

The Nature of Reality

Teleological/Design Argument

- Teleological is a word that comes from Greek and means 'purpose' or 'aim'.
 - The idea of the design argument was developed by William Paley, he used the example of a pocket watch. The theory that it has been perfectly designed and so has been made to work.
 - A watch has several qualities to make it work perfectly, it has glass to see the time, gears to make it move and hands to point to the time behind the glass.
 - Like the watch, our eyes have a designer, someone designed our eye to make all the pieces function, a God is particularly referenced by Paley.
 - Therefore, the design argument states that everything in the world functions so perfectly and harmoniously, that there must be a creator behind it all who has sculpted it.
 - One issue with this argument is that the watch is not 'natural', the world is naturally assumed to be natural. Therefore, it couldn't be created as such.
 - The Anthropic Principle suggests that the world is so perfect that there must be a creator.
 - One problem is that not everything is perfect. Just as the watch can break, the world can break. An eye infection or blindness could be compared to nuclear weapons or plagues.
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John Stuart Mill and Utilitarianism

- One man called John Stuart Mill who came after Paley, disagreed with him. He said that there is cruelty and falsehood in nature, how could there be a **loving** God with all this pain?
- This also emphasised the point that not everything is perfect, so therefore Paley's theory leads to faith defaulting back to a less logical question.
- John Stuart Mill also founded and observed the theory of Utilitarianism which suggested that if the majority of people are happy, then it is better than if no one was happy.
- In Utilitarianism, if we had 5 sweets and 9 people, it would be better to give the 5 sweets out and have the majority be happy than everybody not have a sweet.
- One issue is that the majority of humans have morality compared to the majority of animals, surely with a conscience we should be able to determine good from bad due to free will.
- Another idea that supports this is the 'Survival of the Fittest' idea which suggests that humans have survived throughout the ages because we are the best animals and have defeated others.
- This concept can also refer to natural evil, why would a loving God create a world where natural evil occurs. It cannot be explained with free will, yet it still occurs.

The Theory of Evolution and Design Theory

- Darwin's Theory of Evolution breaks down Paley's philosophical theory because Paley suggested that the eye was created just like a watch.
 - The argument that Darwin puts forward is that not everything is perfect and the eye you get is determined by the genetic card you draw and what ancestors you had.
 - The Theory of Evolution has invalidated the original design argument that everything should have happened for a point and people were made by God.
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F.R. Tennant and John Polkinghorne

- F.R. Tennant was a Christian searching for a logical answer to the existence of God. He stated that it was time to accept the existence of evolution in the Christian faith.
 - As a result he believed that Evolution was guided by God. This led to the development of scientific projects which seek to prove God by looking at genetic perfection.
 - For these people, Genesis can be taken literally or as a myth. He emphasises that neither of these points are significant, rather the fact that God ensured human survival is important.
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The First Cause Argument

- The first cause argument is a philosophical suggestion that shows everything must have a cause, this includes us, an event and in this case, the rest of the universe.
 - For this reason, it is often called the Cosmological argument which is the idea that everything has a cause. Everything in the natural world is such that it is caused by an external force.
 - The Cosmological argument talks about the fact that since everything has a cause, as we go further back, unless there is a God, we reach nothingness, and a black hole of mystery.
 - Aristotle, who founded the argument, suggested that the universe did not just explode into existence, rather something must have triggered the creation of the universe.
 - In the argument he suggests it is like a line of dominos, the person pushes the first domino and observes the rest falling over. He calls God the 'prime mover' or 'first cause'.
 - He says that the universe must be like the first domino, and God like the external force, or person pushing the first domino. The philosopher Thomas Aquinas developed this argument.
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Thomas Aquinas's Argument

- Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD) attempted to prove the existence of God through the 'five ways', he didn't want to disprove newly forming ideas of science, rather just to prove God:
 - **The Argument from Motion** – He says that we live in a world of movement, he also says that one movement is caused by another movement. We push a domino, it moves. Aquinas argues that something must have initially started movement. God is used as the example by Aquinas, he says that infinite regression (there is no beginning,

everything has gone on forever) is impossible and that an 'unmoved mover' must have started something, an external force who began the chain.

- **The Argument from Causation** – Similar to the argument from motion, the argument from causation argues that everything must have an initial cause, and there cannot be an infinite regress of causation. So there must have been an initial cause, initially uncaused, that initial cause must have been God.
- **The Argument from Contingency** – Aquinas says that there are two types of being, recognised by many philosophers, a **necessary being** and a **contingent being**. Humans are generally considered to be contingent beings in the sense that the world would go on without your birth. But there must be a necessary being, as it must have caused existence in the first place. It has always existed and will always exist, and cannot not exist because it created the existence of humanity and the world, it is God. It is impossible that everything is contingent, because everything might not have existed.
- **The Argument from Degrees** – This suggests that there is a baseline for everything, for measuring things. Not literally necessarily, like cm or miles or kg, rather, it is about measuring goodness and truth. Without God we cannot be sure of what is right and what is wrong because there would be no baseline. Morality is based upon God's existence. Everything must be good compared to God's morals, not our own.
- **The Teleological Argument** – The simple argument that everything must have a purpose, and that it exists because it was designed for a purpose. This is the same argument that William Paley later puts forward about the watch.