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Hume, Skepticism, and Induction

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HUME, SKEPTICISM, AND INDUCTION

by

Jason Collins

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ABSTRACT
HUME, SKEPTICISM, AND INDUCTION

by

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Under the Supervision of Assistant Professor Miren Boehm

This paper concerns the following interpretative problem: Hume's most explicit arguments in both the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry* strongly suggest that he is a skeptic about inductive reasoning. This, indeed, has been the traditional interpretation. And yet, Hume engages in and explicitly endorses inductive reasoning throughout his works. I examine two prominent attempts to reconcile these features of Hume's position. One group of commentators, the descriptivists, argues that Hume is not concerned with whether we ought to accept inductive beliefs; he is only concerned with the psychological causes of such beliefs. Because Hume is not concerned with the normative epistemic question, there is no tension in his text. Another group, the externalists, takes Hume to be engaged in an epistemological project; they even acknowledge the skeptical *potential* of Hume's arguments, but they reject the idea that Hume is a skeptic about induction because they find in Hume an externalist strategy of justification which offers an escape from the skeptical conclusion.

I criticize these readings on both textual and conceptual grounds. Against the descriptivist, I argue that Hume is indeed engaged in normative epistemology. Against externalist, I argue that Hume offers no broad solution to skepticism about induction. I defend the following interpretation: Hume endorses skepticism about induction *in*

philosophical reflection. Against the background of modern epistemic contextualism, I argue that Hume appeals to multiple standards for belief justification depending on the context of the investigation. Hume repeatedly announces the success of the skeptic in destroying even our strongest beliefs, but only in cases of philosophical reflection: when we examine the fundamental justification of our beliefs. But he also insists that the power of the skeptic is destroyed when the inquiry shifts to practical matters: when the context of inquiry is that of common life. These multiple justificatory standards explain the apparent conflict between Hume's skepticism and endorsement of induction. I conclude that this contextualist reading of Hume's work offers both the strongest philosophical position for Hume, as well as an interpretation which sacrifices relatively little of the traditional impact of Hume's skeptical arguments.

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0. Introduction

Traditionally, David Hume has been thought to advocate a radical skepticism about induction, offering one of the most powerful versions of the problem of induction in the history of philosophy. He argues that we have 'no reason' to assent to inductive beliefs, and claims that inductive reasoning has "no just foundation" (T. I.3.6.10)¹. These statements and the arguments supporting them have been interpreted as showing that induction has no epistemic value. However, there is a strong tension between Hume's supposed inductive skepticism and the fact that Hume uses, differentiates between good and bad uses of, and endorses induction throughout his work. The question then arises: how can Hume endorse, use, and differentiate between inductive arguments while at the same time believing we have *no reason* to accept those arguments?² This paper will seek to examine how we should understand this tension in Hume's philosophy.

I will discuss and criticize two prominent interpretive approaches which offer quite different solutions. The first reading I will address, the descriptivist interpretation, avoids the tension entirely by denying that Hume's project is epistemic at all. It argues that Hume is not concerned with epistemic justification; instead he is merely concerned with the psychological causes of inductive beliefs. If Hume is not concerned with whether we *should* hold inductive beliefs, then there is no tension between his statements and his use of induction. The second proposed solution, the externalist interpretation,

¹ References to the *Treatise* are to David Hume, *A Treatise Concerning Human Understanding* ed. L.A. Shelby-Bigge. Oxford University Press (1978), hereafter cited as "T" followed by Book, part, section and paragraph numbers.

² Interestingly, both Don Garrett and Kenneth Winkler identify resolving this tension as the one of the most important issues in Hume scholarship at the time of their writing (Winkler 1999).

admits of Hume's epistemic project but claims that Hume actually finds a justification for induction in the course of his inquiry. This position maintains Hume is advocating a form of epistemic externalism. They resolve the tension by reading Hume's claims that we have no reason to believe inductive arguments as saying that we have no *internalist* reason to believe them. However, since Hume offers an *externalist* justification for inductive beliefs, he can consistently claim that induction is not justified by our reasons or arguments while still employing induction in a justified manner. I will sketch textual and conceptual problems with these two readings that shed doubt on the theories' abilities to adequately characterize Hume's epistemology.

After my brief examination of the two interpretations and their challenges, I will offer an account which acknowledges both sides of Hume's treatment of induction while still resolving the tension. I will argue that Hume is employing a form of epistemic contextualism, basing the standards for belief justification on the context of the inquiry. Using contextualism as a backdrop, I will show that we can make sense of Hume's claim that we have *no reason* to believe the future will resemble the past and also Hume's use of inductive reasoning by separating the claims into the contexts in which they apply. I will then show that the contextualist reading has additional interpretive benefits beyond the resolution of the tension which makes it an attractive interpretation of Hume's project.

I. The Tension in Hume

There are many instances throughout Hume's project in which Hume, at least on the surface, dismisses inductive reasoning as completely unfounded. He says, "we cannot give a satisfactory reason, why we believe, after a thousand experiments, that a stone will

fall, or a fire burn" (E.XII.25)³. Even further, "Reason can never shew us the connexion of one object with another, tho' aided by experience, and the observation of their constant conjunction in all past instances" (T I.3.6.12). For Hume, these statements are founded on the principle that "we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those of which we have had experience" (T I.3.12.20) along with the fact that we have never had an experience of necessary connection (the foundation of inductive, or probabilistic reasoning). Thus, Hume is led to conclude that we have no reason to make inductive inferences. Instead, those beliefs are determined by custom or habit. Hume writes, "when the mind, therefore, passes from the idea or impression of one object to the idea or belief of another, it is not determin'd by reason, but by certain principles, which associate together the ideas of these objects, and unite them in the imagination" (T I.3.6.13). After completing this reasoning, Hume seems to fall into a radical inductive skepticism. He says, "I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another"(T I.4.7.8). These passages and others like them have fueled the traditional, skeptical reading of Hume.⁴

However, a more recent interpretive trend has pointed out that Hume relies on inductive beliefs for some of his most basic principles⁵. Not only that, but Hume actually endorses inductive arguments and differentiates between good and bad inductive arguments as well. This has led to a drastic change in the way Hume is understood. After

³ References to the *Enquiry* are to David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* ed. L. A. Shelby-Bigge. Great Books of the Western World Britannica, Chicago. (450-509) hereafter cited as "E" followed by section and paragraph numbers.

⁴ I will argue that the traditional reading is, at least partly correct. For additional arguments in support of the skeptical reading see Stroud (1977), Winkler (1999), and Parush (1977).

⁵ Loeb (2002) offers a history and summary of the evidence which has amassed against the traditional skeptical reading (322-324).

all, if Hume needs induction for his position to operate, surely he does not think it is entirely worthless. We can see Hume's endorsement of inductive reasoning as early as the subtitle of the Treatise, *Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method to a Moral Subject*. The experimental method is, at its heart, an inductive procedure: generalizing phenomena observed through experiment to the unobserved. Even the foundation of much of Hume's empiricist philosophy is defended with induction. The copy principle, the principle that all ideas are based on simple sense impressions, is defended inductively.⁶ This shows that Hume relies upon induction's epistemic worth for the very foundation of his philosophical project. Finally, Hume rejects belief in miracles based on the idea that there is stronger inductive support for belief in uniform laws of nature than there is support for aberrations of those laws⁷. Differentiation between good and bad inductive arguments seems out of place if Hume means to dismiss all forms of induction as unfounded. These and numerous other passages throughout Hume's work strongly suggest that Hume finds some epistemic value in inductive argument. Given the strength of evidence that Hume is not a skeptic about induction, we must find a way to reconcile Hume's apparent dismissal of induction with its use throughout his writings. Finding a plausible resolution to this tension will be the primary goal of this essay.

⁶ Hume offers two arguments for the copy principle, both of which are inductive. The first is an argument from experience in which we are asked to examine any belief we can think of to realize that it is reducible to simple impressions. He says, "We may prosecute this enquiry to what length we please; where we shall always find, that every idea which we examine is copied from a similar impression" (E.II.6). This is, of course, generalizing from observed phenomena to unobserved, or inductive argument. The second argument in support is that men born blind do not have ideas of color, indicating the necessary impression to form the idea. This again, is an inductive appeal to empirical evidence.

⁷ Winkler (1999) argues this as well. He notes that Hume's treatment of miracles in the Enquiry offers a clear case of inductive discrimination (201-202).

II. The Descriptivist Reading

The first solution I wish to address is the descriptivist interpretation, which has been argued most prominently by Don Garrett. Garrett argues that Hume is not engaged in normative epistemic investigation at all in the sections concerning induction of the *Treatise* and *Enquiry*. Rather, Hume's project is merely psychological; he is describing the psychological process of belief formation and the psychological reaction to different skeptical arguments. As such, when Hume says our beliefs are not founded on reason, he is only concerned with the fact that reason is not the psychological cause of the beliefs. He is silent, the descriptivist will say, about whether we *ought to* hold those beliefs. Garrett says, "Hume's conclusion [...] directly concerns the causation of inductive inferences--a question in cognitive psychology--rather than the justification of such inferences, which is a question in epistemology" (Garrett 1997, 94).⁸ In this reading, none of Hume's explicit discussions of induction and causal reasoning in the *Enquiry* and *Treatise* are normative. The descriptivist reading offers an elegant solution to the tension because it rejects the idea that Hume ever claims that induction is unjustified, in fact, he doesn't even consider the question.

Descriptivism boasts a good deal of textual support, largely because of what is missing from Hume's discussion of induction: explicit normative language. When discussing induction in *Treatise* I.3.6, Hume doesn't actually condemn induction any further than to note that it is not founded on reason. Garrett points out that when Hume

⁸ Descriptivism comes in various strengths. Sometimes it is offered as a theory solely about Hume's discussion of induction in *Treatise* I.iii.6. Other times it is used as a general claim about Hume's views on induction. I am addressing the latter, because our project here is to determine Hume's general views on induction, not merely in one section.

discusses induction, he only addresses the causation of inductive beliefs, not their normative status. Hume states, for instance, that "even after we have had experience of the operations of cause and effect, our conclusions from that experience are *not* founded on reasoning, or any process of the understanding" (E.IV.15). Likewise, in the *Treatise*, Hume says, "'tis impossible for us to satisfy ourselves by our reason, why we shou'd extend that experience beyond those particular instances, which have fallen under our observation" (T.I.3.6.13). Here, Hume's conclusions only mention the actual source or mechanism of induction; we never see him stating whether we *ought* to accept the beliefs given this fact. Reading these passages as epistemic is inferring an argument that Hume never voices outright. Realizing this, coupled with arguments against maintaining a purely skeptical account, the descriptivists argue that viewing Hume as doing normative epistemology is a mistake.⁹

I now wish to sketch some challenges and sacrifices which arise from accepting the descriptivist interpretation. The first point weighing against the descriptivist is the justificatory and epistemic nature of Hume's discussion of induction¹⁰. Hume's project, on its face and when deeply analyzed, appears strikingly normative. Garrett rightly points out that Hume does not explicitly endorse skepticism, but it seems that Hume is doing more than seeking the psychological origin of inductive beliefs: he is seeking their justification. This is shown most clearly in the arguments Hume *rejects* as possible

⁹ This is, of course, an extremely brief summary of the broad descriptivist claims and not a detailed discussion of the points in favor or against the descriptivist. The point of this section (and the following section) is to highlight issues and sacrifices of competing interpretations; a full account of descriptivism is due, but is beyond the scope of this paper. For more on the textual support for Descriptivism, and detailed arguments for and against, see Loeb (2006) and Garrett (1997, 2006) and Millican (2002).

¹⁰ This objection is offered in various forms in Winkler (1999) and Loeb (2006).

causes of induction. Hume considers several attempts to ground induction and dismisses them as fallacious or circular. This poses a problem for the descriptivist. Louis Loeb writes, "If the only issue in play in I.iii.6 is whether a demonstrative argument causes inductive inference, it is difficult to see why demonstrations that are subtly flawed, but have an air of plausibility, could not do the trick" (328-29). Hume rejects demonstrative arguments for induction which depend on the uniformity principle not because they are implausible sources of belief, but because they are flawed demonstrations. For instance, it seems perfectly reasonable that a person could be *psychologically* motivated by a circular argument, yet Hume rejects such an argument solely *because it is circular*¹¹. He says that the fact that the reasoning is circular shows that the "foregoing reasoning had no just foundation" (T.I.3.6.10). This seems to indicate that Hume is looking for *acceptable* or *just* arguments for induction, not just those which are psychologically plausible. That Hume seems to require a good proof of induction indicates he is searching for its justification, not explanation.

There is also compelling evidence in Treatise I.iv.7 and Enquiry XII to support an epistemic reading of Hume's project. Hume states that we "cannot give a satisfactory reason, why we believe, after a thousand experiments, that a stone will fall, or fire burn" (E.XII.25). This occurs *after* he has reached the conclusion that all inductive reasoning is based on custom. If we are to believe the descriptivist, though, all Hume has been trying to show is that custom is the *cause* of our belief. If this is so, then Hume has already

¹¹ In T I.iii.6 Hume rejects that the uniformity principle on past experience because to do so would be circular. He says, "If you answer this question in the same manner as the preceding, your answer gives still occasion to a new question of the same kind, even in infinitum; which clearly proves, that the foregoing reasoning had no just foundation." Rejecting an explanation for the sole reason that it's circular is problematic for the descriptivist position, as examined above.

achieved his goal of showing us *why we believe*: he has identified custom as the psychological source. Additionally, Hume regards custom (the source of induction) as "whimsical" and "fallacious" throughout these later sections (E.XII.22-23). The descriptions 'satisfactory', 'whimsical' and 'fallacious', imply a search for epistemically acceptable reasons for induction rather than psychologically plausible reasons. If custom is the source of our beliefs, then its fallacy must be in its epistemic merit, not its causal efficacy. That the foundation is still considered fallacious indicates that Hume is not simply concerned with the *source* but the *rational status* of the foundation.

Finally, I would like to bring attention to an interesting passage from Enquiry XII:

The sceptic, therefore, had better keep within his proper sphere, and display those *philosophical* objections, which arise for more profound researches. Here he seems to have ample matter of triumph; while he justly insists that all our evidence for any matter of fact, which lies beyond the testimony of sense or memory, is derived entirely from the relation of cause and effect; that we have no other idea of this relation than that of two objects, which have been frequently *conjoined* together; that we have no argument to convince us, that objects, which have, in our experience, been frequently conjoined will likewise, in other instances, be conjoined in the same manner; and that nothing leads us to this inference but custom or a certain instinct of our nature; which is indeed difficult to resist, but which, like other instincts may be fallacious and deceitful. While the sceptic insists upon these topics, he shows his force, or rather, indeed, his own and our weakness; and seems, for the time at least, to destroy all assurance and conviction. These arguments might be displayed at greater length, if any durable good or benefit to society could ever be expected to result from them. (E.XII.23)

The passage reads as a direct summary of the conclusions of the argumentation found in Treatise I.iii.6 and Enquiry IV, thereby linking it to Hume's discussion of induction.

Several things about this are striking from the perspective of the descriptivist. First, it is Hume's Pyrrhonian skeptic that is '*justly*' arguing these points (implying that these are in fact epistemic, not psychological, concerns), and second the result of the argument is the suspension of belief. Of course, the descriptivist may argue that this is merely a descriptive passage, detailing the standard psychological effect of facing a skeptical

argument. The descriptivist reading of this passage is plausible up until the last sentence. Hume *rejects* the skeptic's arguments because there is no practical benefit to the path of reasoning. Here Hume is concerned not with describing the psychological effects of the argument, but whether we ought to assent to its conclusions. Though Hume sides against the skeptic (and later sections will explain why he does this), he is considering the normative question of whether we *ought* to offer these skeptical arguments. Therefore, Hume should be taken to be making normative epistemic arguments in the passage. Furthermore, because this passage acts as a summary of the argumentation in Enquiry IV, the arguments which this passage is summarizing should be taken to be normative as well.

Though just a sketch, these points highlight several drawbacks to accepting the descriptivist position. The descriptivist must explain away the distinct epistemic nature of Hume's projects as well as inconsistencies with Hume's conclusions in the end of the Treatise and Enquiry. Because of these disadvantages, there is good reason to prefer a theory which maintains the epistemic nature of Hume's views on induction, provided that theory also solves the tension discussed earlier. Of course, these arguments require further investigation and a full treatment both for and against, but it will be enough for the current project to note that a theory which maintains the epistemic nature of Hume's project will have a significant advantage over the descriptivist solution. In the following sections I consider two proposals which seek to do just that: resolve the tension while maintaining Hume's epistemic project.

III. The Externalist Reading

The second attempt at resolving the tension appeals to epistemic externalism. The externalists admit that Hume is concerned with the rational justification of induction, but they resolve the tension by arguing that Hume actually finds a justification for induction during his inquiry. Epistemic internalism seats the justification of a belief on the agent's evidence or arguments for the belief. If Hume is an internalist, he must be considered an inductive skeptic because he explicitly states that we do not have access to such reasons. The alternative is epistemic externalism. Externalism holds that belief justifiers can be something other than the reasons or arguments the agent has available. For example, we may justify beliefs on the basis of reliability, stability, etc. A prominent externalist interpretation has been offered by Louis Loeb. He notes, "What matters here is that the various options – appealing to irresistibility, proper functioning, adaptiveness, reliability, stability—are externalist theories" (Loeb, 2006. 334). The externalists point out that if Hume justifies induction with something other than one's personal reasons, then we can easily explain why Hume says we have 'no reason' to support induction while still employing it. Internal reasons don't justify inductive beliefs: external factors do. The externalists note that inductive beliefs are determined "by certain principles, which associate together the ideas of these objects, and unite them in the imagination" (T.I.3.6.12). Hume calls these principles custom. The externalists maintain that custom provides an externalist justification for the uniformity principle and induction. This alone is enough to resolve the tension. Loeb notes, "Hume contributes key premises for the skeptical argument about induction, but he does not share the internalist framework that is also necessary to generate its conclusion. [...] Skepticism can be avoided, even if there

is no good argument of any sort supporting the uniformity principle" (Loeb, 2006. 333). Hume's externalist justificatory framework resolves the tension while maintaining the epistemic nature of the project.¹²

The externalist interpretation faces one major difficulty in explaining Hume's works: Hume maintains the power of the skeptic to destroy beliefs even *after* philosophical reflection has taken place. The externalist position maintains that the proper justification of causal reasoning rests outside of a person's epistemic position. However, this means that inductive beliefs should not be held to internalist standards of demonstrative argument. In other words, criticisms appealing to a lack of internalist justification should hold no power over an externalist because the externalist has justified his or her belief in a way that avoids the criticism entirely. Should the skeptical arguments be posed to an externalist, the externalist would respond "I don't need a demonstrative argument to justify my belief; it is justified through its irresistibility¹³". This is characteristic of a response of an externalist position to skepticism, after all, their belief *is justified*. However, this is precisely *not* the response we find Hume using when skepticism is presented. As we saw in the passage quoted above, "while the sceptic insists upon these topics, he shows his force, or rather, indeed, his own and our weakness; and seems, for the time at least, to destroy all assurance and conviction". Hume also states that "this universal and primary opinion of all men is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy" (E.XII.9). The skeptic does not hold power only before reflection, but any time he engages in philosophical inquiry. As Kenneth Winkler points out, "Hume seems

¹² Like the previous section, this discussion is merely intended to offer a brief summary of the attempted solution to the tension and offer some difficulties it will face. For a full treatment of the evidence for the externalist position, see Loeb (2002) and (2006).

¹³ Or one of the other externalist justifications listed above.

to be telling us that when we occupy this view-point [of common life] (after passing through the fires of Pyrrhonism), *the authority of the other [the skeptical] is not entirely forgotten*" (Winkler, 207). On the externalist reading, we would expect internalist-skeptical arguments to lose their power once we recognized that induction was justified through external factors. Placing the justification for beliefs in an external source is the *solution* to internal worries, so Hume should simply stand his ground against the internalist's demands. Instead, Hume capitulates to the internalist worries until he is drawn back out from those concerns. This should be taken as strong evidence that Hume does not maintain a *persistent* externalist justification of causal reasoning. If he did, internalist skeptical worries should lose their force.

This section should not be taken to mean that Hume is not employing an externalist justification of induction at all. In fact, I will argue in the following section that the externalists are largely correct. Hume does justify a system of inductive inference through the principle of custom. However, a key factor that is missing from the externalist account, one which is crucial to understanding Hume's project, is the fact that the externalist solution only applies in some circumstances (like playing backgammon) and not in others (like philosophical reflection or academia). In the following section, I offer a contextualist reading of Hume which takes the progress and insights of the externalist reading and makes sense of the continued power of the skeptic in Hume's work.

IV. The Contextualist Reading

We have seen that Hume should be understood as doing normative epistemology in section II. This epistemic reading seems to leave us with two choices: the skeptical or

the externalist. However, we have already discussed the difficulties with taking Hume to be offering purely externalist or skeptical arguments. Consider the following passage:

For I have already shewn, that the understanding, when it acts alone, and according to its most general principles, entirely subverts itself, and leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition, either in philosophy or common life. We save ourselves from this total scepticism only by means of that singular and seemingly trivial property of the fancy, by which we enter with difficulty into remote views of things, and are not able to accompany them with so sensible an impression, as we do those, which are more easy and natural. (T.I.4.7.7)

Here, Hume is making two statements: when reason runs free, we cannot treat one opinion as more likely than the next, yet we are often forced by nature to accept a principle which produces inductive beliefs. The skeptical interpretation focuses on the first, explaining how we have 'no evidence in any proposition'. The externalist explains the second: that a certain principle, custom, 'saves us from total skepticism'. In order to avoid the problems involved with taking either the purely externalist or purely skeptical interpretation, I will offer a reading which accounts for both of Hume's points. To explain both the skeptical result and the justification of induction, I will argue that Hume is utilizing multiple standards of justification in a method very similar to modern epistemic contextualism.¹⁴

Contextualism is a theory about knowledge which maintains that the standards for whether an agent knows a proposition are based on the context of the knowledge ascription. In ordinary contexts, the standards for whether S knows P are relatively low. In contexts such as scientific or philosophical inquiry, the standards are considerably higher. What counts as knowledge in an everyday conversation will not count as knowledge to a scientist or philosopher. The contextualist maintains that these are two

¹⁴ Hereafter simply contextualism.

separate standards for knowledge, both of which represent knowledge relative to those standards.

One method of thinking about context sensitive knowledge claims is with reference to the uncontroversial context dependence of terms like 'tall' or 'flat'. The soccer field may be flat to the referee, but it is not flat to the geometer. However, both the referee and geometer are speaking truly in their assessment of the field, even though they are apparently disagreeing. The context of inquiry determines whether a field counts as flat or a man counts as tall. Likewise, for the contextualist, what an agent knows is determined by the context of the utterance. So whether S knows P depends on the strength of the standards for evaluating knowledge. Consider Pyrrho and a commoner debating whether or not each knows that he has hands. The commoner, who has very low standards for knowledge, truly claims that he knows he has hands. He is concerned with everyday tasks and simply living his life. Pyrrho, with very high standards, truly claims that he does not know that he has hands. Pyrrho is concerned with obtaining certainty, so he must consider the possibility that he *may* be wrong. Whether S knows P is relative to the context of the inquiry and the standards of that context. An important part of the contextualist framework will be how different standards interact with each other. In cases of disagreement, many contextualists hold that the higher standards win out. Standards are often based on which considerations are allowed and which are excluded, so when higher standards bring new considerations into play, they raise the standards for knowledge. As David Lewis says in *Scorekeeping in a Language Game*,

The commonsensical epistemologist says: 'I know the cat is in the carton---there he is before my eyes---I just *can't* be wrong about that!' The sceptic replies 'You might be the victim of a deceiving demon.' Thereby he brings into consideration possibilities hitherto ignored, else what he says would be false. the boundary shifts outward so that what he

says is true. Once the boundary is shifted, the commonsensical epistemologist must concede defeat. And yet he was not in any way wrong when he laid claim to infallible knowledge. What he said was true with respect to the score as it then was. (Lewis, 355)

So we see how the boundaries in a bare-bones contextualism are supposed to operate. A person's standards for justification set which considerations are ignored and which are entertained. When the skeptic moves to entertain skeptical considerations, those considerations change what is and isn't justified. In this way, the possibilities that are ignored are just as important as those possibilities that are allowed. Those contexts which allow many possibilities (like Pyrrhonism) are high standards and those which ignore many possibilities (like common sense) are low standards. There are, of course, many versions of contextualism with many different frameworks for how boundaries interact. These can range anywhere from theories which disallow real disagreement between contexts to those which state that the high standards always win¹⁵. A full account of contextualism and its methodology is beyond the scope of the paper, but the brief description of the basic tenets of contextualist theory are enough to show the striking parallels with how Hume's skepticism functions in his works.

Contextualism offers us a background for understanding Hume's position. Recognizing that Hume is employing multiple standards for justification grounded on the context of the action, we can explain why Hume would at once dismiss inductive reasoning and employ it extensively. First, I will demonstrate the multiple standards of

¹⁵ For a rather complete summary of different contextualist strategies on the subject, and a complete summary of the varying contextualist positions see DeRose (2009) 128-152.

justification at work in Hume's project, and then I will explain how those standards resolve the tension stemming from Hume's treatment of induction.¹⁶

Hume differentiates the multiple standards of justification by which arguments have force in them. He says,

Though a Pyrrhonian may throw himself or others into a momentary amazement and confusion by his profound reasonings; the first and most trivial event in life will put to flight all his doubts and scruples, and leave him the same, in every point of action and speculation, with the philosophers of every other sect, or with those who never concerned themselves in any philosophical researches. When he awakes from his dream, he will be the first to join in the laugh against himself, and to confess, that all his objections are mere amusement, and can have no other tendency than to show the whimsical condition of mankind, who must act and reason and believe; though they are not able, by their most diligent enquiry, to satisfy themselves concerning the foundation of these operations, or to remove the objections, which may be raised against them. (E.XII.23)

Here we see the separation of contexts, one in which the skeptic 'enjoys ample triumph' and the other in which her position is 'but a dream'. These are the bases for the contexts of justification in Hume's work. One, the philosophical context, is that of deep inquiry; this is the context in which one searches for the foundations of our beliefs. Hume wants to find out which of our beliefs are supported by reason alone: which beliefs we are rationally justified in holding. We have seen this argument play out in earlier sections of

¹⁶ The skepticism referred to in many of the following passages is academic or Pyrrhonist skepticism and not necessarily solely inductive skepticism. However, the context of Hume's discussions of broader skepticism make clear that he is intending to include the inductive skepticism in these discussion. First, that these sections operate as conclusions of the books concerning induction. Indeed induction is the main focus of the Enquiry, the source of many of the contextualist texts. Second, note the many references to causal reasoning, or any reasoning founded upon the uniformity principle. The uniformity principle is the "principle which makes us reason from causes and effects; and, [...] which convinces us of the continu'd existence of external objects, when absent from the senses" (T I.4.7.4). As such, we should not maintain that inductive skepticism is somehow not included in these passages' references to Pyrrhonism or skepticism. In fact, that Hume speaks this way of skepticisms more generally bodes well for the use of the contextualist reading as an interpretation of Hume's broader skepticism, though this is a much larger topic than the paper will address.

this paper, and we have seen the skeptical results. Hume descends through our everyday knowledge, testing the justification for our beliefs until he reaches the core justification for nearly all of our beliefs: the uniformity principle. Upon finding the uniformity principle without foundation, Hume is ready to reject all belief. However, Hume maintains that the force of the skeptic is destroyed when we exit that context of deep inquiry and pursue other ends. He says, "the great subverter of *Pyrrhonism* or the excessive principles of scepticism is action, and employment, and the occupations of the common life" (E.XII.21). When we engage in action, we are placed into a context in which the principles of skepticism lose their force, and the principle producing inductive beliefs, the uniformity principle, is forced upon us. I will argue later in this section that custom provides a justification for both the uniformity principle and induction. I will call this context in which the uniformity principle is active the context of common life.

Of course, a brief sketch of two contexts of justification is not enough to show this as Hume's solution to the tension. I will now discuss the two contexts in more depth, and explain how each operates as a source of belief justification in Hume's system. There are two key factors to keep in mind to understand the contexts at work in Hume and how they relate to a contextualist reading. The first is the goal of the inquiry. This is the benefit which is meant to be achieved through the inquiry or knowledge ascription. The goal of inquiry shapes the second factor: the possibilities that may be taken into account while performing the inquiry¹⁷. These two factors, the goal of the inquiry and the hypotheses allowed by that goal, will illuminate how Hume resolves the tension.

¹⁷ Note the similarities to the Lewis quote above in which what separates high from low standards is the live possibilities.

First, I will discuss the context of the philosopher. This context is defined by the search for the basic foundations of our beliefs. Hume enters the context because he is "uneasy to think I approve of one object, and disapprove of another; call one thing beautiful, and another deform'd; decide concerning truth and falshood, reason and folly, without knowing upon what principles I proceed" (T I.4.7.12). It is in an attempt to determine these principles that Hume famously finds that we have no reason to accept that the future will resemble the past, and it is this reasoning which results in his radical skepticism. After completing his inquiry with the above goal, he finds himself "ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than other" (T I.4.7.8). This is the result of the philosophical context: the discovery that induction is unjustified under its considerations.

Because the philosophical context is characterized by seeking the basic foundations of our beliefs, the context involves taking into consideration skeptical hypotheses which serve to undermine our assurance in those beliefs. In Lewis' quote above, it is a deceiving demon; for Hume it is the consideration that the future may not resemble the past. Every contrary hypothesis must be ruled out in the philosophical context, demanding the utmost internal justification for one's beliefs. Hume notes that the consideration of skeptical hypotheses is the bedrock of the philosophical context. He writes,

While a warm imagination is allow'd to enter into philosophy, and hypotheses embrac'd merely for being specious and agreeable, we can never have any steady principles, nor any sentiments, which will suit with common practice and experience. But were these hypotheses once remov'd, we might hope to establish a system or set of opinions, which if not true (for that, perhaps, is too much to be hop'd for) might at least be satisfactory to the human mind, and might stand the test of the most critical examination. (T I.4.7.14)

Here we see the philosophical context being grounded by taking into account skeptical considerations, and those considerations rendering our sentiments unjustified. We also see a striking similarity with the workings of Lewis's contextualist system, which based standards for justification on the active considerations (the conversational score). Hume has shifted the scoreboard, in Lewisean terms, to make those inductive beliefs which were justified before the shift no longer justified in the new context. In this context, radical skepticism reigns supreme because the skeptical considerations destroy confidence in our inductive beliefs.

Hume notes, however, that by allowing the full extent of skeptical possibilities, the philosophical context is very limited. "The sceptic [...] had better keep within his proper sphere, and display those philosophical objections, which arise from more profound researches" (E.XII.22). The skeptic's "proper sphere" is abstract reasoning, removed from real world concerns. For "these principles may flourish and triumph in schools; where it is indeed difficult if not impossible to refute them. But as soon as they leave the shade and by the presence of the real objects [...] are put in opposition to the more powerful principles of our nature, they vanish like smoke, and leave even the most determined sceptic in the same condition as other mortals" (E.XII.21). Action in common life is antithetical to the goal of the philosophical context, and outside of that context, different standards weigh on belief justification. Hume states the skeptic "must acknowledge, if he will acknowledge anything, that all human life must perish, were his principles universally and steadily to prevail" (E.XII.23). Common life includes an inherent goal of inquiry: living life, and living life imposes certain limits on the possibilities we may consider. When we wish to engage in practical pursuits, the

hypotheses which we are able to consider are limited. These practical concerns place us into a new context of justification, the context of common life, in which induction is justified.

We may now ask why induction must be justified at all in the context of common life. Certainly, we could live our lives if we simply *assumed* that we were justified in forming beliefs through induction. Assuming induction to be justified in common life may solve the problem of making practical actions in the face of radical skepticism, but it cannot solve Hume's tension. If we are merely making a flawed assumption (rather than embracing a lower standard) then the fact that Hume rests so much of his philosophical project on induction would seem a crucial flaw. How could the bedrock of Hume's project, the copy principle, be founded merely on an assumption without justification? If we, as interpreters, want to truly resolve the tension between the skepticism of Hume's arguments and his use of induction, we must find a way to justify induction, even in a limited context.

We have seen that common life limits how high our standards can shift. This is why Hume states, as I quoted above, that common life is the great subverter of "excessive" skeptical principles. This subversion comes in the form of the uniformity principle, which is the foundation of all inductive beliefs. In the philosophical context, Hume found the uniformity principle to be without foundation; however, Hume notes that when we step into the real world, the uniformity principle can no longer be questioned. This principle provides the separation between the two standards. It is a boundary placed on our reason so that we can function in common life. Of course, even in the context of common life, the uniformity principle is not founded upon reason, but by "some other

principle which determines him to form such a conclusion. This principle is Custom or Habit” (E.V.35-36). Following the insights of the externalists, it is custom which provides justification of our inductive beliefs. Custom forces upon us a limitation to the standards of justification we are allowed to use, lowering our standards and allowing more beliefs to be justified. Which specific feature provides the justification I will deliberately leave unspecified. The externalists attribute the justifying force to different features of custom depending on their interpretation. Loeb argues that it is the fact that custom produces steady, reliable beliefs (Loeb, 334). Others identify custom's irresistibility, proper functioning etc. The contextualist is not bound to any specific justifying factor; all the contextualist needs to note is that there is good reason to believe, along with the externalist, that Hume considers custom to be a source of epistemic justification for the uniformity principle.¹⁸ What separates the contextualist from the externalist, however, is that custom is limited to the context of common life. In the philosophical context, custom does not hold power, and thereby is not an active justifier.

Of course, merely justifying the uniformity principle does not itself build a robust system of belief justification. For instance, any common man on the street believes according to the uniformity principle, and Hume does not simply wish to justify *all* beliefs, like beliefs in miracles or superstitions, in the context of common life. I will explain how, from the establishment of the uniformity principle, Hume sets up a method

¹⁸ Clearly, identifying the feature of custom which provides justification is an important project for this interpretation. I am partial to Loeb's suggestion that it is custom's stability, and some features may fit better with the contextualist reading than others. However, this argument must be saved for a future time. For now, it suffices that contextualist can appeal to one of many externalist justifications; as long as custom provides an externalist justification for the uniformity principle, the contextualist account can get off the ground.

of justifying beliefs which allows us to operate as 'philosophers' in the common context. In doing so, Hume illustrates that the common life context is one of justification, separating those who reason well from those who reason poorly inside of it. Hume separates the two, saying of those who merely exist in the common context via ignorance, "many honest gentlemen, who being always employ'd in their domestic affairs, or amusing themselves in common recreations, have carried their thoughts very little beyond those objects, which are every day expos'd to their senses. And indeed, of such as these I pretend not to make philosophers, nor do I expect them either to be associates in these researches or auditors of these discoveries" (T I.4.7.14). The 'discoveries' to which Hume refers are that, strictly speaking, human belief is not founded on reason and the proper way to form beliefs in light of that discovery. To separate his system of reasoning from those of the non-philosophical, Hume offers what Garrett identifies as the Title Principle: "Where reason is lively, and mixes itself with some propensity, it ought to be assented to. Where it does not, it never can have any title to operate on us." (T I.4.7.11). We can see how the Title Principle operates as a justifier by analyzing its parts. First, Hume is relying on reason for the justification, but we have seen the result of relying too much on reason in previous sections. Reason is the force that shifts standards upwards, taking into consideration new hypotheses in the pursuit of certainty. When it runs free, it leads us into the philosophical context, and to skepticism. No inductive belief is based solely on reason. Therefore, we need limitations on the application of reason if we are going to operate in common life, and these limitations are provided by the conditions of liveliness and the mixture with propensity. What it means to state that reason is lively is that the matter seems important and stimulates our interest. Hume notes that in some contexts,

skeptical considerations "appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther" (T.I.4.7.9). However, he also notes that when he grows tired "with amusement and company, and have indulg'd a *reverie* in my chamber, or in a solitary walk by a river-side, I feel in my mind all collected within itself and I am naturally *inclin'd* to carry my view into all those subjects, about which I have met with so many disputes in the course of my reading and conversation" (T.I.4.7.12). The liveliness condition, then, is the requirement that our reason be stimulated; that we are naturally *inclined* to assess the hypotheses under consideration. Liveliness is closely linked with the second limitation on reason; that reason must mix itself with some propensity: some natural tendency for action. This is the external limitation of the goal of inquiry. Our use of reason should be in service to completing some action (the goal of the inquiry), and that action places limitations on how far reason can act. Only considerations compatible with the goal of inquiry are allowed to have title to operate on us. These two limitations allow reason to be applied in the common context, and from them we can justify beliefs in that context.

With this principle, Hume is providing a system of justification for the context of common life. In contextualist terms, Hume is advocating the use of reason to shift the standards of justification to the upper bounds allowed by the goal of inquiry. The uniformity principle sets an upper boundary on how high their standards can shift, and the Title Principle recommends that we allow reason to run free up to that point. By raising the standard for justification to the boundary of the uniformity principle, we are being as skeptical as possible while still remaining in the context of common life. The Title Principle pushes our inquiry on both ends, driving our standards for inquiry up to

exclude beliefs that do not meet the rigorous examination of reason, while preventing reason's excessive application to avoid the uselessness of skepticism. Hume wants to find a way to assess the questions of philosophy and science without falling into the uselessness of skepticism. The realization that the uniformity principle provides a boundary for standards of justification compatible with critical examination *and* living life provides his solution. The Title Principle allows reason to be applied to the context of common life in a restrained, controlled manner, and its use produces a system of belief justification above and beyond the uniformity principle.

This system of reasoning is exemplified by Hume's recommendation that we exhibit a mitigated skepticism in Enquiry XII. Hume says of the mitigated skeptic,

Those who have a propensity to philosophy, will still continue their researches; because they reflect, that, besides the immediate pleasure, attending such an occupation, philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected. But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, so long as they consider the imperfection of those faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations. (E.XII.25)

Mitigated skepticism is, as he says, the new context for the philosopher to occupy. The philosophical context leads to radical skepticism, and Hume rejects that result because of its incompatibility with human life. Hume recommends maintaining a healthy critical standard, one in which we are skeptical of arguments without questioning the fundamental principles of our reasoning. This mitigated skepticism works well in the framework I have laid out above as it represents Hume strengthening the context of common life as far as it will go.¹⁹ He is using reason to 'methodize and correct' the reasoning found in common life: inductive reasoning. We have multiple standards of justification, separated by which hypotheses are being considered, and Hume wishes to

¹⁹ Or, alternatively, creating another standard of the common life philosopher.

push critical thinking as far as it will go while still being compatible with the goal of living life. This context is separate from the contexts of either the common man, who simply believes without reflection, and the skeptic, who believes nothing; it finds a middle ground in which we are able to apply rational criticism without falling into the depths of skepticism. This, of course, is Hume's upshot at the end of the *Treatise* book I and the *Enquiry*: a system of principled, critical reasoning while remaining in the context of common life.

The interplay between the standards is another factor that sets the contextualist interpretation apart from either the skeptical interpretation or the externalist.²⁰ Hume notes that the skeptic holds the power to throw us into skeptical amazement with his arguments, but that amazement is fragile. The contextualist reads this as saying that the skeptic holds the power to shift the context of inquiry further by introducing concerns that were previously omitted from consideration, but that those considerations are only active for a short time. Consider two men at the bar. One is talking about how his dart will stick to the dart board. The other man, a skeptic, goes through Hume's arguments until the first realizes that there is no reason for him to believe that his future throws of the dart will resemble his past throws. The dart thrower must then admit that he does not know, or does not have reason to believe that his dart will stick if thrown correctly, no matter how many times he has seen the dart stick before. However, in doing so, the skeptic has also made the goal of playing the game impossible, at least until the context shifts back. Once the two turn their mind back to the game, and trying to score the most

²⁰ And also, I will suggest, another two-standard view offered in Winkler (1999). The two views share important similarities and differences which I discuss at the end of this section.

points, they cannot help themselves from thinking that the dart will stick if thrown correctly because the context has shifted back to the practical concerns, thereby justifying the inductive belief. This account is faithful not only to the Humean interaction between a skeptic and an ordinary man, but also the contextualist account (as seen in Lewis above). It also helps us specify what kind of contextualism Hume seems to be advocating. For Hume, the higher standards 'win' in a context, as long as there are not external limitations on how high the context can go. Thus we see the parallel between Hume's handling of skepticism and the contextualist position.

This interpretation holds great power to resolve the tension in Hume's work while avoiding the sacrifices and problems of the other proposed solutions. The standards explain the tension by noting that Hume separates his discussion of induction into two sets of circumstances. The first, which I have labeled the philosophical context, is one in which he is concerned with the rational foundation of our beliefs. It is with this concern, and within this context, that he makes the claim that we have *no reason* to believe in induction. In fact, he explicitly says that those hypotheses only hold weight in the academic sphere, removed from the concerns of common life. Outside of that context, Hume finds that we are compelled by nature, by custom, to believe in the uniformity principle. From custom, Hume derives a system of justification which allows the use of induction, but again, only within that specified context. What is justified for the philosopher in an academic hall is not the same as what is justified for the backgammon player, and this is crucial to understanding the apparent tension in Hume's treatment of induction. The tension is only present if we fail to recognize the multiple contexts of justification at work in the project.

This may prompt the objection that Hume, in doing philosophy, cannot justify his use of induction, even under my interpretation. After all, the philosophical context refutes induction, so doesn't the contextualist reading fail to justify *Hume's* use of induction in his philosophical corpus? Not if we are clear about the context of his philosophical work. Hume wishes to naturalize abstract philosophy and introduce a practical benefit to what he sees as useless metaphysics. This is clear even in the subtitle of the *Treatise*, *Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into a Moral Subject*. Hume's project, though a work of philosophy, is to introduce that philosophy into the practical context. Hume recognizes the pitfalls of the unrestricted philosophical context, and thus adopts a strong context, the context of the mitigated skeptic, to allow himself to conduct philosophy with practical results. It is in this final context, the one which Hume explicitly suggests philosophers exhibit, that Hume's project lies. Thus, Hume's use of induction is justified because his work exhibits the context of the mitigated skeptic, not the unrestricted philosopher.

To conclude this section, I would like to briefly discuss a similar interpretation of Hume's epistemology. In *Hume's Inductive Skepticism*, Kenneth Winkler argues that Hume is a skeptic, but that everyday judgments are insulated from that skepticism by natural forces. He builds from that insulation "two sets of norms, and with them two standards of reasonableness" (Winkler, 206) that he uses to resolve Hume's tension in much the same way as I use the justificatory contexts in the contextualist interpretation. The contextualist and insulation interpretations are alike in that they point out key features in Hume's writing which seem to suggest multiple standards of justification. However, while the insulation view recognizes two standards of reasonableness, the

interplay between the standards is better explained by the contextualist position. This is the key difference between the two interpretations.

The insulation view provides two norms of reasonability, one in which the foundations of beliefs are challenged (what I call the philosophical context) and one which uses rules derived from a commitment to the uniformity principle (the context of common life). However, the two standards are separated by largely different justificatory systems. One uses a process of natural, reliabilist justification, while the other is purely rational. This differs from the contextualist interpretation, where the standards are separated by different strengths of hypotheses taken into consideration in the contexts. As we have seen previously in this section, Hume speaks of people shifting between standards within single conversations. Because Winkler defines the standards as being separated by two mostly-unrelated processes of reasonableness, it is not clear why one would shift between the standards so easily. What instigates the switch between contexts and why should we make the switch at all? The contextualist background provides a much more detailed account of the separation between standards. We can explain the shift based wholly on which hypotheses are and are not active in the inquiry. The standards shift by taking new hypotheses into account, and which hypotheses are allowed is determined by the goal of the inquiry via the Title Principle. Without the account of context-based standards, we are left wondering how the norms interact with one another.

The contextualist interpretation not only explains how standards shift but *why*. Winkler poses an unanswered challenge for the insulation view: "why our failure to satisfy the norms at work in section iv gives us a reason--a positive reason-- to confine our enquiries to common life" (Winkler, 208). In the contextualist interpretation, one's

standards are relative to the goal for that inquiry. Standards can be incompatible either because they are too low or too high for the goal in question. We saw this with the dart thrower. The standards for playing the game externally forced the skeptic to limit his standards if he wished to play the game. He could keep his high standards, but doing so would be incompatible with playing the game. In the same way, the goal of living life inherently rules out skeptical standards. Given that we are necessarily concerned with living life, we have a positive reason to limit our contexts to those compatible with that goal.

Ultimately, the contextualist position may be considered a close relative of the insulation interpretation²¹, one that reduces the separation between standards and allows more of Hume's writing to be explained. The principal benefit of using a contextualist framework to understand Hume's treatment of skepticism is that it allows for a detailed description of the workings of the different justificatory standards. We not only make sense of the conflict between Hume's recommendation and condemnation of induction, but we do so in a more philosophically complete way.

V. Benefits and Conclusions

As we have seen, the contextualist interpretation offers a solution to the tension discussed at the beginning of this paper, and does so while avoiding the pitfalls of the other competing interpretations. The traditional skeptical reading has its textual support, but cannot resolve the tension. The descriptivist has to sacrifice the epistemic nature of Hume's project to resolve the tension, and with it, has to explain away a large amount of textual support for the epistemic reading. Also, it sacrifices some of the historical import

²¹ Though the contextualist interpretation did not begin as an adaptation of the insulation view, the two have enough similarities to see them as related in this way.

of Hume's argument, having to claim that Hume offers all the pieces to express the famous problem of induction, but does so incidentally, since he is not concerned with inductive justification at all. The externalist interpretation maintains that Hume provides a consistent solution to skepticism, which conflicts with the text. The contextualist reading avoids all of these issues. It can explain the tension satisfactorily, placing it ahead of the straight skeptical reading. It does not need to dismiss or explain away large portions of seemingly epistemic textual evidence. Further, it explains the apparent externalist justification of induction without making that justification too strong. So the contextualist reading provides many of the benefits of the skeptical and externalist readings without the textual sacrifices of the descriptivist. As a result, the contextualist reading is a very promising interpretation of Hume's epistemology.

The contextualist interpretation also makes sense of other puzzling passages that stem from Hume's treatment of causal arguments. For instance, in the *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, Hume famously discusses the causal reasoning employed by the design argument for God. He says that the argument boils down to one proposition, "*That the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence*" (122). He continues that this proposition is flawed and that it "affords no inference that affects common life, or can be the source of any action or forbearance" (122). In the face of this realization, Hume wonders "what the most inquisitive, contemplative, and religious man [can] do more than give a plain, philosophical assent to the proposition", claiming we should believe the "arguments on which it is established exceed the objections which lie against it" (122). Here we see a similar problem to the original tension; Hume is claiming that we ought to assent to an inductively supported

principle even though it cannot be rationally justified. Though our reason fails to establish the existence of a Deity, Hume still thinks we are justified in accepting the proposition in everyday life. He says, "A person, seasoned with a just sense of the imperfections of natural reason, will fly to revealed truth with the greatest avidity" (123). Hume is noting that although the argument from design holds no weight in the philosophical context, the probable reasoning which leads us to the belief is justified in the common context. In fact, using the Title Principle as the method of inductive reasoning, we have shown what Hume means by saying that one "flies to revealed truth". When we limit ourselves to the context of common life, arguments from analogy hold weight, and we are justified in assenting to their conclusions in that context. The problem dissolves when we separate Hume's claims into different justificatory contexts, allowing induction in one but not the other. Thus, we see the contextualist reading solving another apparent tension in Hume's treatment of inductive reasoning.

Additionally, there is a purely interpretive benefit to the contextualist reading. The contextualist interpretation does the great philosopher the service of attributing to him not only a grand and important project, but also the foresight of modern epistemic developments. It maintains the historical import of his work, granting him the exposition of the problem of induction for which he is so famous. The revisionist accounts, especially the descriptivist, would have us extensively revise Hume's project in order to make sense of the apparent inconsistencies. The contextualist reading, on the other hand, is highly compatible with the traditional skeptical account; Hume is a skeptic about induction, but only in a specific context. Though this is not necessarily a decisive advantage, it does offer an air of plausibility when theories can be made to work without

being overly revisionary. As Adi Parush wrote, "It could possibly happen that generations of scholars have again and again been mistaken as to a philosopher's basic intentions. But one should certainly check and double-check any such revolutionary interpretation lest one fall a victim to it" (Parush, 3). That contextualism offers a defense and modernization of the traditional interpretation is, at least to some degree, a benefit of the theory.

I have argued that Hume is best understood as employing multiple standards of justification for induction in a manner very similar to modern epistemic contextualism. Inductive reasoning, it turns out, is justified in Hume's account, but only in a limited context. Likewise, Hume endorses inductive skepticism, but only in a different context. In the philosophical context, induction is unfounded, yet we are driven by nature to operate in a context in which the uniformity principle and causal reasoning are justified. For Hume, the justification of beliefs varies based on the context of the inquiry, and realizing this resolves any apparent tension between his use and criticism of inductive reasoning.

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