

Hume Review: After the attack on idea of causal relation, Hume generates two New Problems we discussed last time:

- (1) How Come we Seem to have idea of Causation?
- (2) How to do science without justification for induction?

Solution to (1): Humean account of the origins of the idea of causation:

- (a) succession (b) contiguity (c) constant conjunction (d) habit

Solution to (2): Hume's "skeptical solution" to the problem of induction

Upshot: (1) Concept-psychologism (2) Causation-beliefs:
sufficient PsychMotiv. w/o suff. Rat'l Justif.!!!

I. Objections to Hume's Empiricist Theory of Causation

--not necessary I (constant conjunction): 1-case causal inferences

(babies and hot candles)

--not necessary II (contiguity): Northern lights and sunspots

--not nec III (succession): my hand and my book

--not sufficient: my strange neighbor

--last objection: does (C) violate Correspondence Principle?

--last question: is Hume a skeptic about causation? Philosophy and common life.

II. Last remarks on Hume

--Is Hume a skeptic?

Yes: (1) metaphysical and epist. anti-realism

(2) anti-a priorism

No: (1) deflationism vs. nihilistic skept. ("Pyrrhonism")

(2) how Pure Reason leads to nihilism

(3) "mitigated skepticism" and "common life" (THN: 269)

(4) philosophy as anti-philosophy: Nietzsche & later Wittgenstein

--The Challenges David Hume Left for Us:

(I) Is there realism after radical empiricism?

(II) Is there a priori knowledge after radical empiricism?

III. Berkeley's Phenomenalist/Empiricist Idealism

I. Attacks on DH's Solutions

To attack DH: show biconditional (C) is false by showing some one of the right side claims is either not nec. or not suff.

DH response to not nec. I: not all causes and effects need to yield fine-grained inductions (just THIS cause of pain).

DH response to not nec. II: look at actual analysis and you will see you do have contiguous events connecting the putatively discontinuous events rendered in the sci. explanation.

DH resp. to not nec. III: Refine what needs a causal explanation. The entire 'simultaneous event' is what needs explaining (i.e., by what means both the hand/arm and the book rise to 7.5 feet). The explanation will reveal succession in the relation betw the cause of that and the event.

DH resp. to not suff. (i.e., cases of false causes: alarms and 'getting up', etc.-- why do we not make inductive inference that this is a true cause-effect relation?): You are pretending to have contiguity when you do not (if you think there is no diff. betw the case and one in which cause-effect inductive inference is appropriate).

Last objection: where did the belief in necessity in (C) come from (since CP says we just copy off experiences to get mental contents)? From the imagination, like the missing shade of blue? Would this spoil the analysis? No, since imag. can add content accd'g to DH.

II. Windup on Hume

Is Hume a skeptic? JP: both, or Yes and No. DH thinks we do not have knowledge of mind-independent world of objects. Also, he thinks there are no grounds for the claim that there are mind-independent objects, no world-in-itself, but he is, strictly speaking, agnostic about whether these actually exist. Everything we can know is in the "mind bubble" (i.e., in phenomenal experience). So, DH looks like a skeptic from the pt. of view of meta. realists and epist. realists.

DH's "nutrasweet" apriorism: we have analytic truths, but only by convention.

How DH is not a skeptic: he is deflationary toward ER and MR and rationalist theses on a priori content, but he is not a Pyrrhonist (extreme skepticism--"howling in the face of the abyss"--we cannot know anything). DH notes that nihilism of this type is "an extrusion from Rat'lism". It is a by-product of the bel in the poss. of absolute knowledge. This idea of Pure Reason and its natural goal lead to nihilism; fortunately, nature herself obliterates these chimeras (dine, play a game of backgammon). What is most real, DH is saying, is what we find in the common life....namely, all possible appearances. Results in mitigated skepticism: apply empiricist method to tradit. rat'list views, but "go back to common life" to renew our contact with that, which is as real as it gets.

This Humean attitude has been picked up by other, later phils: Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, e.g. The real job of philosophy is to undermine philosophy.

Now, is this DH position good enough? JP thinks this poses two questions to traditional philosophy (which cannot be avoided due to DH): (I) is there realism after rad. empiricism? (II) Is there anything better than ersatz a priori knowledge after rad. empiricism? Can we get full-bodied, necessary truth independent of the "warm, juicy life world"? Can we transcend our ordinary experience? If you think we can, then mitigated scepticism should not satisfy us. Reid thinks he has a response, as does Kant.

III. Berkeley's Phenomenalism

--assumes empiricist account of origin of ideas (no ideas without sensations)

--introduces new claim: no existence without perception!

A. First Dialogue

--attack on the idea of real properties of mind-independent objects

--attack on the idea of material substance

B. General Form of BB's Arguments in First Dialogue

(i) Assume no legit ideas without sensations

(ii) Assume inferences from sensations to mind-independent entities as their causes are unwarranted

(iii) Notice the 'mind-dependent' features of any and all sensible qualities
(e.g., what is small for me is large for you,
all I ever apprehend directly is in the mind, etc.)

(iv) Note that if such sensible qualities are real properties of mind-independent objects, they must be unchanging and we must be able to know them

(v) Note that by (i) and (ii) and (iii) such sensible qualities are neither unchanging nor are they knowable by us.

(vi) Conclusion: sensible qualities cannot be real properties of mind-independent objects.