

Candidate 4 evidence

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2)	<p><u>Knowledge & Doubt - Hume</u></p> <p>Scottish philosopher David Hume had many ideas of Cause & Effect as stated in his meditation IV. Hume was an empiricist - a school of epistemological thought which suggests that all that we come to see (through cause & effect or otherwise) is conveyed to us solely through our senses. Hume had many ideas on the basis of the relations of ideas where he classes them as two separate parts parts within cause & effect: the relations of ideas - a priori knowledge which we can work out or matters of fact - a posteriori knowledge which we know as a matters of definition or constant experience, ie "the sun will rise tomorrow". Hume's ideas of how cause & effect came about have been highly disputed among scholars with Hume himself even identifying some of his arguments shortcomings. Hume's claims on cause & effect do, however, hold major validity is especially within, first & foremost his distinctions between a priori & a posteriori knowledge.</p>	

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	<p> /// Hume's ^{distinguishes on} relations of ideas argument focusses solely on what we know $\frac{1}{2}$ what we can work out. what we know, or matters of fact (a posteriori) are usually undisputed truths which rely heavily on past experiences or knowledge bestowed onto us by a credible source for which we deductively know of no other outcomes or possibilities; it is a fact. ^{Regarding} the Hume's own example of "the sun will rise tomorrow"; we can see that based on experience, brought to us by our senses that this is certainly, as a matter of fact, the case. Hume's relations of ideas, something we perhaps do not automatically know a posteriori or as a matter of fact but something we can work out from previous impressions or ideas for example no one knows automatically that, in Hume's own words, $\frac{30}{2} = 15$ but this is however something we can work out to become certain & known knowledge. </p>	

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	<p> However Hume states that we should ^{could} be sceptical & not always trust what has been delivered to us through our senses, for example his notion that even although we may hear voices speaking rationally in the dark, we should ^{we must} believe there to be people in the dark due to previously gained knowledge that voices usually mean people ergo there are people in the dark. Likewise he states that if we were to find a watch washed up on a desert island we should assume humans to have stepped foot upon said island. Thirdly he states that if a friend sends you a post card from France, you believe them to be in France however all 3 aforementioned examples admit some exceptions. The voices could be a mere voice recording, the watch may have been dropped from a plane or washed up in shallow waters, and your friend may be a liar. The issue here with how Hume gains knowledge is that it doesn't account for coincidences. </p>	

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	Hume speaks of cause & effect wherein if we observe something to occur or set about an action a reaction of similar proportions will likely be observed. (to paraphrase Newton) This is the cause i.e. kicking a ball and the effect: the ball moving off in different directions or indeed stopping dead. He argues that we can't always know what the outcome or effect of an action may be. To use Hume's own example: how can we be sure from our senses alone that this bread I eat for breakfast every morning will always nourish me. Just as one consumes bread expecting to be nourished, this may not always be the case due to what Hume calls the secret & magical qualities of the bread & that one day, just as we're taken for granted that the bread will nourish us, it may in fact not, or even do the opposite.	

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	<p>However, there may be a priori knowledge when we take into account Hume's example of Adam. Adam, the first man, with no prior experience, is perhaps able to figure out if the fire will burn him or if the pool of water will drown him. He could perhaps gather this knowledge from seeing animals, meat or wood burned by fire or seeing animals, pebbles or barrels submerged within the pool. Adam can then, arguably, gather this information from his senses & make reasonable & appropriate judgements based on what he will conclude due to relations of ideas or working things out. However counterarguably however, one may argue that there is no way of foretelling the effects or outcomes of different actions such as stroking a flint & steel in which we, unlike Adam, know largely a posteriori what will happen, however Adam, the first man has no prior knowledge or experience</p>	

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	<p>here I would almost certainly never guess the outcome of sparks flying. So Hume remains it would in some cases be very difficult to have a priori knowledge of cause & effect given that outcomes are often unpredictable especially on first viewing.</p>	
	<p>Hume's argument, is in my mind, strong as he makes clear distinctions between cause & effect & the acquisition of types of knowledge however an area of ambiguity lies within the bounds of coincidence. As Hume would state drinking cyanide will kill you but it is also possible to reach the conclusion of drinking milk will kill you as it is coincidentally possible that ^{for a} person to be allergic or already very ill. Hume's ideas are rigid & lack any room for coincidence or ^{the surprises of} time to life scenarios which can't often be accounted for under his theory. Hume's examples are all, in my opinion, too singular to hold large merit</p>	

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	<p>as all given examples are circumstances</p> <p>Surely there would be footprints or a shelter or even a pile of bones on the island.</p> <p>Surely the individuals in the dark would make other noises, the shuffling of feet, coughing or the fact that they may even choose to expose themselves in the light.</p> <p>What's the point for how These are to a degree, too singular or niche, avoidant of real life negative externalities which makes this theory to a margin, impractical & slightly unrealistic to see any like results.</p> <p>the can</p> <p>We also can never fully be sure that we won't observe new effects for previously assumed causes, just as it probably surprised an early Billiards player when his/her ball stopped dead upon being struck just right, when wasn't accounted for in a prior knowledge, what if said Billiard ball flew off the table & disappeared? And under Hume's logic the connections between cause & effect would largely be blurred as</p>	

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	<p>new, not a priori knowledge is found which again shows a slight issue with objectivity.</p>	
	<p>To conclude, Hume's theory of cause & effect was largely successful as we can link actions of a certain nature to similar outcomes of that level & in the nature that we acquire knowledge through our senses & experiences. Hume makes many accurate distinctions such as when he touches on plain ordinary knowledge & being able to arguably work things out although he may not know for sure until he's seen wood burn & so will be possibly able to conclude that he himself will be burned although there is no accurate way to prove or disprove said point within Humean empiricist logic. Hume's observations, in my mind, hold great validity however, despite their flaws as he makes valid points on the distinctions of knowledge & cause & effect for the most part. Hume though has</p>	

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	work seems marginally flawed:	
	when closely pulled apart, still largely	
	holds true $\frac{1}{2}$ is important in understanding	
	the origins of logic.	

