

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION	<u>Section 2</u>	DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
(A3)	<p>Religious Experience has long been considered as a direct intervention from God to his people. In sacred texts, we see the likes of Moses's actions converting him from royalty to protector and saviour of slaves. However, the rise of scientific enquiry has since allowed Atheists to believe that these Religious Experiences may have natural causes, for instance, psychological.</p>	
	<p>A supporter of the psychological cause could suggest that Religious Experiences are just a method of balancing the conscious and unconscious minds. Sigmund Freud etc etc used this argument in relation to his Orphid Oedipus Complex. This is tied to God as he is the fatherly</p>	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	Figure who, just like an infant's	
	father, is seen to remove the	
	burden of helplessness and suffering.	
	Freud argued that Religious Experience	
	was a psychological tool that the	
	Superego (the sub unconscious yet	
	overwhelmingly influence of society on our	
	conscious) used to balance our minds	
	in times of turmoil. A weakness of	
	this argument is this idea of a	
	subconscious mind. Although widely accepted,	
	this theory uses ^{a series} the basis of an	
	unseeable and untestable ideas like	
	the subconscious, the Oedipus Complex	
	and the Superego) in order to	
	discredit Religious Experience due to	
	its unseeable and untestable nature.	
	Although this psychological approach may	
	hold grounds to say Religious Experience	
	does not prove God's existence, it is	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	in no way certain and nowhere close	
	to conclude.	
	A counter-example to Freud's	
	idea of Religious Experience stemming	
	from our helplessness is the findings of	
	the Alistair Hardy Research Centre (AHRC).	
	AHRC looked to scientifically categorise	
	Religious Experiences in order to gain	
	an evolutionary understanding. An astonishing	
	statistic of between a half and a third	
	of those surveyed reported a Religious	
	Experience. And of this percentage, the	
	AHRC concluded that the majority of	
	those who had Religious Experiences were	
	happy, mentally well-balanced, and of	
	economic comfortability. This decisively	
	undermines Freud's claims against	
	God's existence. On the other hand,	
	a weakness of the AHRC is that	
	the categorisation was largely clumsy	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	and too broad to hold great merit.	
	Moreover, it is argued that this	
	extent of Religious Experiences may hold	
	no evolutionary advantage, allowing	
	room to suppose that Religious	
	Experiences may be proof of God's	
	existence.	
	In the face of this categorisation,	
	it is often questioned whether these	
	accounts are accurate and credible. In	
	Richard Swinburne's work, he wrote of	
	the Principle of Credulity and the	
	Principle of Testimony. He wrote:	
	"in the instance when the subject	
	believes it ^x has ^{occurred} happened (without special	
	consideration) they should accept it ^x exists."	
	This Principle of Credulity was	
	supposed so that, in the absence	
	of the use of drugs or other	
	"special considerations", it could be	

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	<p>That it seems God interacts with us because He has interacted with us.</p> <p>Just as during normal experience we believe what appears to be true, so should be the case for Religious Experience. And so too does Principle of Testimony suggest we should believe these accounts in the cases where we are left no reason to doubt the truthfulness as opposed to if if he were mad or bad. A strength of this is its applicability to everyday situations and the grounds this holds convincingly convincingly.</p> <p>With these principles, it should be found that Religious Experience proves the Existence of God.</p> <p>Lastly, I'd And the writings of William James to be the most note-worthy. Notably ^{Notably} his discussion of</p>	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION	The characteristics of Religious Experience	DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	<p>seems to present many questions regarding its nature - namely, its ineffable and noetic qualities. The undecidable nature of Religious Experience suggests that any meaning derived from it is interpretable depending on who receives it. If a blinding light appears to a Christian or a Muslim with an empowering voice, they may strengthen their belief in their God, or maybe they will both convert. This suggests that Religious Experience, although noetic which suggests God, is actually just a powerful psychological tool which may manifest in our predispositions. And, were this the case, then Freud may have given grounds for its disprove. However</p>	

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	In conclusion, Religious Experience	
	does not prove God, it may	
	merely show our presupposed ideas	
	of Him. Although Freud was wrong	
	in writing of society's helplessness,	
	it may be noted that Religious	
	Experience is, in one way or	
	other, just a powerful psycholog-	
	-ical tool to fuel our	
	sub-rational desires.	

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①	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1 Section 1</p> <p>To prove God's existence, Thomas Aquinas used his Cosmological Arguments since then, the arguments ability to prove God has been questioned, yet his argument for a first cause is widely accepted. This essay will look to address what Aquinas's cosmological argument actually achieved.</p>	
	<p>Firstly, Thomas Aquinas's cosmological arguments prove the existence of a first cause. In his first way, he speaks of motion. In relevance to this, he says everything is in motion and requires a power to put itself into motion. This is largely similar to Aristotle's idea of a Prime Mover, responsible for everything going</p>	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	Through change (be it in state, the	
	size, placement...). From this, he	
	concluded his First Cause. A	
	weakness of this is the Infinite	
	Regress Argument.	
	It is argued by some that	
	there was no first cause and	
	that the Universe is simply made	
	of an endless number of causes	
	with no beginning. David Hume	
	argued this by saying we cannot	
	see causes, and causation is	
	simply an error made by	
	trying to rationalise events in our	
	minds. A weakness of this is the Infinite	
	Library.	
	The Infinite Library is a good	
	counter-example to the infinite regress	
	argument as it displays the impossibility	
	of infinity. By removing all the green	
	books of an infinite library of	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	<p>infinite beings, we find a precluded impossibility in that the the content of the library does not change. This shows the discredibility of any infinite regress argument, which proves the first cause's existence by Aquinas's cosmological argument.</p> <p>Moreover, Aquinas's cosmological arguments include the second way of potentiality to actuality. Aquinas exemplified this as a pot of hot water being both potentially hot and ^{capable} potentially cold. In order for this to occur, there must be some sort of reality which is actuality. For this, Aquinas wrote of God as He holds the utmost reality as a perfect being. RP</p> <p>On the contrary, Richard Dawkins</p>	

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	<p>questioned this reasoning, asserting that this actually could rest upon multiple Gods, and such questions as to which God(s) seems to test the reality of God being the first cause. If it was accepted that God was the actually that all potentialities move towards, what is to say he is uncaused? It is often suggested God was caused, if all this are caused.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Aquinas's third way counters any question against God being the uncaused cause. As everything changes, it is contingent. From life to death, child to adult, dark to light, everything in the universe changes. As such, everything must be contingent from the</p>	

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	start, meaning that God must	
	be necessary to exist for	
	these things to be contingent,	
	as contingency requires necessity.	
	For Aquinas, this was sufficient	
	in proving God.	
	On the other hand, this	
	premise of necessity could be	
	agreed on different terms. For	
	instance, the first cause could be	
	necessary, but it may not	
	necessarily be God. Bertrand	
	Russell argued that the "Universe	
	is Here and that is all". This	
	suggests the Universe is its own	
	own necessity, as God is His own,	
	and everything within it is contingent.	
	This line of reason would be	
	supported by the Big Bang	
	Theory, whereby the Big Bang	

ENTER NUMBER OF QUESTION		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS MARGIN
	is Aquinas's first cause, and the Universe would become Aristotle's prime mover, removing the necessity for of God.	
	In conclusion, Aquinas's cosmological arguments remove any possibility for Occulted Universe Theories or any other Infinite Regression theories. It makes certain that there is ^{the} first cause does not exist. However, it is unsuccessful at proving God's existence, as alternative theories - such as the Big Bang Theory - also fit the construct. However, God is not disproven as the Big Bang could be argued to be His tool of creation, along with other possible credible possibilities.	