

# Review of: "HUME, Paradigms, and the Debate on Psi"

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Overall, this is a very interesting article, well argued and well referenced. It provides a good analysis of psi-critics' use of Hume's arguments and follows on by pointing out some more general problematic points in their arguments. I recommend the paper for publication.

What follows are some thoughts and suggestions. None of them represents a substantial criticism of the paper's argument, and I leave it up to the author whether or not to incorporate them in some way:

- concerning Sect. 2: while the author points out the difference between the account of a miracle in a religious text and data acquired in a laboratory, the argument might be strengthened by further emphasizing the difference between the miracle as a singular event and the plural, accumulated nature of research data.
- In a similar vein, it might be helpful to point out in Sect. 5 that there is an important structural difference between claiming a single published result is fraudulent and claiming that a whole field of research / a multitude of research projects is.
- concerning Sect. 3.1: I am not certain I see how Hume's analysis of causality rules out the transposition of limiting principles. Even a deflationary account of causality has to allow for some form of generalization or for differentiating between (so-far) justified and unjustified causal claims, which opens the way for discussing to what extent a transposition of limiting principles is justified in any specific case. The other way is to take Hume's arguments in their strong form as dismantling any notion of causality, but then we cannot make any generalizations and the whole problem of transposing limiting principles is not so much criticized as rendered completely moot.
- concerning sect. 4: I find the claim that "arguably, most scientists and philosophers are realistic about laws governing our world" highly problematic. At least within the philosophy of science, the status of natural laws is a widely discussed topic with strong arguments being presented both for realistic positions as well as for a number of greatly varied "non-realistic" positions
- Similarly, more care should be taken when using the terms "physicalism" and "materialism" (specifically in sect. 6.2). These terms are not interchangeable, and both come with a set of philosophical problems attached - starting with how to define them. Due to this, it is not clear what exactly the author means when he says psi-skeptics adhere to these doctrines while psi-researchers are prepared to relax them.
- Concerning sect. 5: While "traditional" incentives for fraud may not apply in the context of psi-research, I believe a number of critics would claim that the incentive for fraud, in this case, is to convince critics and establish psi as an accepted field of research.

