

Candidate 1 evidence

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Higher Resource Sheet			
Candidate Name		Scottish Candidate Number	
<p>Dense, expansion, 13.7, accident Hubble, redder CMB, Penzias/Wilson, fuzz, shockwave "There is a fundamental difference between religion, which is based on authority, [and] science, which is based on observation and reason. Science will win because it works." -Hawking Empirical, No cause "Religion is about turning untested belief into unshakable truth through the power of institutions and the passage of time."-Dawkins devotion, comfort Established , disprove</p> <p>Neutral Multiple, Newtonian</p> <p>simple, Variation Finches "I am against religion because it teaches us to be satisfied with not understanding the world." - Dawkins Opposition medicine "The truth may be puzzling... It may not be consonant with what we desperately want to be true. But our preferences do not determine what's true."- Carl Comfort Probable, no comfort</p> <p>Finches, moth Fossils Gaps Genesis Adam Plan "The Big Bang, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, requires it."- Pope Plan Don't disprove "God didn't produce a ready-made world. The Creator has done something cleverer than this, making a world able to make itself." – Polkinhorne Tool Versatility Reinforces Interpretation Innovation Creation Direct Rib "If there is no God, then man and the universe are doomed...It means that the life we have is without ultimate significance, value, or purpose." - William Lane Craig Meaning Spread "No apparent, perceived, or claimed evidence in any field, including history and chronology, can be valid if it contradicts the Scriptural record." - Ham Authority Test</p> <p>Strengthen Unlikely Prejudices</p>			

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To what extent do you agree with scientific explanations for origins?

There has been a debate for hundreds of years over the correct explanations for the origins of life and the universe. With science offering more natural explanations and religion saying it is a result of a creator God. This essay will detail both sides of this argument and explore their merits and drawbacks.

Most scientists agree that the Big Bang Theory is sufficient to explain the origins of the universe. The Big Bang Theory states that the universe began from a singular, incredibly dense point which ~~is~~ underwent a rapid expansion around 13.7 billion years ago. ~~It was said that this~~ This event (the big bang) is described as a "singularity" and a "cosmic accident" with no cause.

There are multiple different sources which provide evidence to support the Big Bang theory such as Edwin Hubble who observed that the light from galaxies is getting redder - meaning they are moving away from one another - this supports the theory of the original expansion of the universe.

Another source is the observation of the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) which was discovered by 2 radio astronomers, Penzias and Wilson, who observed a "noisy fuzz" coming from the universe and deduced this must be a "shockwave"

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from the ~~BB~~ Big Bang.

"There is a fundamental difference between religion, which is based on authority, [and] science which is based on ~~observable~~ observation and reason. Science will win because it works." - Stephen Hawking.

- This source could be interpreted to suggest that science is a much more reliable view to hold as it is verified by the scientific method, using empirical evidence, whereas religion requires blind faith in a creator you cannot gather evidence on.

- An implication of this is that the ~~BB~~ Big Bang Theory is the only explanation necessary to explain origins of the universe as it requires no ~~cause~~ or higher being.

- "Religion is about turning untested belief into unshakable truth through the power of institutions and the passage of time." - Richard Dawkins.

- This source could be interpreted to suggest that religious people only believe in God through continued devotion and a need for comfort.

- An implication of this is that religious people may find it hard to see other view points or ~~criticise~~ analyse their beliefs as their religion seems so unchangeable as it was established so long ago.

- I agree with the scientific explanation for the origins of the universe as I think the Big Bang Theory is neutral with scientist only aiming to prove what they are able to gather evidence on.

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I furthermore agree as I think that because the Big Bang Theory is verified by multiple different sources such as Hubble who have all gathered evidence and come to the same conclusion that it is highly unlikely to be false.

- However I somewhat disagree as I think that the Big Bang Theory is a new way to describe the beginnings and structure of the universe with the previous being the Newtonian Paradigm which proposed the universe was structured like a clockwork machine. If the previous theory is false surely this one could be too.
- Most scientists ~~was~~ agree that the Theory of Evolution is sufficient to explain the origins of life. The Theory of Evolution states that all species and animals evolved from a set of simple life forms which developed on Earth more than 3 billion years ago.
- The theory states that evolution happens through natural selection. This is when individuals in a species show a wider variation of genes. With the ones with genes most suited to surviving and thriving in their environment going on to produce offspring which will inherit these favourable traits.
- The Theory of Evolution was first theorised by Charles Darwin after he travelled to the Galapagos Islands and observed that a single species of finch had diversified and adapted different shapes and sizes.

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of beaks depending on the food source available to them on that part of the islands. Showing they adapted to better suit their environment.

- "I am against religion because it teaches us to be satisfied with not understanding the world." - ~~St~~ Richard Dawkins.
- This source could be interpreted to suggest that science is in complete opposition to religion with science being based on ~~real~~ research and what is ~~clear~~ observable rather than blind faith.
- An implication of this is that Dawkins may believe that it could be dangerous for ~~people~~ religious people to not accept scientific explanation for origins as it means they are less likely to accept other discoveries such as advancements in medicine - which have saved many lives.
- "The truth may be puzzling... It may not be consonant with what we desperately want to be true. But our preferences do not decide what is true." - Carl Sagan.
- This source could be interpreted to suggest that ~~religious people~~ believing in a creator God is ~~comparing~~ comparing to religious people as it means a higher being is looking over you and created you in His image ~~but~~ while science states that there is no specific cause for the origins of life and there is no God.

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- An implication of this may be that ~~science~~ ^{while} the harsh facts of science may offer little to no comfort that it is a much more probable belief than an ~~creator~~ all-powerful, omnipotent, creator God.
- I agree with the scientific explanations for the origins of life as I think that evolution is observable in nature, such as with Darwin's finches and species such as the peppered moth which changed colours to better blend in with the environment around it.
- I furthermore agree as I think that evolution is observable throughout history such as through fossil records which show how much, or how little ~~to~~ a species has changed over time. I think this shows evolution and natural selection in action providing strong evidence for the theory of evolution.
- However I have some reservations as I think that in the fossil records there are gaps of periods of millions of years ~~at this~~ ^{which} means that some guesswork is involved - arguably diminishing the reliability of this theory.
- Liberal Christians would somewhat agree with the scientific explanations for origins as they believe the creation stories in Genesis are meant to be taken symbolically, rather than as a literal

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account of events.

- Liberal Christians also believe that Adam in Genesis wasn't a real person but was rather to symbolise the beginning of humankind, most importantly with God as a Creator and creating humans in his image.
- Liberal Christians would accept the Theory of Evolution and the Big Bang Theory as explanations for origins but would state that they are not sufficient and require God to allow them to happen as part of His plan.
- "The Big Bang, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the intervention of a divine creator but, rather, requires it." - Pope Francis.
- This source could be interpreted to suggest that Christians don't have to choose between believing in science and believing in God as even the pope states the Big Bang happened, just as part of God's plan.
- An implication of this is that the existence of God and the facts of science don't stand to disprove one another but are actually beliefs that strengthen and support the other.
- "God didn't produce a ready-made world. The Creator has done something cleverer than this, making a world able to make itself." - John Polkinghorne.

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- This source could be interpreted to suggest that the Big Bang and natural selection as a tool to create the world and all the species as we know today.
- An implication of this may be that God gave humans and animals the ability to evolve and adapt to make us much more versatile than we would have been had ~~we~~ we been created as we are now.
- (-) I somewhat agree with the liberal Christian explanation for ~~the~~ origins of ~~us~~ as I think that rather than ~~the~~ science completely destroying or opposing their beliefs it ~~reinterprets~~ reinterprets them which might reveal some of the mystery and magic in God's plan and the part that science plays in it.
- However I also disagree as I think that if God and his word in the bible are open to interpretation then God is not the authority on anything, man becomes the authority because he decides when and how God's word applies.
- I ~~also~~ furthermore disagree as I think that if God knew the final outcome of humans why didn't he create us as we are now to allow more time for innovation and advancement.
- ~~Literal~~ Literal Christians would completely disagree ~~for~~ ~~the~~ with the

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scientific explanations for origins of life and the universe as they in the believe that God created the world in the creation stories in Genesis. - that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th

- Literal Christians believe the the bible is the direct word of God ~~is~~ and that God would not have put the creation stories (or any other stories) in the bible if it were not true
- Literal Christians also believe that God created the first human - Adam - and then put him to sleep so he would feel no pain, removed one of his ribs and created Eve out of that. They believe that God created these humans in his image and that they had the ability to populate the rest of the earth. They also believe humans were given special responsibilities to shepherd ~~society~~ society and care for the other humans and animals in it.
- "If there is no God, then man and the universe ~~is doomed~~ are doomed. It means that the life we have is without ultimate significance, ~~or~~ purpose, value, or purpose." - William Lane Craig.
- This source could be interpreted to suggest that God, while giving comfort to Christians also ~~is~~ imbues their life with meaning and without him it would be lacking.

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- An implication of this is that Christian Literal Christians may want to try and convince ~~of~~ people of the existence of God and spread their faith to ensure people aren't "doomed" and to give their life meaning it could have been missing without believing in the existence of God.
- "No apparent, perceived, or claimed evidence in any field, including history and chronology, can be valid if it contradicts the Scriptural record." - Ken Ham
- This source could be interpreted to suggest that literal Christians may view ~~any~~ scientific discovery (no matter how ~~to~~ convincing) as false as it ~~falls~~ falls outside the sphere of biblical authority.
- An implication of this may be that ~~with~~ all scientific evidence, e.g. fossil records must be treated by Literal Christians as a test of faith put there by God to strengthen their belief in him.
- I somewhat agree with the literal Christian explanation for the origins of life and the universe as I think they are so steadfast and confident in their beliefs that nothing, including scientific evidence can sway them and that this would strengthen their relationship with God.
- However I also disagree as I think that ~~because~~ because the ~~that~~ Theory of Evolution

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and the Big Bang Theory have been verified by so many different scientific sources that all point to the same conclusion that it is highly unlikely that they are all wrong.

* Literal christian stubbornly stand in the face of all scientific and geological evidence as.

~~I further~~

- I furthermore disagree as I think that Literal Christians refuse to accept that ~~the~~ the bible was written hundreds of years ago by people who would have had their own prejudices and agendas which may have influenced what they wrote.

- In Conclusion, I think that although ~~that~~ it is not completely unreasonable to believe in a creator God and both science and religion have their merits that I agree with the scientific explanations for origins. This is because I think because The Big Bang and Evolution have been proven many times that it is a much more likely explanation than religion as that requires many more assumptions to be made and variable to be accepted than science does. However I do believe that having faith in a creator God is a valid belief to hold and can

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be extremely enriching to peoples lives.

Candidate 2 evidence

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Higher Resource Sheet		
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number	
<p><u>Literalists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literally perfect + true > Bible is true - Bible reinforce - Consistent - Not textbook "And God said 'Let there be light' and there was light" - Rudimentary understanding wave? particle? → Too scriptural → Other teachings - stoning? Own sense of justice → Not consider BBT <p><u>Liberal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Story - God created > Compatible - Symbolically - truth via imagery - Day not 24hrs. Lack of detail - not true > Convey God created Universe. - Pastor McLaren "not a textbook, but a source of inspiration and guidance." > Use discoveries to understand - Not rule, advice → Multiple meanings, bible speak, experience to interpret. → Compatible - core point - God did it ☺ → Not fact = BBT <p><u>Cosmological</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cause > Universe cause = God, God's cause? cause ≠ Genesis God. - Aquinas: sustaining cause: could be eternal, not cause Revelation. What sustains? - Hume disagree - coincidence, Brian David "The cosmological argument can't stand alone as proof..." > Complexity = God - BBT → Not sufficient → Inconsistent - If 1st cause spontaneous, why not BB? <p>SWRIL, RWSIB</p>		
<p><u>YEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literal 6 day - 6,000-10,000 - ICR criticized - faulty assumptions - Morris Quote ^{incomp.} > Universe created (God) - Ignore fossil record/radiometric > Selective, subjective → 2 Peter - time differently → Disregard for science undermines view → NAS "at odds with scientific consensus + not supported by the weight of scientific evidence." <p><u>BBT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material system - science. Singularity - Matter, time etc, in mixture, ↔ - Particles grouped, formed. Stars, horn + die. > Nothing - low physics, quantum - Hawking "Spontaneous Creation..." > No need for creator, accept BBT - no proof of absence → Extent - accepted by fields Abundance of H-90%, as if BB. → Not believe anymore, coincide - liberal thinks it's how + why. 		

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To what extent do you agree that scientific and religious explanations for the origins of the Universe are compatible?

The Judeo-Christian story for the creation of the Universe is found in the book of Genesis. The story goes as follows: everything is formless and desolate. God decides to make something out of nothing. He makes light, celestial bodies, the sea and trees, and land and its creatures. On the sixth day, God made humans "in His image", as the pinnacle of His creation. The traditional timescale for the story is 6 days, with the seventh a day of rest.

The leading scientific theory is the Big Bang Theory which proposes the Universe began with a singularity, spontaneously. This essay will explore an interpretation of the Genesis account, the Big Bang Theory and the cosmological argument.

One religious explanation comes from literalist Christians. These Christians believe the Genesis story literally, as it is written in the Bible which is the direct word of God. This implies that anything written in the bible is true, as it comes from God. Christian literalists use the Bible to reinforce the validity of the Genesis account. The Bible is the source to prove the Bible is true as it is of God. Furthermore, the Genesis account is consistent with literalist Christian beliefs about the nature of God. These Christians believe that God is omnipotent, all powerful, and therefore capable of creating the Universe and everything in it in 6 days. A literalist Christian may argue that Genesis was not written to be a science textbook, with simple statements to illustrate God's power. Genesis says "And God said 'let there be light!'

*-and we should not try to interpret it.

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and there was light. "This is not an explanation of how light works, and does not answer questions scientists still don't know today - is it a wave? A particle? Humanity had a rudimentary understanding of maths and science ~~at~~ at this time, and if God was too include fine details about the inner workings of the Universe, people wouldn't have understood it. I do not agree that this explanation is compatible with science, as it is too simplistic and therefore a ~~off~~ rejection of human intelligence which even a Christian liberalist would believe is a gift from God. Also, if this the creation account is to be taken literally, what of other teachings in the Bible, such as the stoning of an adulteress? This may lead to a literalist Christianity developing their own sense of justice and carrying out these acts furthermore. This view is incompatible with science as it does not take into account scientific theories, such as the Big Bang Theory.

Another ~~or~~ religion explanation comes from Young Earth creationists. These Christians believe in the literal 6 days in Genesis to create the Universe. They also believe the earth is only around 6,000-10,000 years old, and evidence proving otherwise has been misinterpreted. The Institute for Creation Research holds these beliefs, and publishes books, articles etc. supporting them. This has been widely criticised by scientists, claiming that these views are based on faulty assumptions. This makes the view incompatible with science. Henry M Morris, founder of the ICR said: "The Universe did not come into being by chance. There was a designer, a creator, who had a purpose in creating it." This implies that the Universe requires a creator, and the creator is God. The ICR publish research supporting their views, but

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ignore other evidence against it, such as the fossil record and radiometric dating. An implication of this is that the ICR is subjective, and selective in its use of facts, making it a biased source. I do not agree with this view, as it does not take into account the bible as a whole. For example, 2 Peter says: "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day." This suggests that God measures time differently, and so the 'days' in Genesis aren't strictly 24 hours. This view is incompatible with science as it's disregard for scientific evidence undermines the view point. The National Academy of sciences stated that the ICR's views are "at odds with the scientific consensus, and not supported by the weight of scientific evidence."

A third religious explanation comes from liberal Christians. They interpret the Genesis story metaphorically and believe it is a story to show that God created the Universe. A consequence of this belief is that it is compatible with scientific explanations. These Christians believe much of the bible is meant to be understood symbolically, revealing the truth through imagery and allegory. For these Christians, the 'days' do not have to be 24hr periods, which is more inline with the verse from 2 Peter. They may also point to the lack of detail in the story to prove that it is not true, factually. An implication of this belief is that the Genesis account is a simple story meant to convey that God created the universe. Pastor Brian McHaren said "We need to interpret the bible in light of our own context, and not be afraid to challenge traditional interpretations. The bible is not a rulebook, but it is a source of inspiration and guidance." A consequence of this

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My belief is that Christians should use current scientific discoveries to help deepen the understanding of the bible and God. For these Christians, the bible is not a rulebook, but advice on how to live a good, ~~pro~~ prosperous life. I agree with this view, as it allows us to view the bible as having multiple meanings, and allows scripture to speak to us at different times in our lives, by allowing our experience of the world and God to shape our understanding of Him. I agree that this religious explanation is compatible with science, as it does not disregard the Big Bang theory whilst maintaining the core point of the Genesis creation story, God made the Universe and everything in it as an act of great love. Furthermore, as liberal Christians do not regard Genesis as fact, it is compatible with the Big Bang Theory.

One scientific explanation for the origins of the Universe is the Big Bang Theory. Many scientists believe that the Universe is a purely material system and can be explained through science. There are many variations of the Big Bang Theory, but most agree that the Universe began with a singularity, a point of infinite density and heat, and has been expanding and cooling ever since. The theory proposes that matter, time and space all began in a super-hot super-dense mixture, and over time, the Universe has expanded and cooled into what it is now. Particles grouped and formed atoms, which in turn formed stars and galaxies. Stars being born and dying created asteroids, planets and black holes. This implies that the ~~the~~ Universe came from nothing, which goes against one of the prime laws of physics. However, quantum physics suggests that matter

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can come from nothing, completely spontaneously. Physicist Stephen Hawking said "Spontaneous creation is the reason why there is something rather than nothing, ... it is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the Universe going." This implies that there is no need for a creator, which is unacceptable for some religious people. However, some accept the Big Bang Theory, as although it negates the need for a creator, it does not provide evidence for the absence of one. I agree with this view to a certain extent, as it is accepted by scientists across different fields, including Physics, Biology and Astronomy. Also, there is evidence such as the relative ~~then~~ abundance of the elements, for example, 90% of atoms are Hydrogen atoms, which is consistent ~~with~~ what the chemical make up of the Universe would be if it was created by the Big Bang. This view does not require belief in anything more, but can coincide with some religious explanations. A liberal Christian may believe in the Big Bang Theory, which explains how the Universe was created, and Genesis explains why. This makes it compatible with religious explanations for the origin of the Universe.

A final explanation for the origin of the Universe is the cosmological argument. This is the belief that everything that exists must have a cause. This implies that the Universe, therefore, has a cause, and the cause is God. However, this leads to more questions as if everything has a cause, what caused God? Furthermore, the cause of the Universe is not necessarily the God of Genesis, but it could be another divine being, or the result of another Universe ~~beginning~~ ending. Thomas Aquinas was interested not in a beginning cause, but a sustaining

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cause, as he believed the Universe could be eternal. However, he believed it was not due to the biblical book of revelation, foretelling the end of the earth. His philosophical questions centered around a cause which kept the Universe going. This could be God. However, David Hume disagreed, saying that one thing preexisting another is not proof that the former caused the latter. Philosopher Brian David said "The cosmological argument cannot stand alone as proof for the existence of God." An implication of this belief is that the complexity of the Universe does not necessarily mean that it was created by God, but could instead be a result of the Big Bang Theory. I do not agree that this view is compatible with the scientific explanations, as the cosmological argument is not enough to prove that God created the Universe. Furthermore, the argument is inconsistent as God has no cause. If the first cause (God) happened spontaneously, couldn't the first cause have been the Big Bang?

To conclude, I agree to a certain extent that religious and scientific explanations of the origins of the Universe are compatible. However, I think that religious and scientific explanations are most effective when taken together. I believe that accepting both religious and scientific explanations allow us to develop a more holistic understanding of both how and why we got here. As Einstein said: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

Candidate 3 evidence

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"To what extent do you agree that religious & scientific views on the origins of the universe are compatible?"

KU: In genesis 1 it states "let there be light" Some people believe that this might have been set off by God and the start of the universe.

A: This shows that some christians can see the quote "let there be light" be God creating the universe but it could also be understood as the start of the Big Bang which some can see as something God set off.

KU: Scientists have gathered multiple ~~pieces~~ pieces of evidence to back up their theories on how the universe of created, like the Big Bang Theory.

A: In the scientific world for the origins of the universe, All their theories are backed up with evidence & many experiments to have an overall conclusion, nothing is accepted unless it is verified. overall Both views (Scientific & religious) represent beginning, creation & existence.

E: I Agree that religious & scientific explanations for the origins of the universe are compatible because. When it comes to science they have done multiple experiments to conclude their findings and for some christians that enough for them to see and maybe accept that science could play a part in the creation of the universe.

KU: Albert Einstein once said "science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

A: This suggests that to get a full explanation for the universe creation you need to see both sides of it, religion + science. It further proves

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their compatibility as ~~being~~ their findings and beliefs don't clash over what's true and what isn't and it can actually help people get a full overview of the creation.

KU: Pope Francis also said "The Big Bang, that today is considered to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the creative intervention of God; on the contrary, it requires it."

A: This shows that they can work together with both of their beliefs as science doesn't rule out religion and they can in fact coexist.

Some Christians are fine with just religion or science on their own, which is also accepted, but others need both and to ~~hear~~ that from a scientist himself, is helpful.

E: I agree that they are compatible because they don't need to work alone in trying to find out what's true & what isn't. With science gathering sustainable & legit evidence and religion with their ~~beliefs~~ and the bible, that gives Christians a well put together explanation on the origins of the universe.

KU: In the Bible, it says that the creation of the universe took place over 6 days. Christians say that whatever is written in the bible is the full truth.

A: This shows that some Christians will only believe what's written in the bible and nothing else is accepted. Since none of the scientific explanations for the creation are mentioned in the bible, they aren't taken into account.

KU: ~~Scientists~~ Scientists have said that the Big Bang

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Theory is the point of origin and for them, it's the leading explanation for the creation of the universe.

A: Some people take science as "how" the universe was created the way it was by their evidence and religion as "why" it was created that way and the beliefs & logic behind it all.

E: I Partially agree that science and religion are compatible because although they can both answer different questions and when combined, they have a full explanation for the creation of the universe, they are also different and accepted in different contexts because if it's not in the bible, it's not true however, science gathered their evidence on the creation after the bible was written so if it was the big bang, it wouldn't have been written about.

KU: liberal christians are those who have a symbolic understanding of the creation of the universe so things such as science are easier to accept.

A: This suggests that when scientist came forward with all their evidence, experiments that were conducted and conclusions, liberal christians will find it easier to accept since they only believe in the bible's explanations symbolically.

KU: literal christians are those who see everything as literal and they find it more difficult to accept something that is not God's word.

A: literal christians see & understand that everything in the bible is god's word so as science explanations aren't seen in the bible, they cannot be accepted because it is therefore not God's word & not true to them.

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E: I Disagree that they are compatible on the origins of the universe because although some christians can accept both views, many christians can't. They can find science explanations as disrespectful to God as they are trying to go above him & find other reasonings for the creation of the universe.

K: The Big Bang Theory is supported by evidence such as redshift and cosmic background.

A: This shows and suggests that the Big Bang more than likely was the start of the universe as it initially heated up the universe and CBR have specific temperature ranges to help back it up more.

K: Religion can provide a more spiritual and moral background that can still complement science.

A: This also suggests that they can be compatible and work together in proving the universes' creation. Some people also find it essential to have both viewpoint backing each other up to understand it completely.

E: I Agree that both views are compatible because the both come from different angles from the same question and some christians find it really helpful to know that they can look at both sides to get a full view on the origins of the universe.

K: Some christians say that religion is beyond testing, unlike science.

A: christians believe that everything you need to know on the origins of the universe is written in the bible & they don't need testing to prove their

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viewpoint because they only need God's word for it.

KU: Science and religion have different explanations overall for the origins of the universe, they don't match up.

A: Religion believes that the universe was made with a set purpose by God and he had a whole plan behind it. However, Science believes that there was no initial purpose when the universe was created and it was only after the creation a purpose came into account.

E: I disagree that science and religion are compatible on the origins of the universe because it suggests that they overall do not agree on the purposes of the universe being created and they have their own views and they don't align

In conclusion, I overall agree that religious and scientific views are compatible on the origins of the universe because there is parts of both viewpoints that match up such as "let there be light", it's written in the bible and some can see that being the Big Bang.

Scientific explanations are completely backed up by evidence and all the religious beliefs are written in the bible, which is God's word, so both viewpoints are backed up which supports their compatibility and showing they can coexist.

lastly, some Christians find it essential and easier to accept & understand with both religion and science as they both answer the same question but come from different angles, they

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don't rule each other out to get their point/
view across.

Candidate 4 evidence

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Higher Resource Sheet		
Candidate Name		Scottish Candidate Number
<p>- Abolished in 1998, 65 legal. 9 extreme circumstances, 23 not used in 10 years - Amnesty International.</p> <p>- <u>potential miscarriage of justice</u> (Alexander McClay Williams, 16, assault + murder Vida Robere - executed 8/6/31.) Christians believe crucifixion biggest injustice & more likely to demand justice. John 23: 22 - "For the third time he spoke to them "Why? what crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty."</p> <p><i>Highly unfair, human error, sanctity of life.</i></p> <p>Romans 12: 17-19: "Do not repay anyone for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody... Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath for it is written: 'It is mine to revenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."</p> <p>- <u>deterrence</u>, homicide; 6-8/1m 1965, 10-6/1m 2002: British Parliament. (Ruth Ellis, ¹⁹⁵⁵David Blakely, 20 mins. Home secretary Gwilym Lloyd George: "We cannot have people shooting off firearms in the street!")</p> <p><i>crimes of passion</i></p> <p>Equity, hedonism, <u>consequentialism</u>. Δ agree, one death → safer</p> <p>- <u>Inhumane</u>, injection + chair. Un: 1945. In 2007 vote, moratorium. 104 For, 54 against. Ban Ki-moon: "The death penalty has no place in the 21st century." First precept: abstain from injuring or killing "any living creature." "An action, even if it brings benefit to oneself, cannot be considered a good action if it causes physical and mental pain to another being." - The Buddha</p> <p><i>impossible to punish with composure/compassion</i> <i>still in countries due to political, traditions, order in society reasons.</i></p>		

Question - Evaluate religious and non-religious responses to the moral issues arising from capital punishment.

Capital punishment is a highly controversial method of punishment, which has been a topic of debate for hundreds of years since it was first brought into action. Capital punishment, or the death penalty, was abolished in the UK in 1998, but it is still legal in 55 countries, with 9 of those countries only using it in extreme circumstances, and 23 of them having not used it as a method of punishment in over 10 years, according to Amnesty International. There are a number of different opinions surrounding the death penalty from varied backgrounds all over the world.

One moral issue that comes from the use of capital punishment is the potential for the miscarriage of justice for an innocent individual. Human error could potentially lead to the murder of an entirely innocent being, just by a simple mistake, or by the interference of personal bias. This is what sadly happened in the case of Alexander McClay Williams. Williams was a 16 year old boy, who was accused of the assault and murder of Vida Robere, an employee at the school which he attended. A number of assumptions were made about his character by the jury, mainly based on his race, which would result in Williams being sentenced to death. Alexander McClay Williams would be executed on the 8th of June, 1931, making him the youngest person to ever be executed in the state of Pennsylvania where he lived. Eighty years after the original case was put to rest, Samuel Lemon, a relative of Williams' original defence attorney, brought the case back to light and highlighted the clear racial bias amongst the jury, which was solely comprised of white individuals. Alexander McClay Williams was officially exonerated in 2022. The USA in the 1930's was a hotbed of racial violence, so by having Williams and his defence lawyer, who was also a black man, going up against a jury of white people would have been entirely unfair. An impact of this is that, as a result of Williams case and many others like it, it is no longer allowed to have a jury which is made up of one or two races – it is a requirement for the jury to be as diverse as possible, so to try and prevent any decisions being made based on racist opinions.

One religious response to the moral issue of a potential miscarriage of justice for an innocent person comes from Christianity. Christian individuals would generally be against the use of capital punishment, as they understand the hardship and inequality of somebody being unjustly sentenced to death, as Jesus was. For some literal Christians, they would believe that the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was the greatest injustice to ever occur. One impact of this is that Christian people are more likely to demand justice and to ensure that the person being sentenced is definitely guilty before they serve any time, as someone who believes in Christianity would relate to the unfairness of somebody suffering for a crime that they did not commit. This is made clear through the excerpt from John 23:22,

“For the third time he spoke to them: “Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty.”

This is significant as it highlights the belief of Christian people that there should be highly sufficient evidence before any individual serves time for a crime, especially if that punishment is having their life is taken from them. Additionally, it emphasises the Christian belief of the sanctity of life, and how it should not be taken away from

an individual so easily. Another section from the Bible which emphasises the importance of human life and how unfair it is that some people can take it away from others comes from Romans 12:17-19,

“Do not repay anyone for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody...Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath for it is written, ‘It is mine to revenge; I will repay, says the Lord’”

This quote shows the importance of the Christian belief that not everybody should have the ability to sentence people to death, but rather that only God should have the authority to take somebody’s life from them. Christians believe that God would never harm a living being unless it was truly necessary and due to his omniscient nature, he would know if an individual was truly deserving of the crime or not.

I find that the Christian response to the potential miscarriage of justice as a moral issue of capital punishment to be fair and respectful of those who have suffered unjustly. As Christian people can relate to the feeling of losing somebody to capital punishment unfairly, they seem to have a more fair and well-rounded approach to the certainty that a jury must have before sentencing an individual to death, which I find to align with my own personal views.

Another moral issue that comes from the use of capital punishment is its use as a deterrent for other crimes of a similar nature. Deterrence is one of the four purposes of punishment, and it aims to prevent other people in a community from committing a crime by giving harsh punishments to those who are guilty of that crime. The British Parliament conducted a study where they investigated the rates of homicide in the UK throughout time, and it was found that in 1965, when the death penalty was still in practice, the rate of murder was 6.8 out of every 1 million individuals. However, the 2002 figures showed that since the abolishment of the death penalty, the rate of homicide had nearly tripled, with the rates being 16.6 for every million residents. This emphasises that having capital punishment as a potential sentencing option made individuals far less likely to carry out crimes that would use the death penalty, even if the punishment was very rarely used.

One case where deterrence may have been a factor in the sentencing is the case of Ruth Ellis. In 1955 in Britain, Ruth Ellis was sentenced to death for the murder of her ex-lover, David Blakely. Blakely had been consistently abusive towards Ellis throughout the course of their relationship, even going so far as to cause her to miscarry after punching her in the stomach during a pregnancy. One day, Ellis snapped, and fatally shot Blakely in the street, outside a local pub. Within a few weeks, she was placed in front of a jury and was found to be guilty after only 20 minutes of deliberation. The punishment did not take into consideration the circumstances that Ellis had been living through, and she was executed a short two months after initially committing the crime. Additionally, the Home Secretary Gwilym Lloyd George notably stated, in reference to Ellis, that,

“We cannot have people shooting off firearms in the street!”

This reaction shows that George is concerned about the impact that Ellis’ case being publicised may have, and so it becomes more important that Ellis is punished

severely, in order to deter anybody else who may be close to having a similar outburst.

One non-religious response to the moral issue of capital punishment being used as a deterrent for other serious crimes comes from Utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is a theory, created by Jeremy Bentham, which is composed of three main principles; equity, hedonism, and consequentialism. Consequentialism is the belief that all actions carried out by a Utilitarian should take into consideration the feelings and impact that this action may have on anybody, and to act based on these notions. In the case of capital punishment, a Utilitarian may agree with the use of it in creating a safer community for themselves and others to live in. For Ruth Ellis' case specifically, while it is unjust and a saddening story, a Utilitarian taking consequentialism into consideration would still agree with the use of capital punishment in that case. As a result of the loss of one life, other lives are potentially saved and it would have people living in a safer community with other individuals who are less likely to commit any crimes, for fear of being caught and sentenced to death.

While I take the Utilitarian response to the use of capital punishment as a deterrent into consideration, I do not find that I personally agree with it. In my opinion, I do not believe that it can ever be morally permissible to take somebody's life as a punishment – even if it guarantees the safety of 100 other lives.

A third moral issue which comes from the use of capital punishment is the inhumane nature of some of the punishments. The most common method of capital punishment is the lethal injection, which involves a toxic overdose of 3 different chemicals which result in the loss of control of the body, muscle spasms and eventually, complete organ failure. The inhumane aspects of this punishment result in a lack of dignity for the prisoner in their final moments, as they are left in excruciating pain. Other methods of capital punishment are just as painful for the prisoner, if not worse; with punishments such as the electric chair, and gas chamber still in use.

One non-religious response to the inhumane nature of capital punishment comes from the United Nations. The United Nations, or UN, is an organisation that was founded in 1945 after WWII to promote international relations and to rebuild bonds that had been broken by the devastating war. In 2007, a vote was held in order to implement a moratorium on capital punishment for all countries. However, while 104 countries were in favour of the moratorium, 54 countries voted against it, and so the order was not implemented. This highlights the importance that the death penalty still has in some countries, and that they feel their justice system could not function without it. One of the chairmen of the UN, Ban Ki-Moon, made a statement detailing his views on capital punishment,

“The death penalty has no place in the 21st century.”

This statement highlights the general opinions of most countries in the United Nations, and how the inhumane nature of the punishments promoted in certain countries could be considered a breach of human rights in a society which holds comfort and safety to such high importance.

One religious response to the inhumane nature of capital punishment comes from Buddhism. One of the main staples of being a practising Buddhist is living by the 5 main precepts, of which the first one states that all Buddhist individuals should “abstain from injuring or killing any living creature.” While the Dhamma does not explicitly reference capital punishment at any stage throughout the texts, the Buddha is supposed to have said,

“An action, even if it brings benefit to oneself, cannot be considered a good action if it causes physical and mental pain to another being.”

This emphasises the Buddhist belief that all actions that are carried out must have good intentions, as bad actions result in bad kamma, which pushes you farther from reaching enlightenment. As a result of this, Buddhists recognise that it is entirely impossible to punish a human in such a cruel way while still maintaining composure and having compassion. Although capital punishment seems to be so fundamentally wrong in the eyes of most Buddhists, most countries with a high Buddhist population still use the death penalty and practice it in daily life. The reason for this is due to some of the political situations in these countries, the traditions of the countries, and also that some countries believe that it is essential to use capital punishment for there to be order maintained in the society of that country.

While it is clear that there are many different opinions surrounding the morality of capital punishments from different perspectives, I believe that the opinion of the UN aligns most with my personal views. In such a modern society, should we still find it necessary to resort to methods of punishment which have been traced back to thousands of years ago? I hope that in the near future, those countries who still rely on capital punishment to discipline their residents find a new punishment which they see fit, that does not require the murder of people who deserve to suffer through punishment.