

Inductive arguments for the existence of God



Component 2—Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – inductive



This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

A) Inductive arguments – cosmological: Inductive proofs; the concept of ‘a posteriori’. Cosmological argument: St Thomas Aquinas’ first Three Ways - (motion or change; cause and effect; contingency and necessity). The Kalam cosmological argument with reference to William Lane Craig (rejection of actual infinities and concept of personal creator).

B) Inductive arguments – teleological: St Thomas Aquinas’ Fifth Way - concept of governance; archer and arrow analogy. William Paley’s watchmaker - analogy of complex design. F. R. Tennant’s anthropic and aesthetic arguments - the universe specifically designed for intelligent human life.

B) Challenges to inductive arguments: David Hume - empirical objections and critique of causes (cosmological). David Hume - problems with analogies; rejection of traditional theistic claims: designer not necessarily God of classical theism; apprentice god; plurality of gods; absent god (teleological). Alternative scientific explanations including Big Bang theory and Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content, such as:

- Whether inductive arguments for God’s existence are persuasive.
- The extent to which the Kalam cosmological argument is convincing.
- The effectiveness of the cosmological/teleological argument for God’s existence.
- Whether cosmological/teleological arguments for God’s existence are persuasive in the 21st Century.
- The effectiveness of the challenges to the cosmological/teleological argument for God’s existence.
- Whether scientific explanations are more persuasive than philosophical explanations for the universe’s existence.



Inductive proofs

In Philosophy, what do we mean by an argument?



Create your own argument with up to 4 premises

1)

2)

3)

4)

Conclusion-

Define a 'deductive argument' and give an example...



Define an 'inductive argument' and give an example...



Your first impressions of inductive arguments

A posteriori:

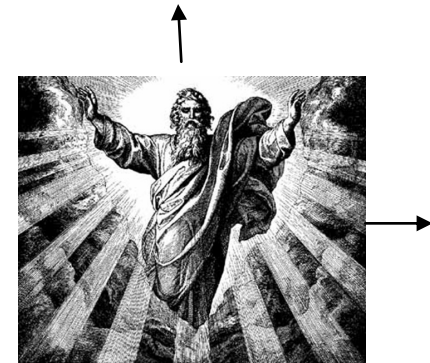
I 
Latin

How strong are inductive proofs for God's existence?

General problems with inductive arguments:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Why is it particularly difficult to prove God using inductive arguments?

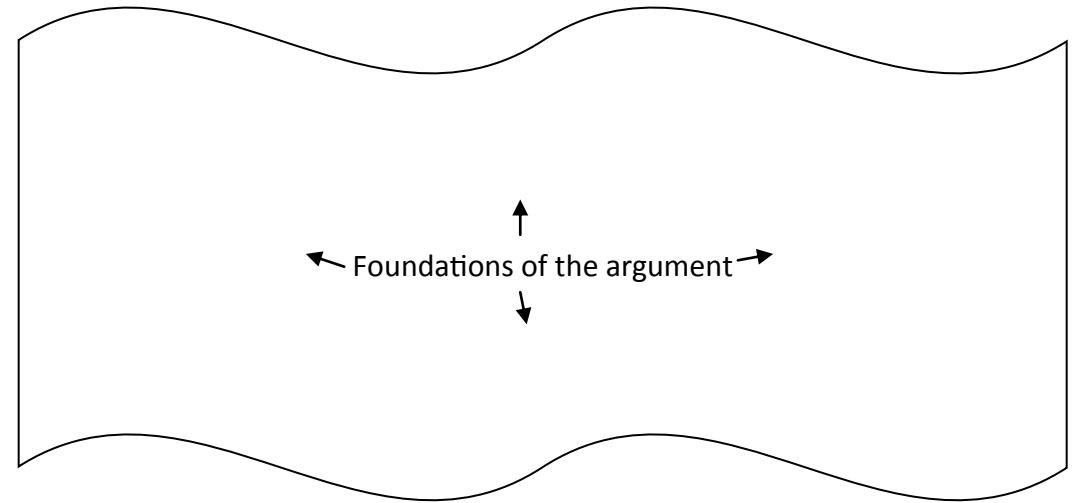


The God of Classical Theism

The cosmological argument- an overview

What questions does it try to answer?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



What type of argument is it and why?
Use key terms

The argument in a nutshell

Premise 1

Premise 2

Premise 3

Premise 4

Premise 5

Conclusion:





Aquinas' first way

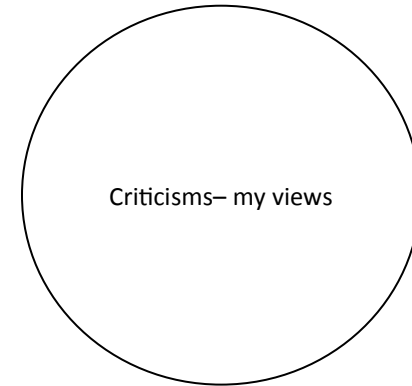
Aquinas' three ways

Aquinas' second way

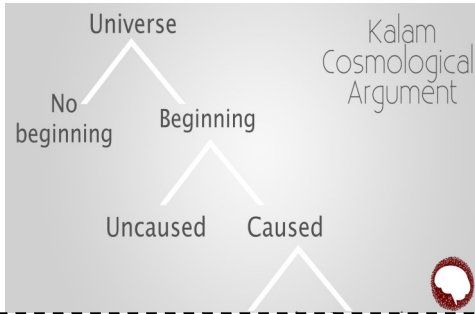
Aquinas' third way

How successful are Aquinas' arguments?

Strengths	Weaknesses



Historical context



Craig—1st part of argument

God as a personal creator

Craig—2nd part of argument

Rejection of actual infinite + example

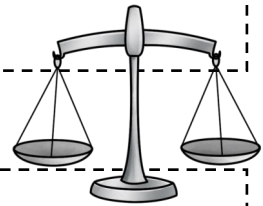


Quotes

Critics / support—*Is it logically valid?*

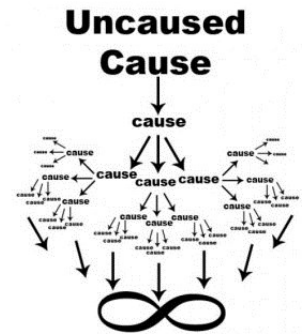
The Kalam cosmological argument

Key words & definitions



Examples

Personal opinion



The teleological argument

The basics

Aquinas' version– summary

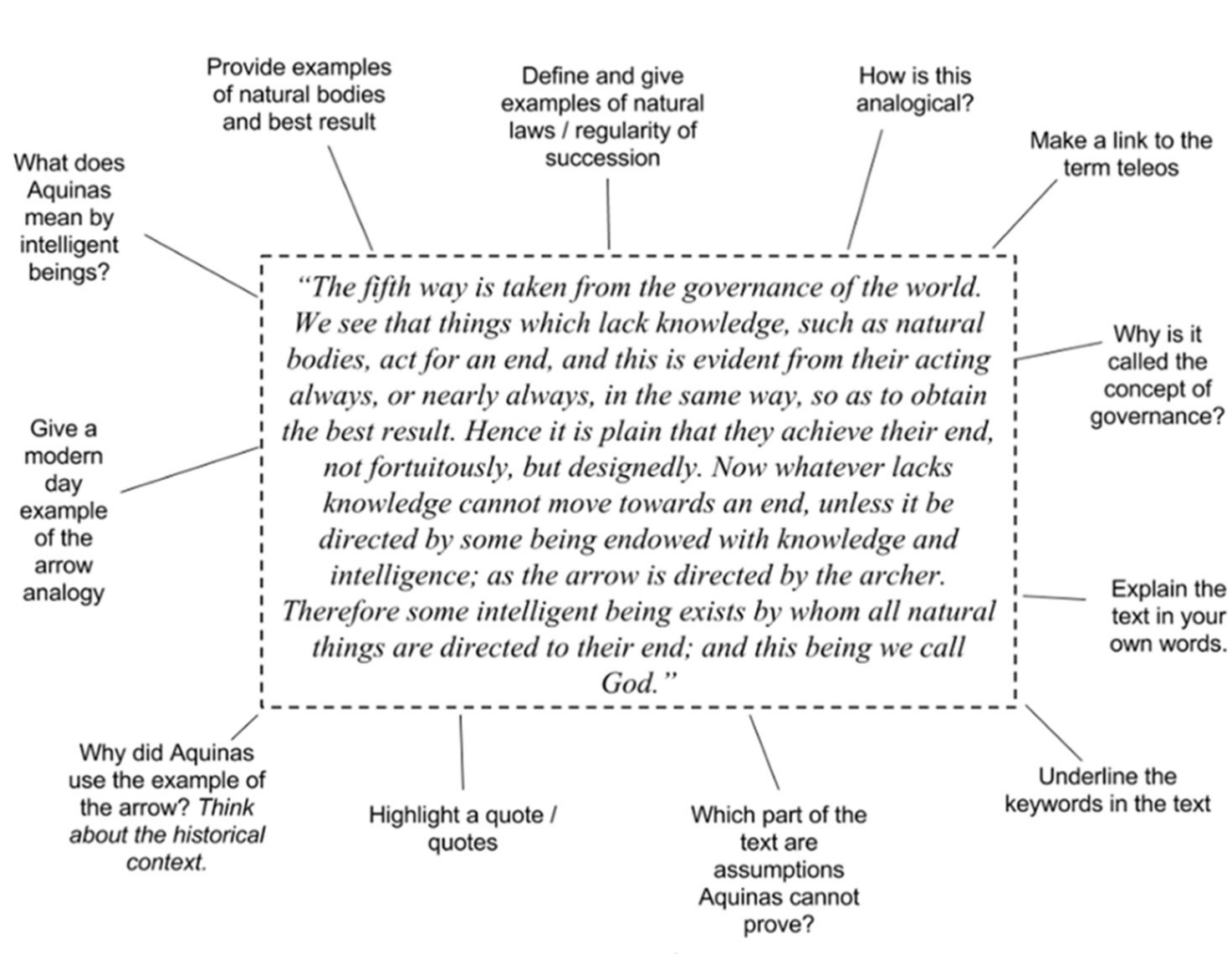


Paley's version– summary

Tennant's version– summary



Aquinas' fifth way



William Paley's watchmaker



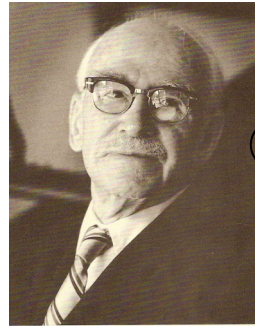
Who was William Paley?

F R Tennant's version

Basic Points

-
-
-
-

Aesthetics Argument



Anthropic Principle

Why do you think the nickname 'the Goldilocks principle' became associated with Tennant's argument?



How effective is the teleological argument?

Is effective

My thoughts...

Notes following presentations...

Is not effective

Is not effective
My thoughts...

Notes following presentations...

David Hume's criticisms of inductive arguments

Hume's objections to the cosmological argument...

- 1) Empirical objections
- 2) Critique of causes

Hume's objections to the teleological argument...

- 1) Problems with analogies

2) Designer not necessarily GOCT

3) Apprentice god

4) Plurality of gods

5) Absent god



Mnemonic to help revise these objections:

Scientific challenges

1) The Big Bang Theory

See page 15

3) Newton's First Law

What is it?

How does it challenge inductive arguments?

A contrast– John Polkinghorne

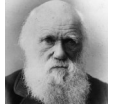
Who was he?

What were his views?

We are not now looking to the physical world for hints of God's existence but to God's existence as an aid for understanding why things have developed in the physical world in the manner that they have

- John Polkinghorne

2) The theory of Evolution



Who was Charles Darwin?

What is Natural Selection?

How have humans evolved?

What are the implications for the teleological argument?

Who is Richard Dawkins?



How does he challenge the teleological argument?

The Big Bang Theory

Scientists believe the _____ began in a hot 'big bang' about 13,600 million years ago. The Universe continues to expand today. The evidence for the Big Bang theory includes the existence of a _____ background radiation, and red-shift. _____ do not remain the same, but change as they age.

Scientists have gathered a lot of evidence and information about the Universe. The Big Bang theory states that about _____ years ago all the matter in the Universe was concentrated into a single incredibly tiny point. This began to enlarge rapidly in a hot explosion, and it is still _____ today.

_____ for the Big Bang includes:

all the _____ are moving away from us

the further away a galaxy is, the faster it is moving away.

These two features are found in explosions - the fastest moving objects end up furthest away from the explosion.

Scientists have also detected a cosmic microwave background radiation or CMBR. This is received from all parts of the Universe and is thought to be the _____ left over from the original explosion.

This theory provides a _____ theory to explain the beginning of the universe. Both _____ of the CA, and those who _____ it, use the Big Bang theory as a _____ for or against the existence of God. Scientific _____ has confirmed that there was a beginning to the universe, and has provided further evidence that the universe developed a structure very early in its history.

The Big Bang theory is a _____ to the CA only if it is accepted as a _____ theory to the CA. If the Big Bang is considered to be a spontaneous _____ without reason or cause then Aquinas' assertion that God is mover and cause of the universe is _____. On the other hand if it is accepted that there must be a _____ why the Big Bang happened, and that once the universe began to evolve there seems to have been a _____ of the universe that ensured it developed and continued, then the Big Bang theory gives support to a belief in the _____ of classical theism.

proof	Stars	God	observation	microwave	supporters	Universe	scientific	deny	rival	sustainer
galaxies		reason	heat	expanding	undermined	Evidence	13.7 billion	challenge	random event	

How persuasive are the cosmological and teleological arguments in the C21st?

Stick picture here or a copy of your group essay plan

Which are stronger?



Scientific challenges or Philosophical challenges? Treasoning

Conclusion to the topic-

How strong are inductive arguments for God's existence?

Choose up to 4 chains of arguments which you consider particularly strong. Try to have strengths as well as weaknesses.

ARGUMENT CHAINS



Your overall conclusion about inductive arguments... How strong are they?

Remember that AO1 means demonstrating knowledge and understanding of a topic area

Exam style questions

Remember that AO2 means analysing and evaluating a topic area

Exam question	AO1/AO2?	Pages
Compare Aquinas' and Paley's forms of the teleological argument.	AO1 20 marks	8-10
'The strengths of inductive arguments outweigh their weaknesses.' Evaluate this view	AO2 30 marks	6-7, 12-18
Compare Paley's and Tennant's forms of the teleological argument.	AO1 20 marks	8, 10-11
'The challenges to the teleological argument for God's existence are convincing.' Evaluate this view.	AO2 30 marks	12-18
Explain Aquinas' cosmological arguments for the existence of God.	AO1 20 marks	4-5
'Science, not God, tells us all we need to know about the beginning of the universe.' Evaluate this view with reference to cosmological arguments for the existence of God.	AO2 30 marks	6-7, 14-18
Explain the teleological arguments for God's existence, with reference to Aquinas, Paley and Tennant.	AO1 20 marks	8-11
'Scientific evidence proves beyond doubt, that there is no designer God.' Evaluate this view.	AO2 30 marks	14-18