Mission Statement

Philosophy means the “love of wisdom.” Philosophy is the foundation and core of all modern methods of inquiry, be it math, science, theology, psychology, economics, medicine, language, education, or literature. It is the fundamental of all our academic fields. Philosophy is a very rigorous and demanding pursuit that requires us to be humble and teachable perhaps more than any other liberal arts discipline. We cannot ever escape philosophy—it is in everything we do, think, and believe. As such, there are good and not so good philosophers. Philosophy demands that we be authentic. There is no room for hypocrisy. Philosophy brings to light our inherent weaknesses as mortals, but it also highlights humanities grandest aspirations and potential. Wisdom, truth, knowledge, reason, love, belief, learning, understanding, justification and compassion are some of philosophy’s main goals.

Here at the BYU-Idaho Philosophical Society, we want to change incorrect paradigms in regards to philosophy; teach and learn truth together; provide a fun, wholesome atmosphere for people; and increase our knowledge and faith in God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and His Church.
THE FOUR PILLARS

The four pillars and principal goals of the Philosophical Society are to:

Increase the skills and abilities of students interested in philosophy by teaching correct paradigms and critical thinking skills, and by informing and introducing those new to the study of philosophy to the methods of philosophy as an academic and personal discipline.

Bring philosophy out of obscurity in terms of BYU-Idaho by providing an avenue of learning not just for students, but for faculty as well, and by encouraging interdisciplinary dialogue on relevant philosophical topics.

Bring BYU-Idaho out of obscurity in terms of philosophy in relation to other institutions of higher learning by promoting an exchange of debate and ideas between neighboring professors, students, and universities.

Provide a safe, wholesome atmosphere for individuals to meet new people, have fun, and make friends.
LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

The BYU–Idaho Philosophical Society is proud to present this first edition of *Elenchus*, the society’s new academic journal. In this inaugural edition, all content is original thought contributed by members of the society. In future editions, we hope this original content will be accompanied by responses and critiques of articles in past editions. In this manner, *Elenchus* will support the dialectical refinement of ideas suggested by its name.

Also, we would like to gratefully acknowledge the contributors who made this edition possible. Special thanks to the Philosophical Society presidency for soliciting interest in and promoting the publication of *Elenchus*; to Brian Merrill and Murray Hunt for their dedicated and insightful guidance and advice; to Aubrey Bjork for work in copyediting and design; and finally, to the members of the Philosophical Society themselves and other interested parties who contributed submissions or support to *Elenchus*.

Sincerely,

The Editors
Joseph Bjork
Oliver Carmack
Peter Carmack
Nathan Orgill
Submission Requirements

To those interested in future editions of *Elenchus*, we will consider submissions based on the following requirements:

- Submission must address a topic relevant to philosophy, such as metaphysics, ethics, logic, esthetics, and epistemology.
- Submissions should range between 1500-3500 words per essay. One submission per author will be considered for publication. Additional submissions will be considered for ensuing editions.
- Submissions must conform to Chicago style footnotes and include at least two philosophical sources. Also, submissions should follow Times New Roman, 12 pt., single-spaced format. Any essays submitted without proper formatting will be automatically be omitted from consideration.

To submit your work, contact the current editor of Elenchus via the Philosophical Society, Department of Humanities and Philosophy.

Sincerely,

The Philosphical Society presidency
Peter Carmack, President
Michael Snedaker, Vice President
Michelle Collingridge, Secretary
# Table of Contents

- Mission Statement ................................................................................................................. 2
- The Four Pillars ....................................................................................................................... 3
- Letter From the Editors ........................................................................................................... 4
- Submission Requirements ........................................................................................................ 5

- An Odyssey of Theodicy, Jakob Adona .................................................................................... 7
- Philosophy of Liberty: A Response, Chris Baker ...................................................................... 10
- Mortal Economy, Joseph Bjork .................................................................................................. 15
- Four Necessary Conditions of Chalmer’s Conception of Consciousness, Oliver Carmack ....... 19
- The Illusion of Scientific Realism: An Argument for Scientific Soft Antirealism, Peter Carmack ........................................................................................................................................... 27
- The Need for Civil Disobedience, Kaylee Foster ..................................................................... 34
- The Dialectical Interplay of Reason and Passion In the Possibility of Faith, Aaron Trappett .... 38
Philosophers of religion, specifically theist philosophers, have provided many arguments for the existence of God. These arguments range from the cosmological argument to the ontological argument, including the teleological argument. Although these are very fine arguments for the existence of God, that have been argued for and against in various manners, there is a more pressing problem in philosophy of religion that eventually needs to be addressed by any believer in God, pertaining to the existence of God and the existence of evil. This problem is known as the problem of evil, which presents itself in two forms, the logical problem of evil, and the evidential problem of evil. While the main goal of this essay is to provide possible theodicy for the logical problem of evil, a quick overview of both will help clarify the target.

Both the evidential and the logical problem of evil provide a widely agreed on definition of God, that is, a God who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. This means that the God who is all powerful, all seeing, and all good, is the God whose existence is questioned by the problem of evil. God knows of all evil, has the power to stop all evil, and has a duty to stop all evil it can. Yet, as we can clearly see, through acts such a genocide, starvation, and other needless causes of pain and suffering, evil still exists. So, the problem concludes, God cannot exist.

The problems diverge in the certainty that God does not exist. While the evidential problem of evil claims to simply to show that it is highly likely that God does not exist, the logical problem of evil says that it is impossible. Since it is harder to address the evidential problem of evil, this essay will focus on possible solutions for the logical problem of evil,1 that is, this essay is meant to show that there is a possibility under which God and evil can coexist, without undermining one of the attributes of God.

To further clarify what this essay is for, one more distinction is necessary. There are two types of evil, the first is moral evil, and the second is natural evil. Moral evil is evil created by what is known as moral agents, that is, willing human beings. Take, for example, a man who murders his wife, versus a man who lost his wife due to cancer or some other natural event. The man who murders his wife, being a moral agent, committed an act of moral evil, while the man who lost his wife to cancer did nothing wrong, however cancer is considered the evil.

While moral evil is evil perpetrated by moral agents, natural evil is evil that occurs because of something in nature. Take Rowe’s example of a fawn,2 in which a fawn is trapped in a burning forest, the fawn dies in burning agony, while God apparently just stands by. But that was not because God is powerless to save the fawn, nor did God not
know the fawn’s agony, he simply just let it happen. Those who present the problem of evil would argue that any good creature would have done anything in its power to help the fawn, and God had all the power needed to do so. Therefore, either God is not all good, or he does not exist. While natural evil needs to be addressed at some later point, perhaps through pastoral care,3 providing a theodicy for moral evil is the ultimate goal of this essay.

Now that the problem has been presented, a solution must also be given. The solution is what is known as a theodicy, or a justification of God, theodicies are supposed to show a reason that God would allow evil. For example, one of the more famous attempts states that God cannot banish evil from the world because to do so would be contradictory to humans having free will, this type of theodicy has been called the Augustinian theodicy, or the free will theodicy. Although the Augustinian theodicy is perhaps the more famous, others still exist, such as the Ireanaean theodicy, also known as the soul making theodicy.4

The Ireanaean theodicy gets its name from Saint Irenaeus and part of his theology, in creation serves the purpose of progressing humans to the point of being closer to God. This progression of the soul is analogous to evolution, that is, through certain events and undergoing trials unwanted parts of the soul dissipate, while more desirable traits emerge. For example, while some men have a disposition to do evil, experiencing aspects of that life involving such evil may become a good thing, as the disposition turns into a feeling of disgust, or a desire to do good. Thus, something evil at the start of creation becomes something good in the end, which is the person’s will.

While human beings are in the likeness of God as a material being, the ultimate goal is to be in the likeness of God as an ethical being. Despite the fact that human beings evolved beyond using tools in minute ways, creating things such as cars to travel fast distances, or computers to share information even those same distances even faster, they are still prone to base emotions such as wrath, lust, envy, greed, or other selfish wants and desires. A truly God-like being would be able to move past those, and find a way to use them for the better.

Having the ability to experience these emotions and actions is vital for being able to use them for good. Understanding how to use the emotion of lust, turning it into love, brings us closer to understanding how God loves. But simply having such emotions does not automatically make us able to use them for good. Just like we had to learn, evolve, and adapt to use the tools we use today, our souls must understand how to use the thoughts and emotions it has for a higher purpose, rather than a base need.

An atheist or presenter of the problem of evil may argue against the Ireanaean theodicy by stating that God could have created determined individuals at the start, and circumvent evil from the start. After all, a determined individual and a free individual who choose the same action have chosen the same good, a husband who murders his wife, has still murder his wife, whether the choice was determined and free. If a God exists, then it would have been better for him to make human beings determined to do good, rather than create them free and run the risk of people like Hitler, Stalin, Genghis Khan, etc. The benefit of making a being determined is it can be programed to always choose good over evil.
However, a determined choice is not at all the same as a free choice. The major difference is a determined choice has no possibility of doing anything than what it was determined to be, it is not a choice, and a determined being cannot be blamed as much as the free being – the free being is responsible for its actions, while a determined one has its origin to thank. Note that this argument is not about the existence of determined being, or even the logical necessity of freedom, but that a free being is morally superior to that of a determined one, by way of being more responsible.

Imagine some human created a program that sorted through peoples money, and made it so they saved on needless expenses. Since the program is determined to find the best route, it is doing good. However, the program itself is not responsible for the money it saved, it was just programed to do so. People can thank the creator for script the program runs on. But, suppose the script malfunctions and people start to lose money because of it. The determined program cannot be held responsible for the faulty script, only the creator.

Perhaps it is better to contrast the actions of a free being versus that of a determined one. Suppose that a driver of a car has the choice between crossing over train tracks, right as the train was coming, or rushing over them, hoping to cross before the train hits the car. Obviously, the train cannot do anything about it, it is on rails, the path is determined. If the car tries to cross, the trained cannot be blamed if it hits the car, it has no control over its actions. However, if an accident happens, and the driver gets hit while crossing the tracks, he is to blame for his bad decision.

The point being, is anyone who makes an accident can only be blamed if the choice was free. This means that freedom is a vital part of the Irenaeian theodicy, because without it the choices human beings would not matter; they would have been made by God, and creation would not matter. In order to become like God, we must be free, so as to make our souls more responsible for our actions, which would happen if we were simply determined.

On top of this, we are better learners when we are free, as an experiment, cited by John Hick, and done by Held and Heim explains. As the experiment goes, there were two kittens of the same litter, and placed in the same environment. While one kitten was free to explore, the other kitten was suspended on a sort of gondola. What the experiment found was that the free kitten was able to learn better using its own freedom and intelligence, and the gondola kitten was unable to explore the environment freely. Thus, we see the importance of free will. There were two kittens of the same litter, and placed in the same environment. While one kitten was free to explore, the other kitten was suspended on a sort of gondola. What the experiment found was that the free kitten was able to learn better using its own freedom and intelligence, and the gondola kitten was unable to explore the environment freely. Thus, we see the importance of free will.

So, evil is necessary because it helps us understand how to do good, and we can only be responsible for that good if we are free. While we are at this stage, we suffer evil in order to learn to do good, to burn away our impurities and learn to be more like God. Freedom grants us knowledge we could not have if we were simply determined, and it gives us more responsibility with it.
To its critics, liberty is an over-used, misunderstood term of oversimplification. “What,” they ask deridingly, “is liberty supposed to protect people? If we just gave people unbridled liberty, what’s to stop them from murdering each other?” This is a childish way of approaching the concept of liberty. However, critics and supporters alike can agree that the term liberty is over-used, and as a result it seems, very misunderstood. But the critique that if people were just given their liberty, they would do terrible things to each other is a very Hobbesian way of looking at it. Thomas Jefferson said it best when he said “Of liberty I would say that, in the whole plenitude of its extent, it is unobstructed action according to our will. But rightful liberty is unobstructed action according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others.” What does this mean? Essentially, it means my arm swing ends where your nose begins. And this is a very important concept. When a society decides it wants to base itself off of the principles of liberty, what is meant is that the individuals are free to live their lives as they choose, so long as they do not infringe upon the liberties of another. In accepting these principles, liberty becomes an ethic, an ought to, a way in which a just society can be built. To illustrate this, I will define liberty. Afterwards, I will present (due to length and time constraints) two well-known and famous court cases in United States’ history, describe how the rulings violated liberty (or did not utilize the simple concept of liberty as it should have), and then describe how a society based on the principles of liberty would’ve ruled in those cases. This is to show that liberty is not just an abstract idea that looks good on paper, but is, in actuality, a concrete and applicable principle – one that is actually very just, in fact. Let’s start with defining liberty.

“Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. For enlightenment of this kind, all that is needed is freedom. And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all: freedom to make public use of one’s reason in all manners.” Immanuel Kant

Liberty. What does it mean? A simple perusing from dictionary.com has five common definitions given. Of those five (the fifth deals with sailors, specifically – as in, it’s the sailor’s adaptation of the word for nautical purposes), four start with this: “Freedom from...” This is important when understanding the nature of liberty. Liberty isn’t, and shouldn’t be, a positive force in someone’s life. Instead, and is shown by not only dictionary.com, but countless thinkers and political philosophers, liberty is a negative force. In other words, man is at liberty when he is not intruded upon by others. One
is not granted liberty. They have liberty, until such force attempts to take it. Why is this distinction – between negative and positive liberty – important? Because this will influence how a liberty-based society is set up and ran. It will provide the basis for a just government (if there is even one), and the grounds for freedom in a given community. Consequently, the concept of law, which exists in a liberty based society, will be negative in its approach as well. This occurs to keep the society consistent with the principles of liberty. If law is positive, it will necessarily trample on liberty. When answering why law should not be positive in nature, the French philosopher Frederic Bastiat said:

“We must remember that law is force, and consequently, the proper functions of the law cannot lawfully extend beyond the proper functions of force. When law and force keep a person within the bounds of justice, they impose nothing but mere obligation. They oblige him only to abstain from harming others. They violate neither his personality, his liberty, nor his property. They safeguard all of these. They are defensive; they defend equally the rights of all...But when law, by means of its necessary agent, force, imposes upon men a regulation of labor, a method or a subject of education, a religious faith or creed – then the law is no longer negative; it acts positively upon the people...When this happens, the people no longer need to discuss, to compare, to plan ahead; the law does all this for them. Intelligence becomes a useless prop for the people; they cease to be men; they lose their personality, their liberty, and their property.”

A liberty-based society seeks out and utilizes concepts in ways similar to its own – namely, those principles which are negative in nature. Therefore, the critique that a liberty-based society is virtually a lawless society is not true. A liberty-based society has laws that prevent the intrusion of liberty by others onto others.

How can we know if an act or law infringes upon someone’s liberty then? If we are to make laws in support of this idea, the society must be able to recognize when liberty is compromised. For this, I propose a series of three questions, to help us determine if liberty is being violated.

1. Does the person have the ability to choose otherwise? Is an actual choice present?
2. Is forced used to make someone do something they do not want to do, without equal opportunity to do otherwise?
3. Does someone’s or some group’s choice necessarily violate the liberty of another? In other words, if you choose to murder someone, is the person whom you are murdering experiencing a violation of their liberty? If you steal from someone or defraud them in anyway, do you disturb that person’s liberty?

If the answer to the first question of a person being able to choose otherwise is “yes,” then you can know that nobody’s liberty is being violated. This is because when something is presented to the individual, a response in the positive or negative have equal opportunity. If the answer to the second question is “yes,” we can know that liberty is indeed being violated because force takes away a person’s ability to choose for themselves between two or more options. If the answer to the third question of a choice necessarily violating someone else’s liberty is “yes,” we can now easily determine that horrible offenses like rape, murder, slavery, theft, fraud, deceit, or anything like those listed, among others, are gross violations of the principles of
liberty. From this, is it possible to see in real life how a liberty-based society would rule in complex court cases? Can a liberty-based society (or the philosophy that governs it) actually be more than just a pretty concept on paper?

In the case of Reynolds v. United States, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that a law banning polygamy did not infringe upon a citizen's first amendment right to the free exercise of religion. In this case, George Reynolds, married to Mary Ann Tuddenham, also married a woman by the name of Amelia Jane Schofield, as part of their religious faith; all three were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In his argument for the unanimous majority, Chief Justice Waite brought up a number of rhetorical arguments to show that complete liberty in exercising religion is wrong for society. One such technique was to ask a similar question this paper has spent a great deal of time criticizing. Justice Waite asked "Suppose one believed that human sacrifices were a necessary part of religious worship, would it be seriously contended that the civil government under which he lived could not interfere to prevent a sacrifice?" It's essentially the same critique from above – "If you give people unbridled liberty, won't they just murder each other?" Our first task is to see if this critique holds up. From earlier in the writing, it is clear that it does not. However, we will now employ the set of questions designed to test if anybody's liberties are being offended.

1. In relation to polygamy, does the second wife have the option to not marry, if she so chooses? Yes, she does. Nobody said she had to marry Mr. Reynolds. And she is free to marry another, should they agree to it. In this sense, the answer to the first question surrounding liberty is "yes." Liberty has not been violated.

2. Was force used to make the second wife marry Mr. Reynolds? No. Mrs. Schofield was well within her liberty to make the decision for herself, by herself. No one's liberty was violated.

3. Does someone else's, or some groups', choice, in this case – the Supreme Court choosing to uphold a law banning polygamous relationships – infringe upon another's liberty – in this case, Mrs. Shofield's choice to marry Mr. Reynolds, or Mr. Reynolds living his religion to marry multiple wives? Yes, it does. In fact, this ruling is a gross violation of Mr. Reynolds liberty.

Based on these answers to the simple questions listed above, we can see here that Mr. Reynolds has done nothing wrong, in the context of liberty. Instead, the Supreme Court (and by extension, Congress for passing the law in the first place) have unjustly infringed upon Mr. Reynolds liberty. With this, I am reminded of the second part of the Thomas Jefferson quote which I used in the opening paragraph, which continues with "I do not add 'within the limits of the law,' because law is often but the tyrant's will, and always so when it violates the right of an individual." Clearly, the United States government has acted in the role of tyrant in this case. The liberty-based society, with law set up as to prevent others from harming each other, would've ruled quite simply, if even recognizing the need to see the case without tossing it out. The ruling would've been thus: "No individual liberties are lost by Mr. Reynolds practicing his religion. Neither for himself, his first wife, or his second. It is not within the bounds of this society to make laws for the private individual practicing his religion
peaceably when no noticeable showing of hostility or disturbance of liberty has been accounted for. Therefore, Mr. Reynolds and his family are allowed to continue to practice their religion as best as they see fit, so long as it continues not to intrude on the liberties of another.”

The second case I will talk about is the famous case of Brown v. Board of Education. This case dealt with “Jim Crow” laws, which allowed for segregation of public utilities based on race. Specifically, Brown was a third grader who attempted to attend an elementary school in Topeka, Kansas, which subsequently told her she could not attend due to her race. The NAACP took the case to the Supreme Court, where the law was overturned, and racial segregation done away with. The Supreme Court's argument dealt with the appropriate application of the 14th amendment, the equal protection amendment, and how segregation did not allow for truly equal facilities between the two races. As it pertains to the ruling in this case, a liberty-based society would agree with the ruling. However, it’s the argument that would be challenged. The logic of the argument itself was not incorrect, but rather, would’ve been better served had it utilized the parsimonious concepts of liberty, which is and should be common to us all. Again, let us turn to our set of questions to determine if the original Jim Crow laws were violations of liberty, to see how a liberty-based society would’ve ruled.

1. Does the person have the ability to choose otherwise? In this case, does the girl (Brown) have the ability to choose to go to another school? Granted, she does. Even though she was banned from the school of her choice, it’s not that she had no choice for another school. So here, her liberty has not been violated. But remember, if only one of the questions results in a negative, we can show that her liberty was violated.

2. Is forced used to make someone do something they do not want to do, without equal opportunity to do otherwise? Was force used? Yes, the little girl was forced from the school of her choosing for something as arbitrary as the color of her skin. Did she have equal opportunity elsewhere, such as at a school specifically designed for black children? No, she did not. At this time, it was well documented that facilities allowed for black people to use were well-below average, under-funded, and typically in complete disrepair. It is obvious here then that Brown’s liberty was indeed violated.

3. Does someone’s or some group’s choice necessarily violate the liberty of another? Yes. In this case, the Jim Crow laws passed by the United States congress specifically prevents others from exercising their liberty; in this case, to choose to go to the school of their choosing. Jim Crow laws were passed with the specific intent to segregate the races into “separate but equal” facilities. Not only did these laws fail in this regard, but they are based purely on anti-liberty philosophies. Race and all the ensuing and unnecessary drama aside, these laws were bad if for nothing else than because Brown’s liberty has been grossly violated.

“The highest manifestation of life consists of this: that a being governs its own actions. A thing which is always subject to the direction of another is somewhat of a dead thing.” St. Thomas Aquinas
In conclusion, liberty is a word thrown around very liberally in today’s society, and is not often understood as often as it is used. This is a sad thing. This essay is an attempt to define liberty, to help people understand what it truly is, and to help people recognize when it has been violated. Liberty defined is the ability to live the life you choose, so long as you do not violate the liberty of others. This kind of liberty is negative in nature, meaning it does not act upon you, so much as you already, naturally, have it, until some force attempts to take it from you. This then necessitates the need for negative law in society – laws set up to prevent the violation of liberty by others. Frederic Bastiat was a brilliant philosopher in this regard, and his words should be looked to for the basis of such thinking. In helping us to recognize if liberty has been violated, three questions were proposed. These questions are designed with the express purpose of illuminating abuses of liberty where they exist, and throwing out false accusations of abuses of liberty. They are parsimonious on purpose. Liberty, as powerful a principle as it is, is actually quite simple, and applies to all equally. This is shown in the two courts cases presented, Reynolds v. United States and Brown v. Kansas. In these cases, the individuals’ liberties were grossly violated, in more ways than one. Utilizing the principles and ethics of liberty, this was proven, and the appropriate ruling presented. Through all of this, liberty isn’t simply an abstract idea, or something that sounds nice, but isn't practical. Liberty is a powerful tool in the hands of the individual, and is designed to protect and sustain lives, property, and the happiness of the individuals who live it. Societies can be built around the principles of liberty. And the critique that such a society would allow for miscreants, law-breakers, and criminals to reign free simply doesn’t hold up. Law can be maintained. In America, where even the United States government can pass laws that limit the freedom of its citizens, this idea is more important than ever. In the words of another famous French philosopher Albert Camus, “The freedom of each finds its limits in that of others; no one has the right to absolute freedom. The limit where freedom begins and ends, where its rights and duties come together, is called law. And the State itself must bow to the Law.”

The purpose of this paper is to prove a single point: that the very fact of mortality, that is to say finiteness, excludes all human endeavor from the possibility of having any meaning. Simply put, immortality is a necessary condition for meaning. I shall approach this topic sequentially from the concept of meaning, through the various methods by which mortals attempt to obtain it for themselves, the shared problem with all those methods, a discussion of the absence of eternity, and finally the necessary implication of this conditional: if human beings have any meaning, then the soul must be immortal.

Meaning is a slippery pig. The “meaning” of a word is the associated concept which the word is used to convey. Thus, words derive their meanings from the purposes they serve, the associated concept. But even in daily parlance, not all words are equally meaningful, nor all conversations. This second sense of the word “meaning,” which would mark a disparity between a “your mama” joke and a sincere discussion concerning the nature of reality, shares the same fundamental features with the “meaning” described in the former sense. This “meaning” is also derived from purposes served, but it introduces a new element: that of the value or quality of the purpose that it serves. This qualification presents a challenge. The meaning of a word or conversation is dependent on the value of the thing which it serves. Human meaning works in the same way. The meaning of a human life is related to the purpose which it serves. If that purpose has value, the human life has meaning. If the purpose has no value, then the human life has no meaning. What this means is that if nothing has value, or if value does not exist, then human life is meaningless.

Let us draw a line here between the concept of value and the action of valuing. I value many things, many of which have little, if any, real value. It is possible to value (verb) things which have no real value (abstract noun). The difference lies in whether there is any good reason to pursue something. If I value green rocks, I can have one of two reasons for doing so. The first is that I have arbitrarily decided to do so, and the other is because there is a good reason for doing so. In the second case, the green rocks have value because there is a reason, outside of my arbitrary desires, to value them. Green rocks as an end to my existence would prove problematic. If my goal is to collect a pile of special green rocks or to get a certain green rock, then the source of my meaning is mortal and, therefore, inadequate as a source of meaning.

All material objects are, theoretically at least, attainable, and so too with emotional or
experiential objects. This attainability forces the object of one’s meaning to transfer from the completed object to some other object or else suffer meaninglessness. If the first object is attained, then in the interim between a purposeful, meaningful existence directed toward the first object and the next object is one of temporary meaninglessness. Consider the athlete who has trained for her entire life to go for the gold medal in the Olympic Games and then succeeds. The goal for her training and her life is now fulfilled and completed. This transference of meaning from the first object to the second raises the problem again of objective meaning. Though the objects here involved are in a sense “objective” in their being objects, the manner in which they come to be so established raises the problem of the arbitrary will. Why, or, for what reason did the individual pursue the first object, and for what reason the second? Any attainable, or finite, end will prove insufficient as an object of meaning. The first object can no longer draw the individual toward it because it is completed and cannot be served. The objective end of meaning cannot be finite, so it must be something infinite. The strength of Hedonism’s argument, that happiness is the only thing with truly innate value, stems precisely from this criterion of non-finiteness. Happiness is a bottomless pit. One can serve happiness as an end without ever reaching a stopping point where more happiness is not possible. It is a “moving end” with the appearance of the infinite.

However, the problem of arbitrariness remains. If a human being makes choices and has experiences, they either have a good reason for doing so or they do not. Regarding Hedonism, it was John Stuart Mill himself who said that “Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof” in his “Utilitarianism.” He continued:

“Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof. The medical art is proved to be good, by its conducing to health; but how is it possible to prove that health is good? The art of music is good, for the reason, among others, that it produces pleasure; but what proof is it possible to give that pleasure is good? If, then, it is asserted that there is a comprehensive formula, including all things which are in themselves good, and that whatever else is good, is not so as an end, but as a mean, the formula may be accepted or rejected, but is not a subject of what is commonly understood by proof.”

Hedonism, in its preoccupation with “ends” misses one critical point. Though happiness seems a bottomless pit and has qualities of the infinite which render it a contender for the objective source of meaning, it ends with death. If all human beings are mortal, then no human being will ever know if happiness can continue as the ultimate end forever. For all human beings, happiness ends, and if that happiness was the source of meaning, then the meaning disappears with it.

Again, the problem of mortality in the pursuit of meaning is found in the moment of death. The individual, having pursued happiness, autonomy, personal development, and any other moving ends (because one can always go further in any of these) may have achieved very high levels in all of these and yet be reduced to meaninglessness;

the individual dies. At that moment, if the individual truly ceases with his or her last expiration, all progress, happiness, and autonomy permanently cease. This makes the net progress along the track to meaning to be nil. There is only meaning in the pursuit of the ultimate infinite end. When the pursuit ends, the meaning is gone retroactively from the entire venture; whatever progress has been made, being finite, is infinitely less than the progress needed to achieve the end and thus adds up to nothing. Sisyphus has pushed the rock near the top, only to be permanently crushed as it rolls inexorably to the bottom.

The Existentialist argues that meaning is derived from the self. According to this theory, there is no real reason for human existence outside of ourselves; our lives are essentially pointless, so we become the masters of our own meaning by inventing our own reasons. According to the Existentialist view, meaning is an invented fiction which exists only in the belief of the viewer. Though this approach is laudable in its effort to create meaning from whole cloth, it falls irrevocably short because the meaning is self-determined, i.e. there is no real reason for the valuing, i.e. there is no value. Unfortunately for the Existentialist, meaning cannot be found looking inward. Therefore, if it is to be found at all, its source must be found looking outward.

Richard Taylor attempts to defend the Existentialist position. His article, “The Meaning of Life” also posits, parallel to this argument, that the meaning of life must be a process rather than an end to be achieved. However, Taylor’s claim that meaning is self-derived fatally raises the problem of arbitrariness: “The meaning of life is from within us, it is not bestowed from without, and it far exceeds in both its beauty and permanence any heaven of which men have ever dreamed or yearned for.” The key words here are “from within us.” This vision of meaning is not found in the pursuit of a specific end, but in a contentment with the present condition of mere existence.

His argument is that all living things have a nature to do a certain thing and that to achieve some final end would negate the beauty of living and consign that being to eternal boredom, a fate he considers the worst kind of hell. He declares rather, that “the point of living is simply to be living, in the manner that it is your nature to be living.” There are several problems with this vision of life and its source of meaning which we will use as a launching point. The first is that the meaning with which Taylor concerns himself is of species, not of individuals. The second is that Taylor correctly identifies eternal continuance as a condition of any living thing having meaning, but incorrectly assumes that living things have eternity to work with.

Now we return again to the single greatest problem which faces humans in the search for meaning. We die. We are, by definition, mortal. Whether soon or late, all human beings eventually stop breathing and their bodies decay away. If, as is commonly believed, this thing called death is permanent, then many potential sources of meaning dry up without any hope of redemption. For example, if I say that my reason for living is to stay alive, then I will fail miserably someday. Likewise if my goal is to become a doctor to find meaning in

3 Ibid
saving lives, then a long-term analysis will show a 100% failure rate. If the timeline is expanded further, then monuments of stone, literature, philosophy, and every other human achievement will eventually be forgotten and become dust. If expanded further, then even parenthood and education cease to have meaning as (whether by plague, black-hole, supernova, or the reverse of the big bang) humanity and all other species with which we associate will eventually go extinct. The class of living beings itself shares in the mortality of its members.

This is where someone might have trouble with my thesis. The response of this person might be something similar to the following: “I agree with you that people die, but that doesn’t mean that life is meaningless, it just means that you have to use the time you have well. Life is like a bank account. You only have so much time, so you need to spend it well, because when it is gone, it’s gone.” This view concedes the dire nature of mortality but draws an unacceptably naïve conclusion. It assumes that there is good in a well-spent mortal life. The trouble with the “wise spending” analogy is that you don’t actually get anything with your time, and you couldn’t take it with you if you did (assuming that life ends permanently with death). All life is saving and building up to the end that never happens. If it is an end that ends, then it is not the true end, and we don’t have any ends that don’t end. The cost of meaning is infinite, and no human has that kind of cash.

A loan won’t do either. The progression of humankind and its perpetuation cannot answer this problem of meaning for reasons briefly described earlier. Not only do civilizations crumble, but entire species fall prey to entropy and extinction. Eventually this will be the fate of humanity. Whether by disease or war or asteroid-strike, all humankind will eventually end. Even if we manage to escape this world and populate the stars, we will fall victims to their mortality as the stars themselves die or the universe collapses back in on itself. To be certain of the end of humanity, one need look no further than the fact of its having begun. All that begins, ends, and whether now or later makes not a whit of difference.

This argument has attacked the traditional sources of meaning and continuance. The paper has shown every human endeavor to be insufficient to produce meaning if humanity is, in fact, mortal. This leaves us with a conditional: if life is not eternal, then it has no meaning. However, stating that immortality is the necessary condition of meaning is only a refutation of meaning if human life genuinely is mortal. The conditional as written also implies another: if life has meaning, then humans are (in one form or another) immortal. Thus, if life is meaningful at all, then the current state of human knowledge is incomplete, because we are not truly mortal.
I. Introduction
Many have attempted to tackle the problem of consciousness in an effort to discover why some beings—namely humans—are consciousness and others are not. Some have argued that the essence of consciousness will always evade our greatest attempts to explain it; yet others believe consciousness is a vital part of our human experience and thus we can discover the mysteries behind it. David J. Chalmers is one such believer who has done much to enlighten our understanding of consciousness. The aim of this paper is to explore four implications of Chalmers definition of consciousness. To understand these implications we must turn to Chalmers definition of consciousness.

II. Chalmers and Consciousness: What it is like to experience or to be
In his book The Character of Consciousness, Chalmers explains the essence of consciousness that has hitherto been a mystery to us. Chalmers reveals that “consciousness is what it is like to experience or to be.” That is, what it is like for me to experience a performance of Hamlet? What is it like for a bird to be a itself? Or what is it like for you to read this paper? Hence Chalmers definition of consciousness is what it is like to experience or to be. Thus, in many respects, consciousness according to Chalmers is subjective. Though much can be said on this and other aspects of Chalmers work, my purpose in this paper is to suggest to the reader some of the implications that arise from Chalmers definition. In other words, in this paper I am granting Chalmers definition of consciousness and my aim is to explore some of the implications of this theory. I will argue that four things are necessary for consciousness to exist if consciousness is indeed what it is like to experience or to be. That is, I argue that four conditions must be met or present in order for the unity we experience in our consciousness to exist. By unity I mean the seemingly flawless cooperation between elements and faculties that make up consciousness to bring about a conscious experience, namely, what it is like to experience. I purpose that there are at least four necessary components to this unity of consciousness: the physical senses, desires, emotions, and reason. Each of these necessary components will be addressed in this paper. The first of these conditions or elements is mentioned by Chalmers and seems to be uncontroversial. Because this element of consciousness seems to be obvious I will not spend much time on it, though it

1 The Character of Consciousness, Chalmers, pg. 78
is an essential aspect of consciousness, as you will see.

III. The Senses

If consciousness is what it is like to experience or to be, then we must have a method of being aware of our experience and our being. The most apparent system of awareness we have is that of our physical senses. Thus, the physical senses of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch are all integrally related to consciousness. Without them we would not be aware of our world nor our place in it. Therefore, consciousness—what it is like to experience or to be—could not be obtained. Though it seems that our physical senses do play a prominent role in our awareness of our experience, some have wondered if they are the only methods or modes of perception we employ. These individuals suggest that perhaps there are other "sense" we possess that enable us to be aware of our experience and being. Some have suggested spiritual, other-worldly, and subconscious abilities that could explain (at least in part) our consciousness. In other words, these other modes of perception also help or play a role in what it is like for us to experience or be.

Yet, this talk of physical awareness and possible other modes of perception give rise to an important question: can consciousness exist without the physical senses of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch? In other words, can we know or experience what something is like without having some kind of physical sense of that experience? This question leads us to a thought experiment that may help us answer this perplexing question.

Thought Experiment: Surgery and Anesthesia

A man is fatally wounded in a car crash and is rushed to the emergency room where operators are desperately trying to save his life. They sedate him or “put him under” with the help of Anesthesia. The man becomes aware of himself and his surroundings three days later. He has no memory or inclination of what happened during the three days but suddenly he finds himself sitting at his kitchen table eating yogurt. He asks himself the perplexing question: “how did I get into the kitchen to eat yogurt when the last thing I remember I was swerving off the road?” Now the question is, did this man experience what it is like to be himself during these three days? In other words, did he experience consciousness according to Chalmers?

It appears that he did not. That is, the man was not conscious: he had no ability to know what it was like to experience his surgery. Yet some might say that just because he wasn’t aware of it doesn’t mean he didn’t experience his surgery. But this objection is overcome by the nature of Chalmers definition of consciousness itself: what it is like to experience. The questions is not whether someone else, say the surgeons or the man’s family members, had experiences of the man having surgery, but the man did was not aware of these subjective experiences. In other words, the man had no way of representing these subjective experiences to himself and thus did not have them. In a way, this points to the metaphysical theory of Idealism, which argues if we do not perceive it (sense it in any way) then it (the thing we perceive) does not exist. But what we are saying here is a little different than this broad sense of Idealism. All we are saying is that the man did not perceive what it was like to have surgery, which does not mean that it did not happen. Perhaps this is all that needs to be said on the matter. Yet, some may still feel unsatisfied
with this argument. This is perhaps because the objection asks a fundamental question about the very nature of experience itself—a topic that is outside the scope of this paper.

This thought experiment seems to show that the physical senses serve as a kind of switch for our consciousness: if they are impaired or do not function at all, then we do not experience consciousness. In other words, if our senses are “on” or functioning, then we experience consciousness, if our senses are “off” or do not function, then we do not experience consciousness. These being the case, then the physical senses are necessary conditions for consciousness.

Now that we understand why the physical senses are a necessary condition of Chalmers theory of consciousness, we can now move on to illustrate the other three conditions. The next condition to be explored is the role of our desires in consciousness.

IV. Desires

Desires (or the will) are the process through which we form our ends. Why are desires the thing that forms our ends? Well, simply because we would not do something unless we desired it in some way. This is especially true in terms our ends: they are the thing (s) that has intrinsic value, the thing we do all other things to gain. In other words, desires form our ends because whatever our intrinsic value is (our end) is the thing we desire most. Our intrinsic value could not be something that we did not desire, though to achieve it we may have undesirable experiences. So, our desires ultimately form our ends, and our ends determine the value of our experience. For, without ends, there is no value. Without value there is no meaningful distinction between the objects of our experience. In addition, if there is no distinction between objects, everything is the same; there is no way to say how X is different from Y, therefore they are the same. Thus, without ends which are determined by our desires, we could not say what it is like to experience or to be, and therefore there is no consciousness. If what I have said above is true, then desires form the foundation of consciousness or what it is like to experience or to be. To understand how why this is, let us take each section and explore it briefly.

**Ends, Value, and Meaning**

The idea that desires are what form our ends is controversial. Some philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Kant argue that reason is the faculty by which we form our ends—they even claim that reason ought to fulfill this role. Yet, I take the position of David Hume which sums up in his own words: “Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them.” Yet, like Hume I do “not claim that reason has no role in human action, but rather that its role is an auxiliary one; the motivating force behind an action must come from passion.” I do not intent to argue by what means our ends are formed—that is a topic for another day. But to make my position clear on how our ends are formed, I have cited Hume with the hopes that my position will be clear in order that I may argue that desires (or passions as Hume uses the term) are a necessary condition for consciousness.

I stated above that our ends determine our values. How this is accomplished is simple: our desires tell us what we value and therefore we have

---

2 Hume, David, *Treatise of Human Nature*, pg 415
3 Denis, Lara, ”Kant and Hume on Morality”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
“a point of reference” so to speak, and we are able to distinguish other phenomenon in relation to what we desire. So, our ends tell us what we value and give us a basis from which we can evaluate our experience. Also, our ends serve as a way to distinguish experiences from one another—object X is in line with our ends and object Y is not. However, there may be instances (perhaps many) were we are unsure how to evaluate our experiences in relation to our ends. That is, we may not know how object X fits into our paradigm of values. In these instances, we certainly do our best to come to some conclusion of why object X is or is not in line with our ends. Ultimately we must choose, even if we are not sure, but we evaluate the object using our “best considered opinion.”

This leads us to an important objection to the view I have discussed above. Some argue that it is the nature of the objects themselves, and the apparent differences between them, like color, shape, and size etc., that allow us to make distinctions between the objects of our experience. This seems to be true, but I am not arguing that desires and ends create the inherent distinctions between objects, but that they form the meaning these objects have to us in our life. Our ends tell us what the objects in our experience mean to us and these are the kind differences that truly matter. Without ends (however great or small) we cannot say X is better or greater because there is no standard to make that judgment. Therefore, we must have some kind of end—a standard—by which to judge the objects of our experience. Those judgments are what we mean when we say “experience X is like ____ to me.” That is, experience X has some value in relation to our ends.

Consciousness according to Chalmers is not simply that we are aware of things around us (though this is an necessary condition of consciousness) but what these things are like to us. In other words, I believe we can interpret Chalmers as saying that consciousness is what our experience means to us individually. So, what experience is like to me equates to what experience means to me. Therefore, if our desires form our ends (and our ends form the basis for value and meaning), then individual desires are a necessary condition of consciousness.

V. Emotions: Our Value System in Action

All of us experience emotions on a daily basis in varying degrees. Emotions are very much a part of what makes our experiences unique or personal to us. If consciousness is what experience is like or means to us, then emotions play a necessary part in this experience. In fact, emotions could be said to be our personal touch with our experiences. That is, perhaps the greatest subjective influence we experience while engaging our world is our personal emotions and reactions to the world. But how exactly do emotions play a role in consciousness? This question leads us to ask if we could say what experience X is like or means to me without emotions or feelings of any kind. In other words, could we know what something is like or what something means to us without some kind of emotion or feeling? I argue that one could not. Let us turn to a thought experiment to explore this point.

**Thought Experiment: Emily the Emotionless**

Imagine a woman—Emily—who has no emotions or feelings. All of her other faculties and

---

4 Ross, W.D., The Right and the Good, pg 15
abilities are in perfect order, but she cannot feel or experience emotions. The question is does Emily experience consciousness according to Chalmers? To answer this, we need to review what Emily does have in order to see if emotions truly are a necessary condition for Chalmers theory of consciousness to work. First, from our previous discussion, Emily has desires. These desires allow her to create her ends. Once Emily’s ends are in place, then her experience take on value and meaning. She is now ready to engage the world consciously, so to speak. Yet, even though she has these faculties, they are only partial servants in that there is no way to of her to interpret the value and meaning of her experience in relation to her ends. Just because she has value and meaning doesn’t indicate see can interpreted or understand them. Without emotions, Emily could not know what the value and meaning of her experience actually mean for her here and now in relation to her ends. In other words, she is stuck “in the void of the moment” as I like to say, and cannot see how her experience reflects her ends. So, we now have discovered perhaps the most crucial aspect of the nature of emotion: it is an ever running evaluating system. That is, our emotions are constantly influx (in different degrees of course). Now this leads us to understand that one of the reasons emotions have such a personal nature to them is because they are reactions to our experiences in relation to our ends. In other words, emotions are our reactions or interpretations of where we stand in our current circumstances relative to our ends. This is the vital functions emotions play: they are an interpretation device for our current life experience. Without emotions, our ends could not be achieved because we would always be in limbo of where we stand in relation to our ends. That is, our emotions tell us if we are closer to achieving our ends or not from moment to moment. In this way, our emotions could be as seen as some kind of Christian conscious which tells us whether we are in on or off the course set out by our ends. Yet, as many of us can attest, there may be many paths lead to the same place. A quick example of this is to draw a single dot (make it fairly large), then draw as many lines as you can (like rays) coming out of the dot. The dot represents an individual’s ultimate end and the rays or lines shooting out of it are the many paths one can take to achieve it. What this example shows is that there are many ways to achieve an end, though our emotions only tell us whether we are successful or unsuccessful in the current path we are endeavoring to take towards our ends. Our emotions do not say which path is the best to take; they only tell us how we are faring in the journey. Though emotions have this limitation, they still are a necessary condition of consciousness because they are the way in which we connect where we are now with our future ends. Yet, as is apparent, there must be a way to choose which path will be most effective to achieve our ends. Hence, another interpretation device is necessary in order to tell us which path we ought to take, or which is the most effective in achieving our ends: reason.

VI. Reason

Reason has long been the “god of the philosophers” as I like to say. That is, philosophers almost universally appeal to the reason as the standard of thinking, arguing, and action. Aristotle argued that because man is a rational being he is able to determine what his ends ought to be by reason. Kant takes a similar approach by saying that reason can and ought to tell us what we desire.
Yet, I disagree with Aristotle and Kant about the nature and role of reason in human action. Again, I do not wish to argue this point in depth (in and of itself it is a huge topic) but only to make it clear that my position on reason is. As I said before, I take a Humian view of reason. With this said, we can now understand how reason is a necessary part of consciousness or what it is like to experience.

Reason is the faculty that serves as an interpretation device, much like emotions, but whose function is to analyze all the data of an experience, then derives a course of action that advances us towards our ends. Reason puts all the variables of our experience together (at least to the best of its ability) and tries to plot a consistent course towards our ends. Therefore, the sole function of reason is to make decisions from the available information and to direct us towards our ends. Reason does not determine what our ends are, only how to achieve them. Again, this paper assumes a position on all of these issues (desires, ends, values, emotions, and reason) and does not try to argue why the view that has been assumed is more accurate, better, or preferable. The goal here is to show that by taking the stances I have taken in this paper on these issues, that they are necessary conditions to Chalmers theory of consciousness.

Let us now briefly discuss why reason is a necessary condition of consciousness. Though reason does not determine what we are after, or what our experience is like at the moment, it does tell us how our experience relates to all our past experience. In other words, reason takes all the experiences we have throughout the day and puts them together; with the result of making sense of them all (hopefully anyway) relative to what our ends are. One analogy that could be employed here (though it does have its problems) is that of a film: each experience we have during the day is like a picture, and when all the pictures are put together we have a story that flows together and we are able to understand how one picture relates to the next. In much of the same way, reason is because it would not know what current life is like. Second, emotions are able to assist reason (to some degree) in its endeavor of finding the best course to follow towards an end. For example, emotions such as anger and frustration often occur because we perceive (consciously or unconsciously; both of these terms are used in relation to awareness) some kind of obstruction or obstacle in our path. When someone wants to be loved (an end) and he is not receiving it or can't seem to find, achieve, or gain it, he often becomes angry. Emotions such as these (anger and frustration) can aid reason by showing it (reason) that the current course is not working well and needs to be altered somehow. So, reason and emotions working in tandem allow a person to better interpret what is happening in their life, how to make decisions about what to do next, and to advance towards and hopefully achieve their ends. That is why emotions cannot be replaced by reason, or why reason and emotions are both necessary conditions of consciousness.
constantly analyzing our current experiences in relation to our past trying to make sense of what we ought to do in the near future. Without reason, our experience would make little or no sense to us; it would be all “choppy” or disconnected. Reason allows us to look at our experience holistically, to make connections, and to see themes, and patterns etc. Therefore, our sense of being would be fleeting, even lost without reason because we could not hold on to what it means for me to read one word because I would experience a different word the next moment and the meaning of the first would be lost. In other words, reason holds everything together and allows us to understand our experience and ourselves in the moment and in the past. Without the cohesive presence of reason, consciousness could not exist because all meaning and the context of our past experience would disappear. With the disappearance of the meaning of past experience, things in the present would only have a rudimentary meaning at best, but it is most likely that they would hold no meaning for us (i.e. what it is like to experience them). This is because there would be nothing to contrast what it is like to experience something in that moment because all past meaning would be gone. For example, let us call your first experience A. Once new inputs are received, you now have experience B. But the meaning of experience B is determined by the context of experience A. If A disappears as soon as B arrives, then you B cease’s to have meaning, just as experience A had no meaning until experience B came along to contrast it. This basic examples shows why reason is necessary for consciousness to exist.

I would like to address two objections to my example of reason. First, some could argue that even if reason did play the role I am arguing for, it is unlikely that we would lose sight of experience A when experience B arrives. This may be so, but it is a cognitive fact that short term memory is only capable of retaining information for up to 20 seconds (that is the longest amount of time given, most cognitive scientists say that it is around 4 seconds). The second problem with this objection is that it is unclear how quickly new data or inputs are processed. The jump between experience A and experience B could be 0.00009 seconds or less. So it seems clear that something must hold our experiences of the world together. Perhaps, what I am suggesting is that memory (short and long term) are elements of reason. Suffice it to say, it is clear that if we do not have reason to hold our experience together from A to B, experience A will be gone and B will lose its meaning.

The second objection to my view is that experience is continuous. It is never broken up or segregated from itself, so there is no experience A and experience B—there is only experience. This objection is interesting but it completely destroys our natural dependents on time. If experience is continuous then there is no progression, no ends (because ends are something we are working towards) nor any sense of what experience A is versus experience B. In short, there is no what it is like because there is no it. There is nothing to distinguish our experiences from one another. Therefore, there is no individuality or uniqueness to anything we experience. Therefore, consciousness according to Chalmers is completely undermined. However, this objections does not seem plausible for the above reason because we do have a strong sense of individual experiences and of time. So,
we can conclude that reason is needed to make our experiences coherent thereby preserving past meaning and making future meaning possible. Therefore, reason is a necessary condition for consciousness like the physical senses, desires, and emotions.

**VII. Conclusion**

As a reminder, the purpose of this essay was to show that the senses, desires, emotions, and reason are necessary conditions of and form the unity of consciousness that we experience. It has been argued that each of these conditions must be present in order for consciousness—what it is like to experience—to exist. The physical senses are needed to know what it is like to experience because it seems that in our present state, the physical senses are our principle modality of awareness. If we are not aware of experience, then how can we know what that experience is like? So, it seems clear that without the physical senses we could not know what experience is like and thus we do not experience consciousness. Desires are necessary because they form our ends which create meaning for us. There is no what experience X is like without the meaning of experience X. Without desires to shape our ends, we could not derive meaning from our experience. Therefore, desires are necessary if we are to experience consciousness. Similarly, emotions tell us specifically what experience X is like in relation to our ends. So, emotions are our moment by moment “meaning interpreter.” Without emotions we could not experience meaning, or at least we could not interpret meaning after we have derived it through our desires. Our emotions tell us how experience X is like in relation to the meaning we have created through our desires. Therefore, without emotions, no experience would be like anything. Reason also interprets our experience in relation to our ends. It also holds our experience together in a coherent manner so that we can contrast experience X with experience Y and so on. Without reason all experience would be disconnected and we could not make inferences about the meaning of our experience. So, without reason, the unity of consciousness—consciousness period would unravel. Thus, reason is a necessary condition of consciousness—what it is like to experience. These four conditions, working together, form the unity of consciousness that we experience. Without one, consciousness would be lost.
Introduction

Throughout the history of science, arguments have emerged about science’s ability or non-ability to actually describe reality. Some may be tempted to think from the outset that this is a trivial matter and therefore should not be discussed as it would be a waste of time. Additionally, some may think that this controversy is really not a problem and is therefore easy to decide that the conclusions of science do in fact reflect reality. However, these two separate sentiments are not rationally or historically well grounded. The heated arguments in regards to scientific realism are “centrally connected to almost everything else in the philosophy of science, for they concern the very nature of scientific knowledge.” ¹ Scientific realism could be defined as a positive epistemological attitude towards the content of our best theories and models, advocating beliefs in both observable and non-observable aspects of the world described by the individual branches of science. This epistemic approach has far reaching metaphysical and semantic implications. Consequently, these various commitments are challenged by a number of rival epistemologies and theories of science, known today collectively as forms of scientific antirealism.²

Thesis

During the course of the development of science and the resulting technology, many have claimed that their findings reflect, correlate, and demonstrate the way the world actually is. Science has now moved into the realm of ontology. This is a bold and powerful assertion. Hence, it is the aim of this essay to evaluate whether or not these claims (and others like it) are well founded or rationally justified.

The Three Pillars of Scientific Realism

Scientific realism could be said to be a positive outlook about the realistic nature of our best scientific theories. But, one may ask, what does that actually mean? In order to be explicit about what realism is in regards to science, it is helpful to think of it in terms of three different categories: a metaphysical category, a semantic category, and an epistemological category.


From the metaphysical viewpoint, one must clearly understand that realism is committed to the 'mind independent' existence of the world (meaning this believes in an external world). Therefore, scientific realists believe that the entities they are studying are actually metaphysical entities outside of one's mind. This is in stark contrast to other metaphysical notions. For instance, this assertion is rejected by any position that falls under 'idealism' (including some forms of phenomenology), which states that there is no external world; everything is thus dependent upon the mind. However, this kind of idealism is rarely encountered within philosophy of science. Yet, there remain other more common views which reject the mind-independence premise that are very prominent in the field of philosophy of science. One such notion is the neo-Kantian view of the nature of scientific knowledge, which wholly denies that the world of our experience is mind-independent. The dispute here is that the world investigated by the sciences (as distinct from the world itself) is in some sense dependent on the ideas one brings to the scientific investigation itself. For realists, objects must be independent of the mind in order for them to do science in the way it is done. However, as it has been argued, the independence and the resulting existence of mind-independent entities is a very controversial philosophical stance. One should not, therefore, assume that realism is on non-controversial ground with the acceptance of this base axiom.

Moving forward, scientific realism (from now on, when I say 'realism' I mean 'scientific realism'), is semantically dedicated to a literal explanation of scientific claims about the world. It is therefore common practice for realists to take hypothetical or theoretical statements at face value. Accordingly, the claims that are made about scientific entities, processes, properties, and relations (whether they be observable or unobservable), should be seen literally as having truth-values, regardless of whether they are true or false. This semantic adherence contrasts mostly with the instrumentalists, who interpret descriptions of the unobservable simply as instruments for the prediction of observable phenomena, or merely for systematizing observation reports. That is all. Generally, instrumentalists maintain that assertions about unobservable things have no actual literal meaning at all. Rather, they are some kind of convenient fiction created by us to explain the data of phenomena. They do not however state that such assertions are therefore meaningless or useless. Accordingly, it is not always apparent whether or not it is a good and rational epistemological criteria to take things at face value in this way.

Lastly, our final category of realism states that, epistemologically, realism is devoted to the idea that theoretical claims can actually create knowledge of the world. This contrasts with many common levels of degrees of skeptical views. These positions advocate to varying degrees of extremes, that:

Even if they were to grant the metaphysical and semantic dimensions of realism, doubt that scientific investigation is epistemologically powerful enough to yield such knowledge, or, as in the case of some antirealist positions, insist that it is only powerful enough to yield knowledge regarding observables.

However, the epistemological category of realism is not always clear on this point. For example, while many realists adhere to the truth (or at minimum, the approximate truth) of theories understood in terms of some version of the correspondence theory of truth, some do not. Nevertheless, a good general stance for realism is widely agreed upon: our best scientific theories give true or approximately true descriptions of observable and unobservable aspects of the existence of a mind-independent world.  

Epistemic Achievements versus Epistemic Aims

The most common way realism is understood is in terms of the epistemic achievements established by scientific theories. From this approach, realism is a philosophical position concerning the actual epistemological status of theories, which is described in a variety of ways. For instance, many define scientific realism in terms of the truth or approximate truth of scientific theories (or certain aspects of those theories). Others define it in terms of the successful references it makes of theoretical terms to things in the world, both observable and unobservable. Still other groups define scientific realism not in terms of truth or reference, but in terms of belief in the ontology of scientific theories. What all of these approaches have in common is a commitment to the idea that our best theories have a certain epistemic status: they yield knowledge of aspects of the world, including unobservable aspects.  

Additionally, another way to think about realism is in terms of the epistemic aims of scientific methods of inquiry. In other words, there are some that think of the view in terms of what science aims to do: the scientific realist holds that science aims to produce true descriptions of things in the world (or approximately true descriptions). It should be noted here that there is a weak implication that arises from this fact, the effect being that if science aims at truth within scientific practice (and if it is at all successful), the characterization of realism in terms of aims could entail some form of characterization of achievement. However, this is not a necessary implication, because defining realism in terms of aims for truth does not, in and of itself, claim anything about the success of scientific practice in this regard. Consequently, it is important to decide upon what grounds one will characterize realism because it will drastically affect the outcomes of the whole scientific enterprise.

The Miracle Argument

The most powerful insight motivating realism is not a new idea, rather it is a very old one. This idea is commonly known in recent discourse as the miracle argument. It posits that realism “is the only philosophy that doesn’t make the success of science a miracle.” The argument starts with the widely accepted assumption or premise that our best theories are extremely successful—they enable empirical predictions and explanations of scientific investigations, with the result often marked by incredible accuracy. So, one could ask, what is it that justifies this success? One possible  

explanation often used by realists, is that our best theories are in fact true (or at the very least approximately true). It is clear, the realists argue, that if these theories were not close to the truth, the fact that they are so successful would be a miracle. But, since they are obviously not a miracle, one can infer rationally that they must be true instead (or approximately true). This is the crux of their argument.

Critique of the Miracle Argument

Even though this is a powerful common-sense argument, it is not without fault. The miracle argument could be critiqued in a number of ways. First, one could use a skeptical line of reasoning to question the very need for an explanation of the success of science. For instance, van Fraassen states:

*Successful theories are analogous to well-adapted organisms—since only successful theories (organisms) survive, it is hardly surprising that our theories are successful, and therefore, there is no demand here for an explanation of success...* [One] might wonder, for instance, why a particular theory is successful (as opposed to why theories in general are successful), and the explanation sought may turn on specific features of the theory itself, including its descriptions of unobservables.*9*

Whether such explanations need be true, though, is a matter of debate. While most theories of explanation require that “the explanans be true, pragmatic theories of explanation do not”*10* however. More generally, any epistemology of science that does not accept one or more of the three dimensions of realism (commitment to a mind-independent world, literal semantics, and epistemic access to unobservables) will thereby present a strong reason for resisting the miracle argument. On the other hand, one does not have to merely disagree with the foundational axioms of realism in order to disbelieve or find the miracle argument unsatisfactory.

Some philosophers suggest that the miracle argument itself is an instance of fallacious reasoning, in particular committing the base rate fallacy.**11** So, consider the following demonstration given by Peter Lipton:

*There is a test for a disease for which the rate of false negatives (negative results in cases where the disease is present) is zero, and the rate of false positives (positive results in cases where the disease is absent) is one in ten (that is, disease-free individuals test positive 10% of the time). If one tests positive, what are the chances that one has the disease? It would be a mistake to conclude that, based on the rate of false positives, the probability is 90%, for the actual probability depends on some further, crucial information: the base rate of the disease in the population (the proportion of people having it). The lower the incidence of the disease at large, the lower the probability that a positive result signals the presence of the disease. By analogy, using the success of a scientific theory as an indicator of its approximate truth (assuming a low rate of false positives—cases in which theories far from the truth are nonetheless successful) is arguably, likewise, an instance of the base rate fallacy.*12

---


10 Fraassen, Bas C. “3.” In Images of Science: Essays on Realism and Empiricism, with a Reply from Bas C. Van Fraassen, 55. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.


Therefore, the success of a theory does not by itself reasonably posit that it is likely approximately true, and since there is no independent way of knowing the base rate of approximately true theories, the chances of it being approximately true cannot be assessed. I contend that this line of reasoning is cogent, and thus overcomes the objections the realists employ against the anti-realists’ reply to the miracle argument.

The Argument from Corroboration

In the scientific world, there are many methods that scientists employ to make sure their proposed theories are true, correct, and adequate. One fact that lends credence to the realist interpretation of science is the existence of corroboration. If a theory can produce more than one distinct type of evidence (normally through instrumentation) of a proposed entity, then the combined verification adds to the probability of it really existing. For instance, Ian Hacking gives the example of:

[Dense] bodies in red blood platelets that are detected by using different forms of microscopy. Different techniques of detection, such as those employed in light microscopy and transmission electron microscopy, make use of very different sorts of physical processes, and these operations are described theoretically in terms of correspondingly different causal mechanisms.13

Thus, the argument from corroboration can be outlined as follows:

- If an entity can be detected by some kind of method, technique, or instrument then it is most likely real.
- If that same entity can be detected by a different kind of apparatus in addition to the original, then it is highly unlikely that this is just a mere coincidence.
- Therefore, if some kind of entity can be detected by two or more methods, techniques, and instruments (or a combination of any of those listed), then that entity can be reasonably believed in.

This argument brings to light one of realism’s greatest appeals—the supposed common sense of its position. For most things in life, the fact of corroboration would be a sufficient criterion to establish one’s belief. However, ‘science’ is not most things, nor does it claim to be like other methods, disciplines, or pursuits. Science likes to distinguish itself, and in a round-about way (although it doesn’t always) prides itself as the standard of rationality. Therefore, not just any kind of common-sense appeal will suffice.

Critique of the Argument from Corroboration

As appealing as the above argument is to mankind’s common reason, common sense does not always serve as a reliable guide to truth. In fact, it is extremely difficult to determine philosophically what qualifies something to be common sense in the first place. Further, why does some argument, idea, or theory gain respect and adherents for the mere fact of its basic explanatory nature? Often, many (or most) theories that are accepted as true in science today are not intuitively apparent or easy to understand in the first place. For instance, the biological theory of evolution is not in the least congruent to one’s base intuitions. Or consider the heliocentric cosmology model proposed by science. This model does not in the least seem to play by

the rules of common sense (which historically was one of the major reasons why it was rejected or resisted for so long). Additionally, our current modern theories of optics are far beyond and incompatible with foundational assumptions, thoughts or ideas of how vision should work based off of our phenomenal experience. The list could go on and on, illustrating how the best theories of modern science in every branch, often defy all of the unspoken laws of common sense. So, if one were to claim that science follows the common intuitions of humanity, one would be very wrong indeed. Therefore, the mere ability of a theory to appeal to common sense really does not do much for that theory in reality. Nor does it thereby guarantee that the proposed theory is more real or more probable. Things are not always what they seem.

A further objection could be stated against the corroboration argument specifically. Often, techniques are developed because one suspects there might be some kind of entity to be detected. Methods of detection are therefore constructed directly for the purpose or the intention of reproducing these postulated outputs (entities). This means that the discovery of such entities come forth because of “theory-laden observations” rather than by actual discovery. Anyone can theoretically posit some kind of an entity (such as an atom) which then is substituted into a working model that can explain the supposed phenomena being observed. As a result, the discovery only exists within the model itself, not necessarily (both in the scientific and the logical meaning) in the external world. This is not to say that all theories fall under this criticism. However, if atoms, neutrons, or protons only exist inside a computer-generated model (or any kind of model) then it is highly dubious whether or not they exist outside the asserted model. Consequently, it does not matter how many instances of corroboration one can demonstrate for the existence of a said entity, because if that entity can't be demonstrated outside of the instruments developed for the direct purpose of its detection, then it is not objectively decidable whether or not the entity exists.

Conclusion
Science is important, no doubt about it. One would be silly and naïve to assert that science is not useful and has not accomplished many great achievements that have helped mankind immeasurably with their day-to-day lives. Yet it seems because of the apparent success and power that comes from science, humanity has been seduced into thinking that it can or should be able to answer all of their problems. Science today by the general public and by some scientists has become almost deified. It is the authority of the authorities. It has become the uncontested pillar of what it means to be rational, consistent, and respectable. Its methods, theories, and findings are close to the realm of complete impeccability. However, science is problematic (along with many other things). The foundations and the axioms of science are not on any stronger ground than any other form or method of inquiry. There is good cause to be careful, and exercise a healthy dose of skepticism about its methods, theories, and results. It is not as black and white as science and the world want us to believe. It has been the intent of this essay to call into question, highlight, and evaluate some of the basic axioms one must follow in order to adhere to the commonly accepted form of science—realism. This essay is not meant to be a skeptical downer.
of science. Rather, it is to merely demonstrate that scientific realism is not squeaky clean from its own problems and paradoxes. Therefore, we need to be more humble about our claims in life (of all kinds, not just scientific). Thus, I assert that a better more tenable position should be endorsed in science—that is, soft antirealism. This term means that we can know with a reliable level of certainty phenomena that are observable. (What is observable and what is not observable is beyond the scope of this essay.) Furthermore, for phenomena that we cannot observe, we might (or we might not) be able to know if they exist objectively; however, we need to realize that we ought to be humble and less dogmatic about their existence. In conclusion, I assert that this paper provides reasonable (but not exhaustive) evidence for accepting this suggested philosophical stance towards the fundamental nature of science.
Civil Disobedience is the public, non-violent and intentional refusal of law or a set of laws that are perceived to be “unjust”, in order to promote moral consistency. A proponent of civil disobedience suggests that there are situations that necessarily call for this acting out to maintain justice, morality, safety, and the overall good of society. In his book Morals and Ethics, Carl Wellman establishes basic situations in which civil disobedience would be justified; among his justifications is the need to preserve moral integrity, combat immorality, and promote positive social reform.\(^1\) Still many other philosophers, including Socrates, believed there could be no moral justification for civil disobedience. Such behavior would only hurt the system. Although Socrates and other philosophers strongly oppose any form of civil disobedience, I claim that in order to maintain moral integrity, promote social progress, and keep governmental authority in check, civil disobedience is justified.

As a precursor to the civil disobedience argument, it is important to recognize that all points addressed regard any reasonably just and moral society which would promote obedience of law. However, it must be noted that although there can be strong moral justifications to follow certain individual laws, there is no moral obligation to follow the law as it stands in its generalized form.\(^2\) What necessarily follows is just as all citizens of a sovereign generally have a legal and somewhat moral obligation to obey the law, they also have a moral obligation to prohibit those immoral laws that would infringe upon others’ rights unjustly.

Our governmental system is made to function on a stipulated set of moral standards. In a democracy, each individual is entitled to promote these moral standards by helping to establish and maintain laws and statutes. That being said, this system would not work unless we could rely on both the citizens and our elected officials to possess a sense of integrity toward these standards. To illustrate, suppose the government passed law that all people with vehicles were criminals guilty of environmental deterioration. They proceeded to punish these individuals by blowing up their cars. Such an act would impose on our constitutional right to own property. An act of civil disobedience could be in order to bring attention to the injustice and put an end to the statute. In order to see that our rights are protected and our morals are upheld, the citizens have a responsibility to preserve certain moral standards. Socrates, in Crito, lived by the philosophy of moral consistency—he would much more prefer to give up his life than his principles. He believed that wrong should never be returned.

---


for wrong. Although he opposed civil disobedience, this could help support the notion that citizens must therefore have the obligation to stand up for violations of principal—within the means of civility.\textsuperscript{3} If we do not act with this responsibility, we would pollute the system and disable its functionality.

The need for social progress further justifies civil disobedience. As illustrated in the previous example, civil disobedience can bring attention to a cause and promote change in a problem that may have otherwise been overlooked. Once the problem is acknowledged, necessary steps are taken to veto a law or prohibit any further unjust acts. In other words, civil disobedience can be the segue for positive reform—and history has proven this time and time again. When the unsafe working conditions and starvation wages still existed in America in 1900, it was necessary that the workers go on strike to bring attention to the less than desirable circumstances. In turn, their strike led to higher compensation for workers and an establishment of child labor laws.\textsuperscript{4} Similarly, the abolition of slavery would not have come to pass unless there was an uprising by those who opposed it. In theory, illustrated by both situations, submitting to unjust rulers or laws would have resulted in a far greater state of chaos. There was, however, no corrupt government that needed to be overthrown in either case, but there was a need to change the system by promoting moral integrity. This ultimately led to positive social progress.

Someone who opposes the justification of civil disobedience might point out that in any given situation, we could not possibly know that the act of disobeying would be worth the price. In other words, there can be no assurance that the end will justify the means. Take for example what took place years after the French Revolution. In 1871 the Parisian people thought they could overthrow the republic, similar to how it had been done almost fifty years prior. However, the resistance backfired; 20,000 people were killed in one week and no reform was made.\textsuperscript{5} Was this sacrifice worth the end, which ultimately brought about no positive change? Those who deny this question also deny the justification of civil disobedience. Furthermore, an opponent of the civil disobedience claims that social harms by breaking the law- in any form- are inevitable. No matter how good the cause, acting out will always bring negative consequences, because it is a lack of respect for the established system.

While the opponents raise a good point, an advocate of civil disobedience could respond simply by saying that the dangers of not objecting to unjust laws or rulers are just as grave, if not more so, as the process of reform. Martin Luther King did not believe that the ends justified the means; however, this was because he saw that the means had to be just as pure as the desired end. In this sense, “immoral destructive means cannot bring about moral and constructive ends.” He saw that on the other end of the spectrum, looking at the role of government within a nation, leaders of our country could impose just as wrong or unjust of a “means” to bring to pass a “just” end.\textsuperscript{6} For this reason, Martin Luther King and the student movement focused on

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
nonviolence and the steady endurance of a peaceful but firm opposition of the law, while believing that this pure means would ultimately enable them to reach their desired and pure end.

Of course, this is not to say that civil disobedience is always good. If this were the case then obeying the law would never be required and society would enter into anarchy. There are, however, certain times in which our democracy is not enough to make proper changes. Hence, civil disobedience cannot be considered disrespect for our system, as it would then be equated with patriotism and a love for one’s country. Furthermore, while it cannot always be determined what may happen in consequence of disobedience, it also cannot be proven what would happen as a result of not doing anything. Either way, an appeal to ignorance renders this argument invalid, and a chance must be taken where there is substantial evidence that enough positive reform will result from the act that it is then justified. If used correctly, it necessarily follows that civil disobedience is not disrespect for one’s country, but rather an advocate of promoting the purest form of a moral government and the greater good of society.

One last justification is that civil disobedience is needed in times when the government exceeds its authority and there is no practical alternative. History has shown that it is often the case that the government becomes corrupt and steps on the rights of its citizens. At these times it is necessary for the citizens to keep them in check, and to establish what they may and may not have control over. Aquinas believed that the government is established to protect and withhold our natural rights. If otherwise left unchecked, the government would have the potential of imposing upon these natural rights and the liberty of the governed. Our government has established a three-tiered system in which the government checks itself. Ultimately however, it is the citizens’ responsibility to make sure those checking on one another are also being fair and moral. Although the best option is to utilize this system of a democracy to find solutions to any problems there might be, the ability to reform unjust laws of any kind are contingent on the morality of the government officials. Hence, if a governmental body becomes corrupt, the necessary mean to restoring justice and liberty is through civil disobedience. Henry David Thoreau, a prominent writer, philosopher, and activist for the practical use of civil disobedience, formulated his purposes largely around the motto, “That government is best which governs least”, and shared his belief that the government is “equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it.”

Hence, upon Thoreau’s premises, civil disobedience is the necessary tool to stop government from imposing upon its people, and, essentially, the people imposing upon themselves.

There are times when civil disobedience is a necessary method in promoting moral standards, justice, and the overall functionality of our governmental system. Because our system was founded upon natural rights and fundamental principles of morals standards, it is the citizens’ responsibility to take action when those establishments are being infringed upon. Furthermore, social progress is made possible in keeping the government within its authority through such action. It is possible, however, that

---

violating one law with the intent to reform it individually could harm the system as a whole. In addition, breaking one individual law could result in opposition of all laws, thus constituting lawlessness. These and other points still need to be explored. Ultimately, I stand by my claim that there are cases that constitute and justify civil disobedience as necessary for the greater good of society.
Philosophers, in any school of thought within which inquiry is directed and arguments take shape, are often reminded of a singular fact pertaining to their enterprise, a reminder which comes—strictly speaking—from without the grand intellectual palisade of its employ: "Genuine philosophical problems are always rooted outside philosophy and they die if these roots decay."¹ Philosophical investigation into religion, as richly metaphysical as religious experience is, and as empirically unconfirmable as religion’s propositions may seem, is faced with the truth that religious experience, for the believer—especially one so untrained in the sophisticated methods of philosophical and scientific discovery as may reasonably be found in any culture—is rarely, if at all, the product of reasoned inquiry only. And yet, Tillich—a philosopher and theologian whose own work follows Barth’s critiques of modern Christianity for very similar reasons as those proposed by Tillich—provides a provocative reminder that the great sin committed by those interested in theo-philosophic inquiry is an attempt to subsume the inwardsness of faith to the dispassionate objectivity of reason; likewise, lest the zealot here presume herself vindicated, the great sin of the masses is the attempt to subsume reason to the chaos and randomness of human feeling.² Thus, while genuine philosophical dilemmas are truly grounded in experience outside of the sterile environment of reasoned inquiry and its elegant theorizing, it would seem that passional experience, irrespective of its divinity and especially if left unattended by reason, wants a measure of confidence and lacks what may be termed stolidity—a term I take, in this paper, to mean “dependability”, for it may be admitted that no conviction can be said to be meaningful if it lacks an anchor in the facticity of belief, or the “believing of that which is believed”. In order to avoid the “great sin” of reducing passion and reason from one another in the experience of faith, what follows is a phenomenological description of what I consider to be an accurate account of the interplay of reason and passion in possible in religious experience.”

The proposed phenomenological description will be distilled during a brief consideration of the popular arguments within this class of inquiry. The description posited here following is a dialectic central in the believer’s move from impassioned desire, to inquiry, to one’s “first moment of faith”.


the seeds of faith are both contained in the passional will of the individual as well as being present in an intellectual tendency. Of the latter, we are reminded by James that “religious affirmations” comprehend two moments of intellectual recognition: “first, that the best things are the Eternal things; and second, that we are better off for believing (this) first affirmation” than not believing it. This intellectual tendency, enacted in the moment of the recognition of the supernal value of eternal, or heavenly, things (as they are taken to be appropriately disposed phenomena of belief in the vast field of religious experience) relates dialectically to the former—that is, the passional will—in the first instant, because the affirmations of religion assume eternity and the individual’s relationship with eternity in time, or the mortal context of finitude. Of the former, reflection on both points “makes it way inwardly in inwardness,” we would safely say with Kierkegaard, as one reconnoiters herself as being thrust between her “where” and “what” in time, and indefiniteness—that is, an infinite hope in the desired culmination of her existential hopes in the eternal—in her consideration of where she wants to be in eternity. We might, here, consider the aforementioned “intellectual tendency”, as reason itself. The passional will, which may be taken here to mean the tendency to determinateness of choice upon the passion stimulated in the paradox of time and eternity in time, could be said to be what is actually experienced as belief. In this first move of the dialect, impassioned desire may be expressed as having a will to believe in that which one knows not. It is critical to note that, at this stage, the subjects of religious belief are desired but are, to reason, merely potential, or “yet to be appropriated as objects of proper faith”. Nothing of an objective character of divine things needs to have been presented to reason in order for this moment of belief to become possible.

From the first moment belief becomes possible, and in each successive moment of belief, what one comes to know of the divine provides the objective representation of those things to which the faith-seeker relates subjectively in the first movement of the dialectic, in the passionate will inwardly, suggesting that inquiry by reason provides directness for the passionate will; for, to say “I believe God exists”, Kant reminds us, is a statement which “identifies for us a pure concept of the understanding,” in other words a sort of a priori proposition that, though it may be specified as the form or metaphysic of religious experience, yet “exceeds the bounds” of reasoned inquiry in its extremity, “so that it cannot be said to be derived analytically.” In the second move of the dialectic, the pure ideas respecting the phenomena of religious experience in the understanding are acted upon, in turn, by the deepened inwardness effected by “the spontaneous testimony” of the object of the religious metaphysic—an objectivity which takes shape via reasoned inquiry. From here, belief takes up a “rising” character, a rising conviction in a state of increasing poignancy requiring absolution, one which “forces itself upon” our intuition “from every side…as an indelible impression” which isn’t at all actuated “by arguments or demonstration”. Such impressions take shape in the reading of the bible,

---

in contemplating of the splendor of nature, and in reflections of one’s infinite passion in moments of despair (in which one reconnoiters the infinite need for culmination of the indefinite). Reason, then, in the first and every succeeding moment of the dialectic of religious belief, provides an essential relation to faith in two ways: first, in the reason are contained what may be loosely coined, “the seeds of faith”, or the pure ideas of understanding which require interaction with religious phenomena in order to be enacted reflectively. Religious phenomena are all—either together or in part—that which is experienced as belief, in moments of rising conviction and deepened inwardness. Second, reasoned inquiry provides the directedness of inwardness; for, without objective inquiry into the matters of religious experience, the inward directionality of the will may be said to otherwise lack content expressive of religious experience and so may be said to be, in the extreme, zealouness without content, susceptible to be driven upon the wind of this or that doctrine, and whichever one provides the most convincing undertow upon which the zeal sans content may ride to shore. Directed belief, then, is taken to be stolid belief, or dependable in relation to the subjectivity of religious experience. This moment of the dialectic, impassioned inquiry, may be expressed as believing in that which one knows, but not knowing why.

The not-knowing-why of one’s believing forms the final move in the dialectic which may culminate as faith—the appropriation of phenomena of religious experience as one’s own. Reason inquires objectively into the matter of not-knowing-why as it investigates the objectivity of one’s need for the culmination of the indefinite and the objectivity both behind the starry heavens above (or the splendor of nature round-about) and what may seem to be the mystic historicism of biblical accounts. These inquiries take shape in asking questions concerning the nature of the god of the biblical accounts, whether that god relates to the presentment of nature’s splendor one now witnesses; the nature of one’s soul is also investigated and whether its immortality is linear or transmigrational—or, whether there is, in fact, no god and no soul at all. Reason, alone, is left with “a could...or could not...” concerning the propositions of religious belief. Evidences sufficient for reason alone are not present to sustain the affirmative, neither the negation, of this conditional either/or; and so the inquiry terminates in an upward limit where reason can no longer sensibly penetrate; a moment of Ankst, then, is presented to reason alone: that is, fear; fear of the uncertain and things which cannot solved by rational enterprise. It is critical here to note for clarity that in the previous moves of the dialectic, reason and conviction work in tandem—one specifying the form of religious experience, the other sustaining the pure concept of understanding upon the matters and content of religious experience. In the moment of uncertainty, one reconnoiters reason as being impotent before the uncertainty of the metaphysic of religion—of god, the soul, creation, and so forth. It is in this moment, for the believer, that inwardness—rather than rational inquiry—overwhelms the objectivity of reason as a motivator for continued religious experience, embracing the uncertainties presented to reason in Ankst. As Ankst is inevitable for the reason, so, too, is the overwhelming subjectivity of belief inevitable in overcoming it. Again, it is in this very moment when subjectivity achieves this, its “maximum inwardness,” that the “divine miracle
of faith” is enacted, which is the intelligibility to intuition of that which, to reason, is impenetrable and undiscoverable. This move in the dialectic may appropriately be termed faith, or belief in that which one knows and which one knows she cannot deny. Critically, this move is enacted as the appropriation of that which was once desired by the passional will to believe and of that which became increasingly objective to reason in inquiry, but which remained absent of a definitive character for the believer in the initial moments in which belief first becomes possible.

In the foregoing, I have presented a possible method for describing the unison of reason and passion in religious experience. I have shown that this dialectical description is acceptable under the conditions of rising convictions, acting upon pure ideas concomitant with the phenomena of religious experience in the understanding. The existence of these pure ideas may be seen to be evident in the experience of those who have a will to believe, only they know not what; or, those who believe, yet know not why. The dialect terminates in the overwhelming subjective appropriation of that which is believed, concerning which reason inevitably reconnoiters its impotence in Ankst, or fear of the uncertain. This does not mean to say that fear alone motivates belief in god, or that fear is the driver of the dialectic I have described; indeed, it has been shown that one’s searching is preceded by an impassioned desire to search for the object and content of one’s will to believe. Searching by reason has also been shown to be coupled, not with fear throughout the process, but with conviction. For specificity, these convictions may be said to be characterized by confidence in that Being whose being is steadily impressed upon the intuitions of the believer, in an impassioned need for culmination of the indefinite, and in a joyful looking forward to that day, perhaps, in which culmination of one’s infinite need in very fact takes place. Fear, then, only affects the reason, and reason alone, in what has been termed the upward extremity—the furthest delimitation—of investigation, enacted by reason’s abutting the stubborn fact that the metaphysic it successfully described as potential is irrevocably beyond the powers of reason to derive by argumentation and demonstration.