

Mainstream¹ Science De-Capacitates Atheism

Today's mounting trend to **dismiss** the God of the Bible is more fragile (*rationaly* speaking) than is commonly imagined. Many skeptics urge the claim, "*God can't be proved!*" as their way to imply that the God of the Bible is a myth. Yet in reality, the *non-provability* of God's existence places the degree of theism's² certitude at virtually the same level in principle, as is *scientific* certitude (likewise being **not**-provable). Indeed, the posture of mockingly belittling the Bible, is indicative of a **non-scientific** spirit (the refusal to face evidence). My goal is indeed to highlight the **absurdity** of those who demand **proveability** as a criterion for any statement to qualify as trustworthy. By way of example, the conclusion of *philosopher* David Hume's essay regarding *Human Understanding*, entailed a glaringly **reckless** directive:

*"Morals and criticism are not so properly objects of the understanding as of taste and sentiment. Beauty, whether moral or natural, is felt, more properly than perceived ... When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. [Then] Commit it...to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."*³

Notice that, based on his **own** criteria, this lauded⁴ intellect routed **his own philosophical essay to the furnace** since **it too fails the truth-test** that he deemed is demanded in order to escape "*the flames*."

Now hear ye this! **Science is not provable.**⁵ Since *frontier*⁶ science firstly confronts interactions between occasionally *unpredictable* forces and *obscure* entities, and also faces the reality that observers must **trust by faith** that our very *perceptions* are correct, **science is not provable**. Only *abstract* claims consisting of mathematics and logic are provable. Consequently *scientific* theories⁷ are instead deemed to be "**justified**" **insofar as** they align with evidence that is **superior** in measure and quality **to competing** hypotheses. Hume's demand that all claims *must* conform to "*quantity*" etc. in order to qualify as true, is absurd since, **by his own standard**, defining even *what* the term *science means*, fails to meet his requirements for truth statements. Indeed his strictures, if obeyed, invalidly deem it impossible to even assess the ramifications that logically follow *from* scientific data. But Hume was wrong. Rationality indicates that **non-scientific** statements too are trustworthy if they are logically framed and affirmed by relevant evidence. If that wasn't so, then social speech, even Hume's, would lack any capacity to convey truth.

Similarly, the thesis of Stephen Jay Gould's (SJG) book, *Rocks of Ages*,⁸ lays out his claim that the disparate concepts of *science* and *religion* constitute "**non-overlapping magisteria**" (**NOMA**) in which **only** the realm of **science** illuminates "*the factual character of the natural world and develops theories that coordinate and explain these facts,*" while the realm of **religion** by contrast, "*operates in the...realm of human purposes, meanings, and values*" to the complete **exclusion of physical facts and realities**. By the term "*non-overlapping,*" SJG disallows the notion that these realms are reconcilable. In other words, he denies potential reciprocal relationships between science and religion. Indeed, since he is a *practical*

¹ "Mainstream" takes nature's phenomena at face value. Since Darwinism *opposes* purposeful causation, it doesn't qualify as a scientific tenet.

² The belief that there is a God who both created the entirety of the cosmos and intervenes at time miraculously in its affairs is called "theism."

³ "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding." <https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/hume/enquiry.pdf> (boldface mine).

⁴ Darwinist, Michael Ruse. *Darwin and Design*. (Harvard, 2003) declares that Hume's "*Dialogue on Natural Religion*" is the most sustained attack ever penned against theology and religious belief of any kind" p. 27.

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/empirical-evidence> ** <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/if-you-say-science-is-right-youre-wrong/>

⁶ The term I deem fitting to describe yet-to-be-investigated arena of scientific studies, particularly concerning non-repeatable phenomena.

⁷ A hypothesis predicts, without certainty, the cause of a phenomenon or an occurrence in nature that has yet to be established by evidence.

⁸ *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life*. (Ballantine, 1999), p. 4.

materialist, he refuses even the *possibility of intelligent agents* impacting the physical realm. Yet it is at this very point that **Gould violates the standard boundaries of science** by usurping its authority to referee his denial of that possibility. In actual fact, the purview of science is limited solely to particulars of *physical* nature, to the complete exclusion of concepts concerning potential *spiritual* realities.

Although he correctly notes that science “cannot, in principle, specify what...happened before [the Big Bang (BB) because] *previous history gets erased*,”⁹ I reply that **NO scientific data Gould does have**, can posit a *natural*-cause of that scientifically-demonstrable beginning **out of nothing**, that is more plausible than is the Bible’s view, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*” (Gen. 1:1).¹⁰

Furthermore, Gould’s NOMA thesis is **rebutted** by the fact that many historians and philosophers of science affirm that **biblical religion positively “gave birth” to a disciplined analysis into the structure of nature** (today called “**science**”).¹¹ This insight took place in a *biblical* culture among believers in the God of the Bible. Because they held that God both created the entire cosmos and possesses a superior intellect (Is. 55:9), they believed that the stuff of nature must consist of underlying structure that is both intelligible and ubiquitous so that it might, in part, elevate humanity’s standard of living. **Scientific advance**, I repeat, was inspired *by* beliefs about the nature of God. Having followed that hunch by delving into nature,” scientists’ beliefs were vindicated. In sum, A.N. Whitehead said, “*There can be no living science unless there is a wide-spread...conviction in the existence of an order of things.*”¹²

In addition to the trend of declining disbelief in the existence of God that I cited as I began this paper, I now shift my focus to a contributory factor to this malady that persists with regularity. There is today a chronic propensity to emulate the legendary complaint by Bertrand Russel that there is “**not enough evidence.**”¹³ Sadly, Russel’s **critique** of arguments for the existence of God in his lecture titled, “Why I am Not a Christian,” is little more than the lazy ruse of “*nay-saying*” as opposed to expressing the *scientific* spirit of seeking further truth about the frontiers of nature. The ultimate goal of science defies the former while urging no less than the latter. In regard to the context of this paper, serious scientists employ the investigational program, “*Inference to the best explanation among of pool of competing hypotheses,*” it is clear that rejecting the God of the Bible obligates skeptics to propose an alternative hypothesis which claims to more fully reconcile with the established body of scientific phenomena than does biblical faith in Genesis 1:1. What that demands however is that skeptics propose what they can’t possibly produce, namely a substantive proposal that can substantiate their claim as superior to biblical faith.¹⁴ In *rational* terms, the notion of a cosmos popping into existence out of absolutely nothing is impossible, while in *scientific* terms, the observable facts of the BB expansion indicate that, prior to the beginning, neither time, space, matter, nor energy existed that could possibly create by another means. On the other hand, the unassailable *scientific* evidence affirming the BB¹⁵ fully reconciles with Gen.1:1.

Gary Jensen, NALC Lutheran Pastor, retired © December 29, 2023

Gjensen549@gmail.com ** Christianityontheoffense.com ** offensivechristianity.blogspot.com

M.Div. Degree from Luther/Northwestern Theological Seminary ** M.A. Degree with Honors in *Science and Religion* from BIOLA University

⁹ This includes firstly the observable evidence that the cosmos continues to expand from out of a zero-volume (absolute nothingness) beginning, the fact that it is cooling off, and that that beginning blast left behind for scientists to detect, its unique black-body light waves. Op.Cit. (8).

¹⁰ See the first few pages of my booklet, “God’s Prints are Everywhere,” at my website: www.christianityontheoffense.com/articles.

¹¹ While Asians charted the stars, the Greeks philosophized, and the Chinese invented gunpowder, none studied nature itself. See Stephen Meyer. *Return of the God Hypothesis*. (Harper One, 2021), ** www.theologyofscience.org/christianity-and-the-birth-of-modern-science/

¹² Alfred North Whitehead. “Science and the Modern World.” Ch. 1, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/68611/68611-h/68611-h.htm>

¹³ www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/an-introduction-to-the-philosophy-of-religion/theistic-arguments/0FA26BAFBAA3D0521CDA3A70FD90A5DC

¹⁴ See my paper, “The Scientific Impossibility of a Universe Creating Itself,” at my website, Op.Cit. (10).

¹⁵ Op.cit. (10).