

FIRST CAUSE ARGUMENT

P1. There are things that are caused.

P2. Nothing causes itself.

P3. There cannot be an infinite series of *past* causes.

C1. There must be a first uncaused cause.

Ad hoc hypothesis: All people call the first uncaused cause "God".

Supporting argument

P4. In every causal series there is a first, intermediate, and final element.

P5. If the first element never occurs, then the intermediate and final elements never occur.

P6. Infinite series have no first, middle, or final elements.

P7. If we suppose that the current series is infinite, then there would be no first element.

P8. If we suppose the current series is infinite, then we would suppose nothing to be happening now.

P9. Something is happening now.

C2 = P3. The causal series must not be infinite.

Criticisms:

1. P3 is false.

2. The supporting argument is question begging.

3. What are causes?

4. Alternative explanation(s).

Further considerations: how many first causers? Does s/he/it/them care about us? Is the first causer a sentient entity?

ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Reductio ad absurdum argument

Assume the logical opposite of the desired conclusion. If conclusion is a logical contradiction, then the original assumption must be false.

"God" is defined as "a being no greater than which can be conceived".

P1. God exists in the understanding alone.

P2. Whatever exist in the understanding and reality is greater than that which exists in the understanding alone.

P3. We can conceive of god existing in reality as well as in the understanding.

P4. We can conceive of a being greater than god.

C1. We can conceive of a being greater than the greatest conceivable being.

C1 is a contradiction.

P1 is necessarily false.

C2. God exists in reality.

Criticisms:

1. Guanilo's Perfect Island
2. Kant's analysis of "existence"

CONTINGENCY ARGUMENT

P1. There are things which depend for their existence on other things.

P2. Any contingent entity depends either upon another contingent entity or some necessary entity for its existence (by definition).

P3. The chain of dependence of contingent entity upon contingent entity cannot go on infinitely.

C1. There must be some necessary entity on which some contingent entity depends.

Ad hoc hypothesis: All people call the necessary entity "God".

Criticisms

1. Category mistake.
2. Underlying assumption is (epistemically) false.
3. "Contingency" and "necessity" apply to propositions, not to substances.
4. Alternative explanation(s).

Further considerations: how many necessary entities? Does s/he/it/them care about us? Is the necessary entity a sentient entity?

Abductive Reasoning – Extra Credit Assignment

We can ask "Which of the two is the best explanation?" Refer to on-line exercise and Pojman 631 – 633 regarding what abductive reasoning is and how it works. Apply abductive reasoning to the First Cause and Contingency arguments; that is, which is the better explanation—"God is the first uncaused cause" or the "Big Bang", for the First Cause Argument. Do the same with the Contingency Argument—God vs. Quantum Particles as the necessary entity. You can use atomic particles if that is easier.

Due At Time of Test

TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Inductive *a posteriori* argument

"Design" or telos:

1. Goal-seeking (Aristotle)
2. "Parts that are framed and put together for a purpose". Purpose carries with it the concepts of "utility" or "intention".
3. A system of parts that perform a function.

"The Coke Can, the Atheist's Nightmare"

"Designer of Audio CD Packaging Enters Hell" by Steve Martin

[`Intelligent Falling' Theory](#)

Formalized version of the teleological argument:

- P1. All [artificial] things with which we are familiar which have the marks of design are created by intelligent designers.
- P2. "Every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in [artifacts], exists in the works of nature; with the difference, on the side of nature, of being greater and more, and in a degree which exceeds all computation."
- C1. The universe has an intelligent designer.

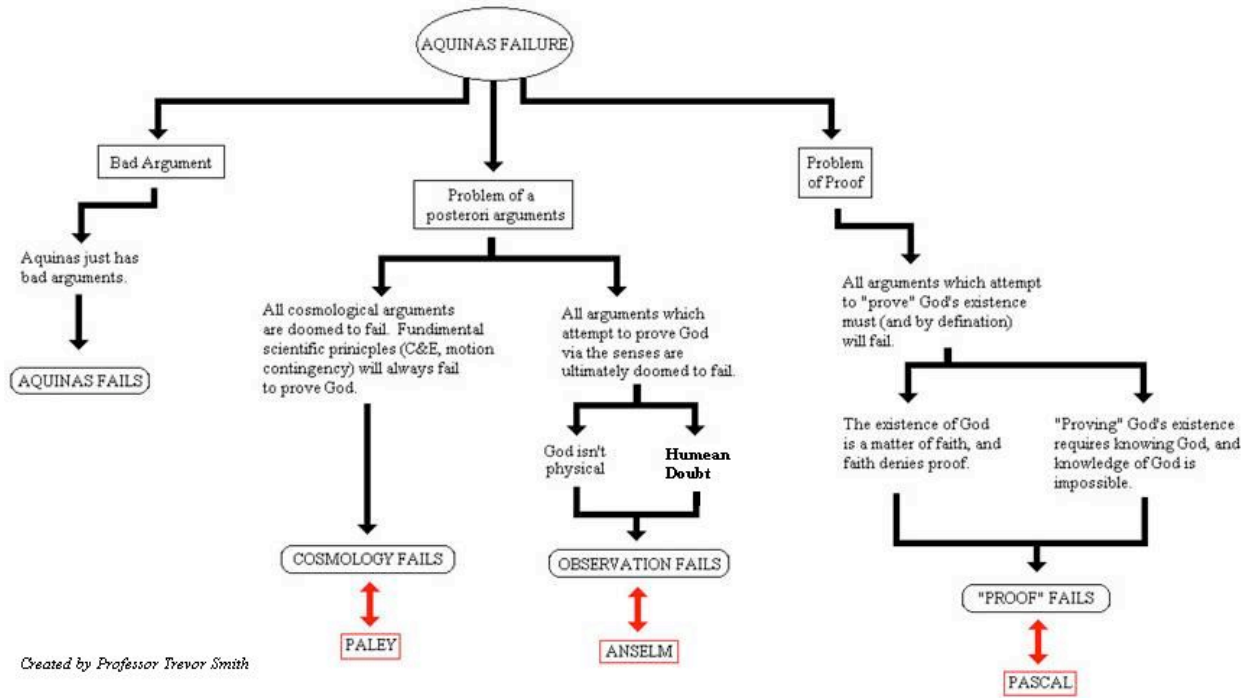
[Hume's and Other Criticisms:](#)

1. Tenuous assumption
2. Begs the question
3. Not knowable (*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*)
Paley's Answer: I
4. Hasty generalization
5. False composition
6. Sufficient Similarity
7. Human consciousness is no indicator of the consciousness of a deity *in kind*.
8. Problem of natural evil: Progeria, Huntington's, Harlequin Ichthyosis, Other Botched Worlds
Paley's Answer: II

Alternative explanation: Evolution

Evolution vs. ID, which is the better explanation?

- Which is capable of explaining, for example, why viruses and bacteria are becoming disease resistant and pests resistant to pesticides?
- Which is the best explanation, ID or Evolution, for genetic disorders like those listed above?



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