

The facade of the teleological argument



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The Teleological argument for the existence of God seems strikingly compelling at first glance, but greatly weakens once it becomes subjected to intense discourse.

This argument, also referred to as the “ design argument”, is an a posteriori argument claiming that through observation of the universe we can discover evidence of intelligent design that justifiably infers the existence of a “ grand designer”, usually posited as God. In Dialogues

Concerning Natural

Religion, David Hume, a British empiricist, first presents his version of the Teleological argument through the use of his character Cleanthes, Hume’s representation of the typical 18th century empirical theist: Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: you will find it to be nothing but one great machine, subdivided into an infinite number of lesser machines, which again admit of subdivisions to a degree beyond what human senses and faculties can trace and explain.

All these various machines, and even their most minute parts, are adjusted to each other with an accuracy which ravishes into admiration all men who have ever contemplated them . . .