

Rival Philosophies of Fact

Sources on presuppositionalism make it clear that, because of its “methodology” (see for instance [here](#)), the question of the Christian god’s existence cannot be settled on the basis of facts. For instance, Cornelius Van Til himself made this crystal clear when he wrote:

It is impossible and useless to seek to defend Christianity as an historical religion by a discussion of facts only. (Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith*, p. 7)

With resolute pronouncements such as this, what card-carrying presuppositionalist would disagree? Of course, this is the kind of attitude one might expect from a position that cannot be supported by facts in the first place. If appealing to facts is not sufficient to validate a position one holds on the basis of faith, he might as well come out and declare that “a discussion of facts only” is simply the wrong vehicle for substantiating that position. And lo, that’s precisely what Van Til does.

Consider for a moment some of the major tenets of what Christianity teaches, tenets which everyone is expected to accept as factual, but without factual support. For instance, that the Christian deity is real, that it created the universe (“the earth and the heaven”), that it created man in its own image, that it chose a people as its favorites (the ancient Israelites), that it sent its only begotten son to die a horrific death in order to “redeem” anyone who is bamboozled by all these and other teachings of the sacred storybook. If all of these claims are supposed to be factual, why cannot “a discussion of facts only” serve in defending them? Does Van Til think that a discussion of something *other than facts* is needed to defend “Christianity as an historical religion”? If so, what is this other something?

This is where Van Til raised the issue of which *philosophy of facts* best equips a thinker to deal with the individual facts he discovers in the world. But we would be wrong to assume that this means that Van Til is actually concerned with preserving the integrity of a fact-based way of looking at the world. On the contrary, his aim here is to *hijack* the issue of facts and seat it on mystical presuppositions. Hence the name of his apologetic artifice, *presuppositionalism*.

Now the bible does not lay out any explicit theory of facts. Indeed, it seems not even to speak of facts in any intelligent manner. It certainly does not spell out a *philosophy of facts*. Its authors were clearly more concerned with invoking the wrath of an invisible magic being, endorsing doctrinal positions on the basis of faith, shaming readers into submission, prostituting their minds and filling their imaginations with horrific fantasies and bizarre teachings. But this is not to say that an implicit understanding of the nature of facts cannot be ascertained from the contents of the bible.

Without a doubt, the biblical worldview characterizes all facts as dependent on the will of its deity. Today’s theologians and apologists are explicit in their affirmation of such characterizations. On this view, facts are *created*, which means: they do *not* exist independent of consciousness, in particular of the supernatural consciousness which is claimed to have created them. Consequently, however ‘fact’ is defined by today’s defenders of Christianity, one thing is certain: the biblical portrait represents facts as inherently *subjective*, that is: they depend on and conform to the dictates of a ruling subject whose say-so is the final court of appeal in determining their nature at any given moment. The Christian “philosophy of fact” is *subjective* because it assumes the metaphysical primacy of the *subject* in the subject-object relationship. On this view, facts are whatever the ruling subject wants them to be. This is the essential metaphysical view which underlies the notion that *wishing makes it so*. In this context, subjectivism is essentially the view that reality, facts and truth are obedient to the dictates of some privileged consciousness.

Contrast the Christian view of facts with the objective theory of facts. Where the Christian view of facts clearly seats facts on the dictates of an omnipotent subject - thus affirming the primacy of the subject in the subject-object relationship, the objective theory of facts is based on the primacy of the object in the subject-object relationship. This theory recognizes that facts are what they are independent of consciousness, of *any* consciousness, that facts do not bend or reshape themselves in response to wishes, desires, commands, threats, insults, or protestation. It is on the basis of the objective theory of facts that one makes statements such as “wishing doesn’t make it so” or “Mt. McKinley is located in Alaska whether anyone realizes it or not.” According to the objective theory of facts, if facts were actually based on the dictates of consciousness (e.g.,

will, wishing, preference, etc.), it would not make any sense to affirm anything as factual; all it would take is another consciousness to come along and say it's not a fact, and reality would obey. For this reason, it should be clear that the Christian is borrowing from a non-Christian conception of facts whenever he makes statements like "God exists even if no one believes it." For on the Christian view, as we have seen, facts conform to consciousness, which can only mean that facts are not objective according to the Christian view.

Van Til made it clear that, on the Christian view, we cannot rely on facts, for they have no inherent stability whatsoever:

God may at any time take one *fact* and set it into a new relation to created law. That is, there is no inherent reason in the facts or laws why this should not be done. It is this sort of conception of the relation of facts and laws, of the temporal one and many, embedded as it is in the idea of God in which we profess to believe, that we need in order to make room for miracles. And miracles are at the heart of the Christian position. (*The Defense of the Faith*, p. 27)

On this view, it may be a fact *this moment* that Mt. McKinley is located in Alaska. But, since the Christian god "may at any time take one *fact* and set it into a new relation to created law," who but the ruling consciousness knows where Mt. McKinley may be in the next moment? The ruling consciousness may decide to relocate it in southern Japan, or Tanzania, or Laos. The flexibility that Van Til reserves for facts in relation to principles of thought certainly affords this.

Now Van Til is explicit in telling us that his worldview needs this kind of facts-in-flux view of things "in order to make room for miracles." And it's not just that facts can change at random; since 'random' is actually an epistemological concept, the changes that facts undergo in this context would be random so far as the believer is concerned. But this is a mere incidental outcome that the believer has to deal with in his worldview. Even more than this, since this view represents facts as subject to deliberate, intentional change, there would be no identifiable causality to the changes taking place traceable to the nature of the facts themselves. The changes that facts would undergo, on Van Til's view, would bear no relation to their nature, but depend completely on the whim of an invisible magic being whose "counsel" or "plan" is an utter mystery to the believer. He just has to go along with the flow, imagining that anything and everything that happens around him is being choreographed by a supernatural, reality-ruling consciousness whose exercise of will historically (per the bible at any rate) includes such notable and examples as turning water into wine, enabling men to walk on unfrozen water,

According to the Christian "philosophy of fact," facts are *creations* of a supernatural consciousness. On this view, facts are essentially [wished](#) into existence by an omnipotent conscious being. This is explicitly held to be the case for *all* facts. Writes Van Til:

God is the creator of every fact. (*Christian Theistic Evidences*, p. 88; quoted in Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic*, p. 378.)

Elsewhere Van Til writes:

The Christian starts his reasoning from the presupposition that what God, through Christ, says in the Scriptures is true. Accordingly all "facts" are God and Christ created and directed to the consummation of history." ("An Uncertain Sound: An Evaluation Of The Philosophy Of Hendrik Hart," 1971)

Christian apologist Mike Warren similarly exclaims:

All facts are God-created, God-interpreted facts." ([Christian Civilization is the Only Civilization](#))

Of course, note that when statements like these are made, they appear as bare assertions, announcements which are to be taken on faith, on authority, on the implied threat of psychological or spiritual sanction. Readers are expected to feel compelled to accept these claims without objective support because they're supposed to believe that something bad will happen to them - either in the here and now of reality, or in the afterlife which awaits - if they don't accept them.

Now a fundamental problem should be immediately obvious here. The Christian wants us to accept as *fact* the claim that his god exists. We are also told that, for the Christian, "the most basic fact of all facts is the existence of the triune God" (*Common Grace and the Gospel*, ch. 1). So it is a fact, we are told, that the Christian god exists. But we are also told that this "God is the creator of every fact," that "all facts are God-created." So was the fact that this god exists, also created by this same god? This seems quite illogical. To create anything, a creator-god would first have to exist. A thing cannot create the fact of its own existence. The

presuppositionalist must allow an exception to the rule here, but this would split facts into two mutually exclusive categories, thus requiring duplicitous provisions in the Christian theory of facts. It would, in the case of its god's existence for instance, need to allow for at least some facts to be uncreated. But if any facts can be uncreated, why couldn't all other facts be uncreated? A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Elsewhere Van Til writes

all facts in this universe are under God's control" ("The Resurrection As A Part Of Christian Truth," The Banner, 1939, Vol. 74, p. 339)

While this statement focuses on the facts which obtain within the universe proper, the same subordination of those facts to the dictates of the ruling consciousness is maintained. Anything we take as factual in the universe is subject to revision according to the ruling consciousness' divine whims. According to a rational worldview, It's a fact that apples come from apple trees. But on the Christian worldview, this is only factual so long as the Christian god desires to keep it that way. It could decide to change this fact, such that apples instead come from cucumber plants or from fish anuses. In the end, on the Christian view, it's the *desires* of the Christian god which are absolute, not the facts we discover in reality. Talk about reducing a worldview to absurdity!

But this systemic embrace of absurdity at such a fundamental level of thought does not keep believers today from endorsing it. For instance, in his blog entry [What Are the Facts? \(Repeat\)](#), Gavin Beers quotes Christian apologist R.J. Rushdoony as follows:

For the Christian, all factuality is God-created and the product of His eternal purpose; all facts are thus totally rational, because [sic] the mind of God is behind them, and their reality is thus more than physical and natural.

The view expressed here repeats the same major problem for the Christian "philosophy of fact" which we saw above, for it presupposes that for facts to be rational, "the mind of God" must be "behind them." In other words, all facts must have been created by the Christian god. Without this element of having been created by the Christian god, so the reasoning goes, no fact would be intelligible. Again, this can only mean that, if it is a fact that the Christian god exists, either the Christian god created this fact (which, as we saw above, is nonsensical), or qua fact it is unintelligible. This is quite a dilemma for the Christian, but it is unavoidable given the predominant view of facts affirmed in these statements. Since to say that a being created the fact of its own existence would commit the fallacy of the stolen concept (by characterizing such a fact as the product of a creative act, such a claim would require that the fact in question did not obtain prior to its creation, and yet the alleged fact in question is that the creator of all facts exists), the unavoidable implications of the view expressed here render it completely absurd and nonsensical. And yet, this is what can be expected from the Christian "philosophy of fact" that Van Til affirms as essential to his worldview and its proper defense.

The Christian view would then need to affirm two fundamentally different conceptions of facts, one pertaining to uncreated facts (which, per the statements quoted above, are apparently not allowed) and one pertaining to created facts. And even though it's clear that Van Til and other presuppositionalists do not make such provision, such duplicity would be required in order to stave off the absurd internal implications that have hitherto been identified, and yet it would also create further problems. For analytic philosophers, this view of factuality seems quite a death knell. Facts which have traditionally been taken as "necessary" suddenly become "contingent," since all facts on the Christian view were "created." The fact that $2+2=4$, for instance, was "created" by the Christian god. Of course, not all Christians would agree with this implication; but given the exhaustive pervasiveness of the presuppositionalists' assertions, absurdities like this are an unavoidable by-product of the Christian theory of facts.

But the absurdities do not stop there. The problem is bigger than just its implications for the fact that $2+2=4$. If facts are dependent upon someone's *will*, as the Christian worldview holds, then obviously those facts have no necessary content of their own. Facts, on such a view, are not necessary, but utterly contingent, contingent upon the will of the being said to have the power to create and alter them. On such a basis, one could never claim to really know any facts, for any fact he might claim to know could be altered at any time without his knowing it. Certainly believers do not expect their god to seek their consent or approval before altering any facts it has chosen to alter. One might say, for instance, that it's a fact that dogs are mammals; but since this fact was "created" by the Christian god and this god can revise it at any time, it could change: dogs could suddenly become reptiles on this view. Christians like to reply to this kind of objection by saying that their god has a rational nature, that it wouldn't act against its nature, etc., none of which is very convincing against the relief of the sovereignty it is said to possess over the universe and its means of revelation to man via miracles. After all,

we can affirm the fact that John F. Kennedy is dead, but the Christian god, if it were real, could resurrect the assassinated president at any time if it wanted to. Again, its wants, desires, wishes and whims hold metaphysical primacy over the domain of factuality. Ironically enough, such responses in essence come across as *de facto* denials of divine omnipotence: while they claim that their god is omnipotent, it has apparently chosen not to exercise it outside the confines of a self-inflicted straitjacket. Why? Appeals to “divine rationality” ring hollow, since no Christian would say that his god’s miraculous interventions in history, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, were irrational. Such “rationality” as the Christian conceives of it includes not only the “natural order” of things as we actually perceive them in the world, but also any revision of them (e.g., miracles), however temporary.

And let’s not forget another important doctrine of Christianity: the doctrine of malevolent spirits. While Christians might claim that their god would not transform dogs from mammals into reptiles, who is to say that demons and devils cannot or would not? Indeed, the problem still persists, especially when we factor in the claim that supernatural beings other than just the Christian god are said to lurk “back of” the objects we perceive in the world. Mischievous and nefarious, demons, devils and other spooks are supposed also to inhabit the supernatural realm and wield influence over the “created order”; indeed, the bible itself claims that the leader of these malevolent spirits, Satan, is “the prince of this world” (cf. Jn. 12:31, 14:30, 16:11). As supernatural beings which have the power to take possession of human beings (cf. Mt. 4:24, 8:16, 28, 9:32, 12:22; Mk. 1:32, 5:15-18) and manipulate, deceive, and misguide them, they too have the ability to meddle with man’s efforts to know facts.

So really, what we have in the Christian theory of facts is not fully disclosed by its spokesmen: not only does the Christian god hold metaphysical primacy over the facts of the world, but so do other alleged supernatural beings.

Of course, Christians themselves have shown that, even on their own terms, it is notoriously difficult to distinguish “the supernatural” from the imaginary. I surmise that this is because there is no fundamental distinction between the two. In the end, since Christianity actually asserts the primacy of the supernatural over the realm of facts, believers are really telling us that *the imaginary* holds metaphysical primacy over *the actual*, since they claim such primacy on behalf of their imaginary spirits.

Notice how all this systematically destroys any potential for knowledge of the world. If any of these spirits are able to alter the identity of things which exist (such as turning water into wine), or cause them to act against their natures (such as enabling human beings to walk on unfrozen water), who is to say that none of them could alter our memory of the past, or even change history without us knowing it? Surely the Christian god is not bound to the temporal order of the universe, is it? Since the Christian god can at any time, we are told, take any fact and put it into a new relationship with created law, who is to say our memory of things we have done or witnessed could ever be accurate? I remember getting my driver’s license when I was 16 years old, for instance. But if I believed that such a being as the god Christianity describes and worships were real, that memory could be completely false. Maybe I was 18 when I got my license, or 26, or maybe I never got one, or maybe I was born with it already in hand and just don’t know this. Or, it could be true today that I got my license at 16, and false tomorrow, and then true again the next day. What is to stop an omnipotent being from revising the past in such a manner? Does the believer himself presume to be able to stop this? If he says that no one, including the god he claims to worship, can alter the past once it has happened, then clearly he’s telling us that neither his god nor any other being is truly omnipotent, or at any rate that his god has the same relationship to the past that we have. If he says that his god can go back in time and revise history, but simply wouldn’t, then the believer sets himself as the author of his god’s plan: his god does whatever he imagines it does. And of course, what would keep an actually existing sovereign deity from *deceiving* me into believing that I ever got my driver’s license in the first place, let alone at 16 years old? Blank out.

Avoiding a “direct appeal to facts” is essential to the presuppositional approach to defending Christian theism or settling the debate between believers and non-believers. As Van Til himself states:

The method of reasoning by presupposition may be said to be indirect rather than direct. The issue between believers and non-believers in Christian theism cannot be settled by a direct appeal to “facts” or “laws” whose nature and significance is [sic] already agreed upon by both parties to the debate. (*The Defense of the Faith*, p. 100)

Here Van Til adds a new qualification to the treatment of facts in his apologetic treatment. He says that the debate between believer and non-believer “cannot be settled by a direct appeal to ‘facts’ or ‘laws’ whose nature and significance is [sic] already agreed upon by both parties to the debate.” Of course, if the believer holds that

“God is the creator of every fact” and that “all ‘facts’ are God and Christ created and directed to the consummation of history,” as we have already seen Van Til affirm, while the non-believer (particularly if he subscribes to an objective view of reality) recognizes that facts are not subject to conscious intentions, then there probably is no such agreement between them. On the Christian view, facts are creations of consciousness, open to revision according to divine whim, while on an objective view facts are what they are independent of consciousness, regardless of who likes it, regardless of who disapproves. The two positions are diametrically opposed from their very foundations. And yet, since both the believer and the non-believer live in the same reality, they do in fact have many points of ‘common ground’ in [metaphysics](#), [epistemology](#) and [ethics](#), only the believer has a confessional motivation to deny this fact outright, or interpret it in favor of protecting his confessional investment by means of [assimilation](#).

Notice how Van Til puts defining importance on whether or not the nature and significance of facts are “agreed upon by both parties to the debate.” Why should their agreement or disagreement on these things matter if in fact the facts in question are indeed factual? Shouldn’t the fact that they are factual matter more? Apparently not for Van Til. Van Til takes the Christian command to “come out and be ye separate” (II Cor. 6:17) very seriously. It seems that what is of primary importance for Van Til, since he names no facts to begin with, is division between believer and non-believer for the sake of division as such. Agreement with the non-believer is to be avoided at all costs, even at the cost of an objective understanding of facts. The impulse for all this is the believer’s determination to imagine a supernatural consciousness “back of” everything we perceive and discover in the world. Van Til makes this crystal clear when he writes:

I could believe in nothing else if I did not, as back of everything, believe in this God. (“Toward A Reformed Apologetic,” 1972)

Since upholding and defending such imaginations as if they reflected “absolute reality” - a reality that is even more real than the reality in which we live, move and have our being on a daily basis - is of prime importance to someone like Van Til, it’s no surprise that the antithetical divide between himself and those who do not indulge in such imaginations is emphasized like this.

An obvious outcome given Van Til’s stated view is that, if the non-believer disagrees with the believer at any point, this fact itself is a creation of his god. This points right back to the alleged creator of facts as the cause for such disagreement and division. It makes no sense to hold the non-believer accountable for his disagreement with the believer, or for any position he might happen to hold, for if he holds a certain position, on Van Til’s view the fact that he holds it is just another of his god’s creations: his god obviously wanted it this way. The unavoidable implications of determinism serve only to reduce any accountability on man’s part to “God made me do it.” So the common presuppositionalist strategy of urging the non-believer to “account for” his non-belief or any position he might affirmatively take on any issue, is rather farcical: the non-believer only needs to point out that the apologist, according to his own presuppositions, is looking in the wrong place for the explanations he has asked for.

Instead of focusing on any specific facts themselves, Van Til thinks the debate stems from something prior to facts. Van Til explains:

The question is rather as to what is the final reference-point required to make the “facts” and “laws” intelligible. The question is as to what the “facts” and “laws” really are. Are they what the non-Christian methodology assumes that they are? Are they what the Christian theistic methodology presupposes they are? (*The Defense of the Faith*, p. 100)

Van Til makes it clear that, for his worldview, facts are clearly not primaries. Something takes priority to facts, and logically, whatever this something is that exists before them must be something other than factual, for he makes it clear that there is something which precedes facts. Van Til’s statement here would serve no purpose if that which comes before facts is just another bunch of facts; it must be something other than facts, it must be *non-factual*. Van Til calls it “the final reference-point,” but does not explicitly state what he means by this in this section of his book. To find clues as to what Van Til means here, we look further in his book:

The final point of reference in all predication must ultimately rest in some mind, divine or human. It is either the self-contained God of Christianity or the would-be autonomous man that must be and is presupposed as the final reference point in every sentence that any man utters. (Ibid., p. 215.)

What Van Til states here supplies a portion of the context missing from his previous statement about the need to identify “the final reference-point required to make the ‘facts’ and ‘laws’ intelligible.” And it is quite clear: for

Van Til, “the final-reference point” which makes laws and facts intelligible must be *subject* in the subject-object relationship, either human or supernatural. So far as I can find, Van Til provides no argument for his view that “the final point of reference in all predication must ultimately rest in some mind, divine or human.” Indeed, it is not entirely clear what exactly this is supposed to mean, so I have little choice but to interpret it literally. A point of reference would, as I understand it, be some object to which one’s identifications (which would include predication) and judgments refer. Van Til may have meant something else (he seems to treat the objects of cognition as unnecessary), but if so I would say that he has expressed himself quite poorly. Even some of Van Til’s own devoted followers have complained about Van Til’s “‘torturous English’, his redundant and unclear style, his penchant for sloganeering, and his disorganized presentation of themes” (Michael Butler, “The Transcendental Argument for God’s Existence,” in Schlissel’s *The Standard Bearer: A Festschrift for Greg L. Bahnsen*, p. 70). Regardless, it seems that Van Til can only mean that, for his “philosophy of fact,” a *subject* must hold primacy over all objects in order for predication of facts to be possible. From the very outset, this rules out the primacy of objects in the subject-object relationship, which means it rules out all objectivity. On an objective orientation, the “final point of reference” would be the facts of reality themselves, beginning with the fact that existence exists, since it is understood on the objective view that facts obtain independent of consciousness; they do not conform to conscious intentions. The “the final point of reference” would not be a mind, as if a mind could dictate what reality consists of or what it should be. A mind needs content, just as consciousness requires an object, and that content must come from somewhere. On an objective view, that content ultimately comes from what is perceived, the objects of awareness; on the theistic view, the mind creates its own content, consciousness creates its own objects.

So what about Van Til’s last questions here? Are facts “what the non-Christian methodology assumes that they are?” Or, “are they what the Christian theistic methodology presupposes they are?” To sort this out, Van Til proposes the following two-step apologetic procedure:

The answer to this question cannot be finally settled by any direct discussion of “facts.” It must, in the last analysis, be settled indirectly. The Christian apologist must place himself upon the position of his opponent, assuming the correctness of his method merely for argument’s sake, in order to show him that on such a position the “facts are not facts and the “laws” are not laws. He must also ask the non-Christian to place himself upon the Christian position for argument’s sake in order that he may be shown that only upon such a basis do “facts” and “laws” appear intelligible. (Ibid., pp. 100-101)

Regarding the second step, I have already noted its [parallels to sampling drug use](#). This step of the presuppositional apologetic very much resembles the kind of tactic an addict might use to goad non-users into the world of substance abuse. “Just try it. Once you do, you’ll see how everything in this crazy world finally makes sense!” I prefer a more scientific route, analyzing the chemical causality of the substance on the brain, thus understanding why the drug alters its users’ behavior so drastically. This is essentially what I have done above, by pointing out how the Christian theory of facts is fundamentally subjective, thus obliterating the very concept ‘fact’ in its destructive wake.

The very last statement Van Til makes is especially curious, given the way he words it. He wants to show the non-believer that “only upon such a basis do ‘facts’ and ‘laws’ appear intelligible.” Van Til’s own pupil, Greg Bahnsen, points out that “the Bible distinguishes between appearance and reality” (*Always Ready*, p. 181). Even Proverbs 14:12 warns that “there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” So in Van Til’s case, while “facts” and “laws” as his worldview conceives of them may *appear* “intelligible,” his own worldview tells us that this may be only a mirage. Van Til needs to give more assurance than his customary unsupported assertions and catchy slogans to make his case. And given the points we’ve seen so far, such a venture would be hopeless from the very start.

But what about what “the non-Christian methodology” assumes facts to be? Isn’t this racked with problems of its own? Well, it depends on which “non-Christian methodology” we’re talking about. A non-Christian methodology would be any which is not Christian, and there’s lots of those. Most thinkers, regardless of religiosity, do not walk around with a fully developed “philosophy of fact” formulated in their minds. However, in spite of its difficulties, some general features of fact theory can and should be explicitly articulated, specifically with regard to the orientation between subject and object. A philosophy of facts which human beings can apply in their lives must at minimum comply with the primacy of existence, and do so without compromise. Compromising the primacy of existence can only lead, if left uncorrected, to a blurring between reality and fantasy, which is the very bloodline of a mystical worldview (such as Christianity). To my knowledge, Objectivism is the only worldview which identifies the primacy of existence as a fundamental principle guiding human cognition, and which takes it seriously in its effort to develop a worldview consistent with that principle. Given the incontestable truth of this

principle, the only philosophy of fact worthy of its name must stand in accordance with the primacy of existence, the essence of the principle of objectivity, for facts are objective, and a worldview dealing in facts must provide understanding of this from its very foundations. At the very least we can conclude that one should not look to Christianity for such principles.

by Dawson Bethrick

Labels: [Facts](#), [Primacy of Existence](#)

posted by [Bahnsen Burner](#) at [6:00 AM](#)

16 Comments:

[M](#) said...

For the last time Dawson, write a damn book against this stuff. You're wasting your time publishing this stuff online.

Also, nix the whole Objectivism bullshit; real philosophers don't take it seriously for valid reasons. I was initially attracted to it in high school (like many fake high school intelligensia), but I abandoned it when I recognized it as the adolescent, sophomoric, pedestrian "philosophy" that it is. It's stupidly circular and poorly argued for; more often than not disguising assertion as argument.

Ayn Rand is to philosophy as Lyndon Larouche is to politics. Objectivists are the Scientologists of philosophy and "Atlas Shrugged" is its "Dianetics" equivalent. They are the street preachers of philosophy. They as embarrassing to professional philosophers as the lone, dogged and obnoxious "9/11 Truther" is in a meeting of structural engineers or the token "Reiki healer" is at an NIH meeting. People usually give up Objectivism at about the same way others learn that their "Anime" (or "Manga") obsession is seriously lame and, usually, maturity dawns on them when they emerge from their parents' basements, throw away their "Ron Paul 08" signs and t-shirts, and attempt to become thinking adults and abandon their "high-school intelligensia" image. They stop asking "Who Is John Galt?" and start asking, "Who fucking cares?"

There's a reason Peikoff is so damn lonely. More often than not, Objectivists are as insulated in their worldviews and their "apologetics" as the goddamn Calvinists.

[November 09, 2008 12:05 PM](#)

[madmax](#) said...

M,

There is not one argument in that entire diatribe. Its pure ad hominem, nothing more.

[November 09, 2008 3:14 PM](#)

[Phoroneus](#) said...

I guess the jig is up, come on everyone let's hastily reject Objectivism due to the random insults hurled at us about how adolescent it is. We all know none of us accepted it in order to actually learn about the universe but instead did it to pretend to fit into a high school clique.

Right?

[November 11, 2008 8:18 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

That's right, Phoroneus, we all want to hide in a high school clique. M really made us there! I must really be the odd man out, though. I never heard of Ayn Rand back when I was in high school, my parents' house did not have a basement, I never had a "high school intelligentsia" image, and I was not a supporter of Ron Paul (never really knew much about the guy). I also didn't know that Peikoff was lonely. If that's true, maybe I should give him a

call one of these days. As for “poorly argued for,” M has us at a disadvantage on that score: as Madmax pointed out, I don’t see one argument anywhere in M’s delicious diatribe.

Like other detractors of Objectivism, M would do well to realize that the only alternative to Objectivism is some form of subjectivism (let his own words serve as a case in point). Perhaps he does realize this and intends on remaining a recluse in his own subjective realm. Too bad - it’s a big world out there, and there’s so much to see, do and accomplish. As for your average “professional philosopher,” it’s true - Rand is an outsider (which is indescribably refreshing), and they don’t like outsiders very much. With the kind of foam and froth that Rand’s writings have apparently inspired among the college in-crowd, she must have posed quite a threat! And with the vacuous non-argument which that crowd seems only capable of generating, I can see why.

Toodles!
Dawson

[November 12, 2008 5:47 AM](#)

[mgarelick](#) said...

So the common presuppositionalist strategy of urging the non-believer to “account for” his non-belief or any position he might affirmatively take on any issue, is rather farcical: the non-believer only needs to point out that the apologist, according to his own presuppositions, is looking in the wrong place for the explanations he has asked for.

I think there's a problem with this. It does us no good to remind the apologist that explanations of non-belief can't be found "according to his own presuppositions," because (unless I'm missing something) the apologist is asking the non-believer to account for non-belief within the non-believer's *own* thought system, in other words, to show that his worldview is sustainable on its own merits. Don't get me wrong here; I gag whenever I hear Craig or his ilk say "account for," and I'd love to hear a solid explanation of why it is gibberish.

[November 13, 2008 7:12 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Mgarelick: “I think there's a problem with this. It does us no good to remind the apologist that explanations of non-belief can't be found ‘according to his own presuppositions’, because (unless I'm missing something) the apologist is asking the non-believer to account for non-belief within the non-believer's *own* thought system, in other words, to show that his worldview is sustainable on its own merits.”

I understand your point, and I’m certainly aware that this is the apologist’s *stated* intention for directing the debate in this direction. But it is still farcical on several levels. For one, he’s already pre-judged that whatever explanation you might give in your “account for” your views will be invalid, untrue, spiritually deficient, or what have you. He’s got a lot of canned objections which he’s waiting to pull out in order to discredit you and essentially make you look silly, stupid, intellectually inferior. (This is especially the case if his peers are watching in the audience; it’s all for show.) He’s not really interested in what your position is (look how many times I've had to re-explain the same thing to certain apologists who have challenged me!), he’s only interested in *destroying* it, for the very idea that you might possibly have a well-grounded position is itself a threat to his faith (that’s how tenuous it is). Given the apologist’s “presuppositions” (i.e., confessional commitments), the non-believer would be perfectly right to say to the apologist, when asked to “account for” his non-believing views, “According to your views, your god made me this way. Why are you asking me? No matter what I tell you, you’re going to think it’s wrong, and yet on your position, your god saw to it that I would think the way I do. So you’re calling the knowledge that your god put in my head ‘wrong’.”

But what’s even more farcical about the apologist’s ploy to have the non-believer “account for” some “presupposition” (e.g., the uniformity of nature, laws of logic, objective moral principles, etc.), is the fact that the apologist is trying to divert attention away from his Christian views and onto the non-believer’s views, to put the non-believer on defensive. It’s all part of shifting the focus in order to thwart any opportunity the believer might have for scrutinizing the Christian position. It’s all part of a game of deflection that the apologist has been coached to play. He wants to keep the attention off of Christianity at all costs. He does not teach his views and why they are true, worthy of assent, etc. He wants to bully. As Rand pointed out, faith and force are corollaries. The “how do you account for X” ploy is a verbal manifestation of this fact.

Mgarellick: "Don't get me wrong here; I gag whenever I hear Craig or his ilk say 'account for', and I'd love to hear a solid explanation of why it is gibberish."

In some ways, I interpret the apologist's call for us to "account for" our views as a tacit cry of surrender to ignorance. He surrendered his mind long before this when he got to certain questions in life and gave up the quest by burrowing into the imaginary instead of into the facts. At some point when he confronted a question about reality, he surrendered, essentially saying "Duh, I donno, must be God did it!" Now he wants you to do the same.

Regards,
Dawson

[November 14, 2008 5:41 AM](#)

[mgarellick](#) said...

Dawson,

Thank you for the reply. I think all of your points about apologists have merit. Here's another way to approach the accounting problem.

I actually think that some apologists do a pretty good job of illustrating the difficulties of various nontheistic philosophies. Where they fail, as you point out, is in showing how theism solves these problems, *other than by fiat*. Example: "You can't account for the uniformity of nature, but we can because we believe in a rational god who created nature with uniformity."

My answer to the accounting challenge would be, "You're right -- I can't account for that; it's a very complicated problem, and I'm not going to declare it to be solved."

One of the central failings of theism, as I see it, is the inability to accept that the way things are may not be the way we want them to be. We want a "worldview" that is a tidy package, but we haven't actually achieved it on any principled basis. We want justice; it's upsetting to think that Adolph Hitler and Anne Frank have come to the same end, but that doesn't make heaven and hell any more likely.

[November 14, 2008 11:56 AM](#)

[Dr Funkenstein](#) said...

Hi Dawson

I've been reading your blog for a while now, but haven't felt inclined to comment 'til now.

I have to agree with you on this paragraph:

I understand your point, and I'm certainly aware that this is the apologist's stated intention for directing the debate in this direction. But it is still farcical on several levels. For one, he's already pre-judged that whatever explanation you might give in your "account for" your views will be invalid, untrue, spiritually deficient, or what have you. He's got a lot of canned objections which he's waiting to pull out in order to discredit you and essentially make you look silly, stupid, intellectually inferior. (This is especially the case if his peers are watching in the audience; it's all for show.)

This is all very true. The whole shtick really is just a ploy to throw atheists (or at least those who don't put much stock in the idea of a god for whatever reason) off guard, before then proclaiming 'ah you don't have an explanation for phenomenon X (the laws of logic seem to be a favourite), therefore my worldview wins' when the non-Christian can't provide a satisfactory answer. For anyone not well initiated in philosophy (like me for example, although I have been trying to read up on the subject of late), it is quite easy to fall into the trap.

I noticed from your archives you have dabbled in a bit of debate with the Triablogue in the past - certainly their members are quick to indulge in ridicule if an atheist makes any mistakes in their debate. However, I have found via doing a little more reading and that with a bit of probing it becomes apparent that the presuppositionalist assertions are just flimsy rhetoric - they are never clear what they mean when they say 'account for', and as you say happily dismiss any potential explanation proffered out of hand. for example, Stephen Law pointed out on his

blog that the laws of logic could simply be brute facts of the universe/existence. Of course, when I borrowed this point and used it in a debate, it was dismissed out of hand - yet presuppositionalists happily assert that the laws of logic 'flow from God's nature ie are simply a brute fact of God, or words to that effect. It's all fairly ridiculous, and seems to be an attempt to package various axioms and so on into one giant discount deal for the theist - their 'account' for all these things basically boils down to 'dunno, Goddidit', which as most people realise is no explanation at all.

[November 14, 2008 6:15 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Hi Mgarelick and Dr. Funkenstein,

Sorry for the delay in my response - I've had a very busy last few days.

First, thank you for all your thoughtful comments. I am grateful to you not only for taking some time to read some of my work, but also to post your thoughts. I'm sure you're all like me, very very busy with your lives, trying to make things happen for yourselves. To take some time out of your day to write such thoughtful messages on my blog is truly an honor for me.

Mgarelick, I think you're right about apologists (some anyway) pointing out problems with various secular philosophies. Some are well rehearsed at this, to be sure, and there are many secular philosophies which suffer from various errors, making them "easy prey" for the apologist's talons. You might notice that apologists tend to seize on the more obvious problems though. For instance, if a position says something like "All knowledge needs evidence," they'll ask "What's the evidence for this claim to knowledge?" And although this can be answered (though not with some snappy soundbite), the proponent of the view in question is not likely going to have a satisfactory answer for it. Tellingly, the theist wants to take that unsatisfactory response as license to affirm any claim regardless of evidence (or lack thereof). Why else would he challenge it?

What's disconcerting, however, is how casually apologists assume that their rehearsed criticism will work against *any* and *every* non-Christian position. When I point out to apologists that their canned replies to strict empiricism, rationalism, logical positivism, existentialism, postmodernism, Humean skepticism, etc., etc., do not work against the Objectivist philosophy, the point never seems to sink in. It's as if they either aren't listening, are not teachable on such matters, or simply insist on a kind of self-inflicted stubbornness which paralyzes their maturation as thinkers. Maybe it's a combination of all three of these factors, or maybe it's something else (e.g., a commitment to defending a confessional investment, etc.). The causality for such impermeability will of course vary from individual to individual, or so I would think. I really am trying to be charitable, but perhaps that's a liability of my own.

As for the challenge to offer an "account for" some issue or debating point, I really have no problem with such challenges. I have sought over the years to develop my own responses, but as your own proposed response indicates, some issues are very complicated, and are not easily communicated. They have to be formulated with care, and the heat of debate is not a suitable time to do this. I'm confident that any question an apologist might pose can be answered, even though he may not like the answer. But his not liking the answer is neither here nor there. Sometimes the answer is pointing out a flaw in the question's assumptions (e.g., "If God didn't create the universe, where did it come from?").

Which brings me to your other point, namely that (in essence) theists do not like reality as it is, and consequently seek refuge in their imagination. He's frustrated with reality (it requires a lot of effort, there's a lot of trial and error, sometimes humiliating and even damaging failures, and it never seems to just snap into the shape he desires), so he runs with the idea that it is temporary and will pass away, and that he himself is eternal. And so long as he nourishes the hunger of the phantasms he imagines, he believes he'll be rewarded when he dies. As he indulges this fantasy, it can take on an all-consuming central role in his conscious life, so much so that he hungers and thirsts for it to be validated somehow. That's why he not only wants a debate, but anxiously prepares for debates, and desperately wants to prevail in debate. And debate for the apologist consists mostly of interrogating his opponent with the intent to entrap and uncover faults. He may even manufacture them if he can't find them quickly.

But I agree: suppose an apologist asks you how you "account for" the uniformity of nature. He's most likely going to accuse you either of offering an inadequate response or of begging the question. Indeed, how one might

answer this challenge in fact depends on what “account for” is supposed to mean. One apologist told me that “an account is a logical proof.” So by this token, any attempt to “prove” the uniformity of nature is, by virtue of its service as a proof, going to assume the uniformity of nature. So like a spider waiting for a fly, he’s going to be on the other end ready to say “You’re begging the question!” This ploy is not only intended to discredit your proposed “account,” it’s also supposed to discredit your whole mind, including not only the conceptual framework by which you interact with the world and integrate new facts, but also all content, including your view of yourself, the sum of your experiences, your entire person and life history. All of these are supposed to be repudiated by this one supposed error. It’s not an invitation, but a bully’s demand to renounce reality as it is and to step into the realm of the imaginary as if it were the “ultimate reality.”

How an individual may “account for” something like logic, the uniformity of nature, objective morality, etc., is really neither here nor there when it comes to a proof of a god’s existence, unless of course that proof is founded on ignorance per se. See for instance my blog [Presuppositionalism and the Argument from Ignorance](#). Suppose the apologist demands an individual to “account for” the uniformity of nature, and that individual turns out to be a 9-year-old kid. The 9-year-old kid may very well respond, “I don’t know,” and I wouldn’t expect him to know. Does this therefore give license to insert “God” as the best “account for” the uniformity of nature? Indeed, there is a predatory nature to such apologetic tactics. Really, who is the lion roaming around seeking whom he may devour?

Dr. Funk asked about my interactions with individuals from Triablogue. Triablogue are stuck at Device 2: Discrediting the World. This is their primary mission: to discredit, even vilify, anyone who’s not entirely on board with their god-belief program. Their tools are ridicule (“Dawson must either be a precocious four-year old or a retarded adult”) and condescension (“you’re not smart enough to be devious”). I’ve found that there is little if anything valuable to learn from Triablogue, which I think is a telling point. To find anything worthy of learning, you have to pick through a lot of ad hominem fluff. Watch how they turn on each other, too, when they step outside their imaginary doctrinal boundaries. It gets very ugly very quickly. I guess it’s just the love of Christ in action.

Regards,
Dawson

[November 18, 2008 5:50 AM](#)

[mgarelick](#) said...

Dawson -- good to hear back from you; I feel like we could have a long and rewarding discussion. (I'll just add you to the "have a long and rewarding discussion with" queue on my to-do list. < g >)

Just one thing I'll respond to right now. You said:

"It's as if they either aren't listening, are not teachable on such matters, or simply insist on a kind of self-inflicted stubbornness which paralyzes their maturation as thinkers. Maybe it's a combination of all three of these factors, or maybe it's something else (e.g., a commitment to defending a confessional investment, etc.). The causality for such impermeability will of course vary from individual to individual, or so I would think. I really am trying to be charitable, but perhaps that's a liability of my own."

Not a liability, and not your own. I, too, try to assume the best of my opponents, only partly because it's "the right thing to do" (charitable, as you put it), but also for two other reasons. It hones our own arguments to make the best assumptions of our opponents' (go for that high fruit, it'll help your jump shot); and, what's the point otherwise? I mean, what fun is it to just say "that guy is a moron?"

The real problem with apologetics is illustrated by the first part of my quote from your post, and it is that apologetics is a cheating game at its root. It is defined at its essence (by its proponents) as an intellectual pursuit, but the ultimate conclusion is circumscribed. It's like jousting with a rubber lance: "We're going to fight to the death! (take the argument wherever it leads) But I'm not actually going to let you kill me. (I know that god is real, because he told me so.)"

I sometimes wonder: assuming that an apologist really believes in salvation, hell, etc., and assuming that they will admit the possibility that their opponent will convince at least one person in the audience (thereby depriving them of salvation), how can they justify participating in a debate? Is it a cost/benefit analysis (risk x souls in

order to save y souls)?

Anyway, that's my fun for today -- time for work. Thanks again for the opportunity.

[November 18, 2008 8:06 AM](#)

[Harold](#) said...

Hello, I recently discovered this website. It's pretty heady, so I'm starting with your March '05 posts, lol.

Harold

[November 22, 2008 6:33 PM](#)

[Vytautas](#) said...

Bahnsen Burner: Facts are not objective according to the Christian view.

Vytautas: To whom are facts not objective? If it is to a man's prospective, then I disagree because sense objects are able to affect the mind. If it is to God's prospective, then I disagree, since all objects are within his ruling providence.

Bahnsen Burner: But if any facts can be uncreated, why couldn't all other facts be uncreated?

Vytautas: It is due to the fact that there is a difference between the Creator and his creation.

Bahnsen Burner: In the end, on the Christian view, it's the desires of the Christian god which are absolute, not the facts we discover in reality. Talk about reducing a worldview to absurdity!

Vytautas: Please show the absurdity. I must be blind.

Bahnsen Burner: Facts which have traditionally been taken as "necessary" suddenly become "contingent," since all facts on the Christian view were "created." The fact that $2+2=4$, for instance, was "created" by the Christian god.

Vytautas: When you use the term "fact", do you mean something that is true? Then there are truths as God knows them, and there are truths as we know them. Our idea of $2+2=4$ is analogous to the way God knows this necessary truth due to the Creator/creature distinction.

Bahnsen Burner: If facts are dependent upon someone's will, as the Christian worldview holds, then obviously those facts have no necessary content of their own. Facts, on such a view, are not necessary, but utterly contingent, contingent upon the will of the being said to have the power to create and alter them.

Vytautas: Yes, but God is necessary as we discussed earlier. So if the will of God is apart of God, then the will of God is necessary as well. The facts are contingent on something that is necessary. Thus, the facts are saved.

Bahnsen Burner: We can affirm the fact that John F. Kennedy is dead, but the Christian god, if it were real, could resurrect the assassinated president at any time if it wanted to.

Vytautas: Yes, but John F. Kennedy died November 22, 1963 in Dallas, Texas. God does not change this fact in space-time because he planned this since the foundations of the world. Only an irrational god would do that.

[December 03, 2008 11:46 AM](#)

[Justin Hall](#) said...

I fail to see how anything could be either rational or irrational with regard to gods actions. being rational presupposes being able to choose the correct action as apposed to the incorrect action (irrational) after taking into account the objective facts pertinent to the choice before you. For god there can be no objective facts, everything conforms to his will. Basically if I want X and the facts are Y then I must do Z. God on the other hand

just wishes X to conform to his will and to heck with Z. Thus nothing is rational or irrational for him. Further if we take god seriously then there is nothing that rules out the possibility that the earth was in fact created out of a soup can on December 1st 1970 with everyone alive at that moment created with the memories of the JFK assassination and we would have no way of knowing. In fact he can have changed the date from its original in say 1960 to 1963 just because it suits his whim and he could change our memories and recorded histories as well, we would never know. So if god is real and enjoys a subjective relationship with the objects of his awareness, then there are no objective facts for anyone, not him, not you, no one. You may complain that god would never lie to you, ask yourself how to you measure the word of a man? how can we measure gods word? By how it compares to a reality that is under his complete control? Where are the objective facts now? Vytautas I believe this cartoon universe is the absurdity you are looking for.

[December 04, 2008 3:59 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Hi Vytautas,

It's good to hear from you again. Thanks for stopping by and sharing your comments.

I was going to work up a response to some of your points, but I had some questions on what you wrote because it's not clear what you're trying to say. When you say that you disagree in your initial point, are you saying that facts are not objective for anyone? Is this itself a fact? And if so, is it not itself an objective fact - i.e., a fact that is impervious to conscious intentions? What is the alternative to objectivity in your view, if not some form of subjectivism?

Also, when you say that "sense objects are able to affect the mind," what specifically do you mean by this, and why would you conclude from this that facts are not objective? How does that follow? It sounds like you're suggesting that the mind functions optimally if there are no sense objects to begin with to "affect the mind." Anyway, some clarity on what you were trying to say here would be helpful, because as it stands now it's vague and unsubstantial.

When you say that "God does not change [the fact that JF Kennedy died Nov. 22, 1963] in space-time because he [planned] this since the foundations of the world," specifically which fact are you talking about that your god "does not change"? That JFK is dead? Or that he died on a specific date? You claim that "only an irrational god" would change whichever fact is in question here, but why? It seems that you would consider anything your god plans and does "rational," even if it involved resurrecting JFK or revising the date on which he was assassinated. Surely you believe that your god is capable of performing both alterations, no? If so, it's within your god's power to do either one. And if you believed your god had a purpose for resurrecting JFK or changing the date on which he was assassinated, would you call that "irrational"? Justin gave some brief comments on why it's quizzical at best to ascribe rationality or irrationality to a god's behavior. I'm wondering if you could clarify what you were trying to say, and what you mean by "rational" and "irrational". I'm in agreement with Justin that, on my understanding of what rationality is, neither concept could apply. I can give some fundamental reasons why this is so if you like. But we're speaking about your god here, and your god is supposedly omniscient and all-powerful, and thus quite a fount of knowledge for us to learn.

Regards,
Dawson

[December 05, 2008 5:31 AM](#)

[Vytautas](#) said...

Bahnsen Burner: When you say that you disagree in your initial point, are you saying that facts are not objective for anyone?

Vytautas: Facts are objective for the Christian view as well any other view.

Bahnsen Burner: Is this itself a fact?

Vytautas: No, because a statement about the facts in general is not a statement about something objective, since it is subjective.

Bahnsen Burner: And if so, is it not itself an objective fact - i.e., a fact that is impervious to conscious intentions? What is the alternative to objectivity in your view, if not some form of subjectivism?

Vytautas: We can know things objectively as well as subjectively. Why are there only facts and not statements about the facts?

Bahnsen Burner: Also, when you say that “sense objects are able to affect the mind,” what specifically do you mean by this, and why would you conclude from this that facts are not objective?

Vytautas: A sense objects are identified by the senses, and the mind passively takes in information about the object. The passive act of apprehending an object affects the mind, but if the mind does not sense the object, then the object cannot be identified. I deny that facts are not objective.

Bahnsen Burner: How does that follow? It sounds like you’re suggesting that the mind functions optimally if there are no sense objects to begin with to “affect the mind.” Anyway, some clarity on what you were trying to say here would be helpful, because as it stands now it’s vague and unsubstantial.

Vytautas: A mind has an intellect and a will. The intellect passively takes in information of the sense object, but the will must operate on the sense data to make it understandable. If the facts are not objective, then all of reality as we perceive it would be subjective. But we know things objectively as well as subjectively.

Bahnsen Burner: When you say that “God does not change [the fact that JF Kennedy died Nov. 22, 1963] in space-time because he [planned] this since the foundations of the world,” specifically which fact are you talking about that your god “does not change”? That JFK is dead? Or that he died on a specific date?

Vytautas: It is the fact that the assassination happened in history. The event is not repeatable because it all ready happened. Even if JFK rose from the dead, that fact would be a different from the historical fact. So the same historical event cannot happen twice.

Bahnsen Burner: You claim that “only an irrational god” would change whichever fact is in question here, but why?

Vytautas: It is because an irrational god would change its plan when it is carried out. An irrational god does not plan everything in advance so it does not know everything in advance.

Bahnsen Burner: It seems that you would consider anything your god plans and does “rational,” even if it involved resurrecting JFK or revising the date on which he was assassinated.

Vytautas: God is rational because he plans out history, but an irrational god is captive to his creation. We only know history after the fact. So we don’t know if God will resurrect JFK, but he will not revise the date on which he was assassinated because then God would be inconstant with what he has decreed.

Bahnsen Burner: Surely you believe that your god is capable of performing both alterations, no?

Vytautas: I deny that God is capable of performing both alterations, since it would make him irrational.

Bahnsen Burner: If so, it’s within your god’s power to do either one.

Vytautas: Yes

Bahnsen Burner: And if you believed your god had a purpose for resurrecting JFK or changing the date on which he was assassinated, would you call that “irrational”?

Vytautas: No

Bahnsen Burner: Justin gave some brief comments on why it’s quizzical at best to ascribe rationality or irrationality to a god’s behavior. I’m wondering if you could clarify what you were trying to say, and what you mean by “rational” and “irrational”.

Vytautas: "Rational" means understandable. And "irrational" means not understandable. God is rational in relation to himself, but God is incomprehensible to man, so that he must reveal himself to man, if we are to know something about God.

Bahnsen Burner: I'm in agreement with Justin that, on my understanding of what rationality is, neither concept could apply. I can give some fundamental reasons why this is so if you like.

Vytautas: Why cannot God be rational?

Bahnsen Burner: But we're speaking about your god here, and your god is supposedly omniscient and all-powerful, and thus quite a fount of knowledge for us to learn.

[December 05, 2008 3:48 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Hello Vytautas,

Thanks again for your comments and questions. I have posted a reply to your recent statements here:

[Thoughts on Recent Comments by Vytautas](#)

I did not include my response to your final question ("Why cannot God be rational?") in tonight's blog. I will post my response to this question in its own blog in the near future (it deserves its very own entry!).

Regards,
Dawson

[December 06, 2008 10:24 PM](#)

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