

# David Hume Three Hundred years on

✘ In the three hundred years since his birth, the work of David Hume on philosophy, history and economics has been invaluable.

To mark the Tercentenary, the conference [‘Hume after 300 years’](#) will be held between 18th and 23rd of July 2011. The University of Edinburgh is also organising a series of events throughout the year and anyone is welcome to attend any of these events. Events include ‘Dialogues with Hume’, ‘Humes Birthday Party’, and ‘Hume Today’. More information on all of these events [here](#).

Hume was a prominent figure of the 18th century’s Scottish Enlightenment, particularly remembered for his philosophical empiricism and scepticism, and his works continue to be relevant to the philosophical disputes of the 21st century. He lived from 1771 until his death in 1776 at the southwest corner of St. Andrew Square at what is now 21, Saint David Street.

The story goes, that while standing at the top of Calton Hill and taking in the views of Edinburgh, Hume realised that his senses gave him knowledge. Hence he was a rationalist and an empiricist: he argued that proof was required in order to establish a truth.

He is generally recognised as the greatest philosopher ever to write in English and today his work is studied by academics from all over the world. One of Hume’s main focuses is the argument against superstition. As a sceptic as well as an atheist, his ideas were not popular with religious leaders. He argued, for example, that religion is not the key to understanding the universe and that instead it is a reflection

of human psychology.

The publication for which he is best known, 'A Treatise of Human Nature' was produced around 1740. The 'Treatise' was not well received within his lifetime, but it has since become arguably one of the most important books in the history of philosophy.

