his reasoning behind why humans accept thoughts that are in some ways illogical. Noonan expands on the difference between what he has coined beliefs of “causal inference” and those that are not. The difference between the beliefs is that those derived from numerical quantities or logic such as mathematical equations and obvious observations are not “causal inference.” “Causal inference” is the ability not to have a cause be based solely upon logic but rather more so experience. Experiences such as, “...what will happen if you get shot/take arsenic/drop a hammer on your toe.” allow for “causal inference” (Noonan 1999, 92).

In the third section of *A Treatise*, “Morals”, Hume presents his thesis on morality and features justice and injustice. “Morals” is significant because Hume is known for his analysis on the concept of justice. In his introduction to “Morals”, Hume makes a universal statement that,

“Morality is a subject that interests us [Humans] above all others...” (Hume 2009, 697). From Hume’s statement the importance of morality, even within the eighteenth century and during the Enlightenment period is highlighted. However, Hume goes on to state rather unenthusiastically, “...I never should have ventured upon a third volume of such abstruse philosophy, in an age, wherein the greatest part of men seem agreed to convert reading into an amusement...” (Hume 2009, 697). Unfortunately, Hume understood not many would praise his ideas or understand them entirely during the publication of “Morals”. Furthering his inquiry, Hume divides philosophy into two separate entities: speculative and practical. Moreover, morals extend from the speculative notion of philosophy rather than definitive evidence. These morals can, “...excite passions, and produce or prevent actions,” which is justified by the strength perceived morals have from in societal norms (Hume 2009, 699). Therefore, reason is not an important component when forming a moral. Reason provides independence from feelings of passion, creating no influence upon us as emotional responses do. Hume argues that if morals did not invoke emotional responses, such as passion, there would be no use for morals due to a lack of influence on our actions. Hume’s interpretation of morals deviates from his previous “Newtonianism” and scientific modelling. However, in the case of morals, science serves little to no purpose. Moral’s themselves are subjective and serve to represent the emotions of the ruling society. Hume’s assertion of passion is indicative to how humans decide the importance of poise and virtuous qualities.

In a subsection of “Morals” entitled “Of Justice and Injustice”, Hume seeks how to define justice properly. Self-love, as he explains it, is the, “...source of all injustice and violence...” because it derails us from wholesome actions and instead focuses on only ourselves (Hume 2009, 730). The only way to treat this condition is to restrain ourselves from such vices. Hume explains

public interest as an unnatural component of justice. Ideal involvement includes the development of rules and laws to promote justice and honesty explicitly. Public interest supersedes our vices and self-love to govern a mass of individuals. Hume explains that men attach themselves so heavily to the possession of their assets due to the laws of society. He goes on to state, “Though the rules of justice be artificial, they are not arbitrary,” meaning they have been created for a purpose (Hume 2009, 736). Hume believes, “Mankind is an inventive species...” and can create such laws and therefore justice. However, man invents these laws and concepts which enable an attachment to promote whatever the law has set out to accomplish.

To a large extent, *A Treatise* argues for an improvement to philosophy itself through scientific modeling, concepts of justice as applicable to man, and understanding elements of the human mind including impression and ideas.

Hume's Beliefs

. Through his understanding of Shaftesbury's works, Hume began to embody a “modern-day stoic” and became focused on “reflections against death, & poverty, & shame, & pain, & all the other calamities of life” (Harris 2015, 81). However, Hume became influenced by natural science and its contributors such as Isaac Newton, John Locke, and Lord Shaftesbury. The purpose of *A Treatise* was to contribute a furthering a scientific evaluation of man towards a more philosophical approach (Harris 2015, 84).

Philosophical empiricism and sentimentalism are evident from Hume's written works. His empiricism comes from the belief he has in experience as the primary foundation of knowledge. Hume's sentimentalist beliefs are rooted in his views on passionate emotions being

the leader in moral decisions. Naturalism is another component of Hume's philosophy which is the idea that natural laws of science govern the world.

Interestingly, Hume analyzed the concept of miracles regarding nature's laws. He views miracles as something that would completely defy the set laws of nature and be entirely out of the ordinary. Hume states in his *First Enquiry*, "In conclusions that are based on an infallible experience, [man] expects the outcome with the highest degree of assurance and regards his past experience as a full proof of the future existence of that outcome" showing his belief in empiricism and the argument against miracles (Hume 2017, 58). Since miracles go against prior knowledge and experience, they are perceived as unnatural and unreliable. These spontaneous miracles challenge the systematic construct of nature's law. For this reason, Hume formulates great disdain for miracles and the connection with religion (McGrew 2016, 1). A secular belief system such as the one Hume had, leaves no room for supernatural actions without an apparent cause and effect. As an Enlightenment thinker, with deep rooted influences from Isaac Newton and secularism, Hume vehemently opposed the possibility of miracles. Miracles completely went against the grain of thinking philosophers such as Hume tried to promote. Any abstract concept that did not rely on experience, was not regarded as a real event.

Colleagues viewed Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1779) as too controversial. After much convincing, Hume agreed to publish the work after his passing in 1776 to avoid being ostracized (Morris and Brown 2014, 1). The *Dialogues* are meant to explore the existence of God through three characters; however, each character has their position on whether the presence of God can be confirmed. Natural theology was an essential component to the Enlightenment since the requirements were concrete evidence rather than blind faith. The characters bicker but ultimately explain three arguments against each other, notably case of

design. Negative theology, the cosmological argument and argument from design are the positions represented by the characters. The first argument of negative theology has two conditions which are that God exists and that we do not know anything about God. However, the unclear aspect of the debate is everyone's personal tie for who they feel God embodies. Therefore, how is it that we do not know anything about God if we can invoke an image for ourselves? Additionally, this argument uses God as a word with no meaning since there is no evidence to back up any claims made about a deity. The argument relies on those who do not question the first two premises and believe without fail God exists despite having no evidence – only faith. The easiest way to refute this argument is to assert that we do not know anything about the concept, then the word God no longer holds meaning.

Further into the debate, is the cosmological argument, which focuses on three premises to determine if God exists. The argument states, "If x exists, then x has a cause. The universe exists. Therefore, the universe has a cause which is God." This argument may sound more thought out and reasonable than negative theology. However, the ontological does not depend on the first premises to be very relevant to the last two premises of the universe and that the cause is God. The argument relies on the first statement as truth and thus is believed to support the whole debate. However, the validity of this argument does not hold up despite efforts to offer up some evidence regarding the belief God is real. Since only one premises needs to hold true, the ontological argument is either invalid due to irrelevant information or the conclusion becomes insignificant.

The argument of design has more conditions and premises than the first two. First, the world is a machine made up of machines. Second, all machines have an intelligent designer. Next, similar effects have similar causes but in proportion. Lastly, in the argument the world is

said to have an intelligent designer who is like the people that create these intelligent machines on Earth. However, the problem with this argument comes from how we define machines and how the world's processes or machines could be made from people. This argument only allows for either the first premises or second to be true but not both. Seeing as to how we can raise the question of who designed or created God. The argument from design has little religious significance as it does not touch on any moral qualities of God or even appearance. Meaning Hume's belief of skepticism has proof from the argument of design due to religious insignificance.

Hume's Influence on Kant

Immanuel Kant and David Hume both lived within the late 1720s-1770s before Hume's passing in 1776. Hume's philosophies inspired Kant's early interest and ideas in philosophy. Kant was focused on "human anatomy" and explored the human psyche from our motivations to value of emotions. (Rohlf 2018, 1). Like Hume, Kant did not grow up exceptionally wealthy, but finances were never an immediate issue. From childhood, Kant was also exposed to the religious beliefs of Pietism through his primary schooling. Kant developed an interest in classical language at an early age and sought out opportunities in school to learn Latin. Unlike Hume, Kant had a consistent line of work tutoring children, teaching and being a chair member for Albertina University. Kant composed three critiques in his lifetime which were the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), and *Critique of Judgement* (1790) (Rohlf 2018, 1). Additionally, he published scientific works and five more philosophical works later in his lifetime. The *Critiques* were written and published at the tail end of the Enlightenment. The works were a response to the dilemma that faced those during the Enlightenment from the threat posed to religion and traditions from science and reason. Kant

drew from the ideas of Hume and Hutcheson in his philosophical essays and understanding (Rohlf 2018, 1). Furthermore, Kant is infamous for his assertion that Hume, "...was the very thing that many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a completely different direction" (Guyer 2009, 1). The influence of Hume is clear from his philosophy's ability to wake Kant from his mental slumber and pursue the human understanding and morality.

Both Hume and Kant shared a mutual love for Isaac Newton's work and methodology in natural philosophy or science as we know of it today. Similar to Hume's *A Treatise*, Kant explores Newton's scientific methods in comparison to hard science and philosophy in his "Prize Essay" (1760s). Kant implores a new, "...inductive empirical method of the natural science" in the "Prize Essay" where he utilizes observation and reasoning towards his philosophy (Guyer 2012, 40). Kant's new approach is similar to Hume's philosophy in *A Treatise*. Although both philosophers were able to establish common ground with Isaac Newton, Kant strayed from Hume's initial idea of morality. Kant associates morality within the confines of law, obligation, and duty. Conversely, Hume embodies more of a sentimentalist approach which Kant reviewed but ultimately refuted. Moral sentimentalism is the idea that our human emotions and desires are used to create morals (Kauppinen 2017, 1). Hume's moral philosophy influenced Kant early in his works. However, as Kant continued the ideology he found flaws within the sentimentalism argument. Kant's issues with sentimentalism include the arbitrary standards of good and evil meant to encapsulate all humans (Wilson 2018, 1). Furthermore, Kant argues morals differ from person to person and how strongly one observes their personal morals will inevitably vary. The sheer uncertainty of the differing standards in morality forces Kant to reject sentimentalism as an answer to human morals. Leading into moral judgement, Hume believed that it will, "...concern

the character traits and motives behind human actions,” (Wilson 2018, 1). Therefore, our passions, vices and virtues of our character influence our judgement in moral situations. Hume expands on moral judgement as a way of perceiving an event or situation through unbiased thinking while allowing for one to recognize their emotional responses (Wilson 2018, 1). Kant’s approach to moral judgement is free from emotion and the concept of vices and virtues; thus, challenging human beings to make the judgement based on moral law and strictly by right or wrong. Here, Kant alludes back to his main principles of laws, duties, and obligations. He asserts the moral law to begin, then deduces that it is the duty of the being to spectate a situation. Lastly, the being has the obligation to determine if the situation is just or unjust while free from emotion (Wilson 2018, 1).

Reason for Kant is the vehicle for moral decisions, but for Hume, it is the emotional response and character traits that human possess individually. Furthermore, Hume and Kant have fundamentally different ideas on the concept of reason and what it entails. For Hume, reason is directly correlated with passion and will not directly influence one's moral actions. Passions are the dominant influential factor for Hume in human decision making and perception. Kant disagrees and asserts reason is unrelated to passionate emotion and therefore is rational in its contribution. Despite this, Kant does hold a belief that emotions are what can motivate us and our actions in some way (Wilson 2018, 1).

Vices and virtues are used by Kant and Hume to express human morality, but the perception of the definitions differ. Hume explored the idea of vices and virtues as character traits more so tied to the mind than anything else. Vices for Hume are undesirable qualities in human beings including malice or greed, while virtues are desirable and give the allusion of goodness and pleases others (Wilson 2018, 1). Kant’s ideas of virtue and vices contribute to his

original moral model of laws and duties. Virtuous endeavors for Kant are one's ability to fulfill moral responsibilities and obey to moral laws. On the other hand, vices restrict one's obligation to the moral code through practices of greed and only self-fulfillment. For Kant, morality is the defining law that applies to everyone which demands respect and an obligation to fulfill the commitment to morality (Wilson 1).

Alternatively, Kant and Hume's work expresses similarities in their respective philosophies from moral construct to freedom. The basis of morality was a significant factor in the human understanding for both despite some disagreement. These moral constructs allowed humans to have a more comprehensive understanding of their motivations and actions. Morals became more abstract and subjective rather than cemented by religious leaders. The concept of freedom became essential for both philosophers on morality and the connection with determinism. Determinism is the idea of, "...every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature," meaning one's moral actions are a result of prior events (Hofer 2016, 1). Kant and Hume recognize free will's involvement in regard to decision making but are interested in what causes one to pick what to do and whether it is moral or not. Both philosophers agree on how to approach religion despite their different religious backgrounds. The ideal philosophy for them does not rely upon religious notions and morals to promote clear decision making. Additionally, both hold the belief that morality and religious beliefs should be held at a distance. Hume is more apprehensive of religious intentions than Kant, but both are in agreement on religious separation. The idea is that no God is governing the moral atmosphere but rather the intellect and reason of human beings. Hume argues that religion changes our intentions, and so we begin to conform to an idealized set of values without question

or the ability to create our own. Kant's philosophy generally agrees with Hume but is less jaded by religion and takes a lighter approach to refute the existence of a God.

From Kant's early skepticism and arguments against sentimentalism, Hume became one of the primary influences for Kant's work. Kant uses his writings to agree or refute assertions from Hume. Hume, through his philosophical ideas, was able to contribute to the birth of modern philosophy through Kant's ability to interpret his work.

Conclusion

Overall, Hume's legacy lies in *The History of England*, *A Treatise* and his letters. Historical framework shifted from isolated events to increased awareness of social and political implications after Hume's *The History of England*. From Hume's *Treatise*, his philosophy grew to encompass science and experiences as knowledge. New definitions of memories, ideas, and reflections of the mind arose from *A Treatise*. Hume's concepts of morality questioned reason as the source of a moral construct. Instead, he advocated for the use of passionate emotions as the embodiment of morals. Hume's letters allow the reader a glimpse into his struggle with mental health, political status, and passion for philosophy. Furthermore, Hume's work inspired Kant to foster his ideas on knowledge, free will, and morality. The Enlightenment benefited from Hume's continued assertions of scientific methods as a vehicle for furthering philosophical ideas. Hume's lack of religious beliefs caused him to encourage the secular approach cultivated by the 18th century. Therefore, Hume revolutionized philosophical advancement from his scientific approach and analysis of the mind's complexities. Furthermore, Hume's disagreements with other philosophers proved to be powerful as Hume set out to re-analyze and refute previous ideas. Thereby, challenging the 17th century philosophical thinking and reshaping philosophy for the 19th century thinkers.

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