

SKEPTICISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC[†]

Brian A. Chance

Kant's response to skepticism in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is complex and remarkably nuanced, although it is rarely recognized as such. Instead, the dominant view since Kant's own time has been that this response is fairly straightforward. Skeptics deny various claims to cognition that Kant affirms. Some of these claims concern the existence of the external world, others the existence of objectively necessary causal relations, and others still the more general possibility of synthetic *a priori* cognition. And since Kant's response to these denials—whether in the Refutation of Idealism, the Second Analogy, or the Transcendental Analytic more generally—is to show that each is unjustified, his response to skepticism is typically thought to be entirely negative. Moreover, since all of these denials have, at different times, been attributed to Hume, it is often supposed that Kant's response to skepticism reduces without remainder to his response to Hume.

Aspects of this view have recently been challenged by Michael Forster and Paul Guyer.¹ On their view, Hume is not the sole focus of Kant's anti-skeptical arguments, and external world skepticism was never a central target of the *Critique*. Rather, the *Critique* is an attempt to provide critical responses to two distinct skeptical threats, only one of which can be attributed to Hume. The first is a skeptical denial of *a priori* principles of cognition that Kant attempts to

[†] Citations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* use the standard A/B format to refer to the pages of the first (A) and second (B) editions. Citations from Kant's other works use the volume number and pagination of the *Kant's gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Royal Prussian (later German, then Berlin-Brandenburg) Academy of the Sciences. 29 vols. (Berlin, 1900—). I have used the translations of Kant's works listed in the bibliography, in some cases with slight modifications. All other translations are my own.

¹ See Paul Guyer, *Knowledge, Reason, and Taste: Kant's Response to Hume* (Princeton, 2008), 22-70 and Michael Forster, *Kant and Skepticism* (Princeton, 2008).

refute in the Transcendental Aesthetic and Transcendental Analytic by showing that various cognitive abilities and common sense believes presuppose the existence of such principles. Because of Kant's repeated suggestion that Hume's doubts about causation lead to such a denial, Forster and Guyer call this form of skepticism *Humean skepticism*.² The second is a skeptical crisis that Kant attempts to extricate us from in the Transcendental Dialectic by identifying the cause of pure reason's 'natural and unavoidable' dialectic and resolving the disputes within the field of metaphysics to which this dialectic gives rise (A298/B354). Because this dialectic leads to a vacillation between different conflicting views, Guyer and Forster call this form of skepticism *Pyrrhonian skepticism*.

I am sympathetic to much of this new view. But there are two important aspects of Kant's response to skepticism that I believe Forster and Guyer have obscured. The first is that Kant's response to Pyrrhonian skepticism is *also* a response to Hume.³ The second is that certain aspects of this response are decidedly *positive*. These aspects are obscured by their accounts in part because the distinction they draw between Humean and Pyrrhonian skepticism does not map neatly onto Kant's. As a result, they fail to identify areas where Kant believes Hume's views overlap with Pyrrhonian skepticism and overlook the extent to which the Transcendental Dialectic was influenced by a method that Kant regarded as Pyrrhonian in inception but, at least in the *Critique*, associated exclusively with Hume. Bringing these additional aspects of Kant's response to skepticism to light is important because it allows us to see that two fairly widespread views about this response are mistaken. The first is that Kant's response to Hume is limited to his account of possible experience. The second is that his response to skepticism is

² See *Critique* B 127-8 and *Prolegomena* 4:262.

³ For a reading that emphasizes a different aspect of Hume's relation to Pyrrhonian skepticism, see Robert Stern, 'Metaphysical Dogmatism, Humean Scepticism, Kantian Criticism', *Kantian Review* 11 (2006): 102-116, who is responding to an earlier version of Guyer's views in Paul Guyer, 'Kant on Common Sense and Skepticism', *Kantian Review* 7 (2003): 1-37.

exhausted by his attempt to refute skeptical doctrines. In contrast to these views, to which Forster and Guyer are also committed, I hope to show (1) that Kant believed Hume's skepticism manifested important elements of Pyrrhonian skepticism and (2) that both Pyrrhonian skepticism and Hume had a significant positive influence on the development of the Transcendental Dialectic.

I begin in section one by reconstructing Kant's conception of Pyrrhonian skepticism. Since the phrase 'Pyrrhonian skepticism' never occurs in the *Critique* and Kant's explicit discussions of skepticism there are, moreover, quite brief, my reconstruction will rely on the extensive discussions of skepticism found in the transcripts of his lectures on logic. In section two, I then argue that Kant regarded two elements of Hume's skepticism as Pyrrhonian. In section three, I document the positive influence of Pyrrhonian skepticism and Hume on Kant by describing his use of one of these elements, the Pyrrhonian skeptical method, in the 'Antinomy of Pure Reason' (the second and longest part of the Dialectic). In section four, I then examine the development of the Dialectic in order to show that Kant's initial response to Pyrrhonian skepticism and to Hume was even more favorable than the text of the *Critique* suggests and, in particular, that he initially believed the skeptical method was powerful enough to identify and resolve *all* of the illicit claims of metaphysics. Finally, in section five I review the consequences of these considerations for our understanding of Kant's response to skepticism in general and to Hume in particular.

1. KANT'S CONCEPTION OF PYRRHONIAN SKEPTICISM

In his logic lectures, Kant typically distinguished between Pyrrhonian skepticism, which he identified primarily with Pyrrho of Elis and Sextus Empiricus, and Academic skepticism, which

he identified with Plato's successors in the Academy.⁴ Kant lectured on logic for almost four decades, and his students produced dozens of lecture transcripts. For our purposes, the most important of these are the *Philippi Logic* and *Blomberg Logic*, both of which are based on lectures from the early 1770s. Drawing on these transcripts, I want to defend the following general claims:

1. Kant distinguishes Pyrrhonian skepticism from Academic skepticism, which he tends to think of not as a form of skepticism at all but rather a disguised form of dogmatism.
2. He identifies Pyrrhonian skepticism with a particular *form of doubt* and a *method* used to elicit this doubt.
3. His attitude toward Pyrrhonian skepticism, particularly its method, is *overwhelmingly* positive.
4. He believes that the *scope* of Pyrrhonian skepticism is restricted to claims within theoretical philosophy and explicitly *excludes* mathematics, morals, and common sense claims about experience from the scope of Pyrrhonian doubt.

In the remainder of this section, I elaborate on each of these points in turn.

1. In his *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, Sextus Empiricus suggests that many Academic skeptics are really dogmatists in disguise because they do not merely withhold judgment about our possession of knowledge but make positive claims about our ignorance. And Kant appears to follow Sextus in his own description of the difference between the Pyrrhonians and the Academics.⁵ According to the *Philippi Logic*, Pyrrho 'taught only that one should not immediately accept the propositions of philosophy and decide but at first doubt until one is

⁴ Kant actually appears to have given been somewhat ambivalent about who should count as the founder of Academic skepticism. The *Philippi Logic* (24:337), *Vienna Logic* (24:803), and *Jäsche Logic* (9:30) all suggest that Speusippus, the first of Plato's successors, is the founder of Academic skepticism. But the *Blomberg Logic* suggests that Plato was the founder, and the *Busolt Logic* and *Dohna-Wundlacken Logic* take the view that Arcesilaus, the second of Plato's successors, is the true founder (24:209, 646, 700).

⁵ See Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, I.xxxiii. Sextus is mentioned in the *Vienne Logic* (24:803), the *Jäsche Logic* (9:31), and in a passage from another logic transcript interpolated into the *Metaphysic L₂* (28:539), always as a compiler of the skeptical views of others. Nevertheless, it is not clear how familiar Kant was with Sextus' writings. He never mentions any of them by name and could have easily based his comments about them on secondary sources. One source is certainly Albrecht Haller's translation of J.H.S. Formey's unpublished *Le triomphe de l'évidence*, which appeared as *Prüfung der Secte, die an allem zweifelt* (Göttingen, 1751) and includes a summary of *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Kant recommended Haller's translation along with J.G. Sulzer's four-volume edition of Hume's works to his students interested in learning more about skepticism 'of modern times' (24:218). See Tonelli, 'Kant und die antiken Skeptiker', 96-7 and 105-8 for discussion of other possible secondary sources.

unmistakably convinced of them’, while the Academics advocated ‘a categorical doubt that everything is uncertain’ (24:330, 337). Similarly, the *Blomberg Logic* describes Pyrrho as someone who opposed the dogmatists by arguing that their claims were merely uncertain, while the Academics ‘took doubting so far, and became so excessive, that they finally began to doubt everything’ (24:36). This ‘excessive’ skepticism is then twice identified with dogmatism. One passage describes dogmatic doubt as the rejection of all inquiry and the *denial* of anything ‘toward which we have, or believe ourselves to have, a grounded doubt’. Another describes the doubt of the Academic skeptic as a ‘dogmatic, seeming doubt’ (24:205, 209).⁶

2. The form of doubt that Kant associates with Pyrrhonian skepticism is what he calls the *doubt of postponement*. This form of doubt is contrasted with the *dogmatic doubt* of the Academic, and it has two distinguishable aspects.⁷ The first is that the Pyrrhonian does not assert that we have no knowledge in a particular domain but merely suspends his judgment about the status of a claim. The second is that he suspends his judgments in light of the conflicting arguments he has examined because doing so serves his broader aim, which is to seek truth. The fundamental motivation of the Pyrrhonian for Kant is therefore *not*, as one familiar with the writings of Sextus might think, the search for quietude, but instead the desire that his inquiry might one day end in the discovery of genuine knowledge.⁸ It is the *Blomberg Logic* that makes the Pyrrhonian’s search for knowledge most clear:

Skeptical doubt consists in being conscious of the uncertainty with a cognition and thus in being compelled to inquire into it more and more, so that finally one may nonetheless attain certainty with the help of careful investigations. (24:209)

⁶ For latter expressions of the view that Academic skepticism is actually a form of dogmatism, see *Busolt Logic* 24:646 and *Dohna-Wunderlacken Logic* 24:699, both of which are from the early 1790’s.

⁷ Kant’s terms for this form of doubt ‘Zweifel des Aufschubs’, as opposed to dogmatic doubt, which he refers to as ‘Zweifel des Entscheidens’. In interpreting Kant’s lectures, it is important to keep track of the uses of ‘Aufschub’, ‘entscheiden’ and their cognates since doing so is often the only sure way to tell what form of skepticism a given passage describes.

⁸ See, for example, Sextus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, I.xii.

An even clearer expression of this aim is found in an earlier passage of the *Blomberg Logic*, where Kant describes the withholding of judgment as suspension: ‘*Suspensio* should only help [one] not to accept something until one has enough grounds, but not on this account to reject every hope at all of being able to attain full certainty concerning a thing or a conception’ (24:161).

In order to postpone his judgment, the Pyrrhonian uses what Kant calls the ‘skeptical method.’ This method, as it is described in the *Blomberg Logic*, is one by which one ‘establishes a distrust in oneself, considers the grounds for and against the cognition that one has, and in this way strives to come to [attain] complete certainty concerning it’ (24:208). The passage goes on to describe this method as the ‘*kathartikon*’ of reason and its ‘best means of purgation’ (24:208). Use of the skeptical method, then, is an attempt to bring oneself into a state of skeptical doubt. For we now see that this doubt consists in, first, questioning whether our claims to knowledge are justified and, second, suspending judgment until we have sufficient reason to affirm or deny these claims. What this description of the skeptical method adds to our understanding of skeptical doubt is that the Pyrrhonian attempts to elicit this doubt by examining arguments for and against whatever claim is under consideration. Thus, the skeptical method prescribes the *manner* in which the suspicion is raised that leads to suspension of judgment.⁹

3. It is perhaps because he believes the Pyrrhonian’s goal is to attain knowledge that Kant’s attitude towards Pyrrhonian skepticism is overwhelmingly positive. According to the *Philippi Logic*, the ‘use of skepticism is uncommonly great, when it is of the right kind’ (24:438). And this kind is one ‘in which it is allowed to oppose a proposition to others and proofs for the opposite can be introduced’ (24:439). Similarly, according to the *Blomberg Logic*, ‘true skepticism’, by which Kant means Pyrrhonian skepticism, ‘is certainly a thing of great

⁹ See also *Blomberg Logic* 24:159, 161, 211 and *Philippi Logic* 24:330.

usefulness, and as such is nothing other than an exact, careful investigation of all *dogmata* that are put forth as apodictic' (24:210). Kant's favorable attitude toward Pyrrhonian skepticism, at least as he understands it, could hardly be stated more clearly.

4. I now turn to the *scope* of Pyrrhonian doubt. This is most difficult aspect of Kant's conception of Pyrrhonian skepticism to discern on the basis of the logic lectures, in part because there are so few comments about it. On balance, however, it is clear that Kant believes the scope of this doubt is restricted to claims within theoretical philosophy. Still, there is reason to be suspicious of this claim. The previous quote makes clear that Kant believes the Pyrrhonian doubts dogma, and a number of other passages make clear that by 'dogma' Kant means necessary truths of what he also calls 'truths of reason'.¹⁰ Thus, it may seem that the scope of Pyrrhonian skepticism extends to necessary truths beyond theoretical philosophy, such as those of mathematics or morals.

But the more precise statements about Pyrrhonian skepticism in the logic lectures clearly speak against this reading. Another passage of the *Blomberg Logic* claims it is 'utterly false' that Pyrrho 'denied each and every dogma' (24:213-4). And its continuation explicitly excludes morals from the scope of Pyrrhonian doubt and insists that Pyrrho accepted many empirical judgments:

One who accepts no *dogmata* cannot teach morality. In any case, there are certain, so to speak, eternal principles of reason, which cannot be disputed at all. But Pyrrho was also accused in addition of doubting all empirical judgments and not trusting them. But this is nothing but a fabrication, which has no ground. (24:214)

Finally, a passage from the *Herder Logic* makes clear that mathematical truths are also excluded from the scope of Pyrrhonian doubt: 'Pyrrho: that universal dogmata (except for mathematics) were uncertain' (24:4). Thus, the Pyrrhonian does not deny all dogma and explicitly affirms

¹⁰ See, for example, *Blomberg Logic* 24:99 and *Philippi Logic* 24:327.

moral truths, mathematical truths, as well as many common sense judgments. And if we exclude moral and mathematical truths from the class of necessary ones, what we are left with are the truths of theoretical philosophy.¹¹

2. HUME'S LIMITED PYRRHONIANISM

In what sense, then, might Hume's skepticism be Pyrrhonian? If we accept Forster and Guyer's characterization, the question appears misguided. They identify Humean skepticism with the denial of *a priori* principles of cognition. And if anything, this form of skepticism seems incompatible with Kant's conception of Pyrrhonian skepticism. For Hume's denial of *a priori* principles is not a suspension of judgment but a straightforward example of dogmatic doubt. If Hume's skepticism bears any similarity to the forms of ancient skepticism Kant recognized, then, it seems that this similarity is to Academic not Pyrrhonian skepticism.¹²

But if Kant's conception of Humean skepticism (the skepticism he associates with Hume) is broader than Forster and Guyer's characterization of Humean skepticism, the additional elements it includes might coincide with elements of Kant's conception of Pyrrhonian skepticism. And if Hume's skepticism does contain Pyrrhonian elements, Forster and Guyer's own assessment of the importance of Pyrrhonian skepticism would suggest that the Dialectic is as much a response to Hume as to Pyrrhonian skepticism. In section three, we will see that Forster and Guyer are

¹¹ Forster, *Kant and Skepticism*, 19 suggests that logic is also excluded from the scope of Pyrrhonian skepticism on Kant's account. However, I can find no evidence for this claim in the passages Forster cites or in any others from the logic lectures. Indeed, there are passages from the *Pölitiz Logic* and *Vienna Logic* in which the skeptics (among them Hume) are referred to as 'anti-logicians', and this would seem to indicate that Kant believes the skeptics are opposed to if not necessarily skeptical of logic (24:509, 805). However, I suspect there is too little evidence to settle this point definitively.

¹² In the logic lectures, Kant also recognizes a modern skeptical tradition, which he identifies with Voltaire, Bayle, and, especially, Hume. However, he does not provide a general characterization of modern skepticism but instead prefers to describe modern skeptics in terms of their relation to the ancient skeptical tradition. See *Herder Logic* 24:4, *Blomberg Logic* 24:36, 210f., 217, *Philippi Logic* 24:330, *Pölitiz Logic* 24:509, *Vienna Logic* 24:803-4, and *Jäsche Logic* 9:31.

wrong to interpret this response as entirely critical. For the moment, however, I want to show that Kant's conception of Hume's skepticism is in fact broader than they suggest.

First, Kant is explicit that Hume uses the skeptical method and frequently identifies Hume as a Pyrrhonian in virtue of this use. A passage in the *Blomberg Logic* describes this method as 'a true investigation of the truth by means of postponement' and then states that some writers are called 'skeptics' who 'do not in the least deserve the name of philosopher (e.g. a Voltaire)', while others are 'not real *academici* but instead merely display a skeptical method in itself and, as it were, affect it, e.g. a Hume' (24:210-211). A subsequent passage then describes Hume's writings as an extended exercise in the skeptical method. After mentioning the first *Enquiry* and the four volume German translation of Hume's works, Kant is recorded as having said:

In these writings of Hume is to be found a gentle, calm, unprejudiced examination. In them he considers, namely, first of all one side of a thing; he searches for all possible grounds for it, and expounds them in the best oratorical style. Then he takes up the other side, presents it for examination, as it were, completely without partisanship, expounds again all the opposing grounds with just the same eloquence [...] (24:217)¹³

Similarly, the *Philippi Logic* describes Hume as someone who has written in the Pyrrhonian 'mode of thinking', by which the skeptical method is surely meant (24:330). Finally, Kant opens his most extensive discussion of Hume in the *Critique* by commenting that 'Hume is perhaps the most ingenious of all skeptics, and [...] incontrovertibly the most preeminent one with regard to

¹³ Here I disagree with Forster, *Kant and Skepticism*, 103 note 21, who claims that the discussion of Pyrrhonian skepticism in the *Blomberg Logic* shows that Kant thought of Hume 'as in effect merely an inferior Pyrronist'. As I have already suggested, Hume's skepticism is not entirely Pyrrhonian by Kant's standards. But I find nothing in the *Blomberg Logic* to suggest that Kant believed Hume's skepticism was an inferior form of Pyrrhonian skepticism. Indeed, as I believe the passage I am about to discuss from the *Critique* makes clear, Kant thought of Hume as the contemporary standard bearer of the Pyrrhonian skeptical method. Forster also claims that Hume never uses the skeptical method and that Kant was simply mistaken when he said that he did. But he does not consider Hume's comments in the parts of the first *Enquiry* and *Dialogues* I reference in note 16, below. Regarding the claim that Kant thought of Hume as an inferior Pyrrhonian, I suspect that Forster is reading the passage from 24:210-11 as a warning that Hume should not be thought of as a Pyrrhonian skeptic, whereas I read it as a warning that he should not be confused with an Academic skeptic.

the influence that the *skeptical procedure* can have on awakening a thorough examination of reason' (A764/B792, my emphasis). This 'skeptical procedure' can only be the skeptical method.

Second, Kant believes that Hume advocates using the skeptical method as a means to resolve the kinds of metaphysical disputes he addresses in the Dialectic. Since these disputes all fall within the field of theoretical philosophy, Kant thus believes that the specific way Hume uses the skeptical method is Pyrrhonian as well. Indeed, Hume's use of the skeptical method appears to be of central concern for Kant. For he begins his discussion of Hume in the *Critique* by addressing the uses and limitations of this method. Kant does not use the phrase 'skeptical method' in this part of his discussion but instead speaks of a 'skeptical use of reason'. However, he goes on to characterize this method as a 'principle of its [i.e. reason's] neutrality in all controversies' in which one 'incite[s] reason against itself' and 'hand[s] it weapons on both sides'(A756/B784). So it is clear that the skeptical use of reason is an instance of the skeptical method described in the logic lectures.¹⁴ Kant claims that using this method as the sole means to 'end the conflict of reason with itself' is 'an entirely vain attempt' (A757/B785). And he appears to regard Hume as someone who failed to recognize this limitation. But he also believes that the skeptical method can play an important *preliminary* role in ending such a conflict by making us more receptive to the primary task of the *Critique*, the examination of our faculty of reason and its powers.¹⁵ And when he concludes his discussion of Hume, it is this preliminary role that he emphasizes. Although the skeptical method is not '**satisfying** for questions of reason', Kant there insists that it is still '**preparatory** for arousing its caution and showing it fundamental means for securing it in its rightful possessions' (A769/B797).

¹⁴ Kant's description of the skeptical use of reason is also consistent with his description of the skeptical method at A424/B451, which I discuss in section three.

¹⁵ See Axi and A761/B789.

While Hume's endorsement of dogmatic doubt means that he is not a perfect fit to Kant's conception of a Pyrrhonian skeptic, then, Kant still regards Hume's use of the skeptical method and the specific way he uses this method as Pyrrhonian. Moreover, as we will see in section four, Kant initially believed that the skeptical method could be used to justify a dogmatic denial of certain metaphysical claims. For this reason, the fact that Hume departs from Kant's conception of a Pyrrhonian skeptic by endorsing a dogmatic doubt actually makes it more likely that he and not the ancient Pyrrhonians provided the model for Kant's use of the skeptical method. Most importantly, the passages from Kant's discussion of Hume in the *Critique* make clear that Kant regards the skeptical method as part of the solution to the Pyrrhonian crisis that (as Guyer and Forster rightly claim) is his principle target in the *Dialectic*. And his association of this method with Hume, as evidenced by the passages from the logic lectures and the *Critique*, makes clear that he also regards this aspect of the solution, at least in part, as a Humean one.¹⁶

3. PYRRHONIAN SKEPTICISM AND THE SKEPTICAL METHOD IN THE 'ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON'

Having identified the respects in which Kant regards Hume's skepticism as Pyrrhonian and seen that the skeptical method plays a preparatory role in the elimination of the metaphysical disputes at issue in the *Critique*, it is time to consider Kant's comments about skepticism in the

¹⁶ While it is not essential to my argument, it is also worth noting that interpreting Hume's skepticism as Pyrrhonian in the way Kant does is more plausible than it may initially appear. Hume explicitly discusses Pyrrhonian skepticism in the first *Enquiry* and *Dialogues* and does so in ways that suggest the affinities with Pyrrhonian skepticism that Kant identifies. Both works describe the mind's tendency to reflect on questions it cannot answer and that, for this reason, lead to uncertainty and conflict within the field of metaphysics. And both assign Pyrrhonian skepticism the positive role of counterbalancing this tendency and making it easier for us to limit our speculations to questions of what Hume calls 'common life' and 'daily practice'. Moreover, the effects Hume hopes to elicit by using Pyrrhonian arguments are consistent with Kant's conception of the scope of Pyrrhonian skepticism. Hume is emphatic that these arguments have no lasting effect on our common sense beliefs about the world or, indeed, on any of our beliefs about matters of fact. Instead, the kinds of questions he believes exposure to Pyrrhonian arguments will help us eliminate are the abstract theoretical questions that, for Kant, fell under the category of dogma or 'truths of reason'. Finally, Hume is clear in both works that the claims of mathematics and morals are not affected by Pyrrhonian argument. See *Enquiry*, Section XII, Part 3 and *Dialogues*, Part 1.

Dialectic, all of which occur in the ‘Antinomy of Pure Reason’.¹⁷ Kant does not mention Hume in the Antinomy or anywhere else in the Dialectic for that matter. But the evidence from the logic lectures and *Critique* clearly shows that he associates this method with Hume. And since Hume is also the *only* philosopher explicitly identified with this method in the *Critique*, Hume’s use of the method is certainly part of what Kant has in mind when he discusses the skeptical method in the Antinomy.¹⁸ Given the preparatory role he believes this method plays in the elimination of metaphysical disputes, it should not be surprising that Kant not only discusses the skeptical method in the Antinomy but uses it as well.¹⁹

Kant’s first mention of skepticism in the Antinomy is a description of what is without a doubt the clearest instance of the Pyrrhonian crisis that he believes metaphysics faces: the ‘natural antithetic’ of human reason. In contrast to the merely ‘one-sided’ illusion that he addresses in the Paralogisms, we discover in the Antinomy that reason is able to generate equally compelling arguments for incompatible claims.²⁰ And it is this conflict between claims that reason generates itself that Kant calls the ‘natural antithetic’ of reason. This conflict is one ‘for which one does not need to ponder or to lay artificial snares, but rather into which reason falls of itself and even unavoidably’ (A407/B433).

¹⁷ Here I except Kant’s brief discussion of skeptical idealism in the A-edition fourth paralogism. This discussion does not occur in the B-edition Paralogisms and, more importantly, concerns skeptical idealism and not skepticism *per se*.

¹⁸ Lothar Kreimendahl, *Kant—Der Durchbruch von 1769* (Köln, 1990) argues that Kant was awakened from his dogmatic slumber in 1769 by Hamann’s translation of *Treatise 1.4.7* and that this translation was instrumental in his discovery of the antinomies. What I am claiming here is consistent with Kreimendahl’s thesis (as well as other theses about the cause and date of Kant’s awakening) but clearly distinct from it, namely that Kant employs a method in the Antinomies that can be traced to the Pyrrhonians but whose most prominent contemporary exponent he believes is Hume.

¹⁹ Kant’s use of the skeptical method in the Antinomy is rarely discussed in the literature. Ludwig Weber, *Das Distinktionsverfahren im mittelalterlichen Denken und Kants skeptische Methode* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1976), 168-74 and Rudolph Enno, *Skepsis bei Kant: Ein Beitrag zur Interpretation der Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Munich, 1978), 63-5 and 81-4 are two exceptions.

²⁰ Kant’s discussion of this illusion, which he calls transcendental illusion, is in the Introduction of the Transcendental Dialectic (A293-309/B349-366). For an illuminating discussion of these notoriously difficult passages, see Michelle Grier, *Kant’s Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion* (New York, 2001), 101-139.

Now the question arises: What is the proper response to this antithetic? Kant suggests, perhaps somewhat glibly, that one of our responses *should* be gratitude since the antithetic ‘guards reason against the slumber of an imagined conviction’ (A407/B344). But he also claims that we will be tempted to respond to the antithetic in one of two additional ways, neither of which he favors. The first is to ‘surrender to a skeptical hopelessness’, and the second is to ‘assume an attitude of dogmatic stubbornness, setting [our minds] to certain assertions without giving a fair hearing to the grounds for the opposite side’ (ibid). In other words, Kant thinks that we will be tempted either to suspend our judgment when we discover equally compelling arguments for contradictory claims or to become dogmatic by clinging to one of the claims and ignoring the arguments for the other. But either of these options, Kant insists, is the ‘death of a healthy philosophy’, and the former, because it involves the suspension of judgment, might even be called the ‘ **euthanasia** of pure reason’ (ibid).

This, I think, is the strongest condemnation of the skeptical method as a way to *resolve* conflicting metaphysical claims that one is likely to find. But though Kant does not believe that the skeptical method can play the leading role in his resolution of the antinomies, he does give it two important supporting roles. The first is to identify the antinomies themselves, and the second is to make his resolution of them more plausible.

When Kant next discusses skepticism, it is *after* he has specified the content of the antinomies by identifying the four transcendental ideas that will figure into the arguments for each of the four pairs of thesis and antithesis but *before* he has identified these arguments themselves.²¹ Kant returns to the theme of skepticism at this point in the Antinomy because he

²¹ Kant discusses these ideas in the first section of the Antinomies (A409-419/B435-446). For elaboration, see Grier, *Transcendental Illusion*, 172-229.

believes the skeptical method provides the most effective way of identifying these arguments (A424/B451). This method, as Kant now describes it, consists in:

watching or even occasioning a contest between assertions not in order to decide it to the advantage of one party or the other, but to investigate whether the object of the dispute is not perhaps a mere mirage at which each would snatch in vain. (A424/B451)

This is essentially the same description we found in the logic lectures. But Kant here describes the reason for using the skeptical method in more precise terms. In particular, it is not merely to ‘attain certainty’ but to attain certainty about whether certain disputes are caused by our failure to realize that the object of the dispute is something we cannot cognize or, to use Kant’s poetic turn of phrase, at which we would ‘snatch in vain’. In a subsequent passage, Kant claims that the benefit of finding questions for which reason can produce equally strong but conflicting answers is that it allows us to pinpoint the ways that the laws governing our abstract thinking need to be refined. Just as examining the concrete application of laws allows ‘wise legislators’ to ‘draw instruction concerning that which is defective and imprecisely determined in [juridical] laws’, examining the consequences of our natural patterns of reasoning will reveal the ways in which they need to be refined (A424/B451). More importantly, Kant also insists that the skeptical method is the best way for beings with ‘our limited wisdom’ to pinpoint these problems and ‘make reason [...] attentive to the moments involved in determining its principles’ (ibid). The first of the skeptical method’s supporting roles is thus to identify the pairs of contradictory arguments that make up the antinomies.

Kant’s next reference to skepticism in the Antinomy is again to the skeptical method. In a section of the Antinomy called ‘Skeptical representation of the cosmological questions raised by all four transcendental ideas’, he puts this method to work for a second time. But instead of generating arguments for conflicting claims, Kant now asks us to consider the transcendental

ideas that supply the subject matter for each of the antinomies. He does this because he wants to show that these ideas are *all* ‘empty’ in the sense that the objects corresponding to them can never be given in experience. Further, the advantage of understanding that the ideas are empty in this way is that this understanding prepares us for Kant’s resolution of the antinomies via transcendental idealism. If our examination of these ideas should reveal that the thesis and antithesis of each antinomy are both ‘quite empty of sense (nonsense)’, Kant believes ‘we would have good grounds to summon our question itself to be critically examined and to see whether it does not itself rest on a groundless presupposition’ (A485/B513). Kant’s reference to sense and nonsense in this passage alludes to his previous description of the skeptical method. As we have just seen, one rationale behind this method is that it allows us to determine whether the object of a metaphysical dispute is ‘a mere mirage at which each would snatch in vain’ (A423/B451). Now Kant’s goal is precisely to show that the ‘object of the dispute’ in each of the four antinomies is something we snatch at ‘in vain’ because it can never be given in experience. And he regards his attempt to do this as an application of the skeptical method:

This is the great utility of the skeptical way of treating the questions that pure reason puts to pure reason; by means of it one can with little expense exempt oneself from a great deal of dogmatic rubbish, and put in its place a sober critique which, as a true cathartic, will happily purge such delusions along with the punditry attendant upon them. (A485-6/B513-4)

The skeptical method not only helps us identify the antinomies, then, but also makes Kant’s own solution to them more plausible.

After describing the way in which transcendental idealism resolves the antinomies, Kant discusses skepticism once more to reaffirm its importance in the Antinomy. The details of Kant’s solution have been discussed at length by others.²² So I will simply highlight the continued

²² See Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (New York, 1987), 385-415 and, for a more sympathetic reading, Henry Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, revised and enlarged edition (New Haven, 2004), 384-395.

importance Kant places on the skeptical method. After insisting that transcendental idealism is the only theory that can resolve the antinomies, Kant comments that this unique ability also provides us with an indirect proof of transcendental idealism. And since Kant used the skeptical method to motivate his introduction of transcendental idealism, he closes this portion of the Antinomy by again praising the skeptical method:

Thus the transcendental dialectic by no means provides support for skepticism, though it does for the skeptical method, which can point to the dialectic as an example of the great utility of letting the arguments of reason confront one another in the most complete freedom; such arguments, although they may not deliver what one was seeking, nevertheless will always deliver something useful and serviceable for the correction of our judgments. (A507/B535)

Although it is not the ultimate solution to the antinomies, then, the skeptical method does play an important role in this part of the Dialectic. Moreover, the claims Kant makes about the skeptical method in the Antinomy parallel the claims he made about it in the discussion of Hume we considered in the previous section. Both discussions emphasize the preparatory role the skeptical method can play in a critique of metaphysics, and both are sharply critical of the suggestion that this method is sufficient to resolve conflicting metaphysical claims on its own.²³

Finally, while this method is Pyrrhonian in origin, we have also seen that Kant regards Hume as the ‘most preeminent’ philosopher using it in the eighteenth-century. As a result, Kant’s use of the skeptical method in the Antinomy reveals a debt to Pyrrhonian skepticism and to Hume that most commentators, including Forster and Guyer, do not acknowledge. In particular, Kant not only attempts to extricate us from a Pyrrhonian crisis in the Dialectic, as Forster and Guyer rightly claim, but attempts to do so, in part, by using a quintessentially Pyrrhonian method whose most important modern advocate, he believes, is Hume.

²³ As we will see in the next section, Kant’s early account of a critique of metaphysics is one target of this criticism.

4. THE DIALECTIC IN THE EARLY 1770S

For all I have said, however, the positive influence on the Dialectic that we can attribute to Hume and Pyrrhonian skepticism is still relatively modest. And it may seem that Kant's use of the skeptical method in the Antinomy is still too limited for us to regard either Pyrrhonian skepticism or Hume as a *significant* positive influence on the development of the Dialectic. When we examine the role of the skeptical method in early versions of the Dialectic, however, we discover that its influence is far greater than the published version suggests. In particular, we discover that this method did not always play the merely supporting role Kant assigns it there but that he initially believed it was the key to a large part of his critique of metaphysics.

Kant's early conception of the Dialectic differs in at least three ways from the version found in the *Critique*. I will discuss the first two of these differences now and return to the third in a moment. The first is that until the late 1770s Kant believed that the antinomies *completely exhausted* the dialectical inferences of reason and thus that *all* of the illegitimate claims of traditional metaphysics could be put in antinomial form. The second is that during this period Kant also believed that merely identifying pairs of equally compelling but contradictory arguments was a *sufficient* means to end philosophical inquiry about the questions they addressed. Throughout most of the 1770s, that is, Kant believed that using the skeptical method in the first of the two ways he uses it in the Antinomy was sufficient to both *identify* all the illegitimate claims of traditional metaphysics and *prevent* us from making them in the future.

The first of these claims has been discussed extensively by commentators and is now generally accepted.²⁴ But the second is, to my knowledge, a new claim about the development of the Dialectic and cannot be made without providing evidence. One piece of evidence is R4454,

²⁴ See, for example, Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'* (New York, 1918), 431-440 and Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, 387-404.

dated to 1772. Kant here claims that the skeptical method is the most effective way to subject metaphysics to critique and, in particular, that it is a more effective method than the attempt to identify paralogisms (fallacies of equivocation) that he later incorporates into the final version of the Dialectic:

In the critique of metaphysics one can make use of two kinds of methods. The first is to examine proofs and search for their *paralogisms* or *petitiones principii*. The second is to oppose one proof to another, indeed a proof equally convincing as the opposite. The latter method is the best. (17:557)

According to this note, then, the identification of equally compelling arguments for contrary claims is not a preliminary step towards a critique of metaphysics but the best method for such a critique.

We must be careful not to read too much into Kant's claim that the skeptical method is the best method for the critique of metaphysics, however. For Kant can at best only have two of three distinguishable aspects of this critique in mind. In particular, Kant is certainly not suggesting that the skeptical method will allow us to draw a clear distinction between genuine and merely putative objects of cognition. As in Kant's mature critique of metaphysics, this aspect of his early critique of metaphysics is developed as part of his account of possible experience.²⁵ Rather, what Kant appears to mean is that the skeptical method will allow us to identify claims known to be illicit on the basis of other considerations (one of the different versions of the account of possible experience Kant entertained in the 1770s) and prevent us from making these claims in the future. In the terms of the theory Kant will later develop, then, R4454 assigns the

²⁵ For discussion of the development of the first step of Kant's critique in the 1770s, see Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, 11-70 and Wolfgang Carl, *Der schweigende Kant: Die Entwürfe zu einer Deduktion der Kategorien von 1781* (Göttingen, 1989).

skeptical method the dual role of identifying instances of transcendental illusion and preventing us from being deceived by them.²⁶

R4952, dated to the period 1776 to 1778, also suggests that Kant initially thought of the Dialectic as an application of the skeptical method that would allow him to identify the sources of dialectical illusion *and* protect us from falling victim to this illusion:

The sophisticated dialectic is an art of illusion. The philosophical [dialectic] [is] a science of the resolution of illusion and has a propaedeutic part that contains the criterion of truth and a skeptical [part] that identifies the sources of illusion and secures truth against illusion. (18:39)

What Kant here describes as the ‘philosophical dialectic’ includes some topics, like his reference to the ‘criterion of truth’, that he later includes in the ‘Transcendental Analytic’ of the *Critique*.²⁷ But what is important for our purposes is that the task of the Dialectic is assigned to the ‘skeptical part’ of the work Kant is describing since this suggests that he initially believed the skeptical method was *the* method for identifying illegitimate metaphysical claims and preventing us from making them.²⁸

But *why* did the Kant of the 1770s believe that the skeptical method was powerful enough to identify these claims and eliminate our tendency to make them? We can begin to answer this question by noting the third way in which Kant’s conception of the Dialectic throughout most of the 1770s differed from the conception we find in the *Critique*: his relatively benign conception of metaphysical illusion.²⁹

²⁶ Kant distinguishes between transcendental illusion and the deception associated with it. The former is a natural and ineliminable *tendency* to misuse the categories by attempting to cognize the objects supposed to correspond to the ideas of reason (God, the soul, and the world-whole). The latter is any instance of this misuse, that is, any theoretical judgment about one of these objects. Just as we can refrain from judging that an oar that appears bent really is so, Kant’s view in the *Critique* is that we can be subject to transcendental illusion without being deceived by it. See A297/B354 and A708-12/B736-40.

²⁷ See A57-62/B82-86.

²⁸ See also the very telegraphic R4460, dated to 1772, and R4275, dated to the period 1770-1.

²⁹ Kant does not introduce the term ‘transcendental illusion’ until late in the decade and even then only uses it to describe the account he develops in the *Critique*. For this reason, I will use ‘metaphysical illusion’ to designate early

Kant does not develop his mature conception of transcendental illusion as a ‘natural and unavoidable dialectic of pure reason’ until very late in the 1770s but instead continues to hold a version of the *Inaugural Dissertation*’s account of metaphysical illusion throughout most of the decade (A297/B354). There Kant had argued that what he called ‘illusions of the understanding’ arise when we confuse the conditions of the sensible cognition of objects of the intellectual world with the conditions of the objects themselves. The name Kant gave for this kind of confusion was the ‘fallacy of subreption’, and he held that the claims we make when we commit this fallacy are not merely false but actually stand in opposition to what reason tells us about the objects of the intellectual world. Unlike the transcendental illusion of the *Critique*, then, the illusion Kant believes he must combat in the *Dissertation* is not unavoidable but can be prevented by adherence to a simple methodological rule, namely not to confuse ‘what belongs to the understanding with what is sensitive’ (2:412).³⁰

This basic account of the cause of illusion and the means by which we can avoid it is one that Kant continues to hold throughout most of the 1770s. Thus, in the continuation of R4454, the first of the *Reflexionen* discussed in this section, Kant claims that the reason the skeptical method is the best method for the critique of metaphysics is that the ‘errors of metaphysical inferences consist chiefly in the fact that what holds of the conditions of sensible cognition is asserted of the object’ (17:557). And in a passage from R4757, one of the earliest sketches of the Dialectic dated to the period 1775 and 1777, Kant makes his continued adherence to the *Dissertation*’s account of illusion even clearer. Here, under the heading of ‘Dialectic’ and ‘Rules’, Kant writes:

1. Not to judge by rules of appearance that which does not belong to the appearances at all, e.g. God with space and time.

versions of his account of what induces us to make illegitimate metaphysical claims, including the version of this account found in the *Inaugural Dissertation*.

³⁰ For a more detailed discussion of Kant’s account of illusion in the *Inaugural Dissertation*, see Michelle Grier, *Transcendental Illusion*, 48-66.

2. Not to subject to its conditions what does not belong to outer appearance, e.g. spirit.
3. Not to take for impossible that which cannot be comprehended and which cannot be represented in intuition: the totality of the infinite or of infinite division. The infinite series, the finitude of the derived without the *substratum originarium*.

Further, not to confuse the principles of the absolute unity of reason with those of empirical unity.

- a. Simplicity of the thinking subject.
- b. Freedom as the [*crossed out: principium*] condition of rational actions.
- c. *Ens* [*crossed out: infinitum*] *originarium* as *substratum* of all combination of one's representations into a whole.
- d. Not to confuse the restriction of the world as far as its origin and content is concerned with boundedness. (17:704-5)

The first three rules that Kant lists in this passage are more specific versions of the methodological rule introduced in the *Dissertation* not to confuse sensible principles with intelligible ones, while the fourth, 'not to confuse the principles of the absolute unity of reason with those of empirical unity', is a generalization of the first three. And just as the *Dissertation* suggests that adherence to its methodological rule will allow us to avoid 'illusions of the understanding', this passage suggests that adherence to the rules it describes will allow us to avoid the illusions associated with the Antinomies since the 'principles of the absolute unity of reason' it lists correspond to the theses of the four Antinomies.³¹

As he conceived of it throughout most of the 1770s, then, the most onerous part of Kant's attempt to resolve metaphysical disputes was the identification of arguments that violate rules like those described in R4757. And this is the most likely explanation for his belief that the skeptical method could play such an important role in his critique of metaphysics. On Kant's mid-1770s account of metaphysical error, violating these rules will lead us to make conflicting

³¹ It may seem that the 'Simplicity of the thinking subject' does not correspond to any of the antinomies but is, instead, a forerunner of the second paralogism. But in the *Critique*, Kant also suggests that the thesis of the second antinomy asserts the simplicity of the soul. In discussing the non-logical reasons we have for preferring the theses of the antinomies to their antitheses, Kant comments 'that the world has a beginning, *that my thinking self is of a simple and therefore incorruptible nature*, that this self is likewise free and elevated above natural compulsion in its voluntary actions, and finally, that the whole order of things constituting the world descends from an original being, from which it borrows all its unity and purposive connectedness—these are so many cornerstones of morality and religion' (A466/B494, my emphasis).

claims. And since the goal of the skeptical method is to find equally strong arguments for conflicting claims, this method is uniquely suited to help us identify claims that violate one or more of these rules. Moreover, once we know which of our views involve these violations, Kant suggests in R4757 that correcting our beliefs will be as simple as resolving ‘not to confuse principles of the absolute unity of reason with those of empirical unity’ in the particular cases we have identified.

But this comparatively benign conception of the dialectic of reason and what one must do to resolve it was overturned in the late 1770s when Kant expanded the Dialectic to include the Paralogisms and Ideal.³² And this change was accompanied by the abandonment of the *Inaugural Dissertation*’s account of metaphysical illusion and the adoption of the *Critique*’s account of transcendental illusion. As a result of the first of these changes, it became impossible for the skeptical method to *identify* certain illicit metaphysical claims (those of the Paralogisms and the Ideal). And as a result of the second, it lost all its power to prevent us from making them. As Kant’s conception of the problem presented by traditional metaphysics expanded in both nature and scope, the skeptical method could no longer play the leading role in Kant’s critique and was given the supporting role in one portion of that critique that we previously identified in the Antinomy.

5. REEXAMINING KANT’S RESPONSE TO SKEPTICISM

What do all of these details about the development of the Dialectic reveal about Kant’s response to skepticism in the *Critique*? I think they reveal quite a lot. First, they strengthen the

³² R4930, dated to the period 1776 to 1778, is the first to document Kant’s mature conception of transcendental illusion and to mention the term ‘transcendental illusion’. R5552-R5555, all dated to the period 1778 to 1779, present the dialectical inferences of reason in their mature, tripartite form. Unfortunately, these notes do not give us any clear indication of what caused Kant to change his conception of transcendental illusion or the structure of the Dialectic.

case that a portion of Kant's response to Pyrrhonian skepticism in the *Critique* is *positive* by showing that he initially used the Pyrrhonian skeptical method to resolve the metaphysical disputes subsequently addressed in the published version of the *Dialectic*. Others have suggested that Kant went through a skeptical phase in the 1760s.³³ But our examination of the *Dialectic* and its development has revealed that the *Dialectic* (the longest part of the *Critique*) is the final product of another skeptical phase in Kant's development that began in the 1770s and that this phase relied heavily on the skeptical method. This is one consequence for our understanding of Kant's response to skepticism that emerges from the previous two sections. And as I suggested in the introduction, it is also a weighty one. It shows that we should reject the view, common at least since Reinhold, that Kant's response to skepticism is limited to his attempt to refute skeptical doctrines.³⁴ And it suggests that a more detailed examination of the positive influence of the skeptical tradition on Kant may be needed.

Second, these details strengthen the case that we should also regard this positive response to Pyrrhonian skepticism as, in part, a positive response to *Hume* since the period in which Kant's critique of metaphysics was most reliant on the skeptical method is also the period in which there is the most evidence that he regarded Hume's skepticism as, in part, Pyrrhonian. This too is an important conclusion. It shows that Kant's response to Hume is not limited to his account of possible experience and serves to strengthen the view, argued by others in recent years, that Kant's project in the *Critique* is to a large extent a Humean one.³⁵ Kant often emphasizes that he

³³ See, for example Friedrich Paulsen, *Versuch einer Entwicklungsgeschichte der Kantischen Erkenntnistheorie* (Leipzig, 1875), 37-100, Benno Erdmann, ed. *Reflexionen Kants zur kritischen Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1884), XVII-XXIII, Tonelli, 'Kant und die antiken Skeptiker', 110, Weber, *Distinktionsverfahren*, 128-35, and Forster, *Kant and Skepticism*, 19. Forster is alone among these commentators in explicitly charactering this phase as Pyrrhonian.

³⁴ See, for example, K.L Reinhold, *Ueber das Fundament des philosophischen Wissens* (Jena, 1791), 45-70. For discussion of Reinhold's reading of Kant and its influence on subsequent Kant interpretation, see Karl Ameriks, *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy* (New York, 2000).

³⁵ Manfred Kuehn, 'Kant's Transcendental Deduction: A Limited *Defense* of Hume,' in *New essays on Kant*, edited by Bernard den Ouden and Marcia Moen (New York, 1987), Gary Hatfield, 'The Prolegomena and the Critiques of

and Hume share the common goal of undermining the claims of traditional metaphysics.³⁶ And his use of the skeptical method in the 1770s documents a period in his development when he was in far more agreement with the means Hume chose to achieve this goal than he became in the 1780s when his conception of the structure of the Dialectic and of transcendental illusion reached their final form.

Third, these details reveal that Kant's comments in the *Critique* about the limitations of the skeptical method are just as much a criticism of his own position in the 1770s as they are of either Hume or Pyrrhonian skepticism. In the *Critique* and elsewhere, Kant emphasizes that human reason naturally passes through periods of dogmatism and skepticism before entering into its final critical phase.³⁷ And our examination of the development of the Dialectic shows that these claims are not just historical but autobiographical as well.³⁸ It is well-known that Kant's so-called 'silent decade' spans the period between the publication of the dogmatic *Inaugural Dissertation* and the critical first *Critique*. But we now see that the transition between these two phases involved a prolonged skeptical phase in which Kant believed that the method he would later criticize could accomplish most of his critique of metaphysics.

Far from being straightforward, then, Kant's response to skepticism in general and to Hume in particular is more complex than even Forster and Guyer have suggested. While it is true that Kant believes Hume denies the existence of *a priori* principles of cognition and that the arguments of the Aesthetic and Analytic can be read as an extended response to these denials, it is also true that Kant's initial version of critique of traditional metaphysics in the 1770s was

Pure Reason,' in *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung*, edited by R. P. Horstmann V. Gerhardt, and R. Schumacher (Berlin, 2001), and Wayne Waxman, *Kant and the Empiricists: Understanding Understanding* (New York, 2005) have all argued in different ways that the affinities between Kant and Hume are at least as important as the differences. My reservations about Waxman's version of this claim are the subject of some work in progress.

³⁶ See A760/B788, 4:259n, 360, and 5:13.

³⁷ See Aviii-xii, A761/B789, and 20:262-4

³⁸ Forster, *Kant and Skepticism*, 14 makes this claim in a different context.

deeply influenced by a method he associated with Hume and, moreover, that he continued to use this method (albeit in a more limited way) in the published version of the *Critique*. And while it is true that the Dialectic is an attempt to save us from a Pyrrhonian crisis, it is also true that one of the means by which Kant attempts to do this is, at least in its inception, Pyrrhonian and, moreover, that he regards Hume as its most important modern advocate. In Kant's eyes, then, Humean and Pyrrhonian skepticism are connected in complex and subtle ways. And his attitude toward them, including his own skeptical foray in the 1770s, is marked by a deep ambivalence.

Finally, the fact that Kant was willing to borrow from the skeptical tradition, at least as he understood it, because he believed doing so would benefit his critique of traditional metaphysics suggests that this critique and not refuting skepticism—Humean, Pyrrhonian, or otherwise—is the primary goal of the *Critique*. Interpreting Kant's attitude toward skepticism in this way is, of course, consistent with maintaining that his arguments contain refutations of skeptical views. But it suggests that refuting skepticism may not be the unifying theme of the *Critique*. Similar interpretative claims have been made on different grounds by Manfred Kuehn and Gary Hatfield.³⁹ And the considerations presented here lend support to this aspect of their readings. In my view, however, one cannot develop a complete account of the unifying theme of the *Critique* without examining its entire structure and determining the relationship of each major part (including the Doctrine of Method) to the others and the goal to which these parts jointly contribute. And such an examination is more than they or I have sought to provide. As such, it is obviously matter for another paper.⁴⁰

³⁹ See Kuehn, 'Kant's Transcendental Deduction,' and Hatfield, 'The Prolegomena and the Critiques'.

⁴⁰ I am grateful to Mike Beaney, Karen Detlefsen, Scott Edgar, Paul Guyer, Gary Hatfield, Adrienne Martin, Andrew Roche, Daniel Southerland, two anonymous referees, and the participants of the 2008 Atlantic Canada Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy and 2008 North American Kant Society's Midwest Study Group for helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

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