

Philosophy 9045: Hume (and some Humeans) on Scarcity, Conventions, Property and Justice
(This course is crosslisted with Phil 4045G: Special Topics in 18th Century Philosophy)

On Hume's account, private property and the principles of justice arise as a matter of convention. As he says in the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, "The great art of the legislator is to discover the natural liberty of mankind, and to guard it against the encroachments of power." (Hume, *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, §3.1.10) Hume argues that the principles of justice are not derived from reason, but from the passions. He claims that the sense of justice is a natural sentiment that arises from the desire for the good of society. The principles of justice are therefore conventions that are established by the consent of the parties involved. Hume's theory of justice is based on the idea of the "artificiality" of property rights. He argues that property rights are not natural, but are created by human institutions. The principles of justice are therefore conventions that are established by the consent of the parties involved. Hume's theory of justice is based on the idea of the "artificiality" of property rights. He argues that property rights are not natural, but are created by human institutions. The principles of justice are therefore conventions that are established by the consent of the parties involved.