Positive Apologetics

The Ontological Argument

Ontological arguments attempt to prove from the very concept of God that God exists.

This argument was formulated by <u>Anselm</u> and defended by Scotus, Descartes, Spinoza, Lebniz, Stuart Hackett, Norman Malcolm, and Alvin Plantinga (among others)

Anselm's Ontological Argument

Anselm's argument is found in the second chapter of "Proslogium."

1) God is "that than which nothing greater can be conceived."

2) Existence in reality is greater than only existing in the understanding.
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3) Therefore, God exists in reality, otherwise He would not fulfill the criteria found in #1 – a greater being could be conceived.

Descartes' Ontological Argument

Descartes begins with the argument:
"I doubt, therefore I must be thinking, and thus an existing, thinking being."

1) God is perfect.

2) Existence is a perfection.

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3) Therefore, God exists, otherwise He would not fulfill the criteria found in #1 – He would not be perfect.

Malcolm's Ontological Argument

Norman Malcolm reformulated Anselm's argument
in such a way that it became more clear and potent

1) God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived.

2) If God didn't have necessary existence, then a greater being than God would be possible.

3) Therefore, God must have necessary existence.

4) Whatever has necessary existence must exist

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5) Therefore, God exists.

Modal Ontological Argument

Proving God's existence based upon maximal greatness

1) It is possible that a maximally great being exists.

2) If it is possible that a maximally great being exists, then a maximally great being exists in some possible world.

3) If a maximally great being exists in some possible world, then it exists in every possible world.

4) If a maximally great being exists in every possible world, then it exists in the actual world.

5) If a maximally great being exists in the actual world, then a maximally great being exists.

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6) Therefore, a maximally great being (God) exists.
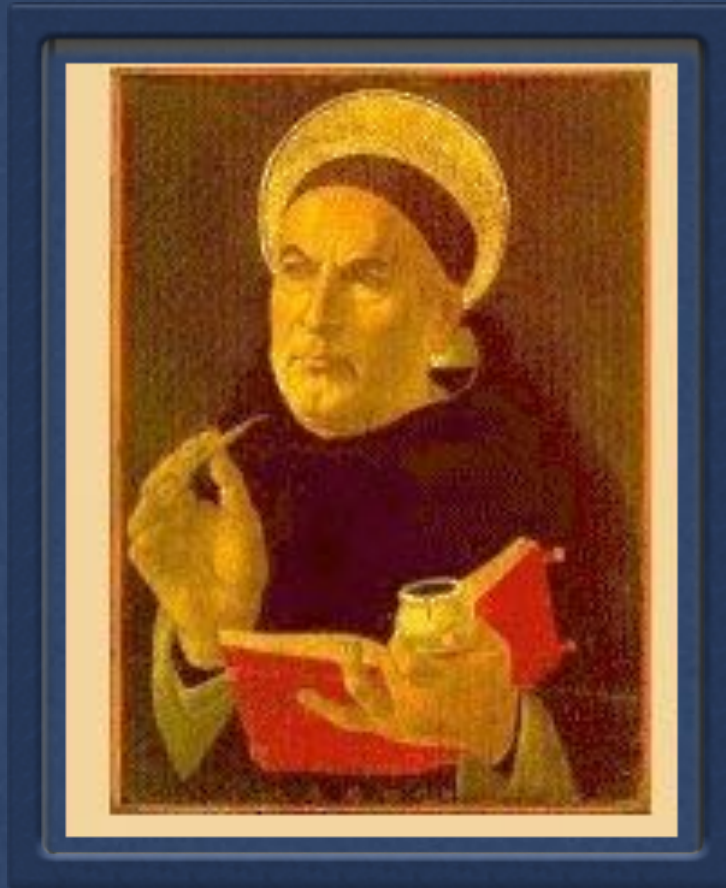
The Cosmological Argument

The Cosmological argument assumes that something exists and argues from the existence of that thing to the existence of a First Cause of the Cosmos.

Cosmological arguments find their roots in Plato and Aristotle, was developed by medieval Islamic, Christian, and Jewish thinkers, and continues to be a forceful argument today in light of modern science.

It has been defended by Plato, Aristotle, al-Ghazali, Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, and William Lane Craig (to name a few).

Al-Ghazali's Kalam Cosmological Argument

This argument originated with Christians trying to rebut the doctrine of the eternity of the universe, but was later developed by Islamic thinkers into, roughly, the following form

1) You cannot add or subtract from infinity.

2) If the universe existed for an infinite amount of time (we'll use days for example), then every day that comes to pass adds time (days) to an already infinite number.

3) But this is impossible, and so time, and the universe, must have had a beginning.
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4) Therefore, God exists, for the universe must have a beginner.

Thomas Aquinas' Five Ways

Thomas Aquinas formulated, in "Summa Theologica," five basic arguments that attempt to logically prove that God must exist.

The first three ways are cosmological in nature, while the fourth is closer to the moral argument (though not completely), and the fifth is a teleological argument.

The First Way - The Unmoved Mover

1) Everything in the universe is in motion.

2) Whatever moves must have been moved by something else.

3) There cannot be an infinite regression of movers for that would mean nothing was ever moved in the first place.

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4) Therefore, there must be an Unmoved Mover (God)

The First Way - The Unmoved Mover

The primary question here is to ask "why motion as opposed to not motion?"

If non-motion is default, then the existence of motion demands an explanation.

Aquinas' argument, and underlying reasoning negates Hume's later suggestion that "the universe has simply always been in motion", for it is not a linear cause and effect question.

The Second Way - The Uncaused Causer

1) Everything in the universe is caused by something else, for it is impossible for something within time to be self-caused.

2) There cannot be an infinite regression of causes for that would mean nothing was ever caused in the first place.

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3) Therefore, there must be an Uncaused Causer (God)

The Second Way - The Uncaused Causer

This argument is not simply a copy of the Unmoved Mover for it is asking the question of causal power. In order to be THE Uncaused Causer of all things, it must be inherently infinite in causal power - the thing by which all causal power is derived.

The Third Way - The Necessary Being

1) The universe contains beings that are not necessary, but merely possible.

2) With an infinite amount of time would come the necessity that no merely possible beings would exist (In an infinite amount of time, all possibilities would be realized).

3) Thus, since nothing would exist, there would always thereafter be nothing, for nothing cannot create anything.

4) But something currently exists, and thus there could not have been an infinite amount of time in the past.

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5) Therefore, there must be Necessary Being that must exist (God)

Leibniz and PSR

1) Nothing happens without sufficient reason.

2) The universe exists and thus it must have a reason for existing.

3) Thus, the reason for the universe existing must be found outside the universe.

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4) Therefore, God exists and is the reason for the universe existing.

The Cosmological Argument and Modern Science

Today, science, through the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) and the Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE), has revealed that the universe is 13.7 billion years old, and came into existence through a "fiery explosion" called the "big bang."

This conclusion was predicted by the theory of relativity and dictates that all time and space had a beginning.

The Cosmological Argument and Modern Science

1) The universe came into existence 13.7 billion years ago.

2) The universe is comprised of all existing matter, space, and time.

3) Thus, before the universe existed, nothing existed.

4) If ever there was nothing, there can never be anything.

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5) Therefore, God exists, and created all space and time, otherwise nothing would ever exist.

The Cosmological Argument and Modern Science

1) The universe is expanding

2) Thus the universe is limited in size and nature

3) For something to be limited, it must first be assumed that something unlimited is enacting the limitation

4) Thus something unlimited must exist

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5) Therefore, God exists and is the unlimited thing than enacts all limitations
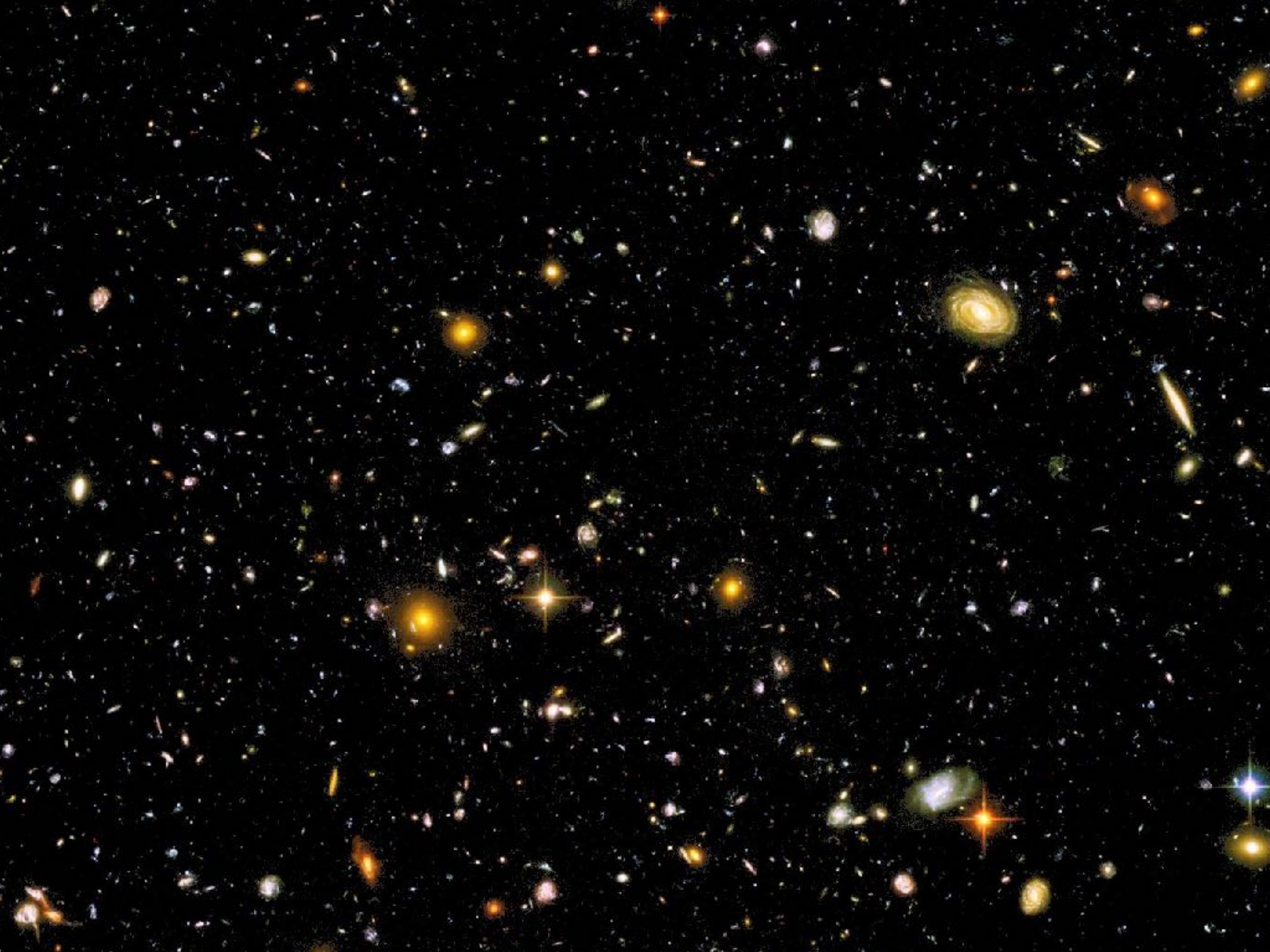
Teleological Argument

The Teleological argument is possibly the oldest and most popular of all the arguments for God's existence. It is also known as the argument from design as it infers an intelligent designer of the universe just as we infer an intelligent designer for any product in which there is evidence for purposeful adaptation of means to some end.

Teleological arguments became very popular with Plato and Aristotle, continued with Aquinas and Paley, and continues to be a forceful argument today in light of modern science.

It has been defended by nearly every apologetic theist since the dawn of humanity.

Aquinas' Fifth Way

1) Nothing in nature, lacking a consciousness, tends toward a goal unless it is under the direction of someone with consciousness and intelligence.

2) Things in nature that lack a consciousness tend toward a goal. (ex – acorns always grow into oaks, etc.)

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3) Therefore, God exists and directs things in nature toward their respective goals.

William Paley and the Watchmaker Argument

- Assume you are walking in a forest and stumble upon a working watch.

- Now, you can clearly see all the evidence of design contained within the watch that make it work.

- You next begin to wonder how it came to be that this watch was sitting where it was when you saw it.

- Is it more reasonable to believe that 1) it was always sitting there, never created, 2) it created itself, or 3) someone created and fashioned it into its current state, for some purpose?

Argument for Design

1) The universe has mathematically predictable patterns

2) Patterns are a component of design

3) Design requires a designer

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4) Therefore, the designed universe requires a designer (God)

The Modern Teleological Argument

1) Anything exhibiting design characteristics was most likely designed.

2) The universe exhibits design characteristics

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3) Therefore, the universe was most likely designed and thus, a designer (GOD) exists.

The Anthropic Principle

- The Anthropic Principle asserts that the parameters of the universe (as well as Earth) were specifically tailored to foster human life.

- The current scientific estimate of the probability for attaining the necessary parameters for life support on one of the planets in the universe is less than 1 chance in 10^{215} (one hundred billion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion).

The Anthropic Principle

The Probability for a Life Support Body

Parameter	Probability that feature will Fall in the required range for physical life
local abundance and distribution of dark matter	0.1
relative abundances of different exotic mass particles	0.1
decay rates of different exotic mass particles	0.1
galaxy cluster size	0.1
galaxy cluster location	0.1
galaxy size	0.1
galaxy type	0.1
galaxy mass distribution	0.2
galaxy location	0.1
variability of local dwarf galaxy absorption rate	0.1
quantity of galactic dust	0.1
star location relative to galactic center	0.2

star distance from corotation circle of galaxy	0.005
star distance from closest spiral arm	0.1
z-axis extremes of star's orbit	0.02
proximity of solar nebula to a type I supernova eruption	0.01
timing of solar nebula formation relative to type I supernova eruption	0.01
proximity of solar nebula to a type II supernova eruption	0.01
timing of solar nebula formation relative to type II supernova eruption	0.01
timing of hypernovae eruptions	0.2
number of hypernovae eruptions	0.1
flux of cosmic ray protons	0.1
variability of cosmic ray proton flux	0.1
number of stars in birthing cluster	0.01
star formation history in parent star vicinity	0.1
birth date of the star-planetary system	0.01
number of stars in system	0.7
number and timing of close encounters by nearby stars	0.01

proximity of close stellar encounters	0.1
masses of close stellar encounters	0.1
star age	0.4
star metallicity	0.05
ratio of 40K, 235,238U, 232Th to iron in star-planetary system	0.02
star orbital eccentricity	0.1
star mass	0.001
star luminosity change relative to speciation types & rates	0.00001
star color	0.4
star magnetic field	0.1
star magnetic field variability	0.1
stellar wind strength and variability	0.1
short period variation in parent star diameter	0.1
star's carbon to oxygen ratio	0.01
star's space velocity relative to Local Standard of Rest	0.05
star's short term luminosity variability	0.05
star's long term luminosity variability	0.05
amplitude and duration of star spot cycle	0.1

number & timing of solar system encounters with interstellar gas clouds	0.1
galactic tidal forces on planetary system	0.2
H3+ production	0.1
supernovae rates & locations	0.01
white dwarf binary types, rates, & locations	0.01
structure of comet cloud surrounding planetary system	0.3
planetary distance from star	0.001
inclination of planetary orbit	0.5
axis tilt of planet	0.3
rate of change of axial tilt	0.01
period and size of axis tilt variation	0.1
planetary rotation period	0.1
rate of change in planetary rotation period	0.05
planetary revolution period	0.2
planetary orbit eccentricity	0.3
rate of change of planetary orbital eccentricity	0.1
rate of change of planetary inclination	0.5

period and size of eccentricity variation	0.1
period and size of inclination variation	0.1
number of moons	0.2
mass and distance of moon	0.01
surface gravity (escape velocity)	0.001
tidal force from sun and moon	0.1
magnetic field	0.01
rate of change & character of change in magnetic field	0.1
albedo (planet reflectivity)	0.1
density	0.1
reducing strength of planet's primordial mantle	0.3
thickness of crust	0.01
timing of birth of continent formation	0.1
oceans-to-continents ratio	0.2
rate of change in oceans to continents ratio	0.1
global distribution of continents	0.3
frequency, timing, & extent of ice ages	0.1

frequency, timing, & extent of global snowball events	0.1
asteroidal & cometary collision rate	0.1
change in asteroidal & cometary collision rates	0.1
rate of change in asteroidal & cometary collision rates	0.1
mass of body colliding with primordial Earth	0.002
timing of body colliding with primordial Earth	0.05
location of body's collision with primordial Earth	0.05
position & mass of Jupiter relative to Earth	0.01
major planet eccentricities	0.1
major planet orbital instabilities	0.05
drift and rate of drift in major planet distances	0.05
number & distribution of planets	0.01
distance of gas giant planets from mean motion resonances	0.02
orbital separation distances among inner planets	0.01
mass of Neptune	0.1
total mass of Kuiper Belt asteroids	0.1
atmospheric transparency	0.01
atmospheric pressure	0.01
atmospheric viscosity	0.1

atmospheric electric discharge rate	0.01
atmospheric temperature gradient	0.01
carbon dioxide level in atmosphere	0.01
rate of change in carbon dioxide level in atmosphere	0.1
rate of change in water vapor level in atmosphere	0.01
rate of change in methane level in early atmosphere	0.01
oxygen quantity in atmosphere	0.01
nitrogen quantity in atmosphere	0.01
carbon monoxide quantity in atmosphere	0.1
chlorine quantity in atmosphere	0.1
cobalt quantity in crust	0.1
arsenic quantity in crust	0.1
copper quantity in crust	0.1
boron quantity in crust	0.1
flourine quantity in crust	0.1
iodine quantity in crust	0.1
manganese quantity in crust	0.1
nickel quantity in crust	0.1

phosphorus quantity in crust	0.1
tin quantity in crust	0.1
zinc quantity in crust	0.1
molybdenum quantity in crust	0.05
vanadium quantity in crust	0.1
chromium quantity in crust	0.1
selenium quantity in crust	0.1
iron quantity in oceans	0.1
tropospheric ozone quantity	0.01
stratospheric ozone quantity	0.01
mesospheric ozone quantity	0.01
water vapor level in atmosphere	0.01
oxygen to nitrogen ratio in atmosphere	0.1
quantity of greenhouse gases in atmosphere	0.01
rate of change in greenhouse gases in atmosphere	0.01
quantity of forest & grass fires	0.01
quantity of sea salt aerosols	0.1

soil mineralization	0.1
quantity of anaeorbic bacteria in the oceans	0.01
quantity of aerobic bacteria in the oceans	0.01
quantity, variety, and timing of sulfate-reducing bacteria	0.001
quantity of decomposer bacteria in soil	0.01
quantity of mycorrhizal fungi in soil	0.01
quantity of nitrifying microbes in soil	0.01
quantity & timing of vascular plant introductions	0.001
quantity, timing, & placement of carbonate-producing animals	0.00001
quantity, timing, & placement of methanogens	0.00001
quantity of soil sulfur	0.1
ratio of electrically conducting inner core radius to radius of the adjacent turbulent fluid shell	0.2
ratio of core to shell (see above) magnetic diffusivity	0.2
magnetic Reynold's number of the shell (see above)	0.2
core precession frequency for planet	0.1
rate of interior heat loss for planet	0.01

quantity of sulfur in the planet'score	0.1
quantity of silicon in the planet's core	0.1
quantity of water at subduction zones in the crust	0.01
quantity of high pressure ice in subducting crustal slabs	0.1
hydration rate of subducted minerals	0.1
tectonic activity	0.05
rate of decline in tectonic activity	0.1
volcanic activity	0.1
rate of decline in volcanic activity	0.1
continental relief	0.1
viscosity at Earth core boundaries	0.01
viscosity of lithosphere	0.2
biomass to comet infall ratio	0.01
regularity of cometary infall	0.1
number, intensity, and location of hurricanes	0.02

dependency factors estimate $\approx 10^{32}$
longevity requirements estimate $\approx 10^{13}$

Probability for occurrence of all 165 parameters $\approx 10^{204}$
Maximum possible number of planets in universe $\approx 10^{22}$

Thus, less than 1 chance in 10^{182} (hundred trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion) exists that even one such planet would occur anywhere in the universe.

The Moral Argument

The Moral argument for the existence of God argues for the existence of a Being that is the embodiment of the ultimate Good, which is the source of the objective moral values we experience in the world.

Moral arguments trace their history back to Plato, continued with Aquinas and William Sorley, and continues to be a popular argument today (C. S. Lewis's Mere Christianity).

Aquinas' Fourth Way

1) Whatever possesses a property more fully than anything else is the cause of that property in other things.

2) In the world, we find a gradation of values: some things are more good, more true, more noble, etc., than other things, which assumes a perfect standard with which to base such judgments.

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3) Therefore, a perfect standard for good, truth, etc., must exist (God).

The Moral Argument

1) No one can conceive or comprehend any notion beyond experience (ex.- I can understand the concept of a unicorn because I know what a horse, a wing, and a horn are from experience. However, if I had no eyes, I could never understand what light was since I could not experience it).

2) All humans inherently have a notion of good and evil, or right and wrong within them (not agreeing with what is good and evil, but an understanding of the very concepts)

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3) Therefore objective good and evil, or right and wrong exist and is thus determined by God.

Other Arguments

The Transcendental Argument

Augustine of Hippo

Argued that the human mind apprehends universal, objective, unchanging, and necessary truths superior to the human mind itself.

Since these truths must reside in a mind, Augustine reasoned that these eternal truths are grounded in the eternal mind of God.

The Transcendental Argument

The Transcendental Argument is often demonstrated using the Laws of Logic (Noncontradiction, Excluded Middle, etc.).

The Laws of Logic cannot be simply human convention for that would make them not laws but merely relative theories. Thus, no one form of logic would be more true than another, and true knowledge would be unattainable through reason, mathematics, and even the scientific method.

The Transcendental Argument

Thus, the Transcendental Argument presents the Atheist with a major dilemma: Demonstrate that God cannot exist without using the senses, mathematics, logic, or the scientific method, for these tools are only available to the Theist

The Transcendental Argument

1) The Law of Contradiction (LOC) is obeyed by reality and all things in it.

2) Humans cannot account for the existence of the LOC for it affected all things before humans came into existence.

3) The universe cannot account for the existence of the LOC for the universe obeys the LOC (The universe cannot both exist and not exist at the same time and in the same respect).

4) A multiverse cannot account for the LOC for it too would obey the LOC (even infinite universes would for they cannot be infinite and not infinite at the same time and in the same respect).

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5) Therefore, an omnipotent being (God) must exist in order to account for the existence of the LOC.

Reformed Epistemology

Alvin Plantinga

Credited with the formulation of "Reformed Epistemology," (though it in many ways dates back to the Reformation) an argument dealing with foundational knowledge.

Reformed Epistemology

PLANTINGA BEGINS HIS ARGUMENT BY
EXPLAINING THE NOTION OF BASICALITY:

- There are some beliefs that are properly basic, and some that are not.

- Properly basic beliefs require no evidence or other propositions in order for someone to be rational in believing them (ex. – I believe that 1+1 is 2, or that my right knee hurts right now, and I base those beliefs upon no other propositions or evidence.

Reformed Epistemology

Plantinga then declares that belief in God is a natural and properly basic belief – fully rational and not groundless.

People have a natural tendency to believe in God because that is the way they are made.

Echoes of Reality

Models For Explaining The Universe

Atheistic Model

1. World created from nothing
2. Life from nonlife
3. Persons from the impersonal
4. Minds from the mindless
5. Order from the orderless
6. Reason from the nonrational
7. Morality from the nonmoral
8. Information without a sender
9. Code from no programmer
10. Truth from an accident

Personal Theist Model

1. World created by a Creator
2. Life from Ultimate Life
3. Persons from the Superpersonal
4. Minds from the Ultimate Mind
5. Order from an Orderer
6. Reason from a Rational Being
7. Morality from a Moral, Personal Being
8. Information from a Sender
9. Code from a Personal Programmer
10. Truth from ultimate Truth