

Hume on the mind

- Two kinds of mental states
 1. impressions
 2. ideas
- Copy Principle :: all ideas are copies of impressions
- All ideas are less phenomenologically “vivid” and “forceful/lively” than their corresponding impressions
- Three principles of association
 1. resemblance
 2. contiguity in time and space
 3. cause & effect
- Missing shade of blue
 - Not a counterexample (?)

Hume’s Fork

- Relations of ideas
 - certain
 - known just by thinking
 - independent of what actually exists
 - concern necessary truths
 - examples include mathematics, linguistic definition/stipulation
 - Negation is or entails a contradiction
- Matters of fact
 - contingent
 - Negation is not (or does not entail) a contradiction
 - not knowable just by thinking
 - depends on what is/was actual
- Analytic truths vs. synthetic truths
 - a priori** knowable/justifiable just by thinking
 - a posteriori** not knowable/justifiable just by thinking – appeal to some experience of the actual world
- Is Hume’s fork fully exhaustive & exclusive?
 - could there be synthetic a priori truths/knowledge?

Hume on Causation

- What is it to have causal knowledge of things?

- What give us certainty (knowledge) of matters of fact beyond that which we currently experience?

Negative Argument

Causal knowledge is not attained via relations of ideas

- The relation of an effect to its cause (and vice versa) can never be attained merely by analysis of the relevant ideas and their relations
 - No contradiction is implied by denying that some effect follows from (some conception of) a putative cause
 - Cause & effect are entirely distinct
 - No necessary connections between entirely distinct existences

Causal knowledge is not attained via a rational process of induction from matters of fact

- Hume denies that causal reasoning from matters of fact is rational
 1. In the past, when I have let go of solid objects suspended in the air, they have fallen.
 2. Therefore, When I let go of this object, it will fall
- We have no rational justification for holding (2) on the basis of (1)
 - truth is not self-evident
 - no contradiction is implied by denial of (2) (i.e. negation of (2) is “conceivable”)
 - no demonstrative (logical) relation between (1) and (2)
- We have no rational basis for believing (2) on the basis of (1)
 - Any rational basis for induction over instances (enumerative induction) requires that we know that the future will be like the past (FLP)
 - * We have no reason to believe FLP
 - No logical demonstration of the truth of FLP
 - Cannot accept FLP based on appeals to probability (i.e. on the FLP having been true previous) – the claim that FLP is true based on past observation of FLP’s truth is circular, it simply assumes that FLP is true