

# Hume on Miracles and Morality

Instructor: Jason Sheley

- We will conclude by briefly looking at two applications of Hume's system:
  - 1 miracles
  - 2 morality

- The key question in each case is, how do we come by the idea we have? How would we get it?
- Given what Hume has said thus far, how would you expect Hume to reason through the case?

# Miracles

- What are our two sources of knowledge here?

- First, **probability**: that experience is uniform, and that the future will be like the past.
- Second, **testimony**: we often accept the word of others if the source is credible

- Now, the question becomes, how would either source furnish us with knowledge that a miracle occurred?

- Hume gives his account on p. 391-3

- The key idea is that I am forced to weigh the probability of one miracle against another...



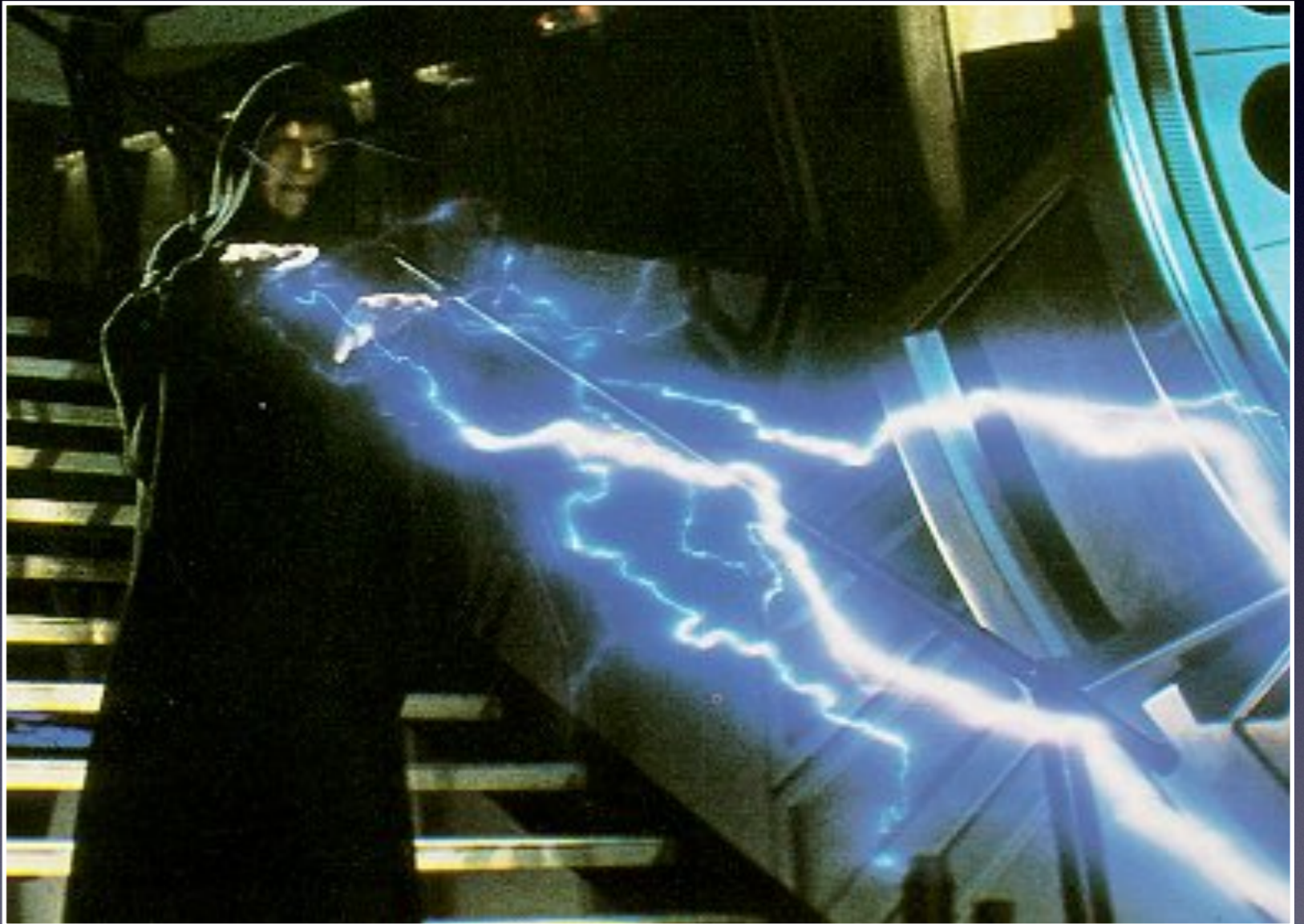
- P. 402 the queen of england example
- P. 403-4: Hume's remarks on the role of faith vs reason

# Morality

- Here the question is similar. Suppose that I consider some action to be wrong. How do I come by that idea?

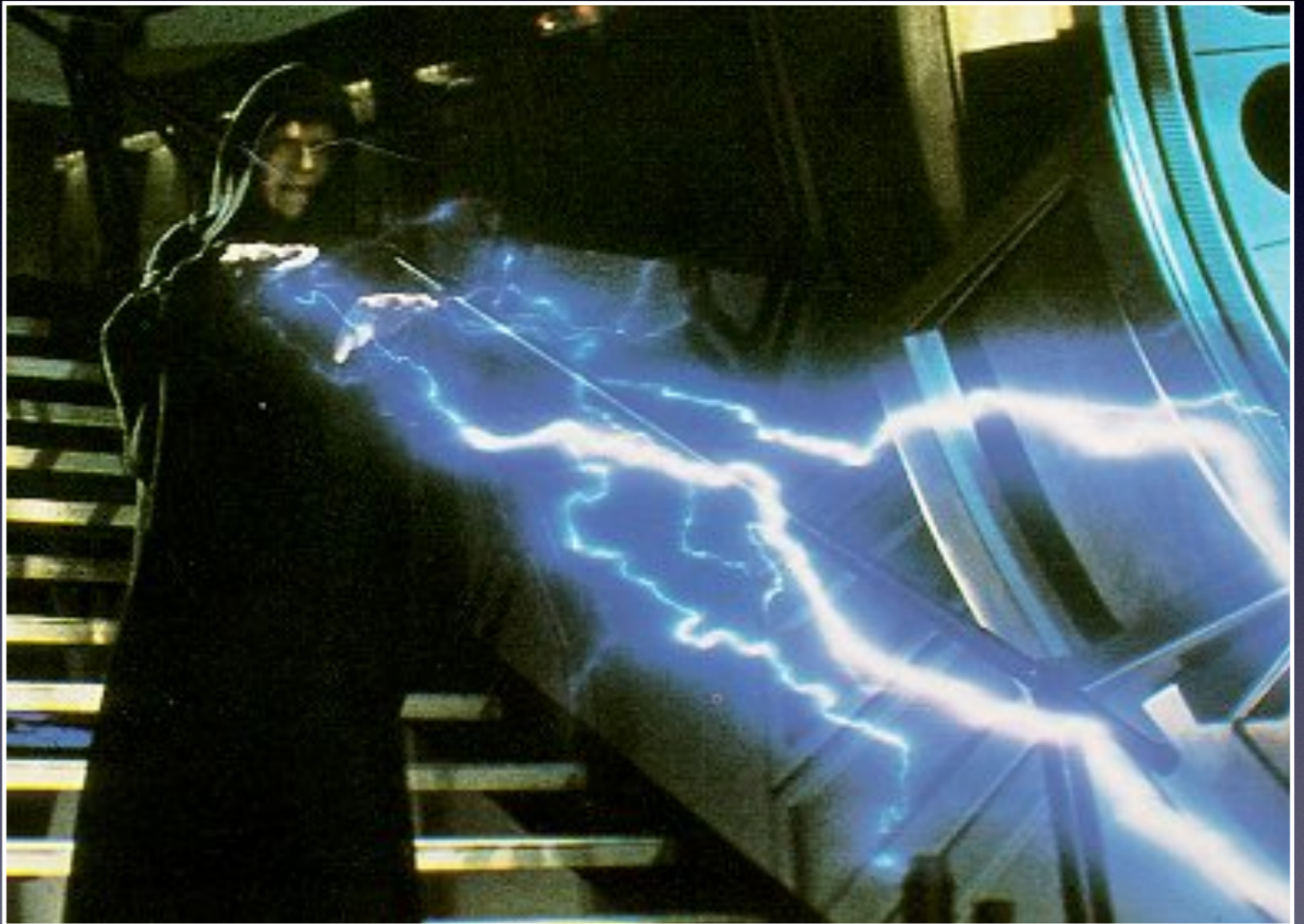
# Is this wrong?

- The key question: where do we perceive the wrongness?



# Is this wrong?

- For Hume, we never perceive good or bad in the world.





Instead, what I perceive is a feeling of disgust at what I see.

- This feeling is what allows me to describe characters as virtuous or vicious.

Let's Review...

If a tree falls in a forest,  
And no one is around to hear it...

	Reason?	Senses?	Skeptic?	Sound?
Descartes				
Locke				
Berkeley				
Hume				



