

WHO MADE GOD?

SEARCHING FOR
A THEORY OF EVERYTHING

Edgar Andrews



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EP Books (Evangelical Press), Registered Office: 140
Coniscliffe Road, Darlington, Co Durham DL3 7RT
admin@epbooks.org
www.epbooks.org

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order@jplbooks.com
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Preface to the third edition

Welcome to the third edition and ninth printing of *Who made God? Searching for a theory of everything*. First published in September 2009, it has since been extensively reviewed by both friend and foe and translated into Dutch, Estonian and Korean. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that some of the material covered in the book has become the subject of further debate during the five intervening years, notably as a result of the publication of two best-selling books by atheists—*The Grand Design* by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow (Bantam Press, 2010) and *A Universe from Nothing* by Lawrence Krauss (Atria Books, 2013). There has also been a courteous exchange of views with Victor Stenger, whose book *God, the failed hypothesis* (Prometheus Books, 2007) I subjected to a detailed critique in *Who made God?* but who has since died. All three books have as their avowed purpose to dispose of the ‘cosmological argument’ for the existence of God and to demonstrate how science alone can (allegedly) explain the origin of the universe without needing to appeal to a supernatural creator. Hawking and his co-author put it thus;

“Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing ... Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist.

It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going” (p.180).

Interestingly, all the key arguments advanced in the Hawking and Krauss books for a God-less origin of the universe were anticipated and answered in *Who made God?* at least in outline. This doesn't mean, of course, that I wrote my prior publication using a magic crystal ball but rather demonstrates that the ideas offered in these two books were not, in fact, new. Nevertheless, such is the popularity of anti-God utterances by prominent scientists that these books have sold in their millions and continue to attract an enormous following in spite of their speculative nature and self-evident logical deficiencies.

Rather than amend the text of *Who made God?* in this new edition, I have chosen to add an appendix to cover the issues raised by Hawking and Mlodinow and by Krauss. This appendix consists largely of a review of *The Grand Design* because *A Universe from Nothing* adds very little in terms of ideas to the former work. I do however include a short note on Krauss' book to cover speculations he makes that go beyond those of Hawking and his co-author, while also adding some further thoughts of my own. The appendix thus expands upon issues already addressed in the original text of *Who made God?* such as the origin of the laws of nature, the multiverse, and the meaning of 'nothing' in the expression *creatio ex nihilo* ('creation out of nothing'). I also provide a link to the full conversation with Victor Stenger.

Edgar Andrews

Welwyn Garden City, February 2015

To get you started ...

During my frequent travels in the USA from 1970 to 2000, one small thing always amused me. As I settled in my seat for yet another intercity flight (let's say to Houston) the pilot would welcome us on board and add, 'If Houston is not in your travel plans for today, this would probably be a good time to deplane.' Very occasionally, a red-faced passenger would do so. By analogy, if you bought this book expecting a boisterous put-down for God, then now would be a good time to ask for your money back.

After all, 'If God made everything, who made God?' is the sceptic's favourite question, asked repeatedly by such as Richard Dawkins and his fellow 'new atheists'. They wield it like a sword—drawn from the twin scabbards of science and philosophy and calculated to decapitate any theists foolish enough to stick their heads above the parapet. In reality, however, the sword is all haft and no blade. Not only can theists safely raise their heads but they can take a good look round at the barren 'landscape' of reductionism. What they will see is a cabal of academic atheists diligently reinventing the Vienna Circle—the air full not of flashing swords but of grinding axes. (The Vienna Circle was the 1920s philosophical school that invented logical positivism, a failed philosophy if ever there was one.)

However, my purpose in this book is not just to refute the assertions of atheists or respond to their writings. It is altogether more positive than that. As I explain in chapter three, the scientist's dream is to develop a 'theory of everything'—a scientific theory that will encompass all the workings of the physical universe in a single self-consistent formulation.

Fair enough, but there is more to the universe than matter, energy, space and time. Most of us believe in the real existence of non-material entities such as friendship, love, beauty, poetry, truth, faith, justice and so on—the things that actually make human life worth living. A true 'theory of everything', therefore, must embrace both the material and non-material aspects of the universe, and my contention is that we already possess such a theory, namely, the hypothesis of God.

In these pages—which are designed to be read and enjoyed by expert and layman alike—I shall review not only the findings of modern physics (my own discipline) but also deep questions of origins. Among other things, we'll consider the origins of the universe; of time; of law in all its aspects; of life; of the human mind; and of morality. In doing so, we'll be able to compare and contrast the predictions of the hypothesis of God with those of atheistic naturalism, concluding that the former is superior in every way.

In this context, astrophysicist Robert Jastrow writes: 'At this moment it seems as though science will never be able to raise the curtain on the mystery of creation. For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountain of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.'¹

This book sets out to explore how the biblical hypothesis of God provides a comprehensible, intellectually consistent and spiritually satisfying view of being that encompasses man's experience of life, the universe and everything. We can only make a small beginning here

but what we find must surely trump the barren nihilistic landscape of atheism.

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Edgar Andrews

Welwyn Garden City, England, 2009

CHAPTER ONE ...

... in which we set out to answer the unanswerable question, 'If God made everything, who made God?' We'll discover that it is unanswerable only in the same sense as the question, 'How long is a piece of string?'—which remains a nonsense question until we define which piece of string we are talking about. In the same way, to answer the challenge 'Who made God?' we must define what we mean by 'God'.

In particular, we'll examine three contentions beloved of atheists. Firstly, the claim that 'we made God' (that God is an invention of the human mind); secondly, the idea that God is so complex that he is too improbable to exist; and thirdly, the suggestion that God has to have a cause because everything else does.

New words?

Ontology: The study of existence or 'being'.

Entropy: The quantity in thermodynamics that measures randomness.

Savant: A wise person; a thinker.

Stasis: A condition where no changes occur.

Tautology: A statement that seems to impart new information but actually repeats what is already known. For example: 'This cat was extraordinarily feline', meaning, 'this cat was unusually cat-like'.

Thermodynamics: The study of heat and energy (especially their flow and transfer).

1. Sooty and the universe

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went.

Edward Fitzgerald

Rubáiyat of Omar Khayyám of Naishápúr

In an interview with John Naish for *The Times* newspaper,¹ the novelist and science-fiction writer Iain Banks declared himself as follows: 'I'm an evangelical atheist; religions are cultural artefacts. We make God, not the other way round ... Religion is one way to explain the universe, but eventually science comes along and explains it ...' He continued: 'I can remember walking down the street in May 1963 ... trying to work out how the world had been formed. I thought that Sooty must have magicked it with his wand. Then I wondered what Sooty could have been standing on in this unformed Universe in order to create it. And who made Sooty? That's when atheism came thundering through me.'

Sooty, you may remember, was a glove-puppet on children's TV who (according to the *Guinness Book of Records*) starred in the longest-running children's programme in the UK, starting in the 1950s. By

species a bear, Sooty played the xylophone and kept a wand with which he performed magic—accompanied by the catchphrase ‘Izzy wizzy, let’s get busy!’ Quite versatile for a bear.

No doubt the young Iain Banks didn’t give the matter the full consideration it deserved, but his whimsical observation sums up the opinions of a surprisingly large number of people in our twenty-first-century Western world. And, of course, ‘Who made Sooty?’ readily translates into adult-speak as ‘Who made God?’ It’s an FAQ—a frequently asked question—commonly posed by those who would banish the very ideas of God and ‘creation’. It is a question that Richard Dawkins asks repeatedly, in various ways, in his best-selling book *The God delusion*.² The logic behind the question runs something like this.

If God exists, then presumably he created everything (why else would we need him?). But if God exists, who made *him*? And since no one can answer that question, it does nothing to solve the riddle of the universe to say, ‘God made it.’ We simply push the mystery one step further back and that is a pointless exercise. No one can doubt that atheists regard the ‘unanswerable question’—‘Who made God?’—as a formidable weapon in their war against faith, if not the ultimate weapon of ontological mass destruction. But, of course, there is more to the unanswerable question than meets the eye. It crops up in a surprising variety of philosophical contexts—like Sooty, it is truly versatile.

When I first began visiting the USA regularly on business, I was struck by the huge versatility of one little word—check. Not only could you write a check to pay a bill and check that your airline hadn’t gone bankrupt overnight, but you could request your check at the end of a restaurant meal, check the boxes on your laundry list (or any other form for that matter), check your luggage at the airline desk, check in or check out of a hotel, check out a new product, check your hasty words when you got mad with some officious bureaucrat, and so on. Then, of course, the word lends itself beautifully to portmanteau usage, as in checklist, raincheck and checkup (I never did encounter

checkdown but I'm still optimistic). Why, with a few more words like 'check' we could halve the weight of our dictionaries!

The 'unanswerable' question 'Who made God?' gets around in much the same way, turning up in a variety of different contexts that will repay closer examination. Let's look briefly at three of them—the 'we made God' hypothesis, the 'improbability of God' calculation, and the 'unanswerable question' dilemma.

Did man make God?

As we saw earlier, there is one answer to the question that atheists are happy to accept—the answer '*We* made God.' As Banks might say, religion has it back to front—we are not God's creation; he is ours. God is a mental construction that mankind once needed to 'explain' its existence but which is no longer required because science explains everything instead. As this book develops, we shall see that attempts to make science explain everything are doomed to failure, but for the moment we'll concentrate on the 'we made God' hypothesis.

Perversely, theologians inadvertently prop up this hypothesis by one of their own time-honoured arguments. I refer to the so-called 'ontological argument' for the objective existence of God. Savants of all stripes are given to making wise-sounding pronouncements that we accept as true even though we don't really understand them (or is that *because* we don't really understand them?). A good example is the famous aphorism propounded by René Descartes (1596–1650)—*Cogito ergo sum* ('I think, therefore I am'). Obvious? Not really. Philosophers have been quarrelling over the validity of the statement ever since it was made.

The 'ontological argument' for the existence of God falls into the same category. Ontology (from the Greek verb 'to be') is the science or study of being or of the essence of things. The ontological argument for the existence of God states that the existence of the *idea* of God necessarily implies the objective existence of God.³ *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*⁴ puts it thus: 'Ontological arguments are arguments, for the conclusion that God exists, from premises which