

OF THE STANDARD OF TASTE
Part One

HUME

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FOR NEXT DAY

1. Is it possible to declare something beautiful if you don't like it?
What would Plato/Gorgias/Augustine/Hume say? (WWXS)
1. Consider the parable of the key and the vat of wine (415-16). What does this parable tell us about the relationship between sentiment and judgment?

2

BEAUTIFUL

WHO'S a pretty boy?
You are!
Yes, you are!



3

BEAUTIFUL

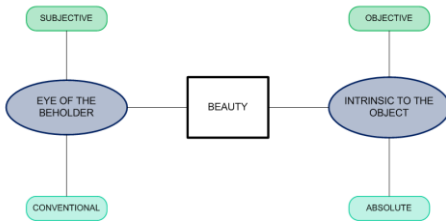
WHO'S a pretty boy?
YOU are!
Yes, you are!



4

The LOCATION of Beauty

Hume: Locating Beauty



5

SENTIMENT

- What is Hume's definition of SENTIMENT?
- I like Cheetos.

"All sentiment is right; because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself" (412).



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HUME'S ANTI-IDEALISM

Hume asserts:
 It is evident that **none of the rules of composition are fixed by reasonings *a priori***, or can be esteemed abstract conclusions of the understanding, from comparing those habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. **The foundation is the same with that of all the practical sciences, *experience***; nor are they any thing but **general observations**, concerning what has been **universally found to please in all countries and in all ages.** (413)

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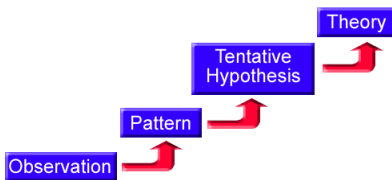
POOL BALL SCENARIO

- If I hit a pool ball the exact same way 1234 times, and it goes into the pocket 1234 times, what WILL happen the 1235th time?



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INDUCTIVE REASONING



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WHAT'S AT STAKE?

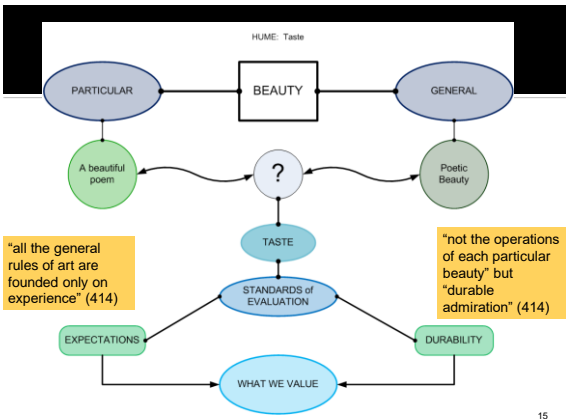
- Hume says: "It is natural for us to seek a *Standard of Taste*; a rule, by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled" (412).
- WHY should these "various sentiments" be "reconciled?"

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WHAT'S POSSIBLE?

- Hume says: "The difference, it is said, is very wide between judgment and sentiment" (412) and that his goal is to "mingle some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment" (412).
- How is this gap between judgment and sentiment to be crossed or closed?

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YES, BUT: SEEKING THE UNIVERSAL

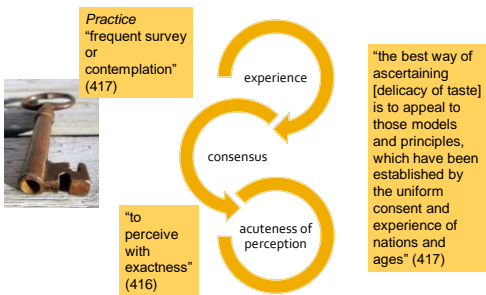
"To seek the real beauty, or real deformity, is as fruitless and enquiry, as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet or real bitter" (413).

"BUT ... there is a certainly a species of common sense which opposes it" (413).

EVEN THOUGH we cannot for sure know the Truth, we *feel as though* there is one and act accordingly.

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REFINEMENT defined?



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JUDGMENT



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PREJUDICE

■ HOW does Hume define PREJUDICE?

DISEASE
"a man in a fever" or "affected with jaundice" (415)



Cure?
"considering myself as a man in general, forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances" (418)

SELFISHNESS
"obstinately maintains his natural position" (419)

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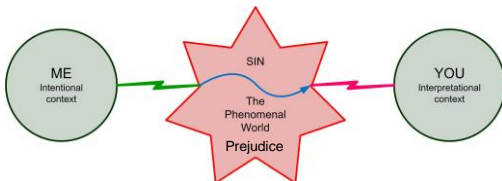
HEALTH

If, in the **sound state of the organ**, there be an entire or considerable **uniformity of sentiment** among men, we may thence derive an **idea** of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in day-light, to the eye of a man **in health**, is denominated their **true** and **real** colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses.

(415)

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AUGUSTINE: the problem of communication; HUME: Prejudice



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WHAT DO WE KNOW?

- From the perspective of Hume, what do STANDARDS of TASTE tell us about
 - The OBJECT of critique?
 - The CRITIC?
 - The IDEAL?
 - The PHENOMENAL WORLD?
 - The INTENT of the AUTHOR?

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