

Question: **Do you agree that the order we see around us could have come about only as the result of intelligent planning?**

1. **The argument from design**

William Paley: natural world is as complex a mechanism, and as manifestly designed, as a watch – it does not weaken our inference from the watch to the watch-maker and the analogy from the world to God

- a) if we've never seen a watch before
- b) if we were to find it didn't work perfectly
- c) if there were some parts whose functions we were unable to discover

2. **Criticisms:**

a) **Hume:**

(i) **analogy between the world and a human artifact = weak**

- I. the world = more like inert animal or vegetable
- II. whether these are designed = the point in question

(ii) **can only infer sufficient cause** to produce an observed effect therefore cannot infer from apparent design one infinitely wise, good and powerful God. Can't infer:

- I. infinite creator from a finite world
- II. that God *still* exists
- III. that there is just *one* God, given the world is full of diversity
- IV. that God = wholly good and benevolent, because there is evil, pain and suffering, as well as good in the world -- on these grounds we could quite rationally infer a god that is evil, and deal with the problem in reverse

Therefore, the design argument is hard pressed to make its claim that God is omnipotent, omniscient and benevolent.

(iii) **any universe is bound to have the appearance of design**

- I. there could not be a universe at all if parts were not adapted to one another
- II. persistence of any kind of life in a relatively fixed environment presupposes order and adaptation
re. Darwin and evolution through natural selection

b) Design argument assumes there was a time prior to which there was no time – but there are **always temporal precedents**

- I. always possible to think of a given date, for which there is a previous date, in the same sense that it is not possible to think of a number for which there is no greater number
- II. Independent criterion to justify this claim = experience of change within time
- III. Even when what is viewed = unchanging there is still the viewer who surveys the scene – the order in which he perceives it = temporal order -- there can be no time without change, the nature of our own experiences being temporally successive

c) **Argument = circular**: order in the universe = evidence that God exists and that God exists = explanation for the order and beginning of the universe

-- no independent criterion to test the hypothesis i.e. we would need to be able to show what the universe is like without God as we can with the electrical appliance which is plugged in and unplugged

e.g. the gremlin hypothesis – it attempts to explain everything and therefore explains nothing