

## Questions about *Treatise II*

1. Hume's "double relation" theory of the indirect passions.

Reading: II.i.i–II.i.vi; II.ii.i–II.ii.ii.

Questions: What facts about our feelings of pride, humility, love and hatred is the double relation theory supposed to explain? How does the explanation work? Is the explanation a successful one?

2. Sympathy

Reading: II.i.xi ('Of the love of fame'), II.ii.ix ('Of the mixture of benevolence and anger with compassion and malice').

Questions: What does Hume mean by 'sympathy'? How does he explain the operation of sympathy, and how successful is this explanation? How does Hume build upon this account in section II.ii.ix?

3. Liberty and necessity.

Reading: II.iii.i–II.iii.ii.

Questions: What does Hume mean by 'necessity' in this context? How does he argue for the claim that human actions are governed by necessity as well as natural occurrences? How successful is this argument? Many philosophers have thought that acceptance of what Hume calls 'the doctrine of necessity' would in some way threaten the claim that we are *morally responsible* for our actions. What is Hume's view on this question, and how does he defend it?

4. Reason and Passion

Reading: II.iii.iii ('Of the influencing motives of the will').

Questions: What does Hume mean by 'reason' in this context? What role does Hume assign to reason in the explanation of action? What does he mean when he says that 'Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them'? What does he mean when he says that "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger"? What does he think is really going on in the cases which are commonly described as involving a conflict between reason and the passions?