

# Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*

## SCHEDULE

- SCIENCE OF MAN. What is the project? *Treatise*, Introduction, pp. 3-6; Abstract, pp. 405-17. Tu 4 Jan
- THEORY OF IDEAS. What is the theory of ideas? How important is the principle that every idea is copied from an impression? *Treatise*, 1.1.1-7, pp. 7-22. Th 6 Jan
- REASON & KNOWLEDGE. What does Hume mean by "reason"? The problem of induction (esp. §6). *Treatise*, 1.3.1-6, pp. 50-65. Tu 11 Jan
- BELIEF. (1) What is distinctive about belief? *Treatise*, 1.3.7-8, pp. 65-74; Appendix, pp. 396-8. (2) Does the discussion of probable reasoning fit with a skeptical interpretation of the problem of induction? *Treatise*, 1.3.11-13, 15, pp. 86-104, 116-8. Th 13 Jan
- NECESSARY CONNECTION: BACKGROUND. Occasionalism: motion of inert matter requires divine omnipotence. *Treatise*, 1.3.14, pp. 105-16; Malebranche. Tu 18 Jan
- NECESSARY CONNECTION: MOE. Different strains: meaning, ontology, and epistemology. How they are used in competing interpretations. *Treatise*, 1.3.14, pp. 105-16. Th 20 Jan
- SCEPTICISM ABOUT THE SENSES. Why do we believe in external objects when all we have are perceptions? Criticism of philosophical theory of double existence of perceptions and objects. *Treatise*, 1.4.2, pp. 125-44. Tu 25 Jan
- SUBSTANCE, BODY, AND MIND. Philosophical attempts to explain how perceived qualities hang together as things. For bodies: ancients, substances vs. accidents; moderns, primary vs. secondary qualities. For minds, neither materialism nor immaterialism is satisfactory. *Treatise*, 1.4.3-5, pp. 144-64. Th 27 Jan

- PERSONAL IDENTITY. Q: why do we believe in personal identity? A: modified version of Locke's memory theory. Hume's inscrutable second thoughts. *Treatise*, 1.4.6, pp. 164-71; Appendix, pp. 398-401; Locke. Tu 1 Feb
- NATURE OF HUME'S SCEPTICISM. What do we learn from the sceptical arguments? *Treatise*, 1.4.7, pp. 171-178. Th 3 Feb
- THEORY OF THE PASSIONS. Indirect passions and the double relation of impressions and ideas. Application to self-directed (pride, humility) and other directed (love, hatred) passions. *Treatise*, 2.1.1-5, 2.1.11, 2.2.1; pp. 181-90, 206-11, 214-6. Tu 8 Feb
- LIBERTY & NECESSITY. Responsibility for actions depends on their being caused by character. Why we think we have liberty: we don't feel forced. Apparent tension with book 1 account, which involves feeling forced. *Treatise*, 2.3.1-2, pp. 257-265. Th 10 Feb
- REASON & THE WILL. Reason cannot influence the will, much less control it. *Treatise*, 2.2.3, pp. 265-8. Tu 15 Feb
- REASON & MORALITY: BACKGROUND. Two opponents: rationalists and egoistic conventionalists. *Treatise*, 3.1.1-2, pp. 293-306; 3.3.6, pp. 393-5; Clarke, Hobbes. Th 17 Feb
- REASON & MORALITY: MOPE. Different strains: meaning, ontology, psychology, and epistemology. How they are used in competing interpretations. *Treatise*, 3.1.1-2. Tu 22 Feb
- NATURAL VIRTUES. Theory: virtues are qualities immediately agreeable or useful to self or others. Shallow distinction between moral virtues and natural abilities. *Treatise*, 3.3.1-5, pp. 367-93. Th 24 Feb
- ARTIFICIAL VIRTUES: JUSTICE. Justice doesn't fit the story about natural virtues: being just is sometimes neither useful nor agreeable. Artificial virtue story explains why we treat justice as a virtue. Does the story rely too heavily on self-interest? *Treatise*, 3.2.1-2, pp. 307-22; 3.2.6, pp. 337-42. Tu 1 Mar

HUME & KANT. Compare their treatment of the motive of duty. <i>Treatise</i> , 3.2.1.1-8, pp. 307-9; 3.2.5.5-6, pp. 332-3; Kant.	Th 3 Mar
HUME'S MORAL SUBJECTIVISM. Why isn't it a matter of objective fact whether acts are virtuous or vicious? See the theory of natural virtue, e.g.. How does Hume handle moral conflict? Hume, "A Dialogue."	Tu 8 Mar
REVIEW. A review session for the exam.	Th 10 Mar

## MATERIALS

The preferred edition of the *Treatise* is the one edited by David and Mary Norton and published in the Oxford Philosophical Texts series. It is available in the Seminary Coop bookstore. This edition has a tan and green cover and is larger than an average book; it is not the small one edited by Selby Bigge and Nidditch.

The numbers in the schedule refer to book, part, section, paragraph, and pages of this edition; book 3, part 2, section 1, paragraphs 1-8, pages 302-9 = 3.2.1.1-8, pp. 307-9.

The other readings will be made available in a xeroxed packet that may be purchased from the Humanities Copy office, in Classics 11. All readings will be on reserve in the Regenstein Library.

Announcements and comments on lectures will be posted on the web at this address:

<http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/mgreen/HumeW05/>

## INSTRUCTORS

The instructor for this course is Michael Green. Office: 123 Wieboldt. Phone: 702-8503. Office hours: Wednesdays 2-4.

David Woessner is the course assistant. His email address is [woessner@uchicago.edu](mailto:woessner@uchicago.edu).

## ASSIGNMENTS

There will be three assignments: (1) a take home mid-term exam, distributed on Thursday, 3 February and due on Monday, 7 February; (2) a paper, due Monday, 7 March; (3) a final exam.

Please take note of the following policies. (1) All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. (2) Late papers will be accepted without question but penalized at the rate of one-eighth of a grade a day, with exceptions in extremely unusual circumstances. (3) Plagiarism, presenting someone else's work as your own, will result in failure in this course and will be reported to the relevant academic authorities. If you are unsure about exactly what counts as plagiarism, please ask.