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They jointly entail that, given that the wise proportion their belief to the evidence, there must be something about their circumstances that determines them to do so.

Since not everyone is wise, these circumstances must be special to them.

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Since not everyone is wise, these circumstances must be special to them.

That is the problem.

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Not everyone is wise. Even wise people are not *always* wise.

There are factors that prevent our beliefs from being determined just by the evidence.

Hume was sensitive to these facts. He did more than almost anyone else at the time to catalogue extra-empirical influences on belief and explain how and why they determine our belief.

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The topics taken up in *Hume's Remedy* arise in connection with his effort to advance and apply this remedy.

Scepticism with Regard to the Senses (1)

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In developing this position, *Hume's Remedy* studies how Hume understood the relation between conscious states (for Hume, sense impressions, ideas, and passions) and our experience of space and time.

Classic Positions on Spatial Localization

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So none of its sensory states (pain, pleasure, taste, smell, colour*, etc.) are located in space.

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Descartes / Malebranche: our beliefs that pains occur in personal body parts and that colours are extended over a visual field are juvenile preconceptions or natural but mistaken judgments.

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Reid: (a) We are innately so constituted that, under appropriate stimulus conditions, we perform acts of conceiving spatially extended objects. The acts are nothing like the objects conceived. In particular, they are not located in space.

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(b) None of our sensory states is anything like any of the qualities of objects. No one, not even the “vulgar” thinks that any of the qualities of their sensory states exists anywhere in space.

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(c) No one, not even painters, interior decorators, florists, cosmeticians, gardeners, etc. ever uses “colour” or the colour terms of any language to refer the qualities of their visual sensations. These words are only ever used to refer to something invisible (the microstructure of visible objects).

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Smith and Condillac attempted more but with questionable success.

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A Novel Position on Spatial Localization

“Intuitionism” (Hume and Kant)

Visual and tactile sensations are immediately experienced as disposed in space.

Hume: space is a “manner” in which simple visual and tactile sensations are disposed in complex visual and tactile impressions

Kant: space is a form of intuition.

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Too bad if that does not fit with the supposition that the mind is an unextended spiritual substance.

The Classic Position on Temporal Localization

Presentism (everyone prior to Einstein, including Hume)

Perceptual consciousness is confined to what exists at the present moment.

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Hume's Remedy argues that Hume and Locke could not account for the experience of succession without tacitly abandoning their accounts of memory

and instead relying on the notion that consciousness extends some way into the very recent past

(that we are somehow able to now "take notice" of what has just passed, as if we could see it still standing there where it was (is?) off in the past, just as we see what is off to the left standing off to the left)

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The manner of the disposition of visible and tactile points is a further feature of complex sense impressions.

It is present in complex impressions as they originally exist prior to any operations of the imagination or understanding. It is not reducible to or derivable from anything found in the disposed coloured and tactile points.

To exist at all, it must exist as a feature of an originally given whole.

One major conclusion of *Hume's Remedy*, cont.'d

Visual and tactile sensory experience (consciousness) takes up space.

Consciousness of all sorts is also temporally extended (in the sense of extending into the very recent past).

Scepticism with Regard to the Senses (2)

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Hume never did that work.

Scepticism with Regard to the Senses (2), cont.'d

Hume's famous account of causal inference focuses on regularity in the succession of species of external objects, simply assuming that these objects are as directly perceived as impressions of pain or anger.

Scepticism with Regard to the Senses (2), cont.'d

Hume's famous account of causal inference focuses on regularity in the succession of species of external objects, simply assuming that these objects are as directly perceived as impressions of pain or anger.

When talking about external world scepticism he claimed that ordinary people take their very sense impressions or (in the *Enquiry*) the "images presented by the senses" to be external objects

ignoring that ordinary people take things like hats, shoes, and stones to be external objects

and that the one cannot be simply identified with the other.

A classic Kantian Objection (H.H. Price; L. White Beck)

Hume took the achievement of recognizing objects for granted, neglecting the role of a priori concepts in this operation.

Answering the Price / Beck Objection

Hume's mistake.

Hume tried to account for all empirically guided belief in the unobserved by appeal to causal inference.

Might he have done better with the other resources at his disposal?

Answering the Price / Beck Objection

Hume's Remedy draws on Humean resources

(association by contiguity and resemblance)

to formulate Humean positions on how we come to

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parse the sensory fields into “images presented by the senses,”

and ascribe identity over time to these images, even across gaps in observation.

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With these resources, Hume could have provided an account of how impressions and “images presented by the senses” are mediately perceived as publicly observable objects, without needing to appeal to a priori concepts.

But this answer comes at a cost.

It calls for a more robust account of temporal experience and spatial representation than Hume provided.

Hume on Endurance

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This doctrine frustrated his ability to offer an adequate account of identity over time.

He was also unable to abide by it.

One can't coherently write that “*an object, which exists for any time in its full perfection without any effect, is not the sole cause of that effect, but requires to be assisted by some other principle, which may forward its influence and operation.*” (T 1.3.15.10, “Rules by which to judge of causes and effects)

while maintaining that no unchanging object lasts for more than a moment. A rule directing us to search for hidden activators could have no purpose under such a supposition.

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Hume's Remedy argues that the non-endurance doctrine is not justified by any of the reasons Hume offered in its support, or by reasons commentators have so far been able to come up with on his behalf.

(And that this is all to the good because Hume's failure in this regard preserves the integrity of his views on more important matters.)

Hume on Vacuum

The Hume of the *Treatise* also maintained that “we can form no idea of a vacuum, or space, where there is nothing visible or tangible.”

This doctrine frustrated his ability to recognize abiding visual and tactile field boundaries and their role in spatial orientation.

One can't coherently write that “*the eye at all times sees an equal number of physical points*” (T 1.3.9.11)

while maintaining that “*when two bodies present themselves, where there was formerly an entire darkness, the only change that is discoverable is in the appearance of these two objects*” and that the surrounding “*darkness or negation of light ... causes no perception different from what a blind [person] receives*” and “*afford[s] us no idea of extension*” (T 1.2.5.11)

Hume on Vacuum, cont.'d

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Berkeley:

We do not immediately perceive visual depth.

We only learn to infer tangible distances from qualitative cues like eye muscle sensations.

We come to read or “mediately perceive” these cues as signs of outward distance.

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We only learn to infer “filled intervals” between the lone bodies from qualitative cues like eye and hand muscle sensations.

Because we think the filled intervals are there, but do not see anything between the lone bodies, we “falsely imagine” that the lone bodies are separated by an invisible and intangible distance.

That is, we “falsely imagine” we are perceiving a vacuum, when we are only perceiving the two lone bodies.

Hume on Vacuum, cont.'d

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It is similarly difficult to offer an associationist account of the “false imagining” of vacuum.

If all that exists, visually, are two lone luminous bodies, the notion of moving the eye from one to the other makes no sense.

Hume on Vacuum, cont.'d

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It is similarly difficult to offer an associationist account of the “false imagining” of vacuum.

If all that exists, visually, are two lone luminous bodies, the notion of moving the eye from one to the other makes no sense.

We think of moving the eyes as involving bringing first the one object, and then the other to the centre of the field of view.

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Hume's Remedy argues that this is the case with all the distance cues Hume invoked. His associationist account only works by relying on what it proposes to deny.

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It is fortunate that Hume's case against the perception of a vacuum collapses.

It is even more telling that his failure was due to the fact that it is so difficult to conceive lone bodies without conceiving them to be disposed in space that even when Hume thought he had succeeded at doing so, he had not.

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Hume's Remedy argues that he was wrong to say what he did about endurance and vacuum and shows how he could have developed robust accounts of identity and objectivity had he corrected the oversights and errors that led him to neglect the further development of one of his best ideas.