

## **FIL 2309 Philosophy of Religion: *Naturalized Theology***

Lecturer: Einar Duenger Bohn

E-mail: e.d.bohn@ifikk.uio.no

Office: GM 643

First, we consider William Paley's classic argument from design, for the existence of a creator, or God.

Second, for most of the course, we consider versions of what's known as *the fine-tuning argument* for the existence of a *creator* of the universe, or God (which are just variants of Paley's argument from design). The rough intuition behind the argument is this: in considering the laws of nature, we can see that the existence of life is so unlikely that the best explanation for its existence is that someone intended for it to happen. Of special interest in this connection are probability, confirmation, anthropic reasoning, and inference to the best explanation. The topic is thus relevant to anyone interested in the philosophy of science as well.

Third, if we get to it, we consider (a version of) what's known as *the cosmological argument* for the existence of a first cause of the universe. The rough intuition behind the argument is this: whatever has a beginning of existence has a cause of existence; the universe has a beginning of existence; so the universe has a cause of existence; which is the first cause, or God. Of special interest here is the problem of an infinite regress.

We might also consider other related topics, if time allows it.

### **Readings:**

- *Required:* William Paley "Natural Theology" (Ch. I-III + XXII)
- *Required:* Neil Manson (ed.) (2003) "God and Design: the teleological argument and modern science"
- *Required:* Lecturer's handout
- *Required:* William Lane Craig (2000) "The Kalam Cosmological Argument"
- *Possibly:* various articles
- *Recommended:* W. Lane Craig & J. P. Moreland (eds.) (2012) "Natural Theology"
- *Recommended:* David Hume "Dialogues concerning natural religion and the history of natural religion"

### **Tentative schedule (subject to continuous change):**

1. William Paley 'Natural Theology', ch. I-III and XXII
2. Same as 1 + Lecturer's handout
3. Neil Manson (ed.) 'God and Design: the teleological argument and modern science' + Lecturer's handout on probability
- 4-14. Same as 3, until we feel ready to move on to another topic