

Fort Bend Christian Academy- Honors Apologetics

Chris Henderson

Abigail Jones v. Yale University: A Modern Day Glimpse into the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument

Kendall Matthews

9 December 2016

Sugar Land, Texas

Table of Contents

A Note from the Author.....	3
Opening Story.....	4
Opening Statements.....	9
Prosecutorial Council Opening Statement.....	9
Defense Council Opening Statement.....	10
G. W. Leibniz.....	12
Direct Examination of G. W. Leibniz.....	12
Cross Examination of G. W. Leibniz.....	24
Peter van Inwagen.....	33
Direct Examination of Peter van Inwagen.....	33
Cross Examination of Peter van Inwagen.....	37
David Hume.....	49
Direct Examination of David Hume.....	49
Cross Examination of David Hume.....	52
Closing Statements.....	61
Defense Council Closing Statement.....	61
Prosecutorial Council Closing Statement.....	62
Challenge to the Reader.....	67
Bibliography.....	68

A Note from the Author

Dear Reader,

Thanks so much for picking up my paper, I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it. The purpose of this paper is not to impress you with my philosophical knowledge, or amaze you with my language; instead, it is the opposite of this. I have written this in order to make the words “Leibnizian Cosmological Argument” not sound so intimidating. When I entered Honors Apologetics, I thought I knew at least a little about theology... But after reading David Hume and Immanuel Kant, I realized that nothing in my academic career had truly prepared me for this lengthy endeavor. The extensive vocabulary and confusing rhetoric of these men made me want to abandon my thesis altogether, but I pressed on. Throughout the summer of 2016, I researched my topic, hoping I would come across a simplified version it, or a simplified version of any theological topic for that matter, but this never happened. So, rather than complaining about the complexity of the realm of theology, I have dedicated my work to simplifying a portion of this realm myself. I have done this by putting the existence of God to test in a real life situation- a trial. In my paper, I have conducted the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument (which is not as scary as it sounds) through court procedures. This simplifies the argument by giving the existence of God context, and by using lower level vocabulary, the story has become understandable so that even a philosophy novice could understand. Also, by directly questioning the creator of the argument, G.W. Leibniz, and his major opponent, David Hume, it makes the argument straight forward and easy to follow, as a real life trial procedure is. Additionally, the trial format forces the witnesses to answer every single question that an attorney would ask a witness in questioning, thus further explain the argument in depth. This definitely was no easy task, as I basically had to write an entire thesis, then boil it down to what truly mattered and what didn't, and then create a story based off of the important pieces of my case. From there, I reduced my language to everyday vocabulary, so that this story would be even more appealing. But all in all, it was worth it. Through this thesis, I hope to attract the common man to the existence of God, because philosophy really isn't that scary after all. I hope that this will spark an interest in you toward the existence of God, as it has done for me, and will at least be the beginning of your research as an inquisitive Christian. Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Kendall Matthews

P.S. I wanted to give a few “thank yous” to some people who really helped this thesis come to life. Luke Thurston, thank you for always answering my dumb question, no matter how dumb they were (and let me tell you, sometimes, they were dumb). Michael Pozzi, thank you for always believing in me and encouraging me to strive for perfection, and even when things weren't perfect, to continue on. Mom, thank you so much for always encouraging me, listening to me talk about philosophy, and truly listening to the defense of my thesis like a million times. Mr. Pogue, thank you so much for going with me to talk to Hendy for the first time and for talking to me for 2 hours on the night before my Prospectus was due. This meant SO much to me. And... Hendy (or should I say Bendy), thank you for always believing in me. It takes a special person to allow someone to write their thesis as a trial, and I am so thankful for this. You inspire me daily to become better, and to do what I love, rather than what makes the most money. Thank you for always talking to me, not only about my thesis, but about life in general. You rock. Now, let's get on to the story.

Opening Story

“Abigail Jones- a young college freshman immersed in a world of secularity. That was me. A naïve girl, overwhelmed in the collegiate world of Yale University.

As I entered my Philosophy 101 class for the first time, I encountered a rather large obstacle. At first, this obstacle was only overwhelming from a physical standpoint, but as class ensued, the obstacle proved to be even more devastating from a spiritual perspective. DING! Class begins. I chose a seat on the front row and positioned myself for emotional demolition. The towering instructor moseyed toward the chalkboard and scribbled P-r-o-f-e-s-s-o-r H-u-m-e with haste. He turned around and stated, ‘Good morning class. My name is Professor David Hume and I’m here to welcome you to your funeral. This day we will be commemorating your religious beliefs and replacing them with my own. No matter how intelligent you believe you are, you are probably wrong. The last drop date of the class is September 22nd- you may want to keep that in mind.’

As Professor Hume began to explain his far-fetched beliefs, I began to quiver. I had come from a Christian school and had never encountered someone whose beliefs were so estranged from mine. I was scared, but not scared enough to be quiet. Professor Hume began to pass out a paper which basically forced each student to sign in agreeance with him. I glanced over it, and realized that I had to object to his beliefs. I raised my hand and simply said, ‘Excuse me, Professor Hume, but I cannot sign this.’ He stopped in his tracks, craned his neck toward me, and simply inquired, ‘Excuse me?’ I further explained to him that I was a Christian, that I strongly believed in God, and that I could not simply disregard my beliefs in order to take a basic philosophy class. He walked over to me and ordered for me to, once more, sign the paper. I

reiterated once more that I could not, upon which he barked at me to leave his presence. ‘But sir!’ I pleaded. His response? A finger pointed towards the door.

As I picked up my things, I walked out of the door, completely humiliated. It was my first day of college; I had never even gone to the principal’s office in high school, and now I had been kicked out of my first class at Yale. Completely flustered, I walked to my Guidance Counselor’s office. I was informed by her secretary that she would be available in 30 minutes, so I waited. Tick tock, tick tock. I began to think, should I have just signed the paper? I mean, I still didn’t have to believe what he believed, but I did need the class credit. As I stood up to walk back to Philosophy 101 and apologize, my Guidance Counselor’s secretary alerted me that she was ready. I strolled into her office, and plumped down in the cushy ‘tell me how you are feeling’ chair. I explained the whole story to her, from beginning to end, and basically, to no avail. All she told me is that I could switch professors, but I still felt like it was wrong for Professor Hume to continue forcing students to believe whatever he believes. I mean, I didn’t want to get him fired, but I had to do something. Frantic, I walked to the Common Area and just sat down in the grass. With arms and legs flailed out on the green, I heard a group of law students passing by, discussing a future case. I sat up, peered my head toward them, and that’s when I realized- I could take Professor Hume to court. I sprung up off of the green, sprinted toward the Law School, and here I am. Is there anything that you can do for me, Ms. Matthews? I really need help.”

Wow, this story both blew me away, and at the same time, put me in between a rock and a hard place. I was a Christian as well, but very under the radar. Abigail’s story was extremely compelling, and definitely a righteous cause, but could I really prosecute the university that employs me? Oh yes, I forgot to mention: Hello, my name is Kendall Matthews and I am a Law

Professor at Yale University. I have been a professor for 8 years, and I specialize in Constitutional Law. Because Abigail was not looking to sue Professor Hume for any money, it was definitely plausible to take the case, even though it was related to the university. This case was definitely not in my area of expertise, and it was risky for my reputation, but I had to give her an answer. After thinking for about two minutes, I answered in the affirmative, under the condition that if we lost, I could not take any pressure from the legal decision. Also, if Yale University ever repudiated the case, I would have to leave it up to her to figure it out. She accepted, and work began.

This case was unlike any other I had dealt with before. First of all, there was the absence of a typical “crime” that the defendant would be denying, and because there was no incredulous crime, there were no direct witnesses. In spite of this, I set out to find skilled professors who believed the opposite of Professor Hume, rather than searching for direct witnesses to the event. Yale University’s code states that professors cannot enforce upon students any beliefs that are proven to be false. In the realm of philosophy, this is much easier said than done, but I was up to the challenge. The main argument that Abigail and I would be attacking is simply Professor Hume’s belief that a god could not be the necessary being that serves as the sufficient reason for the entirety of reality. Immediately, the name of another professor at Yale University came to mind-Professor G. W. Leibniz. Leibniz and Hume were known to have endlessly opposing beliefs, so I set out to speak with the witty professor. After Abigail and I conveyed to Professor Leibniz what was going on, he was completely on board. He let us know that he would do anything in order to have the opportunity to finally defeat Hume and his beliefs. Later that day, I received an affidavit from Professor Leibniz, and began the written casework.

The next day upon entering my office, I found a note on my desk- it was from Professor Hume. The purpose of this note was to remind me that I had not yet reached tenure, and that if I continued with this case, he would make it his personal mission to have me fired. Professor Hume had been teaching at Yale University for 26 years, and was an extremely accredited professor of the university, winning many awards on behalf of his successful department. This threat really moved the circumstances to a personal level, and the odds were not in my favor. Maybe he was right. I mean, what did I know? I was a child compared to him. So I stepped back, I reevaluated, and for the first time in a long time, I prayed. God, should I be doing this? Is this Your Will? Please give me a sign. I rested my head in my palms, as my elbows sunk into the desk. Then I heard a knock on the door, it was Professor Leibniz. Wiping a tear from my eye, I welcomed him with a, "Hello, sir! Please come in." He did as I suggested, and let me know that he not only supported me in the case, but he supported my job as well. I realized then that Professor Leibniz was also a very prestigious professor at Yale, and he was here to help. Philosophy is definitely not my realm of expertise, but Professor Leibniz was an expert. He showed me his book, *On the Origination of Things*, and pointed me to Professor Hume's works. Leibniz guided me through both Hume's arguments, and his own arguments, which sent me sailing. I worked day and night for four months until January 22, 2016- the date of the trial. As I awoke on that winter's morning, I was ready. The opening statement was perfected, the direct and cross examinations were precise, and the closing argument was powerful- it was time.

I entered the court room with Abigail by my side. She had kept her promises through and through, and had worked by my side each day. Suddenly, Professor Hume entered the courtroom with... one of my own colleagues representing him. I should have seen this coming. However, this colleague was not just a colleague; he was the Dean of the Law School, and more

importantly, he was my boss. I closed my eyes and prayed again; was there a reason to fear? As I attempted to focus on my papers and opening statement, I heard a voice call my name. When I looked up to see who was calling, it was Professor Leibniz, but he was not alone. As I began to look around, I realized that the entire courtroom was filled with college students, led by Leibniz, who were there to support Abigail's case. Professor Leibniz wore the biggest smile on his face and gave me a thumbs up. As I stood up for the Judge's entrance, I realized that I was not alone, and there was no reason to fear. Suddenly, the Judge slammed her gavel on the table, and the case ensued.

Opening Statements

Prosecutorial Opening Statement

Judge: *Abigail Jones v. Yale University* has begun. Prosecutorial Council, your opening statement please.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Good morning jury, Your Honor, Defense Council.

Something, rather than nothing... Something... rather than nothing. Last fall, a young college freshman girl came into my office, flustered about what had just happened to her. After many tears and explanations, I was informed that earlier that day, she had been faced with the decision to either sign her religious beliefs away and agree with something completely contradictory to her character, or fight against the tyrant imposing this grief upon her. And ladies and gentlemen let me tell you, she chose to fight. This girl that I speak about is my client, Abigail Jones, and the tyrant, is Professor David Hume of the defense. But rather than attacking Professor Hume's character, the Prosecutorial Council has decided to go against his belief system, which we believe to be false. Professor Hume and his council believe that an omnipotent, necessary being is not the sole explanation of reality, but my council and I disagree. And that is why we are here today- to prove to you that an omnipotent necessary being IS the sole sufficient reason for the entirety of reality. Of course, because we represent the Prosecutorial Council, we have the burden of proof. This burden means that if the defense can find any flaw in our witness' testimony, or any errors throughout our argument, then we will no longer be victorious. However, we have fully accepted this burden because there are simply no holes. The argument is solid, because it is true. The defense claims that we cannot know anything about the explanation to the universe, simply because we do not have supernatural experiences, or so they claim. The defense even goes on to say that even if we could postulate something regarding the existence of

the universe, that we could just say that universe doesn't have a sufficient reason because it simply popped into existence, or it exists "just because." However, the Prosecutorial Council will not stand for this. But why must there be something to serve as the sufficient reason of the universe, rather than nothing? You will find out today through our witness and Yale University's own, Professor G. W. Leibniz. He will explain his reasoning against Professor Hume through the Principle of Sufficient Reason. Throughout today's trial, we will prove to you that that the entirety of reality is best explained and grounded in a necessary being. This "something", rather than nothing, is at the very core of the Christian belief system. It is what my client, Ms. Abigail Jones, believes to be true, and it is what we intend to prove as truth to you today. Thank you.

Defense Opening Statement

Judge: Thank you, Prosecutorial Council. Defense Council, your opening statement please.

Defense Council Attorney: Absolutely, Your Honor. Nothing... rather than something. Who says that there must be an omnipotent, necessary "something" as the sufficient reason for the universe? Neither Professor Hume believes this, nor does Professor van Inwagen, who are both esteemed collegiate professors of Yale University.

Professor Hume is a world renowned professor and has been a treasured member of Yale University's Philosophy Department for 26 years. He has inspired students who have then gone onto be successful lawyers, theologians, and philosophers. But never has he run into a student as disrespectful as Ms. Abigail Jones. She waltzed into his esteemed classroom, and disrespected her elder on the very first day of class! Now I don't know about you, but I don't know anyone in their right mind who would do this as a freshman. If Ms. Jones would pull a trick like this, then who knows what crazy beliefs she would have! But, I guess that question has been answered today through her alliance with the foolish, Professor Leibniz.

As the Defense Council, the burden of proof is not on us; instead, it is on the Prosecutorial Council. All we have to do is find one flaw in Professor Leibniz's argument, and we win the case. This is not a difficult task at all, so this hearing should be short and sweet. As mere humans, we cannot simply create ideas regarding supernatural beings for which we have never experienced. Also, we cannot simply assume that there is a sufficient reason for the universe without a fortified basis, for which there is none. Today, you will hear from Professor van Inwagen, who will completely disprove the validity of the Principle of Sufficient Reason through his postulation of possible worlds. Additionally, you will hear from Professor Hume, who will expand upon the idea that we cannot know anything about that of which we have not experienced. Basically, if humans haven't sensed it with one of the five senses, then humans can't know anything about it. Something rather than nothing? It's absurd, and throughout the entirety of the trial, I believe that you too will find how absurd the Prosecutorial Council's argument truly is. Thank you.

G. W. Leibniz

Direct Examination of Professor Leibniz

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Please state your full name and spell your last name.

Professor Leibniz: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, L-E-I-B-N-I-Z.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. Now, is there anything you would like to establish prior to questioning?

Professor Leibniz: Before I begin, I must first declare two of the main laws by which I can base my argument. The first is the law of contradiction, and the second is the Principle of Sufficient Reason. The law of contradiction basically states that that of which we judge to be false, involves contradiction, and that which is true, is contradictory to the false.¹ If humans are to logically reason, the law of contradiction cannot be denied simply because it is necessary in order to separate the difference between truth and falsity. The second law, the Principle of Sufficient Reason, states that no fact can be real or existent, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason why it is so and not otherwise, although sometimes these reasons cannot be known to us.² Basically, I am using reason interchangeably with the word explanation, so the Principle of Sufficient Reason also could mean that nothing happens without an explanation.³

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: First, please expand on the law of contradiction.

Professor Leibniz: Of course. The importance of the law of contradiction is undeniable, and without it, we cannot reason. Without the law of contradiction, there would be no difference

¹ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

² Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

³ Leibniz originally stated that the word “reason” was used interchangeably with the word “cause”; however, whenever he faced the Infinite Regress problem, he changed his definition of reason to “explanation.”

between truth and falsehood, and therefore a simple "yes" or "no" would simply be out of indifference, rather than out of fact-based knowledge. Basically, if there is a balance, and equal weights are hung on either side of the balance, it is a true statement to say that the entire balance system is stagnant at an equal resting point in between the two equal weights. Because this statement is proven to be true, saying that the balance is *not* equally at rest is contradictory to the truth, thus proving it as false.⁴ However, because the law of contradiction cannot be explained by any other contingent truth, it exists as a first principle, because it is simply at the basis of truth.⁵ The example with the balance is proven true through the law of contradiction, but it can also be proven as true through my second basic principle, the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. That makes more sense. Now can you please better explain the Principle of Sufficient Reason?

Professor Leibniz: Yes, of course. Actually, the first time this principle was employed was by my good friend, Benedict De Spinoza.⁶ However, I was the first to give this principle proper expression in terms of the Cosmological Argument. Over the years, this principle has been defined by myself in many different ways, but ultimately meaning the same thing: Nothing happens without a sufficient reason. Also, just to remind you, whenever I say reason, I mean it to be synonymous with explanation. So basically, when I say that every contingent event or thing has a necessary and sufficient reason, I mean that every event or thing has a necessary and sufficient explanation.⁷ Like I was saying earlier, if there is a balance with equal weights on each side, the balanced system will be at rest, and the sufficient reason for this is that the weights

⁴ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

on either side of the balance are equal. However, if the balance begins to lean more to one side, then there must be an explanation, or sufficient reason, for the shift in the balance.⁸ The type of cause that would explain why the balance is shifting is called an efficient cause, because this type of cause initiates a change. For the balance, the efficient cause could be that the weights were changed to unequal sizes, thus shifting the equilibrium of the balance. An efficient cause, also called a prior cause, is a particular type of “sufficient reason” that can satisfy the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok. Are efficient causes the only type of “sufficient reason” available?

Professor Leibniz: Actually no, efficient causes are not the only types of causes that can satisfy the Principle of Sufficient Reason. While something can be explained by an efficient cause, it can also be explained by the final cause, which is usually referred to as the “purpose” of something.⁹ The question “Why?” can be easily answered through not only the efficient causes, but also the final causes. For example, if you ask, “Why is the kettle boiling?” I could answer by using the efficient cause, and say that the heat from the fire of the stove is causing the molecules of water to vibrate faster and faster until they escape in the form of steam, making the water boil. Or, I could answer with the final cause, and say that I was thirsty, and so my wife is making me tea. Both types of causes answer the “why” question, just in different ways. In the same way, an efficient cause or a final cause could serve as the sufficient reason to any type of existence.¹⁰

⁸ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok great, but how do the different types of sufficient reasons pertain to your overall argument?

Professor Leibniz: So, now that I have told you how the Principle of Sufficient reason works and what a sufficient reason is, I will tell you how I use these sufficient reasons to explain the existence of reality. Basically, I will tell you how I answer why there is something rather than nothing- and I will do this by using both definitions of “reason.” In order to completely explain something, one must explain the efficient causes, and the final causes, but still there is a gaping hole. The rational basis is the sand that completely fills this hole and is what will convince you.¹¹ But, this will all come later in my argument.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, now are there any other justifications to the Principle of Sufficient Reason?

Professor Leibniz: Well, of course there are. But the final one that I will present today is that the Principle of Sufficient Reason can be proved both a priori and a posteriori, which are the most concrete types of truth justification. A priori means relating to, or denoting, reasoning or knowledge that proceeds from theoretical deduction, rather than from observation or experience.¹² Contrastingly, a posteriori is a type of reasoning that is based on reasoning from known facts or past events, rather than assumptions or predictions.¹³

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: What does this mean?

Professor Leibniz: Ok, I will start with a priori. First, let’s begin with an understanding of what a priori truly is. A priori is a type of knowledge that is independent of all experiences, and is not

¹¹ Refer to Appendix on Rational Basis as a Sufficient Reason.

¹² "Leibniz's Fifth Papers." Gottfried W. Leibniz to Samuel Clarke. August 18, 1716.

¹³ Ibid.

based on observations or experiences at all. So, an a priori type of knowledge could be something like “all bachelors are unmarried.” This fact is not based on any observations, but it is still true based on the definition of a bachelor. In regards to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, a priori would be knowledge that satisfies the definition of this principle, just as it satisfies the definition of a bachelor. Basically, the definition of the Principle of Sufficient Reason states that no fact can be real or existent, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason why it is so and not otherwise, although most often these reasons cannot be known to us.¹⁴ So, because a priori justification is based off of the definition of something, then the priori justification says that the nature of things requires the Principle of Sufficient Reason and that the Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot be consistently denied, according to the definition of the Principle of Sufficient Reason.¹⁵

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: What do you mean when you say “nature of things”?

Professor Leibniz: When I say this, I basically mean that “the nature of things” and “reality in itself” are synonymous. Now, obviously you are probably wondering: What about the law of contradiction? Does it have a sufficient reason? The law of contradiction does not have contingent sufficient reason because it is a primitive truth, and therefore is not dependent on experience. But, it is only primitive truths that cannot be explained by contingent truths; all other truths are demonstrable by contingent truths, therefore they fall into the category of “the nature of things.”¹⁶ Because of this, all other truths can be explained by the Principle of Sufficient Reason from an Earthly basis. It is certain, therefore, that all truths, even highly contingent ones,

¹⁴ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Leibniz, Gottfried W. *New Essays*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991.

have a priori proofs as to why they are, rather than are not.¹⁷ Primitive truths are not exceptions to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, but the sufficient reason of primitive truths must be something necessary, rather than something contingent (but I will get to that eventually).

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok. Now, what is the a priori idea that the Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot be consistently denied?

Professor Leibniz: Of course. Basically, just like the law of contradiction, the Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot be denied. The law of contradiction obviously can't be denied or ignored when one is being rational. If it could be, then once again there would be no difference between truth and falsehood. One must assume the law of contradiction if one is to reason. One time, I was writing to Samuel Clarke and explained to him that basically if someone denies the Principle of Sufficient Reason, they must accept absurdity.¹⁸ The very denial of the Principle of Sufficient Reason assumes the principle itself. It's absurd to deny it!

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: What if you are wrong? Why does the denial of the Principle of Sufficient Reason assume the principle itself?

Professor Leibniz: Hm. Well, if I am wrong, then there better be a sufficient reason for why I am wrong, and if I am right, there is a sufficient reason for why I am right. Either way, the Principle of Sufficient Reason must exist, because there is a sufficient reason either way.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: I see. Now will you explain the whole "a posteriori justification" idea?

¹⁷ This sentence and the previous sentence are part of a direct quote from Leibniz's, *On the General Characteristic*.

¹⁸ Leibniz, Gottfried W. *New Essays*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991. More of the argument of the a priori justifications can be found in the letters between Clarke and Leibniz, but for the purpose of this paper, I have decided to just get straight to the point.

Professor Leibniz: Of course. First, let's remind everyone what a posteriori justification is. This type of justification proves something as true as based on past observations or experiences. So, in this type of justification, we see that an exception to the Principle of Sufficient Reason has never been found. We know this because based on past experiences and observations, there has never been a scenario in which the Principle of the Sufficient Reason was proven as incorrect.¹⁹ Each day, humans continue to prove the principle's validity in their lives. This idea can break down into two points. First, humans cannot logically survive without the Principle of Sufficient Reason. If we deny its truth, then the human race becomes delusional, as I have already proved before.²⁰ The principle is necessary for life and for reasoning, therefore humans need it. Second, the truth of the Principle of Sufficient Reason has never been proven false. Anything that had never been proven as false would be the strongest type of a posteriori justification possible. Because the Principle of Sufficient Reason has never been proven as incorrect, then the Principle of Sufficient Reason is in the category of the strongest type of a posteriori justification.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great, now why did you just tell me this?

Professor Leibniz: Because the Principle of Sufficient Reason maximally satisfies a priori and a posteriori justification through the efficient and final causes that serve as sufficient reasons. Because of this, the Principle of Sufficient Reason is sound. It has never been proven wrong, and it is continuously proven more and more valid each day. The Principle of Sufficient Reason, coupled with the law of contradiction, allows for the strength and truth of my argument.

¹⁹ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

²⁰ The human race would become delusional because there would be no explanations, or sufficient reasons, for anything.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. Now that we have this basis, how do you begin this argument that you speak of?

Professor Leibniz: First I establish that something exists. Something must exist.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok. Why do you say this?

Professor Leibniz: I say this because, in our current state, it's impossible for nothing to exist. I mean, for you to even be questioning me here in this courtroom today demands that you must exist, and for me to be answering the questions right now demands for me to exist. Our existence is not a deduction, but an undeniable truth. The phrase "I exist" is a primitive truth, sharing a likeness to the foundational law of contradiction. Both of these are primitive truths because they are not explained by other contingent truths, but instead by necessary truths, thus proving the idea of individual existence as a primitive truth.²¹

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: How do you use the Principle of Sufficient Reason and the law of contradiction to back this argument up?

Professor Leibniz: In the default state, nothing exists. Therefore, when nothing is present, no explanation is needed. However, since something rather than nothing exists as we already established, there is a certain urge for a rational explanation for this existence, as stated in the Principle of Sufficient Reason.²² In addition to just sole existence, everything that exists, exists in a certain form. For example, a giraffe exists in a certain form, and a dolphin exists in a different certain form. There is no general existence, because everything that exists, exists in a unique way. Even two giraffes exist in different forms from one another, though they are in the

²¹ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

²² Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

same species of animal. So, because something exists, and the existence of something is not the default state, then there must be a sufficient reason for the existence of that something. I now will remind you that the Principle of Sufficient Reason states that no fact can be real or existent, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason why it is so, and not otherwise.²³

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So you are saying that something exists. Where does this reason for “something” come from?

Professor Leibniz: Obviously, something cannot serve as an explanation for itself. For example, say a book on the elements of geometry has always existed, and each year, a new version is created in order to enhance the geometry concepts. We can explain the present edition of the geometry book as it is because we can trace all the way back to the original copy, and view the progression from the original book to the present book. However, this is never going to give us an explanation as to *why* the original geometry book was created in the first place.²⁴ No matter how many versions we go back, there are unanswered questions such as: Why were these books written in the first place? Or, why were the geometry books written the way they were? Even the original geometry book cannot answer these questions because the explanation to the existence of the geometry book cannot be found in the geometry book itself, but rather in something outside of the geometry book. This idea of the geometry book can also apply to the world. The states of the world can be explained through previous states of the world. For example, if someone asked, “Why has the Grand Canyon gotten progressively wider over time?” It would be easy to answer that this has occurred due to erosion. However, these progressive states of the Grand Canyon cannot explain the existence of the Grand Canyon as a whole. Though erosion

²³ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

²⁴ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

does explain why the Grand Canyon's size is changing, we will never find in this state of the world why the Grand Canyon exists in the first place, or why it exists in the specific form that it does. The states of the Grand Canyon cannot explain the existence of the Grand Canyon. Instead, only something outside of the world, and greater than the world, could explain the succession of states inside of the world.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And how can you relate this to the universe, or the entirety of reality?

Professor Leibniz: You have a universe, the universe has supposedly always been here in an infinite amount of successive states, but that doesn't explain *why* it is here. The successive states of the universe explain the other successive states that occur in the universe, but they do not explain the reasoning for existence of the universe itself. The universe cannot account for its own explanation, it cannot be its own sufficient reason.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So what does this mean?

Professor Leibniz: Basically, because the universe exists, as we already established, then there must be a sufficient reason for the universe itself. This sufficient reason cannot be inside of the universe, therefore, this sufficient reason must be found outside of the universe.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then, if the sufficient reason for the universe is outside of the universe, what is the sufficient reason for the universe?

Professor Leibniz: Beyond the world, that is, beyond the collection of finite things, there is some "One Being" who rules. For the One Being not only rules the universe, but this being also

created the universe, and therefore serves as the sufficient reason for the universe.²⁵ This being is above the entirety of reality, outside of the entirety of reality, and therefore this being is can serve as the sufficient reason *for* the entirety of reality. As I stated earlier, we cannot find in any of the individual states of reality a sufficient reason for why these states of reality exist.²⁶ Therefore, this being that I speak of must be outside of the world, and have power over the world. This being I speak of must be an omnipotent necessary being, which would be a god, because a god is a necessary and omnipotent being.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Why must this being be necessary?

Professor Leibniz: So in broad terms, if something is contingent, then that something's non-existence is a possibility. Contrastingly, if something is necessary, then that something's non-existence is an impossibility. So because there is a possibility that the universe could not exist, this makes the universe contingent. Because of this, the sufficient reason for the universe must be necessary in order for the contingent universe to be grounded in necessity. Also, to speak of the universe as contingent, is to speak of necessity; you cannot have necessity without contingency, because contingency relies on necessity. Additionally, you cannot have solely necessity inside of the universe because, not everything must be present in the world for the universe to function properly.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, I see. Well, why must this being be omnipotent?

Professor Leibniz: Just so we are clear, if a being is omnipotent, it means that this being has unlimited power.²⁷ Other ways to define omnipotence would be terms such as "all-powerful" or

²⁵ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.

“preeminent,” the list goes on and on. So, we already established that this being that serves as the sufficient reason for the universe must be outside of the universe, in order to serve as the sufficient reason for the universe. We established this because something in the universe could not explain the universe itself. Therefore, this being must be of a greater level than the universe itself, and therefore have dominion over that said universe, which means that the being must be omnipotent.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, how do you know anything else about this being?

Professor Leibniz: I do not necessarily have to know anything more about this being for the purpose of this trial.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Why don't you need to know anything else about this being?

Professor Leibniz: I do not need to know anything more about this being because that is not what I'm proving today. I am not asking “Why THIS specific necessary being?” I am simply asking, “Why A necessary being at all?” In this way, I do not need to explain further characteristics of the necessary being. I am simply proving that an omnipotent, necessary being is the sole cause and sufficient reason for the universe. Necessity and omnipotence are the only factors that must be present in order for this to be true, and so I do not have to explain anything else about this being outside of these characteristics.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, and how does all of this relate back to the Principle of Sufficient Reason?

Professor Leibniz: The being who created the universe must be omnipotent, because the being must be greater the universe and outside of the universe, thus having dominion over the universe.

Also, the being that serves as the sufficient reason for the universe, as explained earlier, must be necessary because we have a contingent universe that therefore calls for a necessary explanation. Basically, only an omnipotent being could have established the Principle of Sufficient Reason in the first place, because the Principle of Sufficient Reason must be grounded in a necessary being.²⁸ The Principle of Sufficient Reason is a primitive truth, meaning that it could only be explained by something necessary. The god that serves as this necessary being, is the ultimate reason, or cause, for everything in the universe, including the Principle of Sufficient Reason. The Principle of Sufficient Reason is absolute, and is the explanation for all things. The Principle of Sufficient Reason can only be this way because it is grounded in an omnipotent being that is greater than this universe, and outside of this universe. And, because the Principle of Sufficient Reason is grounded in omnipotence, it is able to serve as the explanation for all things of the entirety of reality, just as this necessary omnipotent being does.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you for your time, Professor Leibniz. No further questions.

Cross Examination of G.W. Leibniz

Judge: Thank you prosecutorial council. Defense Council, whenever you are ready.

As the defense attorney stands up, I can see the fear in the eyes of my witness, and he could probably see the fear in my eyes as well. I mean, this man wasn't only a defense attorney, but he was my boss. I couldn't decide if it would be better to defeat my boss' client in trial, or not. Probably for the sake of my job, not. Though Professor Leibniz is correct in everything he

²⁸ This principle must be grounded in a necessary being because then otherwise the principle would not be applicable to all cases, and it must be grounded in an omnipotent being in order for the power of the Principle of Sufficient Reason to rule the universe.

says, cross examinations can be tricky because you never know what the defense is going to ask you. My job here is to make sure we stay on topic, and object to anything obscure that may throw Professor Leibniz off track.

Defense Attorney: Good morning. I would like to ask you some questions regarding your statements during direct examination.

Professor Leibniz: Go right ahead.

Defense Attorney: In your direct examination, you said that “something exists.” So my question to you is, what if nothing exists?

Professor Leibniz: It’s not possible for nothing to exist. I mean, for you to even question me regarding existence or nonexistence, and for me to be answering the question right now is to exist. As I said earlier, the phrase “I exist” is a primitive truth, meaning that it is not explained by other contingent truths, but instead, by a necessary truth.²⁹

Defense Attorney: Ok so fine, maybe we all do exist, but in an imaginary world. What if we are all just living in an imaginary world?

Professor Leibniz: Even if you argued that we were a figment of an imagination, the imagination would still exist and something that actually does exist would have had to have this imagination, therefore either way, something exists.

Defense Attorney: Ok, but you yourself said that everything must have a sufficient reason, correct?

²⁹ Obviously this necessary truth is a necessary, omnipotent being; however, for the purpose of this paper I didn’t want to jump to conclusions quite yet.

Professor Leibniz: Yes, I did.

Defense Attorney: So why doesn't the phrase "I exist" have a sufficient reason? Because if your existence doesn't have an explanation, then doesn't all of human existence not have a sufficient reason, thus proving the Principle of Sufficient Reason as incorrect?

Professor Leibniz: I'm glad you asked because you misunderstood what I was saying. Actually, I said that human existence doesn't have a contingent sufficient reason. The mere phrase "I exist" must be grounded in necessity, and thus a necessary being must serve the sufficient reason for the phrase "I exist", and existence as a whole. Just because human existence isn't explained by a contingent explanation, doesn't mean that human existence doesn't have a sufficient reason.

Defense Attorney: Ok, I see. Well, you base all of your reasoning off of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, correct?

Professor Leibniz: Yes.

Defense Attorney: And assuming that the Principle of Sufficient Reason is correct, you yourself said that though everything has a reason, but the reason cannot necessarily be known to us, correct?

Professor Leibniz: Yes, we are humans and are not omniscient or omnipotent, of course.

Defense Attorney: So, how can you say that a god is the necessary being behind the universe? Because really this reason behind the universe cannot be known to us, as you said.

Professor Leibniz: Unfortunately, I'm going to have to completely disagree with you on that, because actually that is not what I said. Through the Principle of Sufficient Reason, everything has an explanation, to which we have already agreed upon. The Principle of Sufficient Reason

itself does not prove a god as the reasoning behind the universe; however, it does prove that the universe demands a sufficient reason for its existence. You, and the Jury, could find through my direct examination that it is a god who is this sufficient reason. And though humans aren't all knowing, there is still a reason for everything, even the things for which we do not know the reason, but in this series of things for we do not know a reason, the entirety of reality is not included. Additionally, I never said that the universe was something that had an explanation that was unknown to us. The omnipotent necessary being is the only one who can know all sufficient reasons.³⁰ Though we don't know the sufficient reason for everything, that doesn't mean that there isn't a sufficient reason for everything.

Defense Attorney: Alright. Well, on another topic. If all we have ever experienced is something, then why wouldn't nothing be the default state? Wouldn't something be the default state?

Professor Leibniz: Something must always be in a particular form, there is no such thing as a generic "something." Everything has a specific form, but this specific form is different for everything. For example, both a dolphin and a giraffe have a specific form in which they exist, but these two specific forms are different from each other. Therefore, the form that is specific to each thing requires an explanation for the way it is, and why it is not.³¹ When referring to the universe, it exists in a certain state, and that certain state must be explained. The universe didn't come into existence from absolutely nothing, and it exists in a certain form, and this form must be explained through a sufficient reason. Therefore, nothing must be the default state because in nothing, there is no specific form, so there is nothing that must be explained. However, in something, there is a specific form, and that specific form must be explained.

³⁰ Refer to Michael Pozzi's thesis on "Omniscience."

³¹ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

Defense Attorney: Fair enough. Ok, now I've got one for you. What if there was no original cause, and there has been an infinite regress since the beginning of time?

Professor Leibniz: Even when you ask this question, there is fault because you are assuming that there is a beginning of time, but I will answer it anyway. So, for everyone here, an infinite regress is a succession of causes with no absolute beginning or end.³² So basically, A caused B and B caused C, but something also caused A, and C will also cause something; the chain of causation never ends. However, it does end through my argument. I have avoided the problem of infinite regression by reinterpreting the endless series, not of events, but of explanations. Even if the universe had always existed, there was nothing within the universe to explain why it exists, and because everything has a sufficient reason, there must be something outside of the universe and outside of these successive states to serve as an explanation, or sufficient reason, for the universe and the successive states. The causes could last forever, but there must be an explanation to them, therefore my argument still stands. The universe still demands a sufficient reason that is outside of the universe.

Defense Attorney: Ok, well... what if the world is eternal? Then there wouldn't need to be a sole reason, because the universe has always existed. Correct?

Professor Leibniz: It actually is plausible to imagine the world as eternal, for the sake of argument. However, because as humans we can only observe a succession of states, and as stated before, these states do not explain the reason for the world, then the idea of an "eternal universe" is not a sufficient reason for the cause of the universe either.³³ So if we assume the world to be eternal, then we assume there to be no primary cause to the universe, but even if there is no

³² Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

³³ *Ibid.*

“primary cause,” there still must be a sufficient reason for the existence of all of the causes that do exist. Like I said before, I interpreted the “endless series,” which would make up the eternal world, into a series of explanations that require sufficient reasons. So, even if the world is eternal and causation is endless, there must be something outside of the world to explain, or serve as a sufficient reason, to this eternal universe.

Defense Attorney: Ok. So what if all of the causes in the world were necessary causes, and contingency didn't exist? Because actually, isn't everything that occurs, necessary?

Professor Leibniz: First of all, to even speak of necessity, you imply contingency. Second of all, all instances are not necessary. A necessary truth represents a true statement whose negation must imply a contradiction in reality, such that the negation would be impossible.³⁴ So for example, if “one plus one equals two” is a necessary truth, then its opposite, “one plus one does not equal two” would be impossible, because it contradicts a necessary truth. If a person understands the meanings of “one” and “two” in terms of unit value, that person can immediately see that the addition of “one plus one” must always equal two. It's impossible that one added to one should ever equal anything besides two. Therefore, “one plus one equals two” is a necessary truth because its negation is impossible.³⁵ On the other hand, a contingent truth represents a true statement whose negation does not imply a contradiction in reality, such that the negation could have been the case.³⁶ For example, if the statement, “Michael ate McDonalds last Wednesday” is a contingent truth, then its negation could have been true, without implying a contradiction in reality. Because Michael could have chosen not to eat McDonalds last Wednesday, or he could

³⁴ "The Meaning of “Necessary” Versus “Contingent” Truth." Objectivism for Intellectuals. May 21, 2015. Accessed September 23, 2016. <https://objectivismforintellectuals.wordpress.com/2015/05/21/the-meaning-of-necessary-versus-contingent-truth/>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

have eaten McDonalds on a different day, we know this truth is contingent, because its negation could have been true.

Defense Attorney: Ok, so there is a difference between contingency and necessity. But isn't the universe necessary for us to live, and not contingent?

Professor Leibniz: In terms of a human, yes the universe is necessary for life, however when referring to an actual necessary being, the universe is contingent. God doesn't need us here, we are just here because He created us and wants us to be here to serve Him. We never had to exist, only He had to exist. He is necessary, because He created us and we need him in order to survive, but He doesn't need us in order to survive. In this way, the universe is contingent because is completely contingent to God, the necessary being.³⁷

Defense Attorney: Ok, well why does something outside of the universe have to be the cause of the universe?

Professor Leibniz: As I stated before, something outside of the universe must be the cause for the universe. Again, I will refer back to the geometry book example. For example, say a book on the elements of geometry has always existed, and one copy is always made from another. We can explain the present book from the book it was copied from, but this is never going to give us a complete explanation as to *why* the original geometry book exists.³⁸ No matter how many books we go back, there are questions still in our minds: Why were these books written in the first place? Why were they written the way they were? Even the original geometry book cannot answer these questions because something cannot be explained by itself. This idea of the geometry book is also true about the world. The states of the world can be explained through

³⁷ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

³⁸ Ibid.

previous states. For example, the Grand Canyon has gotten progressively wider over time due to erosion. However, these states of the Grand Canyon cannot explain the existence of the Grand Canyon as a whole. Though erosion does explain why the Grand Canyon's size is changing, we will never find in this state of the world why there is a Grand Canyon at all, and why it exists in the specific form that it does.

Defense Attorney: Ok, so what? This isn't supposed to be a history lesson.

Professor Leibniz: You're absolutely right, this is not a history lesson. This is MY answer to YOUR question. So, you have a universe, the universe has supposedly always been here in an infinite amount of successive states, but that doesn't explain *why* it is here. The successive states of the universe explain the successive states of the universe, but they do not explain the existence of the universe. The universe cannot account for its own explanation, so the universe cannot be the sufficient reason for itself. Therefore, because there is a sufficient reason for everything that exists, and the universe exists, then there must be a sufficient reason for the existence of the universe. Also because the explanation of something cannot be found in that specific something, the sufficient reason for that something must be found outside of that something. In the same way, the sufficient reason for the universe cannot be found in the universe itself, therefore the sufficient reason for the universe must be found outside of the universe. If this sufficient reason is outside of the universe and has power over the universe, then this sufficient reason is omnipotent. Additionally, because the universe is contingent, it needs a necessary basis. Therefore, the sufficient reason for the universe must be an omnipotent necessary being, which is a god.

Defense Attorney: Well... What if... I don't know... I guess... No further questions.

Judge: Thank you, Professor Leibniz, you may be seated. The Court will now take a recess, and when we resume, Professor van Inwagen will be up for questioning.

As I mouthed “We did it!!!” to Professor Leibniz, a small smile travelled across his face. The defense could not crack him on anything, not even one thing. I squeezed Abigail’s hand and whispered to her, “I’m so proud of him. He did his part, and now it’s my turn to do my part.” She nodded in agreement and responded, “All you have to do is prove Professor Hume and Professor van Inwagen as incorrect, and then close us out. We are halfway there.” She was right. That’s “all” I had to do, but I was ready. After about 10 minutes of prayer, both councils rose in anticipation of the Judge. After she was seated, the case resumed.

Peter van Inwagen

Direct Examination of Peter van Inwagen

Defense Attorney: Please state your full name and spell your last name.

Professor van Inwagen: Peter van Inwagen, I-N-W-A-G-E-N

Defense Attorney: Please tell me about your beliefs regarding the Principle of Sufficient Reason in respect to the Cosmological Argument.

Professor van Inwagen: So, I will start today with the notion of contingent things. So basically, everything that we see came into existence at some time and wouldn't have come into existence if things prior to that specific thing hadn't existed in the way they did. Ok, this sounds confusing but think about it this way: If my parents had never met each other, I wouldn't necessarily exist in the form that I do. The prior events to my existence were important for my actual existence.³⁹

Defense Attorney: Ok, continue please.

Professor van Inwagen: Alright, now consider the question: Why are there contingent things at all? I mean, what explains the existence of contingent things? Well, I believe that maybe nothing explains the existence of contingent things. But let's suppose we accepted the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and so therefore there must be something to explain all contingent things.

Defense Attorney: Ok, how does this impact your argument?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, the Principle of Sufficient Reason states that everything has some sort of explanation, or sufficient reason. If we accept this principle, then we can't say anything exists "just because." Another principle that would seem very likely to accept is the

³⁹ van Inwagen, Peter. "Final Causes." Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Youtube. December 29, 2009. Accessed October 21, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDQ1cEurrKI>.

idea that you can't explain a certain class of things within that certain class of things. Basically, you can't explain a certain class of things without appealing to something outside of those things. You can't explain the existence of fish without the appeal to the non-existence of fish. Now let's take it to another level: contingent beings. If a contingent being has an explanation, then this explanation would have to fall outside of all contingent beings.⁴⁰

Defense Attorney: Why do you say this?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, if you accept both the Principle of the Sufficient Reason and the idea that the explanation of something cannot be found in that specific something, then you find that there must exist a necessary being to serve as the sufficient reason for the contingent being.

Defense Attorney: What is a necessary being to you?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, a necessary being is simply just a being that is not contingent.⁴¹

Defense Attorney: Well, what kind of necessary being would this have to be?

Professor van Inwagen: In order to serve as the sufficient reason for contingency, this necessary being would have to be a necessary being that can explain things. Because of this, the necessary being can't be something like a number, or some abstract article. Instead, the necessary being that I am referring to must have the power to cause things to exist. So therefore, we come to the conclusion that there is a necessary existing being that has the power to cause contingent things to exist.⁴²

⁴⁰ Van Inwagen, Peter. "Final Causes." Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Youtube. December 29, 2009. Accessed October 21, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDQ1cEurrKI>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Van Inwagen, Peter. "Final Causes." Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Youtube. December 29, 2009. Accessed October 21, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDQ1cEurrKI>.

Defense Attorney: And, would that necessarily existing being be what you would call a god?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, I would say so, but actually I haven't proved that this being is omnipotent, or omniscient or anything like that. Though I do believe in a god, I reject the Leibnizian Cosmological argument because all it proves is that there is a necessary being that causes contingent things to occur, rather than proving this being's omnipotence.⁴³

Defense Attorney: Why do you object to the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument?

Professor van Inwagen: Because I believe that first of all, this argument doesn't prove anything about the god who would serve as the necessary being. Additionally, it doesn't prove the Principle of Sufficient Reason as valid, and actually allows for the Principle of Sufficient Reason to be refuted.⁴⁴

Defense Attorney: Well, how do you refute the Principle of Sufficient Reason?

Professor van Inwagen: There are some propositions, and some propositions are true in some worlds and false in other worlds.

Defense Attorney: Ok, so how does this relate?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, let's say that there are possible worlds. And in doing this, let's suppose there are four possible worlds, but only one of these possible worlds is the actual world. Arbitrarily, let's define Possible World Two as the actual world. If the Principle of Sufficient

⁴³ Van Inwagen, Peter. "Final Causes." Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Youtube. December 29, 2009. Accessed October 21, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDQ1cEurrKI>.

⁴⁴ Van Inwagen, Peter. *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.

Reason is correct, there is a sufficient reason for the fact that Possible World Two is the actual world. This means that there is an explanation as to why Possible World Two is the real world.⁴⁵

Defense Attorney: Ok, I understand. Please continue.

Professor van Inwagen: Ok, now let's allow S to stand for the explanation sufficient to describe Possible World Two as the actual world. S cannot be true in any other worlds except for Possible World Two. S must be true in Possible World Two, and in no other possible worlds. If S were true in any other worlds, and S is the sufficient reason for the actual world, then there would be more than one actual world, and that is just silly.

Defense Attorney: Well, where is S found? I mean, where is the sufficient reason for Possible World Two found?

Professor van Inwagen: The fact that Possible World Two is the actual world is not an explanation to the fact that possible World Two is indeed the actual world. Basically, if someone asks, "Why is Possible World Two the actual world?" You cannot simply answer with "because Possible World Two is the actual world." Thus, there can be no answer to this question, "Why is Possible World Two the actual world," because according to Leibniz's argument, there would be nothing to serve as the sufficient reason or Possible World Two.⁴⁶

Defense Attorney: Thank you. Now, according to Professor Leibniz's argument, why couldn't there be some sort of a god to explain the universe?

⁴⁵ Inwagen's entire argument comes from the excerpt "Two Concepts of Possible Worlds" which is found in his book, *Ontology, Identity, and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics*. The citation for the excerpt is: Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

⁴⁶ Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Professor van Inwagen: If the Principle of Sufficient Reason is true, and a necessary and omnipotent god explains everything in the universe, then there would be detrimental consequences. The cost of preserving that god's perfect rationality is the loss of his freedom, his moral perfection, his providence, and his sovereignty.⁴⁷ We are left with a single necessary world, and no god to control it- no sufficient reason in terms of a god. The cost also includes the loss of contingency and moral agency among created beings in the world. So, in order for there to be an explanation for everything, a god would have to compromise his character traits. Therefore, either a god cannot be true, or the Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot be true, but because a god is true, the Principle of Sufficient Reason must not be true, thus disproving Professor Leibniz's argument.⁴⁸

Defense Attorney: Thank you, Professor van Inwagen. No further questions.

Cross Examination of Peter van Inwagen

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Good afternoon, Professor van Inwagen. I would like to ask you a few questions regarding your direct examination.

Professor van Inwagen: Go right ahead.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Now could you please remind me what the Principle of Sufficient Reason is?

⁴⁷ Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001. This is relevant because Peter van Inwagen is proposing possible worlds that could actually exist, but they exist without the Principle of Sufficient Reason. Anything is possible in a possible world, but because this Leibnizian argument is about the real universe, we cannot be talking about possible worlds. Van Inwagen cannot justifiably arbitrarily negate the Principle of Sufficient Reason, just in order to prove it as incorrect. He must have a reason for negating the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and he does not have one, which is why he is incorrect on this point.

⁴⁸ Van Inwagen, Peter. *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.

Professor van Inwagen: Well, of course. The Principle of Sufficient Reason states that everything must have some explanation, or sufficient reason.⁴⁹

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And you say that this principle does not hold any truth at all, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Correct, it does not hold any truth at all.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great, ok so tell me again why the Principle of Sufficient Reason can't be true?

Professor van Inwagen: The Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot be true at all because basically, as I explained earlier, there are some things that cannot be explained, and if they were explained, we would have to compromise the characteristics of a god, so the Principle of Sufficient Reason does not hold.⁵⁰

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, great. Now, regardless of the validity of what you just said, please tell me why what you just said isn't an explanation as to why you believe that the Principle of Sufficient Reason is wrong.

Professor van Inwagen: ...It is an explanation.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Oh, I thought you said the Principle of Sufficient Reason was invalid in all cases?

Professor van Inwagen: I did.

⁴⁹ Post, John F. "How to Refute Principles of Sufficient Reason." How to Refute Principles of Sufficient Reason. Accessed August 26, 2016. <http://cogprints.org/390/1/psrcogprt.htm>.

⁵⁰ Pruss, Alexander R. Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments. PhD diss., Baylor University, 2009.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Oh so that means that in some cases, there are explanations to things?

Professor van Inwagen: Well. Yes, of course there are. I'm just saying that the Principle of Sufficient Reason doesn't hold all of the time.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok then, let's start from there. Tell me about something that doesn't have an explanation or a cause?

Professor van Inwagen: I cannot think of anything, but that's only because I'm not all knowing. But if I were all knowing, there definitely would be some things without explanations.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Then because you cannot think of anything, you cannot claim that there isn't a sufficient reason for everything, because there is.⁵¹ If anyone here today in this courtroom, or anyone ever, can show me something that doesn't have an explanation or cause, then I concede this case. But, until that day, each and every thing has an explanation, or a cause, and we must proceed with this understanding.

Professor van Inwagen: So... what is your question then?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: If you cannot give me an instance in which something in reality does not have a sufficient reason, then you must accept the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

Professor van Inwagen: Well.... Um... Yes, I guess I must accept the Principle of Sufficient Reason. But still, the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument doesn't prove that an omnipotent, necessary being exists, even if the Principle of Sufficient Reason *is* sound.

⁵¹ This refers to the a posteriori argument postulated by Leibniz that an exception to the principle has never been found, and therefore we affirm the Principle of Sufficient Reason every day.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, we will get to that eventually. Now, let's talk about when you stated that basically there are no levels of causation. There is only necessity and not contingency, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, that is what I said.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great. So, one plus one equals two correct?

Defense Council: OBJECTION- RELEVANCE

Judge: Overruled. But Ms. Matthews, please give some context.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Yes, Your Honor I promise I will get to my point. Please just answer the question. Does one plus one equal two?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, of course it does, any idiot would know that.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Exactly, any idiot WOULD know that. As Professor Leibniz stated earlier, a necessary truth represents a true statement whose negation must imply a contradiction in reality, such that the negation would be impossible.⁵² So for example, if "one plus one equals two" is a necessary truth, then it's opposite, "one plus one does not equal two," would be impossible, because it would contradict a necessary truth. Correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I guess so.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: I mean, of course it would! If a person understands the meaning of "one" and "two" in terms of unit value, that person can immediately see that the

⁵² "The Meaning of "Necessary" Versus "Contingent" Truth." Objectivism for Intellectuals. May 21, 2015. Accessed September 23, 2016. <https://objectivismforintellectuals.wordpress.com/2015/05/21/the-meaning-of-necessary-versus-contingent-truth/>.

addition of “one plus one” must always equal two. It’s impossible that one added to one should ever equal anything besides two. Correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, as I’ve already stated, one plus one must equal two.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Exactly! Therefore, “one plus one equals two” is a necessary truth because its negation is impossible.

Professor van Inwagen: Congratulations, you’ve just further proved my point. There are only necessary truths, and “one plus one” is one of them. Can we move on from this?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Actually, that’s not why I am saying this. Now, what if I said “Joe and Sally got married last Sunday.” Is that a necessary truth?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, of course it is a necessary truth, because it actually happened in reality, and everything that truly happens in reality is a necessary truth!!

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, but couldn’t Joe have married Sally on Saturday, or couldn’t Joe not have married Sally?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, those are possibilities. However, according to your own argument, Joe did NOT marry Sally on Saturday, he married her on Sunday.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Please answer the question, Professor van Inwagen. Is it possible that Joe could have married Sally on Saturday?

Professor van Inwagen: Sure, I guess it’s possible.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: But didn’t you yourself agree that the negation of a necessary truth must imply a contradiction in reality, such that the negation of the necessary truth would be impossible?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I did say this.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: But didn't you also just say that Joe could have NOT married Sally last Saturday?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, he could have not married Sally last Sunday. I guess he could have done it on another day.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then, the negation of this so called "necessary truth" is possible, therefore it cannot be a necessary truth.

Professor van Inwagen: Ok, so what? The opposite is possible. Joe could have married Sally on a different day. But if this statement is not a necessary truth, then what kind of truth would you propose it to be?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you for asking. I actually would propose the statement, "Joe married Sally last Sunday" as a contingent truth. I say this because a contingent truth represents a true statement whose negation does not imply a contradiction in reality, such that the negation could have been the case.⁵³ Do you agree that this scenario's negation is possible, Professor van Inwagen?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I do.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Then you must accept that there is a difference in causation level, and that there are contingent causes and necessary causes. Basically, that necessity and contingency both exist.

⁵³ "The Meaning of "Necessary" Versus "Contingent" Truth." Objectivism for Intellectuals. May 21, 2015. Accessed September 23, 2016. <https://objectivismforintellectuals.wordpress.com/2015/05/21/the-meaning-of-necessary-versus-contingent-truth/>.

Professor van Inwagen: Fine, I agree.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great. Now that you have done that, let's talk about these possible worlds that you supposed.

Professor van Inwagen: What about them? Are they wrong too or something?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Actually yes, they are. So you said there could only be an explanation for Possible World Two in Possible World Two, correct?⁵⁴

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, now why couldn't there be a sufficient explanation of Possible World Two in the other three possible worlds, if these worlds are indeed possible?

Professor van Inwagen: Because these other three possible worlds are not the actual world.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok so, there only is one real world. You have already agreed to this statement. But, even if there were other possible worlds, the Principle of Sufficient Reason would still hold there too. For example, in Possible World Two, which you yourself have deemed as the real world, there is a computer sitting on my lap. But in Possible World Three, a hypothetical world, the computer is not on my lap. In both possible worlds, there is a sufficient reason why there is a computer sitting on my lap in the first situation, and in the second situation, there is a sufficient reason explaining why the computer is not sitting on my lap. Correct?

Professor van Inwagen: No.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Why?

⁵⁴ Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Professor van Inwagen: Because there are no sufficient reasons for anything outside of the real world. Basically, the Principle of Sufficient Reason cannot hold in a possible world, so then it definitely cannot hold in the real world.⁵⁵

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Wait, you said yourself that Possible World Three doesn't even exist, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So why are we even trying to apply the Principle of Sufficient Reason to a world that doesn't even exist? Of course this principle is not going to apply. When you presuppose a possible world that arbitrarily doesn't have sufficient reasons, you are negating an omnipotent being. Correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So if your objection to me is that the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument doesn't prove an omnipotent being when dealing with possible worlds, I would agree with you. Want to know why?

Professor van Inwagen: Why?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Because of course you can't prove an omnipotent being, if you are presupposing possible worlds in which an omnipotent being is impossible. When talking about possible worlds, we are talking about worlds that don't even possibly exist. Because these possible worlds don't exist, you could make any arbitrary rule you want to about these worlds. You could even say that monkeys cannot live in a specific possible world simply because it is a

⁵⁵ Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

“possible” world and “the monkeys just cannot live there.” By this logic, simply anything could be arbitrarily negated in a possible world, including the Principle of Sufficient Reason, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, the Principle of Sufficient Reason could be negated, and in my postulation of possible worlds, it is negated.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, so then if the Principle of Sufficient Reason can just be arbitrarily negated, that means that the other three possible worlds are negated, because they are not actually possible due to their irrationality of negating both the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and the possibility of an omnipotent being. From now on, we must only speak about the actual world which you have deemed as Possible World Two, because it is the only one in which true principles cannot be arbitrarily negated.

Professor van Inwagen: Ok, fine.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great. Now that we are speaking only of the actual world, can you please remind the jury what issue you had with the actual world and the Principle of Sufficient Reason?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, of course. Basically, G. W. Leibniz suggests in his argument that because everything needs an explanation, there exists a necessary being to serve as this explanation. However, my problem is that though this argument proves a necessary being, when postulating with possible worlds, it does not prove an omnipotent being, therefore it doesn't prove that a god is this necessary being.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. Now professor, because we have already proved that Possible World Two, the actual world, is the only world in which we can speak about, do you still have an issue?

Professor van Inwagen: Well, I actually no longer have an objection because I was basing my assumption off of a possible world that denied the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and not the actual world.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Right, and your flaw in doing so is that the possible world that you supposed does not allow for an omnipotent being because it denied the Principle of Sufficient Reason for no reason.

Professor van Inwagen: Right... So I guess I no longer have an objection.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great, I'm glad we cleared all of that up. So, if there were a sufficient reason for the actual world, then this reason would be outside of the universe, giving it the characteristics of omnipotence, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, if there were an explanation to the universe, as according to the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, and you also agree that this cause of the actual world would have to be of a greater causation level than the universe, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: I don't really understand the question. Can you rephrase it?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: I mean that, the actual world would have to be contingent upon the necessary explanation of the actual world, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I would believe that.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, now if there were a god, any god, wouldn't he have to be omnipotent, or all knowing?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, that is typically what constitutes the idea of a god.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, but in your premises you basically presupposed that this god could not be omnipotent, correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I did. I did this in order to prove the Principle of Sufficient Reason as incorrect, and now I see that as a flaw.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And if the Principle of Sufficient Reason is correct, then mustn't there be a sufficient reason or explanation for everything??

Professor van Inwagen: Correct.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then there must be an explanation to the universe.

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, but it cannot be the universe itself.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Exactly! Now we are on the same page. The explanation to the universe must be something outside of the universe. If something is outside of the universe, and greater than the universe, then this "something" must be omnipotent, because it is all knowing in regards to the universe. Correct?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And because this "something" is outside of the universe and is the explanation of the contingent universe, then mustn't this "something" be necessary?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And didn't you say yourself that if there were a god, he would have to be omnipotent and necessary?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then if this being, the explanation behind the universe, is necessary and omnipotent, wouldn't it then be a god?

Peter van Inwagen: I see your point.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then, through the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument and the Principle of Sufficient Reason, can't we find that a necessary, omnipotent god is the sole explanation and sufficient reason behind the universe?

Professor van Inwagen: Yes, I guess so.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you, no further questions.

Judge: Thank you, Professor van Inwagen, you may be seated. Defense do you have any further witnesses?

Defense: Yes, Your Honor. We would like to call Professor David Hume to the stand.

One down, and one to go. Professor van Inwagen was completely baffled in his own beliefs. He even conceded to the Principle of Sufficient Reason. I couldn't believe it! Now, of course I knew that Professor van Inwagen was just a fly compared to the ferocious, Professor Hume. But regardless, all I had to do was stick to the truth, and Professor Hume would be defeated. I mean his beliefs were wrong anyway; I could do this.

David Hume**Direct Examination of David Hume**

Defense Attorney: Please state your full name and spell your last name.

Professor Hume: David Hume, H-U-M-E.

Defense Attorney: Thank you. Now, I have a question for you- Why do you believe that a necessary being is not the sole explanation for the entirety of reality?

Professor Hume: Chiefly, as humans, we can only have knowledge regarding things that have been previously experienced by at least one of the five senses.⁵⁷ If a man can see every single shade of blue except one, and you put each shade in front of him from lightest to darkest, while omitting the shade he can't see, can he imagine that missing shade? No, he cannot, because this man has never seen, touch, heard, felt, or tasted this shade of blue, therefore he cannot know anything about it. In accordance to this, we have no supernatural experiences, therefore we cannot know anything of universes being made, or supernatural beings, because we have never *experienced* universes being made, or supernatural beings. I do not disregard the idea of a god; however, because we cannot interact with a god, we have no basis for which to know anything about a god.⁵⁸

Defense Attorney: I see. Now, how does this belief relate to the beginning of the universe?

Professor Hume: We have no experience of universes being made. Simply, we cannot argue from the effect to the cause in a supernatural sense.⁵⁹ This means that we cannot argue from the fact the universe is already made, and try to back solve to find what created it, or what serves as

⁵⁷ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

the sufficient reason of the universe. It just is not logical. It is simply not possible to argue from effects within the universe to causes of the universe as a whole. It is one thing to talk about causes that operate within the system of the universe, but it is an entirely different matter to speculate about whether the system as a whole was caused or not, and if it was caused, what it was caused by. It's too big of a logical jump to move from saying that every event in the universe has a cause, to the claim that the universe itself has a cause. When people say this, they go into the Infinite Regress Problem.⁶⁰

Defense Attorney: Now what is this Infinite Regress Problem you speak about?

Professor Hume: The Infinite Regress Problem is basically that every event has to have a cause and there is no way that there can be a beginning cause, because there is no explanation to this beginning cause.⁶¹ When creating a geometry book, one original copy is created, and from there, each book is copied and altered. Even though a reason can be given for the present book, we can't come to a conclusion about why the original book was created. If you suppose the world is eternal, then you only suppose a succession of states and will not find a sufficient reason for the successive states, within the successive states. This geometry example is the great principle of the Cosmological Argument. We can explain the properties of one book by saying that it is copied from another; however, this doesn't explain why the original book was created in the first place. Now, we could probably figure out why the book was created by finding the original creator of the book, but this would be outside of the geometry book itself. We can only do this, however, because the geometry book is earthly, and we have experienced it.⁶² When dealing with

⁶⁰ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁶¹ Pruss, Alexander R. *Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments*. PhD diss., Baylor University, 2009.

⁶² Godwin, Simon J. "Philosophy of Religion." *The Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Accessed September 26, 2016. http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/sufficient_reason.htm.

the universe, if there is going to be a complete or sufficient reason for the existence of the universe or the entirety of reality, we have to get back to something that does not depend on anything else – and this, according to Mr. Leibniz, would be a necessary omnipotent being. However, as I stated earlier, we have no experiences with supernatural beings, and therefore we cannot know anything about a god, and therefore cannot assume that this god is the sufficient reason for the universe.

Defense Attorney: Can we know anything at all about a possible god?

Professor Hume: No, because this god would be supernatural and we have no supernatural experiences. We cannot know whether this god is necessary or not, all good or not, omnipotent or not, because we do not have experiences with a god, or anything supernatural for that matter.⁶³

Defense Attorney: Thank you. Now, why do you believe that Professor Leibniz is incorrect about his postulation as a whole?

Professor Hume: I have about three major issues with his argument. First, he assumes that we have supernatural experiences, which I have already said is false.⁶⁴ In this way, Professor Leibniz says that we do not need to know anything about an omnipotent necessary being as the sufficient reason for the universe, except that that being is omnipotent and necessary. I disagree, because we cannot even know if this being is omnipotent or necessary, because we have no supernatural experiences. Therefore, we cannot know anything about this being. Second, Professor Leibniz bases his reasoning from the effect to the cause. You cannot do this on an earthly stance, and you especially cannot do this supernaturally because, once again, we have no supernatural experiences. And finally, he believes that there is an ultimate sufficient reason to the

⁶³ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁶⁴ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

universe, and I disagree because there was no ultimate cause to the universe. Instead, there has just been a continuous causation chain for all time, with no definitive beginning or ending point.⁶⁵

Defense Attorney: Thank you, Professor Hume, no further questions.

Cross Examination of David Hume

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Good morning, I would like to ask you some questions regarding your direct examination.

Professor Hume: Fire away.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So you say that we can only have knowledge regarding things that we have experienced with one of the five senses, correct?⁶⁶

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And in making this claim, you say that we have no experiences with supernatural beings, correct?

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And you say that, because of this, we cannot know anything about a supernatural being, such as a god, because we have not experienced anything supernatural.⁶⁷ Correct?

Professor Hume: Precisely.

⁶⁵ This was based on both Hume's work and Leibniz's work, so I will cite both. Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁶⁶ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Great. I just want to make sure that I fully understand your argument before my next statement.⁶⁸ Do you agree that there are existent molecules in the universe that are bonded together right now in order to create matter?

Professor Hume: Yes, anyone would know that.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: You're absolutely right. And anyone would also know that this is actually a supernatural experience. It is not natural for millions of microscopic molecules to hold together and form matter. Only a supernatural occurrence, or being, could have set these molecules into motion. Therefore, because the existence of the universe as a function is supernaturally guided, and because we experience the universe, we do have supernatural experiences.⁶⁹

Professor Hume: You're wrong! We do not have supernatural experiences. I mean, I've never talked to a god, or ever seen one in my life!

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Just because you have never physically interacted with a god does not mean you don't have supernatural experiences. No one has ever physically interacted with the abstract idea of love, but we still know it exists because we have experienced it. The same applies to supernatural occurrences.⁷⁰

Professor Hume: We do not have supernatural experiences. I am standing my ground.

⁶⁸ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, Daniel Garber, and Roger Ariew. *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: I beg your pardon, Professor Hume, but yes we do. The definition of supernatural is being of or beyond what is natural.⁷¹

Professor Hume: Oh whatever, you probably got that out of a regular old dictionary. May I remind you that we are talking philosophy and theology here? What an amateur.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Oh, you know, you are so right. I was actually trying to be amiable towards you by giving you a definition that would grant you a slim chance at correctness. The actual philosophical definition of supernatural is “unexplainable by natural law or phenomena.”⁷² Please tell me in what way millions of molecules making up matter on earth is explained by a natural law or phenomena.

Professor Hume: It just is.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, that is not a good enough answer for me. You know actually it’s funny, you’re entire argument is based on the assumption “it just is.” The molecules in space “just are.” The universe “just is.” Interesting huh?

Professor Hume: Sure, what’s your point?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: My point is that “it just is,” is not a sufficient answer for me, and it shouldn’t be a sufficient answer for you either. As we have already established, nothing “just is”. Everything in existence has a sufficient reason for that said existence. In this way, because the universe exists, the universe needs a sufficient reason for existence. And you,

⁷¹ Supernatural. Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. Accessed October 24, 2016. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/supernatural>

⁷² Blackburn, Simon. *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Professor Hume, need a sufficient reason for why the molecules that make up matter are not supernatural occurrences.⁷³

Professor Hume: Well, I don't have one at the moment, but you also do not have concrete evidence proving that we do have supernatural experiences.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, I see your point and I believe that you see mine as well. I think we are just going to have to end here in a stalemate because you believe that we do not have supernatural experiences, and I believe that we do have supernatural experiences. However, neither of us have absolute, concrete evidence for either side. Is this accurate?

Professor Hume: Yes, I can at least agree to that.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. I will make the stipulation though that because you cannot be absolutely sure that we do not have supernatural experiences, you cannot base all of your logic on this questionable idea.

Professor Hume: Well regardless, I still don't agree with an omnipotent, necessary being as the sufficient reason for the universe.⁷⁴

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: That's quite alright, because I am going to help you validate this truth. So, during your direct examination, you stated that we cannot go from the effect to the cause, correct?⁷⁵

Professor Hume: Yes.

⁷³ Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, Daniel Garber, and Roger Ariew. *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

⁷⁴ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So if I see a dead man on the road and a car near him, I cannot assume that he got into a car accident?

Professor Hume: Well... Not necessarily.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, here's another scenario: A person is killed and there are no physical wounds, but the victim's fingernails are blue. Are you saying that a detective cannot determine that the victim was killed via cyanide poisoning?

Professor Hume: Well... you can assume that but you can never know the details.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok so basically what you are saying is that I can know something, just not the details then?

Professor Hume: Sure, why not.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So then really, I could look at the universe, which is the effect, and know what the cause is, just not the details. Correct?

Professor Hume: Ok, yes I said that, but that doesn't apply to the universe.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Why not?

Professor Hume: So maybe you can go from the effect to the cause, but only with contingent things. You cannot go from a contingent effect back to a necessary cause.⁷⁶

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Oh but I disagree. Don't you believe that everything has a cause, according to your Infinite Regress postulation?

⁷⁶ Pruss, Alexander R. Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments. PhD diss., Baylor University, 2009.

Professor Hume: Yes, but this cause cannot be ultimately traced because there is no ultimate cause.⁷⁷

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, but when you have something contingent and are trying to explain it, wouldn't the explanation have to be something necessary?

Professor Hume: No, because necessary things cannot explain contingent things.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Are you sure?

Professor Hume: Positive.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, so say I'm in Paris and I go to visit the Louvre, a magnificent art museum there. Being in Paris is not necessary in itself, but it is necessary to be in Paris for the contingent fact of visiting the Louvre in person to be true. Right?

Professor Hume: I guess so. But that's not a great argument.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: You're right, it's not a great argument alone. However, because you have accepted the above fact means that you have accepted that contingent facts have necessary causes. Therefore, because the universe is contingent, it could possibly have a necessary cause. Correct?

Professor Hume: Not necessarily, the Paris example is just one case.

⁷⁷ In Leibniz's postulation of causes, he actually says that causes are synonymous to explanations. This language clarification solves the entire Infinite Regress problem because there cannot be an infinite amount of explanations. The explanations would eventually have to lead to one necessary "something": a being serving as the sole explanation, or sufficient reason, for the universe. However, because I already established this argument in Leibniz's questioning section, I wanted to approach the Infinite Regress problem in a different manner to show that there is not only one way to defeat the causation issue.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok so give me a contingent explanation that doesn't ultimately stem from a necessary cause.

Professor Hume: I cannot think of one right now.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Right, you can't think of one, because there aren't any. Because even when you trace a contingent truth all the way back to the original necessary cause, you end up with a necessary being as the sufficient reason. So then, don't you agree that because the universe is contingent, it would have had to be created by a necessary something? A being perhaps?

Professor Hume: Well, what is the difference between the universe and a necessary being?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, for one, the universe cannot do anything it wants to, as an omnipotent being can. Additionally, the universe is limited in size and substance, while a necessary omnipotent being is not limited. Also, the universe has no mind, therefore it cannot cause things, or set things into motion, as an omnipotent necessary being can. So basically, a universe is not omnipotent, but a necessary omnipotent being IS omnipotent.

Professor Hume: Well, why isn't the universe necessary?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, for the universe to be necessary, all of the quarks within the universe would have to exist in the way they do currently, and they could never exist in a different way. However, according to physicists worldwide, quarks could actually be rearranged and not exist in the form that they do, therefore everything within the universe is not necessarily bound.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ A quark is an elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter. Quarks combine to form composite particles called hadrons, the most stable of which are protons and neutrons, the components of atomic nuclei.

Professor Hume: This argument does not completely satisfy me.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well also, if something is necessary, it must exist in the same form in every possible world. A universe is not necessary because it is not the same in all possible worlds, but a necessary being is.

Professor Hume: I'm still not sure...

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Sure about what?

Professor Hume: Well, why can't the universe be this "necessary" thing that serves as the sufficient reason for all of reality? Why does it *have* to be a being?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Alright, so the universe and everything within the universe are in constant motion, correct?

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, so is motion or non-motion the default state?

Professor Hume: Well, it would obviously have to be non-motion because nothing is always the default state, and non-motion implies nothing, in this case.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, so does the default state have to be explained?

Professor Hume: Of course not.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Right, so the universe, because it is in motion, could not serve as a reference point for all things in motion because it itself is in motion. In order to find a sufficient reason for everything in motion, we are going to need to find a sufficient reason that is not in motion- an Unmoved Mover, perhaps.

Professor Hume: So your point is?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, an omnipotent necessary being would not be in motion because this being would be outside of all of reality. Thus, this being is able to serve as the sufficient reason and reference point for everything that is in motion, because this stagnant being set the universe into motion.⁷⁹ The universe cannot be this necessary thing because it is in motion, therefore it cannot explain other portions of reality that are also in motion.

Professor Hume: Well then by your logic, wouldn't the omnipotent, necessary being still require an explanation?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Well, remind me again, does the default state of non-motion require an explanation?

Professor Hume: ...No.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Right, so therefore this Unmoved Mover would require no explanation because this being is in non-motion. Everything that is actually in motion would be grounded in this "Unmoved Mover" of a necessary being.

Professor Hume: Um... well... You can't know anything about the universe or a supernatural being as the sole explanation to the universe, because we don't have supernatural experiences.⁸⁰

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Wait, we just proved right here in this courtroom that no one can be sure if we do, or do not have supernatural experiences. Didn't we?

Professor Hume: Oh... Um... Did we? I don't recall.

⁷⁹ This is somewhat taking from the First Way of the Cosmological Argument which involved the necessary being as an "Unmoved Mover."

⁸⁰ Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Yes we did, and anyone in this place could tell you that.

Professor Hume: Yes... I know.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, I just wanted to make sure we are on the same page. So, as we established earlier, we may or may not have interactions with supernatural beings, correct?

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So therefore, you cannot say that we cannot reason from the effect to the cause when dealing with supernatural topics because you do not have any proof that proves that humans don't have supernatural experiences. Correct?

Professor Hume: Well, nothing concrete, so correct.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: So, because we cannot negate this possibility, can't we say that the universe, which is the effect, can lead us to the cause of that effect, because we may have supernatural experiences?

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And if there were a sufficient reason for the universe, which there is, wouldn't it have to be outside of this universe?

Professor Hume: Yes.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok, so we know that if there is a sufficient reason for this universe, then that sufficient reason must be outside of the universe. Great. Now wouldn't that sufficient reason need to be necessary, because we live in a contingent universe, and contingency must be explained by necessity?

Professor Hume: Yes, the sufficient reason would need to be necessary in order to explain a contingent universe, and the universe is contingent because the quarks in the universe could possibly exist in a different form.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ok so we are looking for a sufficient reason that is outside of the universe, and necessary. And we can know about this supernatural sufficient reason because we may or may not have supernatural experiences. Is all of this correct, Professor Hume?

Professor Hume: Yes, you're right, I get it, ok?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: And because there is a sufficient reason for everything, including the universe, and because this sufficient reason is outside of the universe, wouldn't this sufficient reason have to be omnipotent?

Professor Hume: Well what is your definition of omnipotence?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Something or some being with omnipotence will have unlimited power. Whatever is the sufficient reason for the universe must be omnipotent because this sufficient reason is greater than the universe, and outside of the universe.⁸¹ Correct?

Professor Hume: Ok? And?

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Therefore, because the sufficient reason is outside of the universe, necessary, omnipotent, and supernatural, this sufficient reason must be a god.

Professor Hume: ... I have nothing more to say.

⁸¹ Pruss, Alexander R. Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments. PhD diss., Baylor University, 2009.

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Thank you. No further questions.

Judge: Thank you, Professor Hume. Now, Defense Council, your closing statement please.

Closing Statements

Defense Council Closing Statement

Defense Attorney: Members of the courtroom, thank you again for being present today. My apologies that the case went a little longer than expected, but obviously the decision is clear: a necessary, omnipotent being is not the sole sufficient reason for the entirety of reality.

In order to make this point crystal clear, you heard from the man himself: Professor G. W. Leibniz, what a poor man. He has been trying to equate himself to the great Professor Hume for years. I guess he thought this was his chance to finally win? Obviously, he was wrong. Professor Leibniz's beliefs on this issue are absolutely incorrect because he *actually* believes that we have supernatural experiences, which we obviously do not. I mean, I've never seen God knocking on my door, have you? Didn't think so. As humans, we can only have knowledge regarding things that have been previously experienced by at least one of the five senses. The Prosecution could not prove that we do have supernatural experiences, therefore it is extremely possible that we do NOT have supernatural experiences. In accordance to this, because we most likely have no supernatural experiences, we cannot know anything of universes being made, or supernatural beings, such as a god. In this way, it is silly for the Prosecutorial Council to even have an idea of what would have caused the universe, if anything even did. The idea of a god is not disregarded in this sense, however, because we cannot interact with this god, we have no basis for which to know anything about a god, and whether or not a god was actually the "sufficient reason" for the universe. Because we cannot know anything about supernatural occurrences, we cannot know anything about the supernatural sufficient reason of the universe. This is true because if there were a sufficient reason to the universe, it would have had to have

been supernatural. Basically, we can't know that there is a sufficient reason for the entirety of reality, and we for sure can't know that this sufficient reason is a god.

Also, Professor Leibniz bases his reasoning from the effect to the cause, the effect being the universe, and the cause being a god. You cannot do this supernaturally because, once again, we have no supernatural experiences. This means that we cannot argue from the fact that the universe is already made, and try to back solve and find "who" created it, or "who" serves as the sufficient reason of the universe. It just is not logical. It is simply not possible to argue from effects within the universe to causes of the universe as a whole. It is one thing to talk about causes that operate within the system of the universe, but it is an entirely different matter to speculate about whether the system as a whole was caused or not, and if it was caused, what it was caused by.

Finally, Professor Leibniz believes that there was an ultimate cause to the universe, but how would he know that? Professor Leibniz is wrong because actually, there has just been a continuous causation chain with no definitive beginning or ending point. So truly, there was no beginning cause that could have even been a god, end of story.

The bad news for the prosecution is that each and every point that Professor Leibniz presented today is incorrect. But, the good news for you, is that you only had to find one flaw- just one. So Jury, Your Honor, have your pick. Which flaw will you choose? There are so many. I mean, think about it, a *god* as the ONLY sufficient reason of the universe? Please. That's silly. So let's make this decision quick and easy, so that we don't get the prosecution's hopes up too much. Thank you.

Prosecutorial Council Closing Statement

Prosecutorial Attorney Matthews: Ladies and gentlemen, members of the Jury, Your Honor-something... rather than nothing. In every single instance today, our council has proved to you that something, rather than nothing, is present as the sufficient reason for the entirety of reality.

My client, Abigail Jones, faced the choice of either signing her beliefs away, or fighting, and she chose to fight. And today, I invite you to fight with her. Of course, because I represent the Prosecutorial Council, I have the burden of proof. This burden means that if the defense had poked any holes in the testimony of my witness today, we would have lost the case; however, the defense did not do this. But who could blame them? There were no holes to poke. Instead, through cross examinations, the defense revealed their own gaping holes to the entire courtroom—the gaping holes of their false beliefs. Throughout the entirety of this trial, our council has met the standard of the burden of proof. Even in spite of this burden, we are walking away today completely unharmed, because there was no possible harm to hurl. The argument is solid.

Today, Professor Leibniz gave us the utmost valid reasons explaining why the world exists, rather than not existing, and why the world exists as it does, and not in some alternate way. He explained through the Principle of Sufficient Reason that everything has a sufficient explanation, or a sufficient reason, no matter what it is. He explained to us that nothing in the universe can explain the universe itself. He gave us the great example of a geometry book. Remember that? He said that if someone prints an original geometry book, then 20 years later, that person goes to trace back copy after copy to the original book, that person would still never know why the original book was created in the first place, even if they did find the original book. The universe is the same in that a succession of states occurs every day on Earth and in space. The erosion in the Grand Canyon explains why the gap of the Grand Canyon has grown over time. The dense grey cloud over China explains the negative effects of manufacturing on a

country's environment. But even those these events explain something in the universe. Nothing inside of the universe will ever explain why the universe ITSELF exists. There must be something greater- something outside of the universe- to serve as the sufficient reason of the universe.

Then, we heard from the defense's first witness, Professor van Inwagen. The issue with Professor van Inwagen's argument is that by proposing these possible worlds, he is negating the possibility of an omnipotent god. Of course the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and many other basic rules, would not apply in situations that are not actually plausible! God is omnipotent in all situations, so a presupposition that He is not omnipotent, cannot be applied to reality. Additionally, just assuming that Possible World Two is the actual world can actually still apply to Leibniz. I agree with Professor van Inwagen that the mere fact that Possible World Two is the actual world does not prove that Possible World Two is the actual world. Instead, there must be something behind this contingent world, and that is a necessary being, a god. Professor van Inwagen's argument runs into the problem that many atheists run into: that the existence of something contingent cannot be explained by that contingent things. This fact is true: only necessity can truly explain contingency.

Also, Professor van Inwagen postulated that the Principle of Sufficient Reason is not valid. If the Principle of Sufficient Reason were actually incorrect, then there would have to be a sufficient reason for it being incorrect. By giving a sufficient reason for this incorrectness, it thus proves that the Principle of Sufficient Reason actually IS valid. There is an explanation, or sufficient reason, for all contingent things, including the universe, and that cause, as Professor van Inwagen conceded to, is a necessary omnipotent being.

Then we heard from the man who started it all, Professor Hume. Professor Hume's belief system is completely dependent on one idea: that humans do not have supernatural experiences. However, in Professor Hume's cross examination, we easily proved that humans may or may not have supernatural experiences. Because of this possibility, Hume cannot logically base ALL of his reasoning off of the assumption that we do not have supernatural experiences. If humans do have supernatural experiences, which is very possible, every single point that the defense just closed with is invalid. Without supernatural experiences, we can't supernaturally argue from the effect to the cause. With supernatural experiences, we CAN supernaturally argue from the effect to the cause. Without supernatural experiences, we can't know anything about a god. With supernatural experiences, we CAN know things about a god, including that god's omnipotence and necessity. The fact that we may have supernatural experiences proves Professor Hume's imposed belief system to be systematically incorrect. The idea that we do have supernatural experiences through molecular interactions every millisecond, completely dooms Professor Hume. And just to put one more nail in the coffin, we proved that the Principle of Sufficient Reason is valid, knocking Hume and van Inwagen's arguments to the floor.

Something exists. It's obvious! Something has to exist. Even if someone argued that everything we experience is just a figment of an imagination, something, or rather someone, had to have that imagination. Therefore even in this absurdity, the imaginer still exists. In the default state, nothing exists, and therefore when there is nothing present, there is no need for an explanation. However, whenever something does exist, the default state is escaped and an explanation is necessary, as stated in the valid Principle of Sufficient Reason. Therefore, because the universe exists by definition, it needs an explanation that is more than "just because." That man, Professor Hume, has been forcing his obviously false beliefs upon young students for

twenty six years. Twenty six years! But regardless of Professor Hume's cowardice and insufficiencies, it's not him that I'm worried about, but it's the college students whose beliefs are being skewed. Jury, Your Honor, Professor Hume and his cohorts are wrong in their beliefs and are influencing millennials in a detrimental manner. His method of making students agree with him would be great, if only it weren't forced, and if only his beliefs were actually correct; however, today we have proved that Professor Hume's beliefs are wrong. In order for the students of Yale University to have a better education, we must fight for them in this war against professors like Professor Hume.

Professor van Inwagen's beliefs that were presented today have all been proven as incorrect. Professor Hume's beliefs are blatantly unreasonable. The evidence and the testimonies throughout this entire case overwhelmingly point to these facts. Why does that geometry book exist? Why does the Grand Canyon exist? Why does anything exist? These explanations, as proven today, can be found through a necessary and omnipotent god who IS the sole explanation for the entirety of reality. HE is the something, rather than nothing, that serves as the sufficient reason for the universe, and everything in it. And because of this, we ask that you find the defendant, Professor Hume, GUILTY of imposing incorrect beliefs on the students of Yale University. Thank you.

Challenge to the Reader

What a case! And now reader, it is your turn to take on the role of the Jury and decide: Is a necessary, omnipotent being the sole sufficient reason for the entirety of reality? Was Abigail right? Or was Professor Hume correct, after all? This paper has supplied the information necessary in order for you to make a skilled decision, but I am in no place to impose a belief upon you. My job is to simply provide all of the essential evidence to you, and I believe I have done that. Each person is entitled to their own beliefs, and I will never discard that. Thank you so much for reading my paper. I hope it could positively impact you and give you a further understanding of the Leibnizian Cosmological Argument in your quest of searching for something... rather than nothing.

Bibliography

- Blackburn, Simon. *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Craig, William Lane. *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.
- Geisler, Norman L. *Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976.
- Godwin, Simon J. "Philosophy of Religion." *The Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Accessed September 26, 2016. http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/sufficient_reason.htm.
- Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Inwagen, Peter Van. *Two Concepts of Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Jacquette, Dale. *Ontology*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
- Leibniz, Gottfried W. *New Essays*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991.
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, Daniel Garber, and Roger Ariew. *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *On The Origination of Things*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.
- "Leibniz's Fifth Papers." Gottfried W. Leibniz to Samuel Clarke. August 18, 1716.
- Post, John F. "How to Refute Principles of Sufficient Reason." *How to Refute Principles of Sufficient Reason*. Accessed August 26, 2016. <http://cogprints.org/390/1/psrcogprt.htm>.

Pruss, Alexander R. Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments. PhD diss., Baylor University, 2009.

Supernatural. Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. Accessed

October 24, 2016. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/supernatural>

"The Meaning of "Necessary" Versus "Contingent" Truth." Objectivism for Intellectuals. May 21, 2015. Accessed September 23, 2016.

<https://objectivismforintellectuals.wordpress.com/2015/05/21/the-meaning-of-necessary-versus-contingent-truth/>.

Van Inwagen, Peter. "Final Causes." Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Youtube. December 29, 2009. Accessed October 21, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDQ1cEurrKI>.

Van Inwagen, Peter. *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.