

## CONTENTS

Introduction. Scotland's Hidden Gem	1
1. The Foundations of a Thinker	8
2. Natural Wisdom	36
3. The Meaning of Success	93
4. Retaining Our Humanity	149
5. Learning the Hard Way	199
6. Facing the End	234
Appendix. Humean Maxims and Aphorisms	269
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	285
<i>Notes</i>	287
<i>Further Reading</i>	307
<i>Index</i>	311

## INTRODUCTION

# Scotland's Hidden Gem

Standing at the top of Calton Hill, close to the center of Edinburgh, is Scotland's National Monument, built to commemorate the Scottish soldiers and sailors who died in the Napoleonic Wars. Modeled on the Parthenon in Athens, it ended up resembling its inspiration more than its designers intended.<sup>1</sup> While the Parthenon is half destroyed, the National Monument is only half constructed, after work was abandoned in 1829 due to lack of funds.

The monument's evocation of classical Greece in modern Scotland might at first seem incongruous. When Plato and Aristotle were laying down the foundations of Western philosophy, Scotland, like the rest of Britain, was still a preliterate society. However, by the early eighteenth century, it could proudly claim to be the successor of Athens as the philosophical capital of the world. Edinburgh was leading the European Enlightenment, rivaled only by Paris as an intellectual center. In 1757, David Hume, the greatest philosopher the city, Britain, and arguably even the world had ever known, said with some justification that the Scottish "shou'd really be the People most distinguish'd for literature in Europe."<sup>2</sup>



FIGURE 1. Scotland's National Monument on Calton Hill, Edinburgh.

The city produced two of the greatest thinkers of the modern era. One, the economist Adam Smith, is widely known and esteemed. The other, Hume, remains relatively obscure outside academia. Among philosophers, however, he is often celebrated as the greatest among their ranks of all-time. When thousands of academic philosophers were recently asked which non-living predecessor they most identified with, Hume came a clear first, ahead of Aristotle, Kant, and Wittgenstein.<sup>3</sup> Hume has become the postmortem victim of a phenomenon he himself described: “Learning has been as great a Loser by being shut up in Colleges and Cells, and secluded from the World and good Company.”<sup>4</sup> Hume is as adored in academe as he is unknown in the wider world.

Many scientists—not usually great fans of philosophy—also cite Hume as an influence. In a letter to Moritz Schlick, Einstein reports that he read Hume's *Treatise* "with eagerness and admiration shortly before finding relativity theory." He goes so far as to say that "it is very well possible that without these philosophical studies I would not have arrived at the solution."<sup>5</sup> Charles Darwin's notebooks also show he read several of Hume's works. Even the biologist Lewis Wolpert, who says philosophers are "very clever but have nothing useful to say whatsoever," makes an exception for Hume, admitting that at one stage he "fell in love" with him.<sup>6</sup>

Not even his academic fans, however, sufficiently appreciate Hume as a *practical* philosopher. He is most known for his ideas about cause and effect, perception, and his criticisms of religion. People don't tend to pick up Hume because they want to know how to live. This is a great loss. Hume did spend a lot of time writing and thinking about often arcane metaphysical questions, but only because they were important for understanding human nature and our place in the world. "The most abstract speculations concerning human nature, however cold and unentertaining, become subservient to practical morality; and may render this latter science more correct in its precepts, and more persuasive in its exhortations."<sup>7</sup> For instance, cause and effect was not an abstract metaphysical issue for him but something that touched every moment of our daily experience. He never allowed himself to take intellectual flights of fancy, always grounding his ideas in experience, which he called the "great guide of human life." Hume thus thought about everyday issues in the same way as he did about ultimate ones.

To see how Hume offers us a model of how to live, we need to look not only at his work but at his life. Everyone who knew Hume, with the exception of the paranoid and narcissistic

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, spoke highly of him. When he spent three years in Paris in later life he was known as “*le bon David*,” his company sought out by all the *salonistes*. Baron d’Holbach described him as “a great man, whose friendship, at least, I know to value as it deserves.”<sup>8</sup> Adam Smith described him as “approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit.”<sup>9</sup>

Hume didn’t just write about how to live—he modeled the good life. He was modest in his philosophical pretensions, advocating human sympathy as much as, if not more than, human rationality. He avoided hysterical condemnations of religion and superstition as well as overly optimistic praise for the power of science and rationality. Most of all, he never allowed his pursuit of learning and knowledge to get in the way of the softening pleasures of food, drink, company, and play. Hume exemplified a way of life that is gentle, reasonable, amiable: all the things public life now so rarely is.

What Hume said and did form equal parts of a harmonious whole, a life of the mind and body that stands as an inspiration to us all. I want to approach David Hume as a synoptic whole, a person whose philosophy touches every aspect of how he lived and who he was. To do that, I need to approach his life and work together. I have followed in Hume’s biographical and sometimes geographical footsteps to show why we would be wise to follow in his philosophical ones too.

When we look at his life and person, we also understand better why Hume has not “crossed over” from academic preeminence to public acclaim. In short, he lacks the usual characteristics that give an intellectual mystique and appeal. He is not a tragic, romantic figure who died young, misunderstood, and unknown or unpopular. He was a genial, cheerful man who died loved and renowned. His ideas are far too sensible to shock or

not obviously radical enough to capture our attention. His distaste for “enthusiasts”—by which he meant fanatics of any kind—made him too moderate to inspire zealotry in his admirers. These same qualities that made him a rounded, wise figure prevented him from becoming a cult one.

If ever there were a time in recent history to turn to Hume, now is surely it. The enthusiasts are on the rise, in the form of strongman political populists who assert the will of the people as though it were absolute and absolutely infallible. In more settled times, we could perhaps use a Nietzsche to shake us out of our bourgeois complacency, or entertain Platonic dreams of perfect, immortal forms. Now such philosophical excesses are harmful indulgences. Good, uncommon sense is needed more than ever.

I'm going to use a lot of Hume's own words, simply because I find them so elegantly crafted that I can't see how paraphrasing improves them. I know that many people find Hume difficult to read, largely because of his eighteenth-century style, with its long sentences and archaic vocabulary. But within these seemingly meandering and long-winded texts there are so many gems. In particular, Hume knew the importance of beginnings and endings. Take the first paragraph of *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*:

Disputes with men, pertinaciously obstinate in their principles, are, of all others, the most irksome; except, perhaps, those with persons, entirely disingenuous, who really do not believe the opinions they defend, but engage in the controversy, from affectation, from a spirit of opposition, or from a desire of showing wit and ingenuity, superior to the rest of mankind. The same blind adherence to their own arguments is to be expected in both; the same contempt of their

antagonists; and the same passionate vehemence, in inforcing sophistry and falsehood. And as reasoning is not the source, whence either disputant derives his tenets; it is in vain to expect, that any logic, which speaks not to the affections, will ever engage him to embrace sounder principles.<sup>10</sup>

If you can get beyond the use of words like “pertinaciously” (holding firmly to an opinion or a course of action), “whence,” and “inforcing,” you’ll find a paragraph that is almost a mini-essay, capturing so much that is true of the nature of obstinacy and why it is objectionable. It also tells you that Hume intends to avoid the vice. Hume’s inquiries are sincere, not attempts to justify his own preexisting beliefs. The reader should approach his work in the same spirit of openness.

I’ve extracted the essence of the lessons we can learn from him as Humean maxims and aphorisms. From the above passage, for instance, we can distill the principle: *When reason has nothing to do with why people hold their beliefs, reason is powerless to change them.* Usually these are in my words, sometimes they are in Hume’s. They are gathered together in the book’s appendix. On some occasions they are negative lessons: things we can learn from Hume’s mistakes and failings. The self-detracting and humble Hume would surely have approved of this. He once wrote that one of the things that makes a human superior to other animals is that he “corrects his mistakes; and makes his very errors profitable.”<sup>11</sup> After giving his verdict on the character of Sir Robert Walpole, he even noted that “the impartial Reader, if any such there be; or Posterity, if such a Trifle can reach them, will best be able to correct my Mistakes.”<sup>12</sup>

All the maxims can be identified in the text by my use of a different font. A good one to start us on our guided journey comes directly from the pen of the man himself: “*There are*

*great Advantages, in travelling, & nothing serves more to remove Prejudices.*"<sup>13</sup> Hume traveled a great deal during his lifetime. Two of the most significant trips were both to France. They came at opposite ends of his career and had very different characters. As a young man, he went to sleepy La Flèche in the Loire valley to work in virtual solitude on his first major philosophical work, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. As an older man, his oeuvre complete, he spent a little over two years in bustling Paris, feted by the intelligentsia. These bookends, both symmetric and asymmetric at the same time, frame his life and work in a way that helps us to better understand both. They show that Hume speaks to us all, at every time of life, whether solitary or sociable, well-known or obscure, successful or struggling, young or old. Hume and his philosophy are companions for life.



## INDEX

- Abstract of a late Philosophical Performance, entitled A Treatise of Human Nature, &c. Wherein the Chief Argument and Design of that Book, which has met with such Opposition, and been represented in so terrifying a Light, is further illustrated and explain'd*, 95
- abstruse philosophy, 141–142
- Adams, Robert, 251
- Adventures of Capt. De la Fontaine, late an officer in the service of the States-General, The*, 136
- Advocates Library, 132–136, 133
- aesthetic tastes, 221–222
- agnosticism, 173, 190–191
- Alder, Jane, 252–253
- altruism, 129
- animals, Hume on humans compared to, 236–239
- Aristotle, 1, 2, 178–179; on altruism, 129; on democracy, 113; on human being as social animal, 127; influence on Hume, 62, 63; misogyny of, 34; on substance and its properties, 118; on wonder as beginning of philosophy, 123–124
- arrogance, 77
- ataraxia*, 23
- atheism, 168–192, 244–245
- Aurelius, Marcus, 248
- Ayer, A. J., 44
- Baier, Annette, 82, 207
- balance and moderation, 275–276; “middle station of life” and, 106–115
- Bayle, Pierre, 41, 48, 186
- Beattie, James, 31–32
- beauty, 221–222
- Berkeley, 41
- Berlin, Isaiah, 220–221
- Berry, Sara, 132
- birth and childhood home of David Hume, 8–11
- Blair, Hugh, 13–14, 180
- blind spots, 28–35, 278–279
- Boey, Mungo, 132
- Boswell, James, 17, 139, 244–246
- Boyle, Danny, 14
- Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (Dennett), 183
- Buddhism, 125–126
- bundle theories, 123, 263
- burial site of Hume, 15–16, 16, 251–254, 252–253
- Burke, Edmund, 111, 146
- Carlyle, Thomas, 136, 180
- Carrogis, Louis, 196–198, 197
- Caterus, Johannes, 38

- Caulfield, James, 257, 259  
 cause and effect, 67–69, 71–75; chance  
   and, 98–100; impressions and ideas  
   and, 90–92  
 certainty, 71, 75  
 chance, 97–101  
 change and selfhood, 119–121  
 character, 274–275  
 choice, 102–106  
 Churchill, Winston, 84  
 Cicero, 23  
 Cleland, Elizabeth, 235–236  
 Clephene, John, 100  
 Cochin, Charles-Nicholas, 196  
 cognitive bias, 164  
*Collection complete des oeuvres*, 135  
 Colston, Edward, 32  
*Confessions* (Rousseau), 161  
 confidence, 84  
 Confucius, 62, 63, 77, 228–229  
 courage, 62  
 Crawford, John, 208  
  
 d'Alembert, Jean le Rond, 168, 207, 258  
 Dalrymple, David, 226  
 Darwin, Charles, 3, 166, 186  
 Davenport, Richard, 204–206, 208  
 David Hume Walk, 10, 10–11  
 death of Hume, 243–250  
 de Boufflers, Madame, 150–152, 156–157,  
   160–161, 200, 241  
 Deism, 186–190  
*De La Recherche de la Verité* (Mal-  
   branche), 41  
 democracy, 110–111, 113  
 Dennett, Daniel, 183  
 depression, 23  
 Descartes, René, 38, 40, 41–48, 71, 87;  
   on *I*, 116–117  
 “Descent on the coast of Brittany,” 108  
  
 D’Escherny, Francois L., 48  
 Desideri, Ippolito, 125–126  
 de Verdelin, Madame, 161  
 d’Holbach, Baron, 4, 169–170, 207  
*Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*  
   (Hume), 97, 182, 184–185, 187  
*Dialogues of the Dead* (Lucian), 246  
*Dictionary* (Bayle), 41  
*Dictionary of Music* (Rousseau), 225  
 Diderot, Denis, 154, 168, 255–256, 257  
*Discours Politiques de Monsieur Hume,*  
   *traduits de l’anglois* (Hume), 150  
 Dolu, P. Charles François, 126  
 Dow, Alexander, 10  
 du Deffand, Madame, 160–162  
 Duhamel, A. B., 258  
 Dundas, Robert, 134  
  
 Edinburgh, Scotland: Advocates  
   Library in, 132–136, 133; affluence  
   and poverty in, 13–14; David Hume  
   Walk near, 10, 10–11; Hume’s birth  
   and home in, 8–9; Hume’s return  
   to, 106–107, 127–137; Jack’s Land,  
   137, 144; James Court, 144–146, 145,  
   179, 234–235; life in 18th century,  
   130–137; modern day, 15–16, 15–16;  
   Old Calton Burial Ground, 15–16, 16,  
   251–254, 252–253; Riddle’s Court,  
   128–129; Scotland’s National Monu-  
   ment in, 1, 2; Scottish Enlighten-  
   ment in, 131–132; statue of Hume in,  
   255–257, 257  
 Edmonstone, James, 171  
 education of David Hume: after  
   university, 21–27; formal, 13–21  
 Einstein, Albert, 3  
 Elibank, Lord, 150  
 Elliott, Gilbert, 234–235  
 Emerson, Roger L., 136

- Emile, or, On Education*, 199–200  
 emotions, 86; necessity of, 210–211,  
     281–282; the self and, 117–118  
 empiricism, 44–45, 87–89  
*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 95  
*Enquiry concerning Human Under-  
 standing, An* (Hume), 21, 58, 86, 94,  
     141, 219; on cause and effect, 71–73,  
     90, 92; on free will and actions,  
     105–106; Hume's fork in, 66; as  
     reworking of *Treatise*, 143  
*Enquiry concerning the Principles of  
 Morals, An* (Hume), 5, 94, 140, 213,  
     219, 222–223, 226, 229  
 enthusiasm, 139, 171–172, 185  
 Epicurus, 24  
*Essais Moraux et Politiques* (Hume),  
     150  
*Essay Concerning Human Understand-  
 ing, An* (Locke), 176  
*Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*  
     (Hume), 108  
*Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*,  
     139  
 ethics, 63–64  
 evolutionary psychology, 166–167  
 exercise and health, 21–22, 24  
 experience: knowledge gained through,  
     89–90, 91; the self and, 118, 122  
*Exposé succinct de la contestation qui  
 s'est élevée entre M. Hume et M.  
 Rousseau*, 207  
 faith, 56–57  
 Ferguson, Adam, 136, 158  
 Ffalconer, Katherine, 8–9  
 fitness for survival, 166  
*Five Dissertations*, 175  
 Fleming, Caleb, 183  
 flexibility, 62–63  
*Four Dissertations* (Hume), 182  
 France, Hume's travel to, 36–39  
 Franklin, Benjamin, 146, 168, 186  
 freedom/free will, 102–106, 114  
 frugality, 63, 137  
 fundamental attribution error, 165  
 Geddes, Patrick, 128–129, 145–146  
 generosity, 62  
 Geoffrin, Madame, 160, 162  
 Gibbon, Edward, 138, 170, 236, 243  
 good life, 283–284  
 Gopnik, Alison, 125  
 Grant, James, 137  
 Greig, J.Y.T., 207  
 Grimm, Friedrich Melchior, 241–242  
 Grose, T. H., 140  
 habit, 215–216; virtue and, 62  
 Hall, Edith, 34  
 happiness, 25–26, 212–213  
 Harris, James, 41, 110, 112, 139, 140, 143,  
     191, 255  
 Hertford, Lord, 150, 156, 157, 180–181,  
     191–192, 198  
 heuristics, 164–165, 166  
 hierarchies of power, 230  
*Histoire amoureuse des Gaules par le  
 comte de Bussy Rabutin*, 135  
*History of England* (Hume), 137–140  
*History of the Decline and Fall of the  
 Roman Empire* (Gibbon), 138,  
     243  
*History of the Works of the Learned*, 71  
 Hobbes, Thomas, 38, 120  
 Home, Henry, 94  
 Home, John, 8–9, 139, 180, 243,  
     250–251  
 Hôtel de Brancas, Paris, 192–196, 193  
 Hugo, Victor, 151

- human nature, 43, 264, 276–277;  
 chance and, 97–101; character and,  
 274–275; choice and, 102–106; free  
 will and, 102–106; happiness and,  
 25–26; heuristics and, 164–165, 166;  
 negative assessments of, 217–218;  
 philosophy based on, 87–88;  
 Stoicism and, 25
- Hume, David, 1–3, 135; on abstruse  
 philosophy, 141–142; on acquiring  
 knowledge of the world, 271–272;  
 admiration of virtue of, 259; on  
 aesthetic tastes, 221–222; on argu-  
 ment and discussion, 78–81,  
 279–280; atheism and, 168–192; on  
 balance and moderation, 275–276;  
 birth and childhood home of, 8–9;  
 burial site of, 15–16, 16, 251–254,  
 252–253; on cause and effect, 67–69,  
 71–75, 90–92; on chance, 97–101; on  
 character, 274–275; comparison of  
 humans and animals by, 236–239;  
 on confidence, 84; conservatism of,  
 110–112; on correction in philoso-  
 phy, 143–144; crisis and epiphany  
 for, after leaving university, 21–27;  
 death of, 243–250; on deism,  
 186–190; on democracy, 110–111, 113;  
 difficulty in reading works of, 5–6;  
 on empiricism, 44–45; empiricism  
 and, 44–45, 87–89; enjoyment of  
 good food by, 235–236; on ethics,  
 63–64; as example on how to live,  
 3–5; as failed merchant, 27–35;  
 formal education of, 13–21; in  
 France (*See* La Flèche, France;  
 Paris, France); on free will, 105–106;  
 on the good life, 283–284; on habit,  
 62, 215–216; on happiness, 25–26,  
 212–213; *History of England* by,  
 137–140; on human nature (*See*  
 human nature); on impressions  
 and ideas, 85–92; influence on  
 scientists, 3; on justice, 226–233;  
 last home of, 239–255; lifelong  
 bachelorship of, 239–241; on  
 marriage and divorce, 154–155;  
 maxims and aphorisms of, 6–7; at  
 “middle station of life,” 106–115;  
 military expedition joined by,  
 108–109; on miracles, 52–59; on  
 modesty, 77–78, 83–84, 121–122;  
 on morality, 62–63, 280–281; on  
 moral pluralism, 221; on necessary  
 connection, 69, 90; on necessity  
 of emotion, 210–211, 281–282; on  
 passion, 213–215; personal character  
 of, 255–267, 256; on philosophy and  
 philosophers, 27, 263–266, 270–271;  
 physical appearance of, 258–259;  
 on politics and the good society,  
 110–114, 218–219, 272–273; popular-  
 ity of writings by, 139–140; portraits  
 of, 196–198, 197, 202–203, 203, 258;  
 as practical philosopher, 3; on  
 prejudice, 278–279; on pride,  
 100–101; psychology and, 163–168;  
 on reading and writing, 282–283;  
 on reason (*See* reason); rejection  
 of Descartes’s ideas by, 42–43,  
 49–51; relationship with Rousseau,  
 199–210; on religion, 17–18, 49–51,  
 139, 171–192, 277–278; relocation to  
 La Flèche, 39–52; reputation of,  
 3–4; return to Britain, 93; return  
 to Edinburgh, 127–137; return to  
 Ninewells, 106–107; scholarship on,  
 11–12; Scottish Enlightenment and,  
 131–132; on the self, 116–127; silly  
 side of, 259; on skepticism and

- doubt, 44, 75–76, 79–80, 106,  
273–274; as “Socrates of Edinburgh,”  
146, 148; soft-heartedness of, 259;  
statue of, 255–257, 257; on suicide,  
175, 224–225; on truth, 225–226, 263;  
visit to Italy, 115; voice of, 257–258;  
will of, 250–251; on women, 152–156,  
160, 167
- Hume’s fork, 66
- Hutton, James, 10
- hyperbolic discounting, 164
- hypocrisy, 99
- “Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth,” 113
- imagination, 69–70, 89
- Immerwahr, John, 29–30
- impressions and ideas, 85–92
- Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, 46
- individuation, 120–121
- induction, 67, 78
- is/ought gap, 214–215
- Jack’s Land, 137, 144
- James Court, 144–146, 145, 179,  
234–235
- Jansen, Cornelius, 55
- Jesuits: Buddhism and, 125–126; and  
College of La Flèche, 40–41, 46–52;  
miracles and, 55–56
- Johnson, Samuel, 263, 264
- justice, 226–233
- Kant, Immanuel, 2, 70
- La Flèche, France, 125–126; character  
of town of, 39–40; church of, 49–50,  
50; freethinking environment of,  
41–42; Hume’s impressions and  
ideas on, 85–92; Jesuits’ College of,  
40–41, 46–52; miracles and, 52–59;  
Prytanée nationale militaire in, 48,  
49, 53; Yvandeau house in, 59–64, 60
- Laplace, Pierre-Simon, 173
- laws of nature, 66–67
- Le Procope café, 151–152
- Les Lacunes de la Philosophie*  
(D’Escherny), 48
- Lespinasse, Mlle. Julie de, 160, 162–163
- Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend*  
*In Edinburgh: Containing Some*  
*Observations on a Specimen, A*  
(Hume), 95
- L’Homme* (Descartes), 44
- liberty, 102–106, 114
- Locke, John, 87, 126, 176
- logic, 88
- Lucan, 232
- Macdonald, James, 170
- Machiavelli, Niccolo, 112
- Malebranche, Nicolas, 41, 46, 48
- Marenne, Marin, 38, 40
- Marmontel, 168
- marriage and divorce, 154–155
- matters of fact, 65–66
- mausoleum, Hume’s, 15–16, 16,  
251–254, 252–253
- Meditations* (Descartes), 38, 41
- Meditationum de Primâ Philosophia*  
(Descartes), 48
- memory, 121, 163–164
- Mercier, Hugo, 82
- Metaphysics* (Aristotle), 62
- Methodism, 250
- “middle station of life,” 106–115
- Midgley, Mary, 146
- Miller, Eugene, 139
- Miller, Michael, 27, 35
- Minto, Gilbert, 182
- miracles, 52–59, 79

- misogyny, 34, 155–156  
modesty, 77–78, 83–84, 100, 121–122  
Montesquieu, 186  
morality, 62–63, 280–281; human liberty  
    and, 104–105; justice and, 226–233  
moral judgments on selves, 211–212  
moral pluralism, 220–221  
moral reasoning, 219–220  
Mossner, E. C., 13, 18, 64, 96, 127, 175,  
    208, 255; on death of Hume, 243,  
    249–250; on Hume acknowledged  
    as leading man of letters in Britain,  
    139, 234; on Hume's cooking skills,  
    235; on Hume's home at Hôtel de  
    Brancas, 194; on Hume's life in  
    London, 93; on Hume's life in Paris,  
    158, 160; on Hume's membership in  
    the Select Society, 136; on Prince de  
    Conti's residence, 163; on vacant  
    stare of Hume, 258  
music, 81  
Musonius, 24  
*My Own Life* (Hume), 37, 116, 138, 199,  
    226, 249, 254, 260  
National Library of Scotland, 135  
National Monument, Scotland, 1–2  
*Natural History of Religion*, *The*  
    (Hume), 182–184  
natural world, the: experiments in, 45,  
    164; human beings as part of, 102;  
    Hume's agnosticism and, 190–191;  
    laws of, 66–67; reason and, 76  
Nazism, 33  
necessary connection, 69, 90  
*Neveu de Rameau* (Diderot), 168  
*New and Easy Method of Cookery*, *A*  
    (Cleland), 235–236  
*New England Journal of Medicine*, 225  
*New Theory of Human Understanding*,  
    *A* (Mercier and Sperber), 82  
Nicholson, Thomas, 136  
*Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle), 62  
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 5  
Ninewells estate, 8–11, 106, 127  
Nyerere, Julius, 32  
occasionalism, 41  
*Oeuvres Philosophiques* (Hume), 150  
“Of Essay-Writing,” 142  
“Of Miracles,” 52–59  
“Of National Characters,” 28  
“Of Polygamy and Divorces,” 154  
“Of Some Remarkable Customs,”  
    218–219  
“Of Suicide,” 175  
“Of the First Principles of Govern-  
    ment,” 115  
“Of the Immortality of the Soul,”  
    175  
“Of the Liberty of the Press,” 111  
*Old and New Edinburgh* (Grant), 137  
Old Calton Burial Ground, 15–16, 16,  
    251–254, 252–253  
Ord, Nancy, 239–241, 242  
orderly society, 228–229  
Paine, Thomas, 186  
Paris, France: atheists of, 168–192;  
    Hume invited to, 149–150, 156–157,  
    191–192; Hume's comparison of  
    London with, 159–160; Hume's  
    departure from, 198; Hume's home  
    at Hôtel de Brancas in, 192–196, 193;  
    Hume's portrait in, 196–198, 197;  
    Hume's social circle in, 158–159;  
    Le Procope café in, 151–152; Prince  
    de Conti Temple in, 163–164;  
    reception of Hume in, 157–158;  
    Regency Café of, 168–169; salons  
    of, 150–152, 160–163, 168–170  
passion, 213–215

- past and future, conformity of, 66–67, 71
- Peirce, Charles Sanders, 70
- perception of the mind, 85, 117
- Perinetti, Dario, 40, 46
- personal identity. *See* self, the
- Pharsalia* (Lucan), 232
- Philo, 97, 184, 187–189
- Philosophical Society, 132, 146
- philosophy, 12–13; abstruse, 141–142; confidence of, 84; correction in, 143–144; Descartes and, 41–48; disputes in, 121–122; empiricist, 44–45, 87–89; history as part of, 140–141; human nature and, 25, 87–88; Hume on philosophers and, 27, 263–266, 270–271; need for observation in, 78; psychology and, 163–168; rationalist, 43–44, 71, 88; of reason, 65–66, 70, 75–84; skepticism and, 44, 75–76, 86; Stoicism, 23–25, 43, 247–249; views of women in French, 154; wonder as the beginning of, 123–124
- Plato, 1, 71, 87
- Playfair, John, 251
- pluralism, moral, 220–221
- Plutarch, 23
- Plutarch's Lives*, 241
- Poker Club, 136
- politics and good society, 110–112, 272–273; democratic, 110–111, 113; rule of law and, 113–114; skepticism on, 218–219
- portraits of Hume, 196–198, 197, 202–203, 203, 258
- prejudice, 28–35, 239, 278–279
- pride, 100–101
- Principia Philosophæ* (Descartes), 48
- principles of association, 86
- Principles of Human Knowledge* (Berkeley), 41
- Problems of Philosophy, The* (Russell), 88
- property and taxation, 230–231
- prosperity, 231–232
- Protestantism, 139, 172
- Prytanée national militaire, La Flèche, 48, 49, 53
- psychology, 163–168; evolutionary, 166–167
- Pyrrhonic skepticism, 75–76
- racism, 28–35
- Ramsay, Allan, 202–203, 202–203, 239, 258
- Ramsay, Michael, 41
- Rankenian Club, 17
- Rasmussen, Dennis, 96, 141, 146, 184, 230
- rational argument, 78–81, 279–280
- rational choice, 212–213
- rationalism, 43–44, 71, 75, 88; in private reasoning of individuals, 82
- reading and writing, Hume on, 282–283
- reason, 65–66, 70, 75–84, 209–210, 264, 269–270; criticisms of Hume's notion of, 82–83; disputes in, 121–122; is/ought gap in, 214–215; laws of, 80; limits of, 79–80; in morals, 219–220; observation and, 78; passion and, 213–215; philosophers' exaltation of, 83; private individual, 82; rational argument and, 78–79, 80–81; real meaning of, 212
- recency effect, 164
- Recueil de quelques pieces curieuses concernant la philosophie de monsieur Descartes* (Bayle), 48
- Regency Café, 168–169
- Reid, Thomas, 94, 123, 251

- religion, 277–278; agnosticism and, 173, 190–191; atheism and, 168–192, 244–245; deist, 186–190; faith and, 56–57; Hume's rejection of, 17–18, 49–51, 139; immortality of the soul and, 175–178; life after death and, 177; material prosperity and, 231–232; miracles and, 52–59; science and, 45–46; superstition and enthusiasm in, 139, 172–173, 185
- republicanism, 111, 115
- Riddle's Court, 128–129, 144
- Roman Catholic Church, 40–41, 46, 55, 139, 172, 183. *See also* Jesuits
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 4, 161, 168, 186, 202, 217; denounced by Hume, 207–209; mockery of, 203–204; portrait of, 202, 202–203; relationship with Hume, 199–210
- Russell, Bertrand, 88, 173
- “Sceptic, The,” 24, 216, 218, 266–267
- Schlick, Moritz, 3
- scientific knowledge, 44–46
- Scot, William, 13
- Scots Magazine, The*, 136
- Scotus, Duns, 10
- Select Society, 136
- self, the, 116–127; in Buddhism, 125–126; bundle theory of, 123, 263; change and, 119–121; Descartes on, 116–117; emotions and, 117–118; experience and, 118, 122; individuation of, 120–121; memory and, 121; moral judgment on, 211–212; perceptions of, 117; rational choice and, 212–213; substance of, 118–119, 124
- self-substance, 119, 124
- Seneca, 23, 24, 247–248
- Seven Years' War, 150
- Shaffer, Peter, 81
- skepticism, 44, 75–76, 79–80; of democracy, 110–111; of free will, 106; Hume on doubt and, 273–274
- slavery, 27–35
- Small, James, 10
- Smith, Adam, 2, 4, 110, 134, 144, 175, 182, 230; and the death of Hume, 243–244, 246–247, 254; Hume's letter from France to, 156–159
- Society of Jesus. *See* Jesuits
- Socrates, 176, 178, 249
- Song of Myself*, 262
- soul, immortality of the, 175–178
- Specimen of the Principles concerning Religion and Morality, said to be maintain'd in a Book lately published, entitled, A Treatise of Human Nature* (Wishart), 95
- Sperber, Dan, 82
- St. Clair, James, 108–109, 115
- St. David's Street, 239–240, 240, 242
- Sterne, Laurence, 181
- Stewart, John, 150
- Stoddart, Sandy, 255–257, 257
- Stoicism, 23–25, 247–249; Descartes and, 43
- Strachey, Lytton, 92
- Strahan, William, 143, 146, 159, 246
- Stuart, Dugald, 94–95
- Suard, Jean Baptiste, 207
- substance, 118–119, 124
- suicide, 175, 224–225
- superstition, 139, 171–172, 185
- Tacitus, 48
- Tassie, James, 11
- tastes, 221–222
- taxation, 230–231
- Temple, William Johnstone, 246
- Thiry, Paul Henri, 169



- Topham, Edward, 149
- Torrance, Andrew Stuart, 150
- Trainspotting*, 14
- Traité de morale* (Malebranche), 48
- Treatise of Human Nature*, A (Hume),  
3, 7, 17, 23, 42, 52, 58, 82, 86, 140, 232.  
See also Hume, David; abstract of,  
64–65, 95; *An Enquiry concerning  
Human Understanding* as reworking  
of, 143; on cause and effect, 67–69,  
71–75; composed in La Flèche, 64;  
on conformity of past and future,  
66–67, 71; critical reception of,  
93–96, 140; Hume’s disowning of,  
94, 139; Hume’s satisfaction with,  
91–92; on imagination, 69–70; on  
liberty, 106; on matters of fact,  
65–66; on middle station, 107;  
natural world experiments in, 45;  
on personal identity, 124; on power  
of necessary connection, 69; on  
problem of induction, 67; on  
reasoning, 65, 70; on rule of law,  
114; on women, 153; written attacks  
on, 95–96
- Trebosc, Olivier, 169–170
- truth, 225–226, 263
- ultimate reality, 77–78
- University of Edinburgh, 19, 20, 32, 96,  
128
- van Lelyveld, Alfred, 169–170
- Varia Opeucula* (Aristotle), 62
- vice, 6; boundaries between defects  
and, 64; enthusiasm as Protestant,  
172; extremes of, 62–63; feelings  
about, 210–211; folly and, 83–84;  
human nature and, 112; judgment  
of, 211–212; mankind  
floating between virtue and, 177;  
modesty and, 83; moral thinking  
about, 62; as natural to mankind, 210;  
overlooking of, 99; religion and, 17  
virtue, 17–18, 26, 259; boundaries  
between talents and, 64; ethics  
and, 63–64; feelings about, 210–211;  
habit and, 62; happiness and, 26;  
human nature and, 112; hypocrisy  
and, 99; judgment of, 211–212;  
mankind floating between vice  
and, 177; modesty and, 83; as a  
personified female, 222–223;  
pride and, 101; Stoics on, 24;  
wisdom and, 218
- Voltaire, 26, 138, 151, 168, 170, 186
- Waldmann, Felix, 31
- Wallace, Robert, 181
- Walpole, Horace, 169
- Walpole, Robert, 6
- Walsh, Irvine, 14
- Warburton, Nigel, 258
- wealth, 24–25, 83–84; chance and, 98
- Wealth of Nations, The* (Smith), 230,  
243
- Wedderburn, Rev., 174–175, 254
- Wesley, John, 250
- Whitman, Walt, 262–263
- Whole Duty of Man, The*, 17
- Wilkes, John, 110–111
- Wishart, William, 95, 96
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 2, 44
- women: Hume on, 152–156, 160, 167;  
Hume’s relationships with, 239–242;  
Paris salons and, 150–152, 160–163  
“Women of Sense and Knowledge,” 160
- Wundt, Wilhelm, 168
- Yyvandeau house, La Flèche, 59–64, 60