

## Test 3 Questions 1 and 2

### Test 3 Question #1

Of the four arguments for the existence of God, I think that the cosmological argument gives the best analytic explanation to the question whether or not God exists. The cosmological argument uses the understanding that we have of cause and effect. If something is present, then there must have been something that caused it to be there, just like if your car window is broken when you get back to it, you know that something happened. If we can agree that the universe is here in the now, then something must have caused it to be. This is where God comes in. God (or our idea of a God) is the only possible answer to why the universe exists. It goes completely against our way of thinking to think that the universe just happened and exists. Those who undermine the cosmological approach to the existence of God say that if it was God that created the universe and everything in it, then who or what created God? This simple question nearly dismantles the entire argument unless God operates on a different level than we do. At the end of chapter 2 in Taliaferro's book, *Philosophy of Religion*, Taliaferro questions the process of using language to understand, prove, or even describe God. If God is a supernatural being that operates outside of language, then what keeps him from operating outside of the physical laws that the universe operates by? For example, if I create a Lego man out of Lego blocks, then the man is my creation and I am the creator. Now, just because the Lego man cannot move, doesn't mean that I operate within the same boundaries. It seems plausible, and maybe even obvious that the creator is confined by none of the bounds of which the creation is. Could this explain how God operates in relation to us?

Although the cosmological argument has the greatest analytic explanation, in my opinion, to the question "does God exist?" the argument based upon religious experience has the greatest effectiveness overall. If both religious experiences and sensory experiences can be described in detail, then what makes one trustworthy and the other not? The truth is that you could never prove that an experience that I had never happened, because no one can experience exactly what I experience as I experience it. The only way to get around my experience is to say that I am delusional and have illusions that aren't reality, but are my imagination. The problem with this explanation is that it suggests that your experience of the present is the "normal" or "right" experience. This is not only arrogant, but also closed-minded. Taliaferro talks about an objection to the argument saying that other people can verify sensory experiences, unlike religious ones. This doesn't prove that these religious experiences do not happen, or that because you cannot replicate and verify religious experiences that they are impossible. I believe that this objection makes it impossible to prove that God exists through religious experience. I also believe that experience is the greatest proof that God exists to one who has had such an experience.

**GRADE: 5/5 Good job for a brief summary. Take a look at the comments on other papers, as well.**

**Comment [dp1]:** I agree that of the four arguments you looked at, this one works the best, but it still has problems. However, it is partly an argument from experience and not merely analytic (meaning only based on logical and conceptual issues).

**Comment [dp2]:** That part is analytic: every contingent thing has a cause other than itself. When we apply this to the EXPERIENCE that there is a world, that sets the premises for the conclusion that there is something self-caused that is the explanation for why there is something rather than nothing. This ultimate world cause has traditionally been called God. But it is not possible to go from this argument to the conclusion that the Christian or Islamic God for example, exists. But many people believe it at least makes belief in God minimally rational based on the argument together with Occam's razor.

**Comment [dp3]:** Right. This gets us into all the issues Guerriere raises about an experience of a "salvational Power" which very few people actually have but is at the cores of religions (even if not theistic).