



Hume’s “projectivism” explained

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Abstract

Hume appeals to a mysterious mental process to explain how the world appears to possess features that are not present in sense perceptions, namely causal, moral, and aesthetic properties. He famously writes that the mind spreads itself onto the external world, and that we stain or gild natural objects with our sentiments. Projectivism is founded on these texts but it assumes a reading of Hume’s language as merely metaphorical. This assumption, however, conflicts sharply with the important explanatory role that “spreading” and “staining” are supposed to play, which, ironically, is the very appeal of Hume’s texts to projectivists. In this paper, I first consider the difficulties readers of Hume have encountered in their attempts to ascertain nature of the key psychological process. I then identify in Hume’s texts novel theoretical resources that allow Hume to produce a satisfying answer to the question of process, that is, an account of the precise nature of the key process. I offer this explanation assuming what I take to be Hume’s austere conception of the elements involved in the process: sense impressions and “internal impressions” lacking intrinsic intentionality. On my reading, the spreading process explains the gap between the meager input and the rich, novel output: causal, moral and aesthetic judgments.

Keywords Hume · Projectivism · Spreading the mind · Gilding and staining · Phenomenology · Objectivity · Chemistry · Moral judgments · Aesthetic judgements · Causal judgments · Passions · Original existence · Stroud · Blackburn · Joyce
Hume famously writes that “the mind has a great propensity to spread itself on external objects, and to conjoin with them any internal impressions, which they occasion” (T 1.3.14.25).¹ While the faculty of reason discovers objects “as they really stand in nature,” the faculty of taste, according to Hume, is productive; it adds to the natural

¹ References to the *Treatise* are to Hume (2011), hereafter cited as “T” followed by Book, part, section, and paragraph numbers. References to the second *Enquiry* are to Hume (1998), hereafter cited as “EPM” followed by section and paragraph numbers.

I thank one of my excellent reviewers for suggesting this title to me.

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world. By “gilding or staining all natural objects with the colours, borrowed from internal sentiment, [taste] raises, in a manner, a new creation” (EPM App1.21). What exactly is going on when the mind “spreads itself on external objects”? How does taste add anything to the world by “gilding and staining” natural objects with internal sentiments? What are the “new creations”?

It is astonishing how influential these texts have been, given that Hume never answers these fundamental, basic questions. He maintains that “nothing is more usual than to apply to external bodies every internal sensation, which they occasion” (EHU 7 n17.2).² But he fails to explain what this all too usual “application” of internal sensations to external bodies amounts to.³ The disappointing truth is that Hume offers mere explanatory gestures. Projectivism is founded on these texts, and it inherits this gaping hole, one that has been obscured by the assumption that Hume’s language is merely metaphorical. This is a remarkable fact in itself because it is rather clear that Hume *intends* the spreading or staining to play an important explanatory role. In his illuminating study of projectivist theories, Richard Joyce notes how rarely “proper attention has been given to the fact that the theory is generally presented and thought about in *metaphorical* terms (e.g., “gilding or staining”)” He continues, “[e]ven the appellation “projectivism” is metaphorical, for nobody thinks that when a person projects her anger onto the experience of events (say), this emotion literally flies forth from her brain and laminates the world.”⁴ Joyce is surely right that nobody thinks of “projection” in that way. The question is how to think about it.

What is the spreading or staining supposed to explain for Hume? Most generally, the spreading or staining is supposed to explain our phenomenology. More concretely, it is supposed to account for how the world appears to us to possess causal, aesthetic, and moral (henceforth CAM) qualities. A special operation or process is required to explain these appearances because CAM qualities are not present in our sense impressions. Sense perception alone cannot account for the fact that we perceive CAM properties as objective features of the world. Thus, some mental process/es must be invoked to explain these appearances. According to Hume, this is the mental operation of spreading or staining.

The precise or correct description of CAM appearances, or of our phenomenology in general, is of course a question enveloped in subtle, philosophical complexity. Some

² References to the first *Enquiry* are to Hume (2006), hereafter cited as “EHU” followed by section and paragraph numbers.

³ In this paper I shall treat “spreading”, “staining”, “applying” and other such terms as referring to one and the same process. Not everyone accepts this approach. R. N. Sainsbury, for instance, defends the view that the process of spreading is different from the process of staining because the former produces mistaken beliefs while the latter does not. I disagree with this reading. First, I don’t think that mental processes, in general, should be distinguished solely based on the fact that their products have different truth-values. But second, I reject Sainsbury’s claim that one process leads to error while the other does not. Sainsbury (1998).

⁴ Joyce adds this footnote: “Simon Blackburn is also no doubt aware of the metaphorical status of references to “projection,” yet (in my opinion) he has done little to replace the metaphor with a precise literal hypothesis. On at least one occasion he confesses that “projectivism” is not an entirely happy term for the position he has so frequently advocated (Blackburn 1993, p. 36; Joyce 2009).”

philosophers conceive of CAM appearances as being of *mind-independent* qualities⁵; John McDowell claims that we consider moral properties as properties that things possess “independently of their relation to us.”⁶ Others argue that we experience CAM properties as being *subject-independent*.⁷ I don’t need to side with any of these fine-grained, philosophical formulations for my purposes here. I shall refer to CAM appearances as “objective”; we perceive CAM qualities as properties of objects in the world. The willful murder appears to us to be vicious; the painting appears to us as beautiful; the smoke and the fire appear to us to be causally connected. Many of the objects we experience everyday appear to us as possessing CAM qualities. While some conceptualize such appearances as propositional in their structure, others do not. But it is certainly uncontroversial that judgements are propositional. Because I wish to include propositional structure in the phenomena I aim to investigate, I shall refer to CAM *judgements*, by which I shall mean *perceptual* judgements.

Projectivists have a firm grip on their main explanatory *strategy*. After calling attention to the metaphorical language in which projectivists understand their theory, Joyce remarks: “Evidently, projectivism is a theory in need of translation into literal terms”; this is especially so because, as Joyce points out, “all metaphors are by definition false.” In his attempt to advance this much sought-after, literal translation, Joyce puts forward two theses, the conjunction of which he captures by the phrase “minimal projectivism”. They are, first, that we experience CAM qualities as objective features of the world, and second, that these experiences have their origin in some “non-perceptual faculty”. In the case of necessary connection, Joyce writes that “upon observing a regularity in nature we form an *expectation* that brings about” the experiences of an objective causal property. In the case of morality, “upon observing certain actions and characters (etc.) we have an affective attitude (e.g. the emotion of disapproval) that brings about” experiences of objective moral properties.⁸

I fail to see, however, how it is that Joyce advances a literal translation of spreading or staining. What he lays out is a description of the explanatory strategy, and what he leaves out is an account of how this strategy is carried out: what exactly is the process by which the above happens? Peter Kail characterizes “projectivists’ explanations” as explaining “how the subject takes the world to be by appeal to some feature of their mind of which that appearance is a projection.”⁹ Projectivists’ explanations are meant “to explain why the subject takes the world to be a certain way (either on the level of phenomenology or belief) when it is not possible to invoke the world *being that way* to explain why the subject takes it to be so.”¹⁰ As Kail words it, it is “in virtue of something “in here”, that the world “out there” appears to be a certain way.”¹¹ For McDowell, projectivism is supposed to explain “certain seeming features

⁵ For instance, Jonas Olson, referring in particular to “moral *phenomenology*” writes: “To say that we experience moral properties as objective features of the world, I shall assume, is to say that we experience them as mind-independent.” Olson (2011), p. 22.

⁶ McDowell (1998), p. 151.

⁷ Joyce (2009), p. 64.

⁸ Joyce (2009), p. 55.

⁹ Kail (2007), p. 4.

¹⁰ Kail (2007), pp. 27–28.

¹¹ Kail (2007), p. 4.

of reality as reflections of our subjective responses to a world that really contains no such features.”¹² These are, again, mere strategy. We are still missing an answer to *the question of process*: What exactly do we do (or does the mind do) when we take what is “in here,” and make the world appear as it does?¹³

Readers of Hume have consistently struggled to ascertain what the key psychological process *could be* for Hume. After dedicated attempts, Barry Stroud ends up accusing Hume of being in principle unable to produce a satisfying explanation, for reasons, Stroud insists, that lie deep within Hume’s science of the mind and its accompanying conception of nature.¹⁴ Stroud’s analysis, if true, is devastating.¹⁵ While other commentators have been less critical, they have also issued serious warnings of Hume’s dire predicament.

The purpose of this paper is to propose, on Hume’s behalf, an answer to *the question of process*. I am confident that Hume has the theoretical resources, within his science of the mind, to offer a plausible, promising, and indeed an exciting account of the key process. Although I shall often refer to the process simply as “spreading,” the other terms Hume employs do play an important, guiding role in my paper. Why might Hume refer to the process as “spreading” or “gilding” or “staining” or “conjoining” or “mixing”; what might he have had in mind in denoting the process in question with such language? I find an encouraging clue in Hume’s account of the passions. In what follows, I begin by examining the obstacles interpreters have identified preventing Hume from advancing a satisfying, or even adequate response to the question of process. In the second part of the paper, I put forward a novel reading of the spreading process.

1. Spreading feelings onto the world

Causal, aesthetic, and moral judgements share a similar, basic structure for Hume, one that we can analyze in two steps. First, the observation of certain objects or events has a *mental effect*, which Hume refers to with a variety of terms. Alluding to the aesthetic and moral cases, Hume writes that “the mind, from the con-templation of the whole, feels some new impression of affection or disgust, esteem or contempt, approbation or blame” (EPM App. 1.11). In the well-known case of the willful murder, Hume calls attention to a “feeling or sentiment of blame” or a “sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards the action” from the contemplation of it (T 3.1.1.26). Hume clarifies that the sentiment that arises in the case of the beautiful circle is “only

¹² McDowell (1998), p. 154. He argues that “the response that [...] is projected onto the world can be characterized, without phenomenological falsification, otherwise than in terms of seeming to find the supposed product of projection already there.” McDowell (1998), p. 185 and 143. In an earlier paper, McDowell (1985), he outlines some criteria for an explanation to count as projectivist.

¹³ Kail attempts to answer this question by identifying different uses of the metaphor of projection, for instance, Freudian projection, passage of time as changes in beliefs, Feuerbach’s account of the projection of the Christian God. Kail considers these to be “different modes” of projection. Kail (2007), p. 27. But he defends a view of projection as *commitment* outlining criteria to determine when a commitment counts as a case of projection. Kail (2007), p. 49. Kail does not account for our realist or objectivist *phenomenology*.

¹⁴ Stroud (1993).

¹⁵ This is because the psychological explanation of appearances and beliefs and suppositions in general, but especially those central to the other sciences, is essentially what Hume’s science of the mind aims to achieve, and does achieve, in many cases. For discussion of such successful cases see Boehm (2012).

the effect, which that figure produces upon a mind, whose particular fabric or structure renders it susceptible of such sentiments” (EPM App 1.24). Hume also refers to the mental effect as an “internal sentiment” (EPM App 1.21), or “internal impression” (T 1.3.14.20–22), (EHU 7.9), or “impression of reflection” (T 1.3.14.22). I shall employ mostly the term “internal impression” to indicate the mental effect. The second step just is the process of spreading: the spreading of internal impressions onto objects, with the result that we perceive those objects as possessing CAM qualities.

Stroud conceives of the challenging task of interpreting the process of spreading/staining in Hume as involving an essential constraint. He writes:

How does the appearance of [internal impressions] in the mind have the effect of giving us thoughts (or “ideas”) of vice, of beauty, of causation, or of any other qualities or relations we ascribe to objects when according to Hume those qualities and relations do not and cannot actually belong to “objects as they really stand in nature” (M App 1.21)?¹⁶

The task, according to Stroud, is to understand the process of spreading given that CAM qualities or relations “do not and cannot actually belong to “objects as they really stand in nature.” I agree with Stroud that this “do not and cannot” thesis poses a significant constraint on an interpretation of the key process. I understand this constraint as follows: If an interpretation of the process of spreading renders CAM qualities capable of inhabiting a mind-independent world then we have sufficient reason to abandon it. More positively: a satisfying account of the process of spreading would not only explain how the world appears to be to us but also, it would shed light on why Hume thinks that the way the world appears to be is not how the world *could* be independent of observers.

But is it the case that Hume endorses the view that CAM qualities do not and cannot exist in a mind-independent world? Some interpreters have cautioned against attributing to Hume such a strong and dogmatic position. I disagree, but I can’t adequately engage with their views here.¹⁷ However, because I shall rely on this thesis to measure or assess the strength of several interpretations of the spreading process, in what follows I consider briefly some texts that support it.

Hume writes that our ideas of efficacy or power or necessity, all roughly synonymous for him, “represent not any thing, that does or can belong to the objects, which are constantly conjoin’d” (T 1.3.14.19). What is Hume denying here about causal necessity? Some readers insist that Hume is merely denying that anything corresponding to our *idea* of necessity could “belong to the objects”. This leaves the possibility open, according to these readers, that (metaphysical) necessity does and can belong to objects. However, consider the fact that the text that follows Hume’s claim above about the *idea* of necessity is this: “necessity is something that exists in the mind, not in objects; nor is it possible for us ever to form the most distant idea of it, considered as a quality in bodies” (T 1.3.14.22). The first part of this statement is about *necessity*, which Hume argues does not exist in the objects, but rather in the mind. The second statement says that we couldn’t even have an idea of necessity *as a quality of*

¹⁶ Stroud (1993), p. 258.

¹⁷ I do so in Boehm (2018).

objects. Hume identifies *necessity* with the content of our idea of necessity, and then he maintains that *necessity*, as we think of it, could not be a property of objects.

Hume also contends that “[b]eauty is not a quality of the circle,” pointing to the fact that the quality of beauty “lies not in any part of the line, whose parts are all equally distant from a common center” (EPM, App 1.14). “Till [an] spectator appears, there is nothing but a figure of such particular dimensions and proportions: from his sentiments alone arise its elegance and beauty” (EPM App 1.24). These claims here are about *beauty*, about the aesthetic quality itself, and the position is that this aesthetic quality depends for its existence on a spectator. And if that is the case, then beauty does not and cannot exist in a world devoid of minds.

A moral quality, such as the vice of “willful murder,” is not, according to Hume, a quality of the object or the willful murder itself. If we limit our observation to the act itself, Hume maintains that we find no “real existence” or “matter of fact” that is the vice. “The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object” (T 3.1.1.26). To locate the vice of the willful murder, you must, according to Hume “turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action.” The vice, Hume continues, “lies in yourself, not in the object” (T 3.1.1.26). Again, these claims are about *vice*, the quality of vice, which Hume insists is not a property of the object. And it follows, that if we can only locate vice by turning to our own breast, then vice is not a property that *could* belong to mind-independent objects.

I believe that these, and other texts, strongly support the view that Hume affirms that CAM qualities do not and cannot exist in a mind-independent world. And it is this constraint, understood in this way, that I wish to deploy to test, at least in part, the strength of candidate interpretations of the process of spreading. However, I consider other readings of the constraint to be perfectly adequate for these purposes. One could, as I have done at the beginning of this paper, present the goal of the spreading process as follows: the spreading process needs to explain how, given that CAM qualities are not present in sense impressions, we nonetheless perceive these qualities as objective features of the world. Alternatively, one could substitute “the world in itself,” or such phrases, with “the world as we experience it,” or such phrases. Or along the same lines, we could specify that the *objects* CAM qualities do not and cannot belong to *empirical* objects or objects of experience.

In what follows, I discuss in detail two competing readings of the mental effect or the *internal impression* at the core of the spreading process. I argue that the first reading, which has seemed the most natural or plausible to Hume readers, allows us to grasp why Hume holds that CAM qualities could not belong to objects themselves. However, it fails to explicate how the world appears to us the way it does. I refer to this as the *non-intentional* reading of the internal impression. The other interpretation seems promising as an account of the spreading process, but it, unfortunately, turns CAM qualities into possible inhabitants of the world as it is in itself, or so I argue. I refer to the latter as the *intentional* reading of the internal impression.¹⁸

¹⁸ There is a vast literature on the fascinating question of the intentionality of these internal impressions and passions in general for Hume. In a famous passage, Hume describes the passions as lacking representative character and as being “original existences” (T 2.3.3.5). I present the full passage later in the body of

In the following passage, Stroud is responding to Hume’s depiction of the central process as “gilding and staining all natural objects with the colours, borrowed from internal sentiment” (EPM App 1.21). Here Stroud articulates the fundamental difficulty with the *non-intentional* reading, and he suggests at the end that the *intentional* reading would remedy the problem. Stroud writes:

what do we “borrow” from our internal impressions, and what do we ascribe to the external objects we “gild or stain”? We presumably do not “borrow” the internal impression itself and ascribe it in thought to an external object. We do not think that the sequence of events on the billiards table—the one ball’s striking the other and the second ball’s moving-itself has a feeling or impression like the feeling Hume says we humans get when we observe it. Nor do we think that when the second ball is struck it moves off with a feeling like that. We do not think that an act of willful murder itself has a feeling of disgust or disapprobation, any more than we think that a painting on a wall has a sentiment of pleasure or awe. That is nonsense in each case. It is not the internal impression itself that we ascribe to the external object. Rather, it seems that it should be what the impression is an impression of that we so predicate.¹⁹

Stroud here considers the possibility that when we spread or project an internal impression onto the world, we are *ascribing in thought* the very feeling we are conscious of—a feeling akin to the feeling of pain, lacking intentionality or representative character—to an object. But this results in the kind of “nonsense” Stroud identifies above.²⁰ In ascribing the feeling of delight to a painting, say, I am conceiving of the painting as having the feeling of delight, which is indeed absurd. Commenting on Hume’s claim that necessity “is nothing but an internal impression of the mind, or a determination to carry our thoughts from one object to another” (T 1.3.14.25) Stroud further remarks:

Footnote 18 continued

the paper. A natural reading of this passage suggests that for Hume passions lack intentionality. A more sophisticated school of thought argues that for Hume passions only lack intrinsic intentionality, but they are extrinsically intentional. Ardal (1989), Cohon (1994), Cohon and Owen (1997), Garrett (2006), Schmitter (2008). Against this influential position, Hsueh Qu defends an intrinsic account of intentionality, which he attempts to cohere with the simplicity of the passions. Qu (2012). Jason Fissette argued that passions are compounds with only certain parts lacking intentionality, namely emotions. Fissette (2017). Anyas Merivale offers a very helpful and exceptionally clear discussion of the difference between representative power and intentionality, and intrinsic and extrinsic intentionality. Merivale (2019), pp. 128–144. Also consider reading his (2009).

¹⁹ Stroud (1993), p. 260.

²⁰ Stroud elaborates on the problem further: “The same would be true of the disgust or displeasure we might experience when observing an act of willful murder, or the pleasure we might get from seeing a great painting, if they too are on Hume’s view just impressions or feelings of certain distinctive kinds. To try to predicate them of the objects that cause them would be to ascribe a feeling or impression to an act of murder or to a painting. And that is absurd. The impression or feeling that Hume says comes into the mind when we see objects of one kind constantly followed by objects of another kind would also on that view be yet another distinctive impression. Like a pain, it would be simply an impression or feeling of a certain kind which differs in directly perceivable ways from impressions of other kinds. What distinguishes them in each case would be perceivable or felt qualities of the impressions themselves. Those same qualities which serve to distinguish one kind of impression or feeling from another therefore could not also be thought to be qualities of external objects, any more than the pain we feel or the painfulness of a painful sensation is something that could be a quality of an external object. If impressions of something are understood in that way—as we speak of a “sensation of pain” then what they are impressions of is not something that could also be thought to be a quality of an object.” Stroud (1993), p. 262.

If that is what necessity *is*, then it would seem that any thoughts about necessity would be thoughts either about an impression or about a determination or transition of the mind. But then we could not intelligibly think that necessity, so understood, is a feature of the *relation* between two external objects or events—that the two are necessarily connected.²¹

Related concerns are raised in projectivist circles outside of Hume’s scholarship. Joyce invites us to consider the following statement by Nick Zangwill, which describes Blackburn’s position:

“Projectivism” is the view that the disputed judgements express non-cognitive mental states, such as emotions, desires, habits, or expectations; but the projectivist also holds that such non-cognitive states are *spread* or *projected* onto the genuine facts and states of affair. So we come to speak and think as if there were an extra layer of properties in the world.²²

Joyce quickly zeros in on the acute tension between two claims: that CAM judgements express non-cognitive mental states, and that we come to *think* of the world as possessing CAM qualities. The projectivist is not content to reduce CAM judgements to the mere *expression* of non-cognitive states, such as emotions. The projectivist resists the suggestion that when we judge the painting to be beautiful, all that we are doing is reporting an autobiographical fact, namely that we feel delight when we stare at the painting. On the projectivist reading Joyce is considering here, we don’t merely give vent to our feelings, but rather we *do* something with them: we spread or stain them onto the world, and this spreading or staining explains the objective nature of CAM judgements. The problem is that the ascription of non-cognitive mental states to objects, far from elucidating how we form CAM judgements, it stains our judgements with absurdity.

There are some interesting texts in Hume, however, that invoke precisely the incoherent account we are entertaining here. In these texts, Hume considers the curious, but ubiquitous human tendency to personify nature, and he describes the process as one in which we indeed transfer or apply *feelings* to objects. Hume observes the “very remarkable inclination in human nature, to bestow on external objects the same emotions, which it observes in itself; and to find every where those ideas, which are most present to it” (T 1.4.3.11). In his *Natural History of Religion*, he illustrates this tendency further:

There is an universal tendency among mankind to conceive all beings like themselves, and to transfer to every object, those qualities, with which they are familiarly acquainted, and of which they are intimately conscious. We find human faces in the moon, armies in the clouds; and by a natural propensity, if not corrected by experience and reflection, ascribe malice or good-will to every thing, that hurts or pleases us.... The absurdity is not less, while we cast our eyes upwards; and transferring, as is too usual, human passions and infirmities

²¹ Stroud (1993), p. 262.

²² Joyce (2009), p. 58.

to the deity, represent him as jealous and revengeful, capricious and partial, and in short a wicked and foolish man.... (NHR 3.2)²³

In both of these texts, Hume is targeting philosophical theories that conceive of “inanimate matter” as capable of feeling “the horror of a *vacuum*, sympathies and antipathies, and other affections of human nature” (NHR 3.2). The human tendency to personify nature is invoked to clarify the source of such philosophical errors.²⁴

It is tempting to rush to identify our spreading process with the “personification process”. But this would be a mistake. First, Hume agrees with us in these texts that personifying nature is absurd. He maintains, as he puts it, that there is an “absurdity” involved in the attribution of feelings to inanimate objects or to a deity. If the spreading is the same as the personification process then, as Stroud grimly warns us, we end up with a process that produces absurd or incoherent beliefs. I should note, however, that while some of us regard this consequence as fatal, not all interpreters do.

Some readers of Hume embrace, or at least gloss over the absurdity in question by appealing to external conditions that somehow render the spreading process beneficial. Edward Craig suggests that the process of applying our feelings to objects might be to our advantage, even if it is strictly speaking incoherent.²⁵ The advantages he seems to have in mind are evolutionary ones. Similarly, Jennifer Marusic writes that “[t]he metaphor of ‘spreading’ [...] seems to involve our taking an internal, subjective feeling and then judging that external objects have that very feeling.” Referring to the case of causation, she writes: “Hume seems to be saying [...] that we take our idea of an internal impression—of the feeling of determination—and then think of the objects that cause that feeling as having that very feeling.” She concludes that either “we do have incoherent thoughts” or that perhaps “we simply think about our own minds” when we judge events to be causally connected “but that somehow doing so is beneficial.”²⁶

However, the second reason against adopting personification as a reading of the spreading process seems to work against Craig’s and Marusic’s approaches. In the passage above from *Natural Religion*, Hume specifies that the human tendency to personify nature is usually *corrected* with “experience and reflection”. And Hume himself pointedly *encourages* the correction. Thus, far from embracing the absurdity because of any alleged benefits, Hume urges us to wean ourselves from personification *precisely* because of the absurdity. Experience and reflection, Hume asserts, correct gross personifications of nature, and Hume invites philosophers to consciously attempt to do so as well. If we assume that the spreading process is really the same as the personification process, which Hume acknowledges and condemns as absurd, then it would seem that we ought to aim to eradicate CAM judgements as well. As *moral philosophers*, we should positively condemn CAM judgements, just like logicians

²³ References to the *Natural History of Religion* are to Hume (2007), hereafter cited as “NHR” followed by Section and paragraph numbers.

²⁴ I am grateful to one of my reviewers for inviting me to consider this passage in *Natural Religion*.

²⁵ Craig (2000), p. 114.

²⁶ Marusic (2014). Harold Noonan illuminates the incoherence that results from such reading with a vivid illustration of his own. Suppose, he says, that a song causes one to feel sad. The spreading of the sadness onto the song would amount to judging that the song itself feels sad. Noonan (1999).

keenly disparage contradictions. However, we do not find Hume placing such stringent demands on us.

Third and most important, there is a fundamental difference between cases of personification and spreading cases. When we personify nature, we understand ourselves to be attributing feelings to inanimate objects, feelings just like the ones we experience in ourselves. At the very least, it seems that those who personify nature would accept without resistance the description of the process of personification as one in which they attribute feelings, such as anger or bad intentions to inanimate objects. But, quite plainly, when we issue CAM judgements do not take ourselves to be attributing emotions and desires to inanimate objects. Indeed, we vehemently resist the reduction of our CAM judgements to the personification of nature. Thus, the personification process fully explains my belief that nature has malicious intentions when the rain ruins my party. But the same process offers at best an incomplete and inadequate explanation of CAM judgements. Defenders of this reading of the spreading process owe us an explanation of the difference between thinking that objects possess the very feeling we experience vs thinking that objects possess CAM qualities. These are indeed very different thoughts.²⁷

Some interpreters attempt to account for this difference linguistically. One suggestion is that when we issue CAM judgements we “apprehend, e.g. a feeling of satisfaction at a virtuous character or of delight at observing a perfect circle, as a perception of a mind-independent property, which we verbalise as “virtue”, “beauty”, etc.”²⁸ First, let me comment on the process invoked here, the mistake. How are we to understand our mistaking a feeling of delight for a mind-independent property? The mistake invoked here seems to presuppose, whether intentionally or not, a prior step of personification of nature. We can only understand our mistaking a feeling of delight for a mind-independent property of the circle, if we already assume circles to be capable of feeling delight. If I mistake the moving figure in the distance for the number 7, it must be because I already believe that the number 7 is the kind of thing that could be moving down the street. But we don’t believe that the circle is capable of feeling delight.

We could construe the mistake as one in which we mistake a feeling of delight for a quality in the object, such as the quality of delightfulness.²⁹ But first, the quality of delightfulness is not a mind-independent quality, or at least not obviously so. Second,

²⁷ The same passage I quoted above from *Natural Religion*, includes the following: “Hence the frequency and beauty of the *prosopopeia* in poetry; where trees, mountains and streams are personified, and the inanimate parts of nature acquire sentiment and passion. And though these poetical figures and expressions gain not on the belief, they may serve, at least, to prove a certain tendency in the imagination, without which they could neither be beautiful nor natural” (NHR 3.2). Hume points out that poems sometimes personify nature for artistic effect, to produce or enhance their beauty. The personification of nature in this case, as Hume remarks, does not produce belief: neither the poet nor the reader or the listener believe that trees and mountains feel any emotion. This passage, however, might raise another question: Does the personification of nature process underwrite the perception of beauty? I don’t think so. What Hume is saying here is that a poem sometimes gains its beauty because it personifies nature. The object of beauty is a poem and its personification of nature. But Hume is not claiming that our perception of beauty is *itself* a case of personification of nature. I am thankful to one of my reviewers for bringing up this passage.

²⁸ One of my reviewers has invited me to comment on this suggestion.

²⁹ I am again responding to a reviewer.

if we understand the quality of delightfulness to be the quality, whatever it is, that produces feelings of delight, then we can't at the same time understand the feeling of delight itself as being the kind of thing that could be mistaken for the property of delightfulness. And third, when we judge the circle to be beautiful, we might (or might not) consider the circle to be also delightful, or to be capable of producing delight. A scary object might be perceived as beautiful, but not as delightful.

If we insist that the process of spreading is one in which we mistake an internal impression for a property of a mind-independent object, a property that mind-independent objects possess or can possess, then an account of how the mistake works and how it is plausible is owed. Without such an account what remains is a mysterious mistake as our main explanatory tool. I suspect that the mistake cannot be elucidated without the personification of nature step. If I am correct, we are left with what are, certainly, two distinct thoughts: (a) the circle feels delight, and (b) the circle is beautiful. And I for one, find it almost impossible to take seriously the suggestion that the difference between these two thoughts rests solely on the use of the word "beautiful".

Interpreters of Hume have claimed a fair amount of textual evidence in support of the non-intentional reading of the internal impression. Hume famously compares his account of CAM qualities with the view of "modern philosophy" of sensible qualities. He writes, for instance, that: "Vice and virtue, therefore, may be compar'd to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which according to modern philosophy, are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind (T 3.1.1.26)."³⁰ While Stroud indicates, as we saw above, that an *intentional* reading would allow Hume to offer an intelligible account of the process of spreading, he nonetheless assumes that Hume endorses the non-intentional reading. Commenting on Hume's Comparison above, Stroud remarks that it "suggests that Hume endorses "modern philosophy's view that the redness we see is nothing more than a feature of our impressions." Stroud enlists further support for this conclusion from passages in "Of the Standard of Taste" in which Hume aims "to explain how one color can be "denominated" the "true and real" color of an object, "even while color is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses."³¹

Blackburn rejects Hume's (full) endorsement of the Comparison, but he nonetheless retains the non-intentional reading as Hume's, citing among others, the following passage in Hume as evidence:

A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence, and contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification. When I am angry, I am actually possess'd with the passion, and in that emotion have no more a reference to any other object, than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five foot high. (T 2.3.3.5)

Blackburn, then, conceives the task of interpreting the spreading process as understanding "how a passion, an original existence, becomes transmuted into a judgement

³⁰ The following text seems indicative of Hume's views about sensible qualities "It is universally allowed by modern enquirers, that all the sensible qualities of objects, such as hard, soft, hot, cold, white, black, &c. are merely secondary, and exist not in the objects themselves, but are perceptions of the mind, without any external archetype or model, which they represent" (EHU 12.15).

³¹ Stroud (1993), p. 261. Kenneth Winkler has recently cast doubt on the view that Hume endorses the implications of the modern philosophical view of sensory qualities. Winkler (2011).

of the properties of things.”³² I shall return to Blackburn’s phrasing of the problem later.

The reading of the internal impression as *lacking* (intrinsic) *intentionality* does indeed shed light on Hume’s thesis that CAM qualities cannot belong to the world as it is in itself. But why, exactly, would it be that the world as it appears to us is not a world that could possibly exist in itself? At one point, Stroud interprets “the metaphors of “gilding or staining,” or “spreading” something on to, a neutral and unsuspecting world” as a process in which we “take something mental and see it as external.” And then he ponders, “How does it work?”³³ But I want to note that the mere fact that necessity is mental, or that “necessity lies in the mind,” is not sufficient to account for why necessity could not belong to the objects. ‘Unicorn’ lies also only in the mind, but, at least for Hume, unicorns could exist in nature. Indeed, Hume endorses the Conceivability Principle: “*whatever the mind clearly conceives includes the idea of possible existence*, or in other words, *that nothing we imagine is absolutely impossible*” (T 1.2.2.8).³⁴ We have an idea of necessity, so why is it that our idea of necessity cannot represent anything that could belong to the objects?

If we assume that what is applied or spread onto objects is a non-intentional feeling, akin to the feeling of pain, then the answer seems evident: fire and smoke cannot have feelings; the circle is not the kind of thing that could experience or feel anything. These are, to use Hume’s own word “absurdities.” If it is brute feelings that we ascribe to the objects, then Hume is right; inanimate objects could not possess CAM qualities in themselves.

Stroud considers the *intentional* reading of the internal impression, in contrast, to promise a satisfying explanation of the process of spreading, although he does not believe it to be Hume’s. What is “spread” onto the objects, on this proposal, is not the internal impression itself, but rather the content of the impression. In this case, we *ascribe* the distinct *content* of the impression to objects. The “of” in the “impression of necessity” has as its content *necessity*, which we ascribe to objects. On the face of it, this is an encouraging account of the process by which we come to conceive of the world as beautiful or as causally connected or as vicious. Internal impressions have these features as their very content, and it is this exact content that we attribute to objects in thought. But while this admittedly sketchy interpretation of the “spreading” process might serve to clarify how we *think* of objects in nature as endowed with CAM qualities, it does not seem adequate as an account of how we *experience* the world. How does such content make its way, as it were, into our perceptual experience? Stroud might be blind to this difficulty because his specific focus is the possibility of CAM *thoughts*. And it does seem easier to conceive how we could “apply” a feature of one thought to another. When I think of a giraffe and then I imagine my dog as having the same body patterns as the giraffe, I might be said to accomplish the projective strategy Stroud seems to have in mind. But how do we do this in actual sense experience? How does something that is not in the object of perception present itself as a quality of that very same object?

³² Blackburn (1993), p. 279.

³³ Stroud (1993), p. 260.

³⁴ Other places where Hume endorses this principle are T 1.1.7.6, T 1.2.4.11, Abs. 11.

There is another difficulty with the intentional reading that Stroud seems unaware of. If the internal impression or the idea of necessity has as its content *necessity* (whatever that might mean), then why couldn't necessity be part of the objects as they really stand in nature? What we are missing now is a response to the question of why, if we can conceive of objects as having CAM qualities, it wouldn't be possible for these objects to possess such qualities in themselves. On the non-intentional reading, the answer was on the ready: physical objects cannot experience or feel anything. What response is available to us if the intentional reading is correct?

2. The question of process

I think the non-intentional reading is Hume's. I agree with Stroud and Blackburn and others that Hume conceives of the internal impression at the center of the spreading process as lacking intrinsic intentionality. I am particularly attracted to the language Blackburn employs to formulate the task of addressing the question of process. He writes, again: "the problem in the case of ethics is how a passion, an original existence, becomes transmuted into a judgement of the properties of things"³⁵ Blackburn also characterizes the problem as "understanding the fusion of sentiment" with the judgement of an external world.³⁶ This language resembles the terminology Hume deploys to refer to the key psychological process: spreading, mixing, staining, gilding. And this language is itself very similar to the one Hume employs to depict the processes in which passions of one kind give rise to passions of another kind. It is the language of chemistry. In particular, Hume explains how passions with novel qualitative features arise from qualitatively different passions by invoking what we might call "quasi-chemical" mixtures.

In what follows, I present several passages that reveal Hume's "chemical thinking". Some of them merely evoke the language of chemistry, while others seem suffused with it.

Ideas may be compar'd to the extension and solidity of matter, and impressions, especially reflective ones, to colours, tastes, smells and other sensible qualities. Ideas never admit of a total union, but are endow'd with a kind of impenetrability, by which they exclude each other, and are capable of forming a compound by their conjunction, not by their mixture. On the other hand, impressions and passions are susceptible of an entire union; and like colours, may be blended so perfectly together, that each of them may lose itself, and contribute only to vary that uniform impression, which arises from the whole. Some of the most curious phaenomena of the human mind are deriv'd from this property of the passions.
(T 2.2.6.1)

In this fascinating passage, Hume characterizes the conjunction of ideas as "compounds" and compares these compounds with the "mixture" that only impressions are capable of undergoing. In presenting this fact about impressions, Hume draws the comparison between impressions of reflection and colors: both are capable of perfect mixtures.

³⁵ Blackburn (1993), p. 279.

³⁶ Blackburn (1993), p. 287.

There is perfect union and mixture, but there is also “imperfect union and conjunction.” Hope and fear, Hume remarks, “arise from the different mixture of these opposite passions of grief and joy, and from their imperfect union and conjunction” (T 2.3.9.16). The following identifies various conditions and mixtures with differing results explicitly comparing these with chemical interactions:

Upon the whole, contrary passions succeed each other alternately, when they arise from different objects: They mutually destroy each other, when they proceed from different parts of the same: And they subsist both of them, and mingle together, when they are deriv’d from the contrary and incompatible chances or possibilities, on which any one object depends. The influence of the relations of ideas is plainly seen in this whole affair. If the objects of the contrary passions be totally different, the passions are like two opposite liquors in different bottles, which have no influence on each other. If the objects be intimately connected, the passions are like an alcali and an acid, which, being mingled, destroy each other. If the relation be more imperfect, and consist in the contradictory views of the same object, the passions are like oil and vinegar, which, however mingled, never perfectly unite and incorporate (T 2.3.9.17).

Novel properties emerge or arise from these mixtures—properties that were not present in the original elements. Hume calls attention to this fact in a passage where he discusses the passion of gaming. He depicts this passion as the interaction of two qualitatively different substances, and he explicitly compares it to chemical preparations: “as in certain chemical preparations, where the mixture of two clear and transparent liquids produces a third, which is opaque and colour’d” (T 2.3.10.9). In the following, Hume appeals to the phenomenon that most occupies Newton in the *Opticks*: the colors of light revealed through the prism and he compares the phenomenon with the passions.

Are not these as plain proofs, that the passions of fear and hope are mixtures of grief and joy, as in optics’tis a proof, that a colour’d ray of the sun passing thro’ a prism, is a composition of two others, when, as you diminish or encrease the quantity of either, you find it prevail proportionably more or less in the composition? I am sure neither natural nor moral philosophy admits of stronger proofs. (T 2.3.9.19)

What are we to make of Hume’s appeal to chemistry in his discussion of the passions? In his recent book, Tamás Demeter addresses this question by connecting Hume’s use of chemical language to an intriguing and illuminating history of scientific developments, the most important of which is the emergence of the science of chemistry. And Demeter identifies the seeds of this new science in Newton’s *Opticks*, where Newton himself manifests keen awareness of the fact that mechanical explanation is ill-suited to account for *qualitative* phenomena, such as the colors of light.³⁷

Hume also invokes the language of chemistry to explain the emergence of qualitatively different kinds of perceptions. The following, which forms part of the prism passage above, a passage that reads like a recipe for producing different passions,

³⁷ Demeter (2016).

by adding and subtracting ingredients, renders this point perhaps most vividly. Here Hume details the transition from grief to fear, and then to hope and joy:

Throw in a superior degree of probability to the side of grief, you immediately see that passion diffuse itself over the composition, and tincture it into fear. Encrease the probability, and by that means the grief, the fear prevails still more and more, till at last it runs insensibly, as the joy continually diminishes, into pure grief. After you have brought it to this situation, diminish the grief, after the same manner that you encreas'd it; by diminishing the probability on that side, and you'll see the passion clear every moment, 'till it changes insensibly into hope; which again runs, after the same manner, by slow degrees, into joy, as you encrease that part of the composition by the encrease of the probability. (T 2.3.9.19).

I suggest that Hume's quasi-chemical understanding of the passions might serve as a model for understanding the process of spreading. Perhaps this quasi-chemical understanding of the passions was in Hume's mind when he spoke of the key psychological process as *spreading* and *staining*. Even if not, the quasi-chemical model can assist us in addressing some of the most difficult and intractable questions concerning the process of spreading. Most succinctly, on the proposed model, the process of spreading is one in which a feeling is literally spread or "diffused", to use Hume's revealing term above, onto *sense impressions*. This spreading or staining of feelings onto sense impressions changes the quality of appearances, thus "adding" as Hume put it, something new to the appearances.

To examine this proposal in its proper light, it is best to consider it in the context of the recalcitrant problems I alluded to above. We saw earlier that the application of a feeling, such as the feeling of disapprobation or delight onto objects produced incoherence or absurdity. But the incoherence ensued from a particular reading of the spreading process which was not fully salient earlier. The problem was that we were thinking that the application of a feeling onto an object results in the object *plus* the feeling. We were conceiving of it mathematically, despite Hume's warnings. Referring to the beauty of the circle, Hume writes: "In vain would you look for it in the circle, or seek it, either by your senses, or by mathematical reasonings, in all the properties of that figure" (EPM App 1.24). We have not been alive to the possibility of a different kind of process, one that is in fact not mechanical. But the quasi-chemical model introduces this possibility, namely that the spreading of a feeling onto an object is actually an instance of a *mixture*; it is not a mathematical addition, but rather an organic, psychological process that generates a *new quality*. The feeling of delight that is spread onto the circle results not in the circle plus the feeling, but it generates the perception of the circle as possessing an altogether different quality: beauty. Just as "the mixture of two clear and transparent liquids produces a third, which is opaque and colour'd" (T 2.3.10.9), so the spreading of a feeling of delight onto the impression of the circle produces the perception of a new object with a quality, beauty, that was not present in the original elements or ingredients. Perhaps, indeed, it is something along these lines that Hume has in mind when he writes that the gilding and staining of natural objects with the colors borrowed from internal sentiment "raises, in a manner, a new creation" (ECM App 1.21). Hume also writes that [moral] attributes *arise*

from the particular constitution and fabric of human sentiment and affection” (EMPL 162, emphasis added) and that “objects *acquire* [moral] qualities from the particular character and constitution of the mind which surveys them” (EMPL 171, emphasis added).³⁸

Another stubborn, intractable problem concerns the fact that CAM qualities appear in propositional structures, such as perceptual judgements. And the nagging question is, how we bridge the gap between the occurrence of a non-cognitivist mental state and the judgement or thought that the world is so and so. On the interpretation I put forward, the internal impression or feeling is literally spread on—or to use Hume’s chemical language here, can “perfectly unite and incorporate” (T 2.3.9.17) with—a complex *sense impression*. And this complex sense impression, for Hume, already has propositional structure.³⁹ For Hume, all that is required to perceive that the blue rectangle is next to the red circle is the presence of a sense impression with such content.⁴⁰ To judge, according to Hume, is to conceive in a particularly vivid manner, and to conceive is to have an idea in the mind, one that copies an impression.⁴¹ In the spreading process, the feeling is mixed with the sense impression and in so doing, it enters, as it were, a propositional field. We are able to perceive *that the circle is beautiful* because we were already able to perceive *that the circle/figure is round*. When we judge that the circle is beautiful, there is indeed a non-cognitive mental state or a brute feeling in the mind, but this does not mean that we are merely expressing a feeling of pleasure or delight. In the spreading process, the feeling dissolves into the sense impression thus allowing us to experience the circle as having a new quality, namely beauty.

One might object that on my reading, there is no spreading of “the mind onto the world.” It looks like on my quasi-chemical reading, there is, rather, a spreading of the mind onto the mind. For if the feeling is spread on the sense impression then the feeling is spread on something that is mental. I think this is strictly true, but it is also confused because, for Hume, it is always the case that when we judge the world to be a certain way there is an impression (or perception) present to the mind. When I judge that there is a table based on my perception of the table, the perception of the table is, for Hume, a matter of having a sense impression before my mind. For Hume,

³⁸ References to Hume’s *Essays* are to Miller (1985), hereafter cited as EMPL followed by page number.

³⁹ I don’t think this is controversial in Hume scholarship. After all, for Hume the *judgement* “God is,” to use his own example to make precisely this very point is a matter of having an *idea* before the mind (T 1.3.7.5n20).

⁴⁰ Hume identifies belief as inherent in sense impressions: “Thus it appears, that the *belief* or *assent*, which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from the imagination. To believe is in this case to feel an immediate impression of the senses, or a repetition of that impression in the memory. ’Tis merely the force and liveliness of the perception, which constitutes the first act of the judgment...” (T 1.3.5.7).

⁴¹ For Hume, judgements are “nothing but particular ways of conceiving our objects. Whether we consider a single object, or several; whether we dwell on these objects, or run from them to others; and in whatever form or order we survey them, the act of the mind exceeds not a simple conception; and the only remarkable difference, which occurs on this occasion, is, when we join belief to the conception, and are persuaded of the truth of what we conceive” (T 1.3.7.5n20).

what it means for the world to appear to us in that there are sense perceptions before the mind.⁴²

Interpreters who ponder the nature of the enigmatic psychological process by which “a passion, an original existence, becomes transmuted into a judgement of the properties of things,” to quote Blackburn once again, do not question Hume’s *general* ability to issue judgements *about the world* at all. These interpreters take it for granted that for Hume the world appears to us when, for instance, he invites us to focus on the objects we take to be causally connected and says: “we find only that the one body approaches the other; and that the motion of it precedes that of the other, but without any sensible interval. ‘Tis in vain to rack ourselves with *farther* thought and reflexion upon this subject. We can go no *farther* in considering this particular instance” (T 1.3.2.9). Not only do we perceive bodies, but our perception reveals certain *facts*; “we find”, “that one body approaches the other”, and “that the motion of it precedes that of the other.” We encounter these facts by having sense impressions.⁴³

If we are willing to concede that I am indeed issuing a judgement about the property of an external object when I have a complex sense impression of a table and judge it to be rectangular, then we should also allow that when the same complex sense impression of the table produces in my mind a certain pleasurable feeling, which then is spread onto or mixed with the sense impression, I may be said to judge that the external object, the table, is beautiful. If we are not willing to grant that Hume is ever able to author judgements about the external world, then all I can say is that we face much bigger and serious interpretative issues than that posed by the spreading process.

One might also object that my reading explains (if it does) the *perception* of CAM qualities, but that it is not adequate as an explanation of general thoughts about CAM qualities. I may see that the circle is beautiful, but I may also *think* that circles, in general, are beautiful. Additionally, I may stand in different propositional attitudes towards this circle or circles in general. I may wonder, for instance, whether circles can really be beautiful. How would these general thoughts and propositional attitudes be explained on my account? In this paper, I have attempted only to explain our perception of CAM qualities as objective properties. However, I would like to offer schematic answers to these questions. I suggest that general thoughts about beautiful circles be understood as the result of a copying of a *mixed impression* into an idea. Thus, we first perceive the circle to be beautiful as a result of a mixture of an internal impression and the current sense perception. Of this mixed impression, there can be a copy, and thus an idea. This idea allows us to *think* of the beautiful circle. Hume’s account of general ideas/terms then takes care of general thoughts. Just as there is an idea of a beautiful circle, there are ideas of other beautiful objects, all of which are included in the set of “beautiful things.”

I agreed earlier with Stroud that any account of the spreading process is limited by Hume’s position, as Stroud and I interpret it, that CAM qualities cannot exist in the world as it is in itself. On my reading, the spreading of the feeling onto a sense

⁴² Numerous passages support such a thesis. For instance: “no object can appear to the senses; or in other words, that no impression can become present to the mind, without being determin’d in its degrees both of quantity and quality” (T 1.1.7.4). I discuss other cases and the question of the relation between perceptions and objects in Boehm (2013).

⁴³ The passage above was almost randomly chosen; there are countless such passages.

impression explains why objects appear to possess new qualities: causal, aesthetic, or moral. These “new creations”, these new properties we attribute to objects, are *essentially* the result of a spreading process. Our ability to perceive objects to possess CAM properties rests squarely on the occurrence of the chemical-like process I have described here, a process whose essential elements are internal impressions and sense impressions. CAM properties, as we perceive them and as we think of them cannot possibly exist in a world where the key quasi-chemical processes cannot take place. And such a process cannot occur in a mind-independent world because the ingredients necessary for such mixture cannot exist in a mind-independent world.

To clarify, the “new creations” that arise in the process of spreading and gilding and staining natural objects with internal sentiments are essentially *appearances*. And as such, it is absurd to think of them as part of nature itself. In a passage in which Hume attempts to drive the point home that necessity is in the mind, he writes:

how often must we repeat to ourselves, *that* the simple view of any two objects or actions, however related, can never give us any idea of power, or of a connexion betwixt them: *that* this idea arises from the repetition of their union: *that* the repetition neither discovers nor causes any thing in the objects, but has an influence only on the mind, by that customary transition it produces: *that* this customary transition is, therefore, the same with the power and necessity; which are consequently qualities of perceptions, not of objects, and are internally felt by the soul, and not perceiv'd externally in bodies? (T 1.3.14.24)

Power and necessity are “qualities of perceptions, not of objects.” It is only the objects of perception or thought that have CAM qualities. The object that possesses CAM qualities is an object of experience or thought.

Finally, I wish to add, without being able to defend my assertion here, that I do not think that it follows from anything I have said here that when we believe that the circle is beautiful, we are believing something that must be false. As Rachel Cohon insists, there is little evidence that Hume takes vulgar moral and aesthetic beliefs to be false.⁴⁴ I agree with Cohon, and I consider this to be true of vulgar causal beliefs as well.^{45,46}

⁴⁴ Cohon (2012), pp. 122–123.

⁴⁵ I can't say more because this is work in progress. I will clarify, however, that I *do* take Hume to consider the philosophical position, according to which causal, aesthetic, and moral properties are original to a mind-independent world to be fundamentally mistaken. One reviewer has asked me to comment on Hume's assertion that we approve of virtues because of their utility. This seems to be a good place to comment on this. I take the account I have offered here to explain only our perception of CAM properties as objective properties. The approval of what one perceives to be virtuous, or other qualities, would involve a second-order or meta-level approach. I might perceive x to be virtuous, but on reflection disapprove of it. I might perceive the painting as beautiful but revise my judgement upon learning about the content of the painting. Additionally, a more elaborate account is required to distinguish the uneducated perception of the painting as beautiful from the expert's perception, and this in turn with the attribution of beauty to the painting by agreement of experts.

⁴⁶ I am much obliged to Tamas Demeter for revealing to me the influence of chemistry on Hume's thinking and its significance. I am indebted to Bill Bristow for reading too many versions and drafts of this paper. I thank Don Garrett for very thorough comments on a previous, much muddier version of this paper, Hsueh Qu for useful comments, and Jonathan Cottrell for lively discussion on the subjects of this paper. I am also

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Footnote 46 continued

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