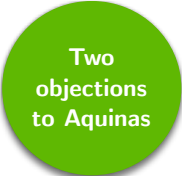


A large red circle with a slight drop shadow, containing the text "Three views about the universe" in white. The text is centered and arranged in three lines.

Three views
about
the universe

Aquinas'
first cause
argument



Two
objections
to Aquinas

the kalām
argument

But even if Aquinas' defense of (4) is unsuccessful, (4) might still be true. When you encounter an argument in which one of the premises is insufficiently well defended by the author, you should always ask: can we do better?

4. There
are no
infinite
causal
chains.

One attempt to do better begins with the thought that just because certain mathematical notions make sense, it does not automatically follow that every real world scenario involving those notions makes sense.

For example, the idea of negative numbers makes sense. But would it make sense for me to say that I have -16 apples in my refrigerator?

One might then try to make a parallel argument about infinity. Perhaps the idea of an infinite series of numbers makes sense, but the idea of an infinite causal chain does not.

One way to argue for this is to argue that, more generally, the idea of an infinite collection of things existing in space and time does not make sense.

Let's consider some curious features of infinite collections. Consider the
collection of natural numbers

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,

And compare this to the collection of even natural numbers

2, 4, 6, 8, ...

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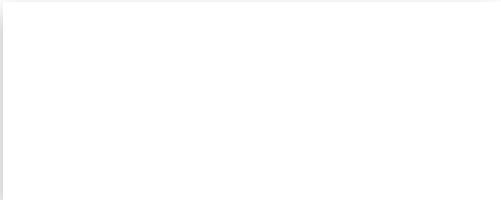
infinite collection of things existing in space and time does not make

collation of natural numbers

Let's consider m arbitrary finite collections. Consider the



1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, . . .



2, 4, 6, 8, . . .

Might defend (8) by saying that this hypothesis is impossible, on the

particles described?

ground that there can't be an uncaused cause, like the explosion of



Goodixists.

first case, then

8. If there is a

Bang could genuinely be a first cause. Things like the Big Bang have to

have a cause; but things like God don't.

Instead, it seems like Aquinas has to argue that nothing like the Big

which was an uncaused cause would have to have other properties, which

he did not have the Big Bang in mind). He tried to argue that something

And that is, in a way, exactly what Aquinas tried to do (though of course

God has, but the Big Bang does not.

grounds that there can't be an uncaused cause?

Might defend (8) by saying that this hypothesis is impossible, on the

Instead, it seems like a defender of the first cause argument has to argue that

nothing like the Big Bang and even first class. Things like the Big

Bang have to have a cause; but things like God don't. But why?

This would appear to be a description of a world in which there is a first

cause, but God does not exist. And it appears to be entirely consistent with

some reason for rejecting the above hypothesis.

simple atheism. So it looks as though, if we are to believe (8), we must have

The Big Bang

The first event in the history of the universe was an explosion of an extremely dense collection of particles, with every particle moving apart from every other particle. This event had no cause - in particular, no being set into motion - and, further, every subsequent event has been an effect of this event.



Two objections to Aquinas



the kalām
argument

and indeed nothing in the universe can be.

On this view, everything which begins to exist at some time must have a

cause. Because the universe — including the Big Bang — has a

Bang — must have a cause. So the Big Bang can't be the first cause —

beginning in time, the universe as a whole — again, including the Big

If one accepts this extra premise, and one accepts the assumption that

was caused to exist by something outside the universe.

the universe can't exist at some time, then it follows that the universe

And then there are just two options — that thing must be eternal, or it

must have met or exist at a certain time.

then *that* thing would have to be eternal, or have come to exist at a certain

If we go with the second option, then it must have had a cause. And

time.

There are a number of questions one could raise about this argument.

But let's focus in on one premise:


Could not object to this premise in much the way that we objected to

be God? How do we know that this eternally existing first cause of the

Aquinas' assumption that if there is a first cause, then that thing must

Universities Good?

Our first topic is the question of whether God exists.



Three views
about
the universe

Aquinas'
first cause
argument



Two objections to Aquinas

good arguments for the existence of God then depends in part on

arguments against simple atheism. Whether they attempt to

Many arguments for God's existence are best thought of as

how seriously you take quasi-theism. This is something to which

we win! return.

Let's turn then to our first argument for the existence of God: the

first argument we find in the reading from Thomas Aquinas.

**Aquinas'
first cause
argument**

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of understanding the cultural context of the research. It highlights the need for researchers to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of the communities they are studying. This is particularly important in the field of health research, where cultural differences can significantly impact the effectiveness of interventions.

The second part of the paper focuses on the methodology used in the study. It describes the process of selecting participants and the data collection methods. The researchers used a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather comprehensive data on the topic.

The third part of the paper presents the findings of the study. It discusses the results of the data analysis and how they relate to the research objectives. The findings suggest that there are significant cultural differences in the way that health is perceived and managed across different communities.

The final part of the paper discusses the implications of the findings for future research and practice. It suggests that researchers should continue to explore the cultural context of health research and develop interventions that are culturally appropriate and effective.

2. Nothing is prior to itself.

its self . (1,2)

1. If something were the cause

3. Nothing is the cause of

oif itseif, it wold be prior

(i) circilair; (ii) infinite;

to its side.

causal chain.

5. At least one thing has a

6. Every causal chain must be

or (iii) have a first cause.

7. There is a first cause.

4. There are no finite

8: If there is a first cause,

Q. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.



theinGdexistis.

C. Good exists. (7, 8)

(3, 4, 5, 6)



4. There
are no
infinite
causal
chains.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, ...

