

1 The Great Debate: Dr. Greg Bahnsen vs. Dr. Gordon Stein

2 Transcript Version: 1.3

3 Version Date: Nov 7, 2004

4 Transcribed by: Chris Kersey

5 Email: transcendasaurus@yahoo.com

6

7 Join the "All-Bahnsen" Yahoo Discussion Board to discuss this debate by visiting

8 <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/all-bahnsen/join>

9

10 The following URL will always contain a pointer to the most recent versions of this document:

11 <http://www.ckdesigns.com/Popc/Debate.html>

12

13 If you do not already own a copy of the Great Debate, please purchase one by visiting Covenant
14 Media Foundation:

15

16 Covenant Tape Ministry: 1-800-553-3938

17 Covenant Media Foundation: <http://www.cmfnow.com>

18

19 ** Version 1.3 Modifications (Nov 7) **

20 1. Corrected some punctuation and improper wordings.

21 2. Inserted missing paragraph to answer to problem of evil on lines 1636 - 1641

22

22 The Great Debate

23 Dr. Greg Bahnsen versus Gordon Stein

24

25 Segment 1

26

27 Bahnsen's Opening Statements

28

29

30 Dr. Bahnsen:

31

32 Thank you David. I want to begin this evening with three opening and introductory remarks
33 about the nature of the debate itself.

34

35 Arguing For the Christian God

36

37 First of all it's necessary at the outset of our debate to define our terms, that's always the case.
38 In the particular here, I should make it clear what I mean when I use the term God. I want to
39 specify that I'm arguing particularly in favor of Christian theism, and for it as a unit or system of
40 thought, and not for anything like theism in general, and there are reasons for that...three.

41

- 42 1. The various conceptions of deity found in the world religions are in most cases logically
43 incompatible leaving no unambiguous sense to general theism, whatever that might be.
- 44 2. Secondly, I have not found the non-Christian religions to be philosophically defensible,
45 each of them being internally incoherent or undermining human reason and experience.
- 46 3. And thirdly since I am by the grace of God a Christian, I cannot from the heart
47 adequately defend those religious faiths with which I disagree. My commitment is to the
48 Triune God and Christian world-view based on God's revelation in the Old and New
49 Testaments.

50

51 So first then, I am defending Christian theism.

52

53 Issues of Debate

54

55 Secondly, I want to observe and we should indicate just what it is (and is not) at issue in the
56 debate and on the basis of which we hope you'll consider the debate. It must be made clear that
57 we are debating about philosophical systems, not the people who adhere to or profess them.
58 Our concern is with the objective merits of the case, which can be made for atheism, or Christian
59 theism: not relative, subjective or personal matters. And again I have three reasons or
60 illustrations of this.

61

- 62 1. The personalities of those individuals who adhere to different systems of thought are not
63 really relevant to the truth or falsity of the claims made by those systems. Atheists and
64 Christians can equally be found emotional, unlearned, intolerant, or rude in their
65 approaches.
- 66 2. Secondly, subjective claims made about the experience of inner satisfaction or peace
67 (claims that are made interestingly by both Christians and Atheists in their literature) and
68 promotional claims made about the superiority of Christianity or Atheism for instance

69 (some atheist literature suggests that greater mental health comes through the
70 independence of the atheist outlook): these sorts of things are always subject to
71 conflicting interpretations and explanations being, I think, more autobiographical rather
72 than telling us anything for sure about the truths of the system under consideration.
73 3. Thirdly, the issue is not whether atheists or professing Christians have ever done
74 anything undesirable or morally unacceptable. One need only think respectively of the
75 atheist involvement in the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution and the professing
76 Christian involved in the Spanish Inquisition. Now the question is not whether adherents
77 of these systems have lived spotless lives, but whether atheism or Christian theism as
78 philosophical systems are objectively true.

79
80 And so I'll be defending Christian theism, and I'll be defending it as a philosophical system.

81
82

83 **Concession To Knowledge Pertaining to Ovarian maturation of Japanese Quail.**

84

85 My last introductory remark is simply to the effect that I want to concede to my opponent all
86 issues pertaining to the control of ovarian maturation in Japanese quail. Okay? The subject of
87 his doctoral dissertation in 1974 at Ohio State. (*Audience laughter*)

88

89 Dr. Stein is a man of intelligence, and that's not in question in this debate. I would not pretend
90 to hold my own in a discussion with him of the empirical details of his narrow domain of
91 specialized natural science. However our subject tonight is really much different, calling for
92 intelligent reflection upon issues, which are philosophical or theological in character.

93

94 For some reason Dr. Stein has over the last decade left his field of expertise and given his life to
95 a campaign for atheism. Whatever his perception of the reason for that, I do not believe that it is
96 because of any genuinely cogent philosophical case which might be made for atheism as a world-
97 view, and it is to this subject which I now turn for tonight's debate.

98

99 **Opening Case**

100

101 My opening case for the existence of God will cover three areas of thought. They are the nature
102 of evidence, the presuppositional conflict of world-views, and finally the transcendental argument
103 for God's existence.

104

105 **The Nature Of Evidence**

106

107 First of all the nature of evidence. How should the difference of opinion between the theist and
108 the atheist be rationally resolved? What Dr. Stein has written indicates that he, like many
109 atheists, has not reflected adequately on this question. He writes, and I quote:

110

111 "The question of the existence of God is a factual question and should be
112 answered in the *same way* as any other factual question", end of quote.

113

114 The assumptions that all existence claims are questions about matters of fact; the assumption
115 that these are all answered in the very same way is not merely oversimplified and misleading, it
116 is simply mistaken. The existence, factuality, or reality of different kinds of things is not
117 established or disconfirmed in the same way in every case.

118

119 We might ask, "Is there a box of crackers in the pantry?" and we know how we would go about
120 answering that question. But that is a far far cry from the way we go about answering, uh

121 questioning, determining the reality of say barometric pressure, quasars, gravitational attraction,
122 elasticity, radioactivity, natural laws, names, grammar, numbers, the university itself (that you're
123 now at), past events, categories, future contingencies, laws of thought, political obligations,
124 individual identity over time, causation, memories, dreams or even love or beauty.

125
126 In such case cases, one does not do anything like walking to the pantry and looking inside for the
127 crackers. There are thousands of existence or factual questions and they are not at all answered
128 in the same way in each case. Just think of the differences and argumentation and types of
129 evidence used by biologists, grammarians, physicists, mathematicians, lawyers, logicians,
130 mechanics, merchants, and artists. It should be obvious that the type of evidence which one
131 looks for in existence or factual claims will be determined by the field of discussion and especially
132 by the metaphysical nature of the entity mentioned in the claim under question.

133
134 Dr. Stein's remark that the existence of a god is answered; (rephrase) the question of the
135 existence of god is answered in the same way as any other factual question mistakenly reduces
136 the theistic question to the same level as a box of crackers in the pantry, which we will hereafter
137 call the crackers in the pantry fallacy. (*Audience laughter*)

138 139 **The presuppositional conflict of world-views**

140
141 Secondly then I'd like to talk about the presuppositional conflict of world-views. Dr. Stein has
142 written about the nature of evidence in the theistic debate, and what he has said points to a
143 second philosophical error of significant proportions. In passing we would note how unclear he is
144 by the way, in speaking of the evidence which must be used describing it variously as logic, facts
145 or reason. Each of these terms is susceptible to a whole host of differing senses, not only in
146 philosophy, but especially in ordinary usage depending on who is using the terms. I take it he
147 wishes to judge hypothesis and the "common sense" by test of logical coherence and empirical
148 observation.

149
150 The problem arises when Dr. Stein elsewhere insists that every claim which someone makes
151 must be treated as a hypothesis which must be tested by such evidence before accepting it.
152 "There is to be nothing", he says, "which smacks of begging the question or circular reasoning."

153
154 This I think is oversimplified thinking and again misleading (what we might call the pretended
155 neutrality fallacy). One can see this by considering the following quotation from Dr. Stein. And I
156 quote:

157
158 "The use of logic or reason is the *only* valid way to examine the truth or falsity of
159 a statement which claims to be factual."

160
161 That's the end of the quote. One must eventually ask Dr. Stein then how he proves *this*
162 statement itself. That is, how does he prove that logic or reason is the only way to prove factual
163 statements? He is now on the horns of a real epistemological dilemma. If he says that the
164 statement is proven by logic or reason, then he is engaging in circular reasoning and he is
165 begging the question, which he staunchly forbids. If he says that the statement is proven in
166 some other fashion, then he refutes the statement itself! That logic or reason is the *only* way to
167 prove things.

168
169 Now my point is not to fault Dr. Stein's commitment to logic or reason, but to observe that it
170 actually has the nature of a pre-commitment or a presupposition. It is not something he has
171 proven by empirical experience or logic, but it is rather *that* by which he proceeds to prove
172 everything else. He is not presuppositionally neutral in his approach to factual questions and

173 disputes. He does not avoid begging crucial questions rather than proving them in what we
174 might call the "garden variety ordinary way."

175
176 Now this tendency to beg crucial questions is openly exposed by Dr. Stein when the issue
177 becomes the existence of God (because he demands that the theist present him with evidence
178 for the existence of God). Now a theist like myself would gladly and readily do so:

179
180 There is the evidence of the created order itself, testifying to the wisdom, power, plan and glory
181 of God. One should not miss the testimony of the solar system, the persuasion of the sea, the
182 amazing intricacies of the human body. There's the evidence of history. God's deliverance of His
183 people, the miracles at Passover night and the Red Sea. The visions of Isaiah, the Shikinah Glory
184 in the temple, the virgin birth of Jesus, His mighty miracles, His resurrection from the dead.
185 There's the evidence of special revelation, the wonder of the Bible as God's word unsurpassed in
186 it's coherence over time and it's historical accuracy and it's life renewing power.

187
188 In short, there is no shortage of empirical indicators or evidences of God's existence, from the
189 thousand stars of the heavens to the five hundred witnesses of Christ's resurrection. But Dr.
190 Stein precludes the very possibility of any of this empirical evidence counting as proof of God's
191 existence. He writes and now I quote:

192
193 "Supernatural explanations are not allowed in science. The theist is hard put to
194 document his claims to the existence of the supernatural if he is in effect
195 forbidden from invoking the supernatural as a part of his explanation. Of course
196 this is entirely fair as it would be begging the question to use what has to be
197 proved as a part of the explanation."

198
199 End of quote.

200
201 In advance you see Dr. Stein is committed to disallowing any theistic interpretation of nature,
202 history or experience. What he seems to overlook is that this is just as much begging the
203 question on his own part as it is on the part of the theist, who appeals to such evidence. He has
204 not at all proven, by empirical observation and logic, his pre-commitment to naturalism. He has
205 assumed it in advance, accepting and rejecting all further factual claims in terms of that
206 controlling and unproven assumption.

207
208 Now the theist does the very same thing, don't get me wrong. When certain empirical evidences
209 are put forth as allegedly disproving the existence of God, the theist regiments his commitments
210 in terms of his presuppositions as well. See, just as the naturalist would insist that Christ could
211 not have risen from the dead, or that there is a natural explanation yet to be found of how he did
212 rise from the dead, so the super naturalist insists that the alleged discrepancies in the Bible have
213 an explanation (some yet to be found perhaps) and that the evil of this world has a sufficient
214 reason behind it, known at least to God.

215
216 They both have their governing presuppositions by which the facts of experience are interpreted.
217 Even as all philosophical systems, all world-views do. At the most fundamental level of
218 everyone's thinking and beliefs, there are primary convictions about reality, man, the world,
219 knowledge, truth, behavior and such things; convictions, about which all other experiences
220 organized, interpreted and applied.

221
222 Dr. Stein has such presuppositions and so do I, and so do all of you. And it is these
223 presuppositions, which determine what we accept by ordinary reasoning and evidence, for they
224 are assumed in all of our reasoning, even about reasoning itself.

225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250

The Transcendental Argument For the Existence Of God

And so I come thirdly then to the transcendental proof of God's existence. How then should the difference of opinion between the theist and the atheist be rationally resolved? That was my opening question. We've seen two of Dr. Steins errors regarding it: The crackers in the pantry fallacy, and the pretended neutrality fallacy.

In the process of discussing them, we've observed that belief in the existence of God is not tested in any ordinary way like other factual claims; and the reason for that is metaphysically because of the non-natural character of God and epistemologically because of the presuppositional character of commitment for or against His existence.

Arguments over conflicting presuppositions between world-views therefore must be resolved somewhat differently and yet still rationally than conflicts over factual existence claims within a world-view or system of thoughts. When we go to look at the different world-views that atheists and theists have, I suggest that we can prove the existence of God from the impossibility of the contrary.

The transcendental proof for God's existence is that without Him, it is impossible to prove anything. The atheist world-view is irrational and cannot consistently provide the preconditions of intelligible experience, science, logic or morality. The atheist world-view cannot allow for laws of logic, the uniformity of nature, the ability for the mind to understand the world, and moral absolutes. In that sense, the atheist world-view cannot account for our debate tonight.

Stein's Opening Statements

251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276

David:

Thank you Dr. Bahnsen for that opening statement. We now turn to you Dr. Stein; your fifteen minute opening statement please.

Dr. Stein:

Can everybody hear me? I assume so. Well, I will grant, uh, Dr. Bahnsen his expertise on a conditional resolution of the apparent paradox of self-deception, which was his dissertation. I don't know how much more relevant that is to our discussion tonight than mine is, probably not any more but um, I would like to also thank Dr. Bahnsen for showing us that he really doesn't understand too much about atheism. I will try to straighten him out.

This is an important question we are discussing. Perhaps it's the most important question in the whole field of Religion, because if God does not exist, then the Bible can't be the word of God; Jesus can't be the Messiah and Christianity cannot be true as well as other religions. So we're dealing with an important issue here.

Now Dr. Bahnsen repeated for me that the existence of God is a factual question. I don't think he would dispute that. I think he misinterpreted what I said when I said that we solve factual questions in the same way. I didn't mean *exactly* the same way: I mean with the use of reason, logic and evidence and that is what I am holding.

Now first let me make clear what atheism is and is not. I think that this is a very commonly misunderstood subject. Atheists do not say that they can prove that there is no God. An atheist

277 is not someone who denies that there is a God. Rather an atheist says that he has examined the
278 proofs that are offered by the theist and he finds them inadequate.

279
280 Now if I were to say that this gentleman (sitting on the front step) could fly by flapping his arms,
281 I would be making a kind of unusual statement and it would be up to him to demonstrate that he
282 could fly. If he can't demonstrate it then we don't believe that he can fly. Now if he doesn't
283 demonstrate it right now, that doesn't mean he can't fly. It just means that he can't fly right
284 now. So we do not deny that he can fly, because he can't demonstrate it right now, but we say
285 that he has not proven his case; and therefore we do not believe that he can fly until he proves
286 so. And this is what an atheist says about the existence of God. He says the case is unproven,
287 not dis-proven.

288
289 So an atheist is really someone who is without a belief in God or who does not believe in a god.
290 It is not someone who denies the existence of God or who says that one does not exist or can
291 prove that one does not exist.

292
293 Now I think that I would like to define a god as well. I'm not so sure I like his definition; I'm not
294 going to stick to just Christian God. I'm going to stick to all kinds of god, and I'm going to use
295 the definition, which both Father Koppleston and Bertrand Russell both agreed upon in their
296 famous debate. Now this was both sides, the leading exponents of both sides, both managed to
297 agree on a definition of God. So I think it must be at least an adequate one if not a great one.
298 And this is the definition:

299
300 "A supreme personal being distinct from the world and creator of the world."

301
302 Now before asking for proof of God's existence, we need a satisfactory definition and I think I've
303 given one which I will find at least satisfactory and if Dr. Bahnsen doesn't agree, we can hear
304 from him.

305
306 Now nothing can qualify as evidence for the existence of a God unless we have some idea of
307 what we are searching for. That's why we need the definition.

308
309 Okay; now throughout history, eleven major kinds of evidence or proof have been offered for the
310 existence of God. In my campus visits, I have heard all kinds of other things offered as proof,
311 but they basically fall into those eleven categories, with some juggling. And if these eleven
312 proofs do not work out logically, or lead to logical self-contradictions, then we can only say that
313 God's existence is not proved; it's unproven, not dis-proven as I mentioned before.

314
315 Now if I assert that this gentleman can fly by flapping his arms, as I said the burden of proof is
316 on him. Supposing I make a more complicated statement. Supposing I say that my dog can talk
317 in complete sentences. Okay, well again I'm making a kind of unusual statement and its up to
318 me to offer the evidence. So I better be prepared to do that or I better be prepared to have
319 people not believe what I say.

320
321 Now I'd like a demonstration either of this gentleman's flying or of my dog talking if I were the
322 person who was being asked to make a conclusion before I admitted that such things were
323 possible or existed. Okay, now how easy would it be to show that this gentleman cannot fly or
324 that my dog cannot talk in complete sentences? As I mentioned before, we get into a real
325 problem when we're trying to show that something cannot happen or that something does not
326 exist.

327

328 For example, if I wanted to prove that unicorns do not exist, I can examine this room and we can
329 find out that there are definitely no unicorns in this room (that small area), but to prove that the
330 general non-existence of something like unicorns, we would have to search the entire universe
331 simultaneously. Then we could only say that no unicorns existed at the moment we searched the
332 universe. But you know, maybe they were there five minutes before, or if we only searched the
333 whole earth, they were on another planet at the time; I mean there are all kinds of other
334 possibilities; so you cannot prove that something does not exist. And that's why as I mentioned
335 before the definition of an atheist is not someone who thinks he has proven that God does not
336 exist, because you cannot.

337
338 Okay, now of those eleven major proofs, I'm going to go over some of them very quickly.
339 They've been nine hundred years in the formulation. During this nine hundred years this is
340 basically what people have come up with.

341 342 **Cosmological argument**

343
344 The first cause argument, also called the cosmological argument. It says that everything must
345 have a cause, therefore the universe had a cause, and that cause was God. God was the first, or
346 uncaused cause. Okay. Well this leads into a real logical bind for the theist, because if
347 everything must have had a cause, then God must have had a cause. If God had a cause, then
348 he was not the first or uncaused cause. If God did not have a cause, then not everything must
349 have a cause. If not everything needs a cause, then perhaps the universe is one of those things,
350 which doesn't need a cause. So you see that we've gotten into a logical bind there; and that
351 proof basically fails.

352
353 Now I'm giving you a real short synopsis of each of these proofs; they could fill an entire book in
354 half, so you have to understand that I'm oversimplifying slightly but I think I'm retaining the logic
355 of it both the pro and con.

356 357 **Teleological argument.**

358
359 The second one is the design argument, also called the teleological argument. It says that the
360 universe is wonderful and exhibits evidence of design or order. Things, which show such
361 wonderful design, must have had a designer who is even more wonderful and that designer was
362 God. Well, if the universe is wonderfully designed, surely God is even more wonderfully
363 designed. He must therefore have had a designer even more wonderful than He is. If God did
364 not require a designer, then there is no reason why such a relatively less wonderful thing as the
365 universe needed one. Again, we are into a logical self-contradiction.

366 367 **Argument From Life**

368
369 The argument from life says life cannot originate from the random movement of atoms, yet life
370 exists therefore the existence of a God was necessary to create life.

371
372 Now basically life didn't originate from the random movement of atoms, and no scientist would
373 say so because there are limits on the chemical composition and physics of atoms and they don't
374 move in any possible way. Chemicals do not combine in any possible way. That's why when you
375 see these one billion to one kind of odds that people have said for life originating... they're all
376 wet. They haven't considered the possibility that not every reaction can occur. So it's possible to
377 explain the origin of life without a God using the principle of parsimony or "*Occam's Razor*", I
378 think we are left with the simpler explanation as the one without the god. I'll go into more detail
379 on that later.

380

381 **Revealed Theology**

382

383 Then we have the argument from revealed theology, which seems to be one of Dr. Bahnsen's
384 favorites. It says that the Bible says that God exists and the Bible is the inspired word of God,
385 therefore what it says must be true, therefore God exists.

386

387 Now this is obviously a circular argument. It begs the question. We're trying to show whether
388 God exists, therefore calling the bible the word of God is not permitted, because it assumes the
389 existence of the very thing we are trying to prove. Now if the Bible is not the word of God, in
390 this case, then we cannot give any real weight to the fact that it mentions that God exists. It
391 does not become a proof. In fact, to prove God from the Bible is standing things on its head.
392 First you must prove God, then you may say (examine) whether god wrote the Bible or dictated it
393 or inspired it. But you can't really use the bible, as Dr. Bahnsen seems to want to do as evidence
394 for the existence of god per se.

395

396 **Argument From Miracles**

397

398 Then we have the argument from miracles. It says that the existence of miracles requires the
399 presence of a supernatural force (that is, a god). Miracles do occur, therefore there is a
400 supernatural force or God.

401

402 Again, this is begging the question. It requires that you must believe in the existence of a God
403 first, beforehand, and then you say that there are such things as miracles, which are the acting
404 of a god to create violations of his own laws. So it is not evidence per se. It can serve as
405 supplementary once you have good evidence in another kind of a way; for the existence of a god
406 then you can use miracles as an additional argument. But in and of itself, it doesn't show the
407 existence of a god because it assumes that which is to be proven.

408

409 I just want to quote you one little thing from Thomas Paine about miracles:

410

411 "If we see an account given of such a miracle by a person who said he saw it, it
412 raises a question in the mind that is very easily decided which is: Is it more
413 probable that nature should go out of her course, or that a man should tell a
414 lie?"

415 We have never seen in our time nature go out of her course, but we have good reason to believe
416 that millions of lies have been told in the same time. It is therefore at least millions to one that
417 the reporter of a miracle tells a lie. I think those are good odds.

418

419 **Ontological Argument**

420

421 Then we come to the ontological argument, one of the most difficult ones to explain to people,
422 but basically it says God is by definition perfect. A necessary quality of any perfect object is that
423 it exists. If it did not exist, it would not be perfect. If perfection requires existence, then God
424 exists since God is perfect.

425

426 Now I don't know if you followed that, but I think this has been pretty well ripped to shreds by
427 philosophers, and I think the problem lies with the (pause/rephrase), the trouble is with the word
428 "exists." In order for something to be perfect, it must first exist. I mean if something did not
429 exist, the word perfect wouldn't mean anything. So, first you must have existence, then possibly
430 you may have perfection. So this again is going backwards, and you must have an existing god,
431 then you can decide whether he is perfect; if perfect ness is a quality of a god then he may be
432 perfect, but he first must exist.

433

434 **Moral Argument**

435

436 Then we have the moral argument. All people have moral values. Existence of these values
437 cannot be explained unless they were implanted in people by a god: therefore God exists.

438

439 Well their answer to this is that there are simpler ways of explaining the origin of moral values
440 without requiring the existence of a god to implant in the people. Besides, if moral values did
441 come from a god, then all people should have the same moral values; and they don't.

442

443 People's moral values are a result of an accommodation, which they have made with their
444 particular environment and then taught to their children as a survival mechanism.

445

446 **Wish Argument**

447

448 Okay, then we have the wish argument. Without the existence of a god, people would have no
449 reason to live or be good, therefore there has to be a god. Most people believe in a god,
450 therefore there is a god.

451

452 This really isn't a proof; it's just a wish. It's like saying, "it would be nice to have a god," which it
453 would, but you know, that doesn't have anything to do with whether there is one or not.

454

455 **Argument From Faith**

456

457 Um, finally we ha..(pause), oh, I'm missing one here. Then we have the argument form faith.
458 The existence of a god cannot be proven by the use of reason, but only by the use of faith. The
459 use of faith shows that there is a god therefore god exists.

460

461 Reason or logic is a proven way of obtaining factual information about the universe. Faith has
462 never been shown to produce true information about the universe because faith is believing
463 something is so because you want it to be so without adequate evidence, therefore, it can't be
464 used to prove the existence of anything. In addition, an additional fact is that faith often gives
465 you the opposite answer to what is given by reason to the same problem. Which also shows that
466 faith does not provide valid answers.

467

468 **Religious Experience**

469

470 Now the argument from religious experience: Many people have claimed to have had a personal
471 experience or encounter with god, therefore he must exist. Now this is a difficult one to handle,
472 because first of all, I've never had such an experience, but I'm sure people have absolutely,
473 honestly reported having had such experiences. But the feeling of having met god must not be
474 confused with that fact of having met him.

475

476 This is a confusion, a semantic confusion and also we cannot use our own feelings as if they
477 were valid information about the world. They are feelings that we have inside of us, but you
478 cannot demonstrate them to another person. They cannot be used as an evidence.

479

480 If everyone had that same experience, like if we all looked around the room and we all agreed
481 there was a clock over there, then you might say that the vision of a clock was a consensual one,
482 if everyone agreed on it. Other than that, if you saw a clock that nobody else did, or only two or
483 three people did in the room, we would have a bit of a problem.

484

485 **Pascal's Wager**

486
487 Pascal's wager is the last of eleven arguments. I hear this a lot on the campuses. It says since
488 we don't know whether a god exists or not, we have no way of finding out in this life. We have
489 nothing to lose by believing in a god. On the other hand, we have a lot to lose if we do not
490 believe in a god and there later turns out to be one after we're dead.
491
492 Well, this is only true if number one: you're right about a god, and secondly if you have picked
493 the right religion, because you might wind up at the judgment day and be right about a god; but
494 he says
495 "What religion were you?"
496 and you say,
497 "I was a believer in Islam,"
498 he said,
499
500 "Sorry, Catholicism was the right religion. Down you go!" (*Audience Laughter*)
501
502 So in addition we might also have; if we have a god who punishes people who live virtuous lives,
503 let's say an atheist who lived a virtuous life, did wonderful deeds in the world, but just did not
504 believe in a god; if a god punishes him, then we have an irrational god who is just as likely to
505 punish the believer as the unbeliever.
506
507

508 **SEGMENT 2: Cross-Examination**

509

510

511 **David:**

512

513 Thank you Dr. Stein. We will now move to our period of cross-examination. The first
514 cross-examiner will be Dr. Bahnsen, who will have an opportunity to cross-examine Dr.
515 Stein. If I could please have silence, we would appreciate it.

516

517 **Dr. Bahnsen**

518 Dr. Stein, do you have any sources that you can give to us very briefly that define
519 atheism as one who finds the theistic proofs inadequate rather than one who denies
520 the existence of God?

521 **Dr. Stein**

522 Yes sir. George Smith's book which you will find for sale in the back of the room
523 upstairs later, called Atheism, the case Against God which I think is the finest book ever
524 written on this subject, makes this quite explicit. I happen to have a copy right here, I
525 can quote you the exact words if you like to see them.

526 **Dr. Bahnsen**

527 No, that won't be necessary.

528 **Dr. Stein**

529 Okay.

530 **Dr. Bahnsen**

531 Do you have any other sources?

532 **Dr. Stein**

533 Sure.

534 **Dr. Bahnsen**

535 What would they be?

536 **Dr. Stein**

537 Charles Bradlaw, who... I will give him to you right now. Uh, 200 years, uh 100 years
538 ago Charles Bradlaw made the comment in his plea for atheism; he said ...

539 **Dr. Bahnsen**

540 That'll be fine.

541 **Dr. Stein**

542 Okay, well...

543 **Dr. Bahnsen**

544 Dr. Stein, did you hear Dr. Bahnsen use the following argument?

545 "The bible says that God exists, and the bible is the inspired word of God, therefore
546 what it says must be true, therefore god exists?"

547 **Dr. Stein**
548 You did not use that, you just assumed that that was so because you were quoting
549 from the bible as if it proved the existence of god.

550 **Dr. Bahnsen**
551 I didn't ask you what I assumed, I asked you if I used that argument..

552 **Dr. Stein**
553 No, you did not use the argument, but you used the results of the argument.

554 **Dr. Bahnsen**
555 Okay Dr. Stein, you mentioned eleven basic proofs for the existence of God. Did you
556 mention the transcendental proof for the existence of god?

557 **Dr. Stein**
558 No, I didn't mention it by name. I think it is not a proof. I would not call it a proof as I
559 understand it the way you said it.

560 **Dr. Bahnsen**
561 You'll have time for a rebuttal on that point. In other words, you didn't deal with that
562 particular one?
563 Are all factual questions answered in the very same way?

564 **Dr. Stein**
565 No they are not. They are answered by the use of certain methods though, that are
566 the same: reason, logic and presenting evidence as facts.

567 **Dr. Bahnsen**
568 Okay; I heard you mention logical binds and logical self contradictions in your speech.
569 You did say that?

570 **Dr. Stein**
571 I used that phrase, yes.

572 **Dr. Bahnsen**
573 Do you believe there are laws of logic then?

574 **Dr. Stein**
575 Absolutely.

576 **Dr. Bahnsen**
577 Are they universal?

578 **Dr. Stein**
579 They are agreed upon by human beings. They aren't laws that exist out in nature.
580 They are...

581 **Dr. Bahnsen**
582 Are they simply conventions then?

583 **Dr. Stein**
584 They are conventions, but they are conventions that are self verifying.

585 **Dr. Bahnsen**
586 Are they sociological laws, or laws of thought?
587 **Dr. Stein**
588 They are laws of thought which are interpreted by men; and promulgated by men.
589 **Dr. Bahnsen**
590 Are they material in nature?
591 **Dr. Stein**
592 How can a law be material?
593 **Dr. Bahnsen**
594 That's a question I'm going to ask you!
595 Thank you.
596 [audience laughter]
597
598 **Dr. Stein**
599 I would say no.
600
601 **Cross Examination: Dr. Stein questions Dr. Bahnsen.**
602
603 David: At this time you have an opportunity to cross examine Dr. Bahnsen.
604
605
606 **Dr. Stein**
607 Dr. Bahnsen, would you call God material or immaterial?
608 **Dr. Bahnsen**
609 Immaterial.
610 **Dr. Stein**
611 What is something that's immaterial?
612 **Dr. Bahnsen**
613 Something not extended in space.
614 **Dr. Stein**
615 Can you give me an example of anything other than god that's immaterial?
616 **Dr. Bahnsen**
617 Laws of logic.
618
619 [Audience Laughter]
620 [David: Can I ask that you hold that down please?]
621
622 **Dr. Stein**
623 Are you putting god as an equivalent thing to the laws of logic?

624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664

Dr. Bahnsen

No. Only if you think all factual questions are answered in the very same way would you even assume that by thinking there are two immaterial things, they must be identical. No they are not identical.

Dr. Stein

I'm not assuming that. I'm just assuming that because the laws of logic are a convention among men. Are you saying God is a convention among men?

Dr. Bahnsen

I don't accept the facts that laws; [correcting himself] that claim that laws of logic are conventional.

Dr. Stein

Okay. Uh, is your god omnipotent, omniscient and omni benevolent?

Dr. Bahnsen

He is.

Dr. Stein

You don't find this a contradiction at all?

Dr. Bahnsen

I do not.

Dr. Stein

Okay, we'll show you a little later that it is...

Um, if your arguments in favor of the existence of god are shown to be incorrect, will you relinquish your belief in God?

Dr. Bahnsen

If my arguments are disproven?

Dr. Stein

Yes.

Dr. Bahnsen

Will I relinquish my belief in God? If there are no arguments for the existence of God, I wouldn't believe in God.

Dr. Stein

That's not quite answering the question. If someone can show you that there are no arguments, would you relinquish your belief? I'm trying to see, what's the basis for your belief.

665 **Dr. Bahnsen**
666 You were the one who said that it's impossible to show a universal negative. No one
667 can show that there are no arguments for the existence of God, so we can only deal
668 with those that I know of.

669 **Dr. Stein**
670 Okay, if someone showed that all of the ones that you produced were invalid, what
671 would be your position?

672 **Dr. Bahnsen**
673 Well, you'd have to describe further the conditions of this. Uh, rationally speaking, if
674 there is no basis for belief in the existence of God, I would relinquish that belief.

675 **Dr. Stein**
676 Okay.
677 Is God good?

678 **Dr. Bahnsen**
679 Yes He is.

680 **Dr. Stein**
681 Ho do you know that?

682 **Dr. Bahnsen**
683 He saved me. He created me. He made the world and He made it good. He sent His
684 son into the world to die for my sins. Many of these evidences are quite convincing to
685 me, but I don't use them outside of a world-view in which they make sense, in which
686 they would be taken as true.

687 If you mean is God good in such a way, or can I give you evidence that you would
688 accept? That would depend on what your presuppositions are.

689 **Dr. Stein**
690 No. I'm asking if god say's something, anything, is it right because anything God does
691 is good, because god is good? Or does it become good just because god said it? I
692 don't know if I said that right. I guess I did.

693 **Dr. Bahnsen**
694 No: I understand the problem, though it's roughly stated.
695 What God says to be good is good because it reflects His own character. God is good,
696 and is the standard of goodness. That's one of the presuppositions of the Christian
697 world-view.

698 **Dr. Stein**
699 Doesn't it indeed [correcting himself]; isn't it indeed a presupposition which is
700 presupposed before there is any actual data from God?

701 **Dr. Bahnsen**
702 Is this a question about my first opening statement?

703 **Dr. Stein**

704 In a sense it is, because although it isn't directly mentioned in your opening statement,
705 it has to do with the whole idea of whether there are absolutes outside of God, which is
706 a important issue in this whole debate. It may come up later.

707

708

709 [THE VOICE: To continue with this presentation, please turn your cassette over at this
710 time.]

711

712 **BEGIN TAPE 1: SIDE 2**

713

714 **Dr. Bahnsen**

715 I still think we're straining at the limits of debate rules here, but I will answer your
716 question. There are no absolutes outside of God.

717 **Dr. Stein**

718 So in other words, the fact that God is good, is something that God told you and that's
719 why you accept it, rather than knowing it ahead and assuming it as a presupposition,
720 which you said a minute ago.

721 **Dr. Bahnsen**

722 That's extremely simplistic. God told it to me and He provided evidence of it.

723 **Dr. Stein**

724 But you also said it was a presupposition.

725 **Dr. Bahnsen**

726 That's right. That's right.

727 **Dr. Stein**

728 Isn't that a contradiction?

729 **Dr. Bahnsen**

730 Oh, not at all. There are many things which are presupposed as well as, uh,
731 evidenced in this world; for instance the laws of logic.

732 **Dr. Stein**

733 I would disagree with that, but.

734 [asking the moderator]: Um, I still have some time? All right...

735 When we talk about immaterial things, are you also saying that there is a such a thing
736 as ghosts or the soul which are another example of immaterial things? Would you call
737 them immaterial?

738 **Dr. Bahnsen**

739 I would say that man is a living soul and has an immaterial aspect to his being; yes.

740 **Dr. Stein**

741 And how would you, uh, prove this?

742

743 **Dr. Bahnsen**
744 Does this have to do with the existence of God then?

745 **Dr. Stein**
746 Well, it has to do with the existence of immaterial things.

747 **Dr. Bahnsen**
748 Well, if there is an immaterial being (God), and if the bible is His word, then I would
749 say that, uh, his revealing the nature of man in the bible is sufficient proof; and that
750 takes us back logically as you'll be bound to say, to whether God Himself does exist.
751 And that's what we're supposed to be debating.

752 **Dr. Stein**
753 Okay, so you're giving me a circular argument which, uh, is...

754 **Dr. Bahnsen**
755 No, I'm telling you what the debate is about.

756 **Dr. Stein**
757 Oh; I know what the debate is about.

758 **Dr. Bahnsen**
759 Yeah [cynically]

760 **Dr. Stein**
761 I'm asking for an answer to a question and I didn't get one. Oh...

762 **Dr. Bahnsen**
763 I'm not debating the nature of the soul tonight, but the existence of God. Yes I believe
764 that man has a soul.

765 **Dr. Stein**
766 Okay. The only reason I asked about the soul is because this is a simpler immaterial
767 object that most people would hold as also immaterial.

768 **Dr. Bahnsen**
769 No; I didn't say that it is similar; I mean that's your claim!

770 **Dr. Stein**
771 Simpler I said. Not similar.

772 **Dr. Bahnsen**
773 Okay.

774 **Dr. Stein**
775 Okay.

776
777

778 **Final Rebuttals: Segment One**
779

780 **[David:**
781

782 Okay, having concluded our segment of cross-examination, we will now begin final rebuttals for
783 segment number one. Dr. Bahnsen, I now turn to your for an eight minute rebuttal.]

784

785

786

Dr. Bahnsen

787

Thank you. Uh, Dr. Stein is uh, not into this debate yet tonight. We are, um, debating
788 the nature of [correcting himself]; I mean the existence of God. I specified that I
789 would be speaking in order to avoid logical contradiction of one particular view of God,
790 the Christian view of God which I personally hold. Dr. Stein says that he will not
791 restrict himself to the Christian conception of God. Well, that's fine...he may not. But
792 all the time he uses on anything that's not the Christian conception of God will be
793 irrelevant. In fact, I will join him in refuting those other conceptions of God. The
794 existence of God that I'm arguing tonight is the Christian one.

795

Secondly, when Dr. Stein defines an atheist as one who finds the theistic proofs
796 inadequate: that is unproven but not disproven, he is engaging in linguistic revision.
797 He does quote for us of course, two um... he said that he could (and I trust that he
798 can) two atheists who likewise defined atheism that way. But you see that it... it strikes
799 me as similar to a Christian who defines his position as being true at the outset and
800 therefore it must be true cause it's true by definition.

801

He has minimized the task that is before him by simply saying, "I'm here to show that
802 the theistic proofs are inadequate." Well, you see even at that though he didn't do his
803 job, even though that was less than what he really should be doing. Because he gave
804 us eleven basic proofs for God attributing one to me that I didn't use, and do not use,
805 and did not assume. He mentioned eleven basic proofs but did not deal with the one
806 that I gave in my opening presentation; so he has not dealt yet with the argument that
807 is before us this evening.

808

Dr. Stein has mentioned logical binds and logical self-contradictions. He says that he
809 holds that the laws of logic are universal but however they are conventional in nature.
810 Uh, that is not at all acceptable philosophically. If the laws of logic are conventional in
811 nature, then you might have different societies that use different laws of logic. It might
812 be appropriate in some society to say both: "my car is in the parking lot and it's not the
813 case that my car is in the parking lot."

814

That is, certain societies that have a convention that says, "go ahead and contradict
815 yourself." Of course there are in a sense sub groups within our own society that might
816 think that way. Thieves have a tendency to say, "this is not my wallet, but it is not the
817 case that it's not my wallet." They might engage in contradictions like that, but I don't
818 think that any of us would want to accept it.

819

The laws of logic are not conventional, are not sociological. I would say that the laws
820 of logic have a transcendental necessity about them. They are universal, they are
821 invariant, and they are not material in nature; and if they are not that then I'd like to
822 know in an atheist universe how it's possible to have laws in the first place, and
823 secondly how it is possible to justify those laws.

824

The laws of logic you see are abstract. As abstract entities, which is the appropriate
825 philosophical term, not spiritual entities as Dr. Stein is speaking of. As abstract entities,
826 that is to say non-individual, or universal in character. They are not materialistic.

827

As universal, they are not experienced to be true. There may be experiences whereby
828 the laws of logic are used, but no one has universal experience. No one has tried every
829 possible instance of a law of logic. As invariant, they don't fit into what most
830 materialists would tell us about the constantly changing nature of the world. And so

831 you see we have a real problem on our hands. Dr. Stein wants to use the laws of logic
832 tonight. I maintain, in so doing, he's borrowing my world-view. For you see, within
833 the theistic world-view, laws of logic make sense. Within the theistic world-view, there
834 can be abstract, universal, invariant entities such as the laws of logic. Within the
835 theistic world-view you cannot contradict yourself because to so do you engage in the
836 nature of lying, and that's contrary to the character of God as we perceive it; and so
837 the laws of logic are something that Dr. Stein is going to have to explain as an atheist
838 or else relinquish using them.

839 The transcendental argument for the existence of God then, which Dr. Stein has yet to
840 touch, and which I don't believe he can surmount is that without the existence of God
841 it's impossible to prove anything; and that's because in the atheistic world, you cannot
842 justify and cannot account for laws in general (laws of thought in particular), laws of
843 nature cannot account for the human mind, and the fact that it's more than
844 electrochemical complexes and events, and cannot give us moral absolutes. That is to
845 say, in the atheist conception of the world, there's really no reason to debate, because
846 in the end as Dr. Stein has said, all these laws are conventional. All these laws are not
847 really law-like in their nature, they're just... well if you're an atheist, and a materialist,
848 you'd have to say they're just something that happens inside the brain. But you see,
849 what happens inside your brain is not the same as what happens inside my brain, and
850 so what happens inside of your brain is not a law. It doesn't necessarily correspond to
851 what happens in mine. In fact you can't be identical with what is inside of my mind or
852 brain, because we don't have the same brains. If the laws of logic come down to being
853 materialistic entities, then they no longer have their law-like character.

854 If they are only social conventions, then of course what we might do tonight to win the
855 debate is just define a new set of laws and we'll say that all those that want the
856 convention that says atheism must be true or theism must be true, and we have the
857 following laws which we conventionally adopt to prove it, you see we'll be satisfied.

858 But no one is satisfied. That's not a rational procedure to follow. Laws of logic cannot
859 be avoided. Laws of logic cannot be accounted for in a materialistic universe, therefore
860 the laws of logic are one of many evidences that without God, you can't prove anything
861 at all.

862

863 David: [Thank you Dr. Bahnsen. Dr. Stein, your eight minute rebuttal please.]

864

865 **Dr. Stein**

866 Okay, I'll now touch on transcendental evidence for the existence of God, which is I
867 think the only time I can really do such is in my rebuttal; but first I'd like to do one
868 more important thing. Rather than asking what is the cause of the universe, we must
869 first ask, does the universe require a causal explanation? Rather than asking what is
870 responsible for design in nature, we must ask, "does nature exhibit design?" God is
871 given as a solution to a metaphysical problem, but no consideration is given to whether
872 such a problem exists in the first place. But God is not an explanation for anything.
873 For example, if I ask you how did the universe come and you say "God created it", that
874 doesn't answer the question. The question is how did God create it? And I defy any
875 theist to explain how God created it. Basically, what you're saying is that an
876 unknowable being is responsible for a given phenomena which he caused through
877 unknowable means. And that's not an explanation, but rather a concession that the
878 phenomena is totally inexplicable.

879

880 Now, about the laws of science. An atheist world... first of all I don't think that Dr.
881 Bahnsen understands what a scientific law is. A scientific law is an observation that's
882 made over and over and over again. The law of gravitation: we drop objects all over
883 the world in different situations and we always observe that they fall to the earth. So
884 eventually we make a statistical statement that objects are likely, almost 100 percent
885 likely to fall to the earth if they're not accelerating in the opposite direction. Okay, in
886 other words, a rocket doesn't fall to the earth immediately, but eventually will if it
887 doesn't escape the gravity of the earth. So these scientific laws are merely
888 consensuses based on thousands and hundreds of thousands of observations.

889

890 The laws of logic are also consensuses based on observations. The fact that they can
891 predict something correctly shows us that we're on the right track; that we're
892 corresponding to reality in some way. If I can plug in a formula and show exactly
893 where a cannon ball is going to land, and predict exactly where it will strike, then my
894 mathematics is reflecting something valid about the behavior of cannon balls that are
895 fired on this earth. Otherwise, I wouldn't have picked the exact spot. Mathematics is
896 basically logic, again used in the same way by consensus of tested things that are self-
897 verifying. I'm not explaining it as well as I could, but that's basically what I'm saying.

898

899 An atheist universe then goes on the basis of the fact that matter has certain intrinsic
900 behavior patterns; electrons repel each other, because they're both negatively charged.
901 Protons repel each other. An electron and a proton attract each other. The opposite
902 poles of a magnet do that. That's an inherent property of matter. That is what
903 produces the regularity in the universe. If there were no regularity then there would
904 be no science possible because you couldn't predict anything (matter wouldn't behave
905 the same the second time as it did the first time; or the third or the fourth).

906

907 So the lack of having a god is in no way detrimental to logic and to having laws in an
908 atheist universe. In fact, if we had a god, we could very easily have an irrational god
909 who did things capriciously so that if I threw a ball...one time I threw it would go up
910 and then the next time down and you know crash straight down and sch srrr sss sssoar
911 right up. That would be just as much evidence for a god as a regularly behaving ball or
912 object dropped. I mean we could have a god who makes the rules and changes them
913 from time to time, or we could have one that makes things the same or we could have
914 a universe that just behaves that way normally.

915

916 Now to ask what caused the universe, although we didn't get into this exact thing, I'm
917 trying to show you that it's to ask an absurd question in the first place. To give god as
918 the answer, first of all I mentioned it doesn't explain anything, but secondly, before
919 something can act as a cause, it must first exist. That is, it must be a part of the
920 universe. And the universe sets the foundation for a causal explanation, but it can-not
921 itself require a causal explanation. I don't know if that's clear.

922

923 If I say "every human being had a mother;" that's a valid question. But if I ask, "who
924 is the mother of the human race?" that is a non-valid question because the human race
925 didn't have a mother. I can ask what was the cause of this planet exploding, but to ask
926 what was the cause of the universe is to ask an invalid question; and to offer the
927 answer as god is to offer an invalid answer to an invalid question.

928

929 We haven't gotten into morality; I think I'm going to leave that for the second half. If
930 Dr. Bahnsen doesn't raise it; I will. He makes an awful lot of statements that are
931 basically feelings. He felt God entered his life, he felt that this happened; he felt that
932 Jesus was resurrected. If he were held to the historian's standard, especially the
933 standard required when a miracle is done as David Hume said ("when a miraculous or a
934 very unlikely event..." such as the resurrection although Hume didn't use that exact
935 analogy, that exact example, "occurs, we must demand an extraordinary amount of
936 proof").

937

938 If I say that the sun is gonna to rise tomorrow, we don't need too much proof because
939 its been rising every day. If I say that that sun is not going to rise tomorrow, then we
940 need an extraordinary amount of evidence before someone will take that seriously
941 because that is a rather unusual event, okay?

942

943 Now he (Dr. Bahnsen) has not held up the historian's standard to a lot of the things
944 he's accepting from the bible as evidence for god; and I think that if he did so, he
945 would soon see that those evidences dried up.

946

947 And now to get to transcendental evidence, finally. The statement that "if God did not
948 exist you couldn't prove anything", and that "logic and scientific laws would be invalid"
949 is absolute nonsense, and I think I've demonstrated part of that. He says that laws of
950 logic are the same everywhere. This is not true, although they are mostly the same
951 and I wonder if he's ever heard of a Zen cone; and the answer to a Zen cone is
952 something, which, like what is the sound of one hand clapping is the most famous Zen
953 cone. The answer to that kind of a question is in a different type of logic in a sense, or
954 is extra-logical if you want to call it that.

955

956 But I do think that most logic as we accept it in the Western world and most of the
957 Eastern world is basis of agreement on people that reflect something about the
958 universe. The idea that transcendental evidence for the existence of god is that the
959 impossibility of the opposite, that the world-view would not be rational if it were
960 atheistic is total nonsense; and I've demonstrated to you that it depends on the
961 inherent properties of matter. If matter has the properties where it behaves regularly,
962 then we have order in the universe and we have a logical rational universe without a
963 god.

964

965 The god issue is not germane if matter behaves in a regular way; and I would hold that
966 the properties of matter as demonstrated over and over again are regular and it's an
967 inherent property of matter. So I think that the transcendental evidence statement can
968 be dismissed as mere wishful thinking coupled with mis-information about what
969 scientific laws are and what atheists would hold. In fact, most scientists; in fact science
970 itself is atheistic. Science is not allowed to use a supernatural explanation for anything;
971 and there is a very good reason for that. If your experiment came out one way, you
972 could say, "god did it." If it came out the opposite way, you could say, "god did that."
973 You would never make any progress in explaining anything in science and so the
974 agreed upon consensus or rules of science is that naturalistic explanations only are
975 asked for and allowed.

976

977

978 **SEGMENT 2**

979 [David:

980 Okay, we have concluded segment number one of this evening's debate. We will now enter
981 segment number two of this evening's debate. Dr. Stein will open segment number two
982 with a ten minute opening statement.]

983

984

985 **Dr. Stein**

986 He will if he can find his notes! Ah... now it would be logically wrong to say that if all of
987 the proofs fail for the existence of god, that one is justified in saying that there is no
988 god. That's...there's a logical fallacy (argumentum ad ignorantum) or something like
989 that, to say that you accept something just because all the evidence to the contrary
990 fails.

991

992 However, we have two other factors here that we must consider. One of them is the
993 fact that nine hundred years have passed since Anselm first postulated the Ontological
994 proof, and Thomas Aquinas in 1200 or so, so we have a long period of time which all of
995 these proofs that are being professed failed. That's some evidence about probability of
996 there being a proof that someone will come up with that will succeed being pretty
997 unlikely. In addition, we have a number of things, which I wouldn't call proofs, but I
998 would call evidence which make the existence of god even more improbable; and one
999 of them is the problem of evil. If an all-good god exists, why is there evil in the world?

1000

1001 We are told with god that all things are possible. If all things are possible, it would be
1002 possible for him to create a world in which the vast mass of suffering that is morally
1003 pointless, such as the pain and misery of animals, the cancer and blindness of little
1004 children, the humiliations of senility and insanity were avoided. These are apparently
1005 inflictions of the creator himself, or else we have a god that isn't omnipotent. If you
1006 admit that, then you deny his goodness. If you say that he would not have done
1007 otherwise, you deny "with him all things are possible."

1008

1009 So the atheist can present several arguments which sort of increase the probability that
1010 there isn't a god. They're not proofs as I've said. One of them would be the problem
1011 of evil. The idea is that the presence of evil is incompatible with an all good, all
1012 knowing and all-powerful god as Dr. Bahnsen suggested he believes in. Now he could
1013 come up with a statement that injustice in this world may well be corrected in the next
1014 world, but that would be something that he would be making without any evidence
1015 whatsoever. Just again, wishful thinking.

1016

1017 He could also say that (to get out of this bind) that god is not all-powerful. That some
1018 things (some evil things) are done without his permission so to speak; in which case his
1019 statement that he believes in an omnipotent god is falsified.

1020

1021 He could also say that the old argument about free will, which is basically a morass into
1022 which he may fall if he wishes, will not do. To say that god gave man free will and
1023 therefore he can choose between evil and good is to imply that god was unable to
1024 make a man who could examine both sides and always choose the good. In other
1025 words, he is limited and the only way he can do it is to let man completely choose for
1026 himself, as if that would take something away from man if he could examine both sides
1027 and still have the guidance within himself to always choose the good.

1028

1029 Now there's no obvious physical evidence of a god. If god wanted man to believe in
1030 him, man or woman (people) he could; all he would have to do is to put in an
1031 appearance before a group of people, especially a group of atheists... in fact we invite
1032 him to our meetings to put in an appearance, and that way anyone would believe in
1033 him except a fool. Well the Christian says that this may sound logical to you, but it
1034 doesn't to god; god evidently wants man to believe on faith without adequate evidence.
1035 Well, if he does, then why did he give man the power of reason, and why did he give
1036 man more reason than any other animal has?

1037

1038 If all living things on the earth were created by a god, and he was a loving god who
1039 made man in his own image, how do you explain the fact that he must have created
1040 the tape worm, the malaria parasite, tetanus germs, polio, ticks, mosquitoes,
1041 cockroaches and fleas. Now surely the dog is not suffering from original sin, and needs
1042 to be infected with fleas so that he can get to doggy heaven, which will be better than
1043 his present life.

1044

1045 The standard answer of theists to this kind of question is; "things have to be better
1046 after death." You know, we have these things on earth as a veil of tears, so to speak.
1047 It doesn't make much sense. I mean any god that would punish a man for what his
1048 ancestors did is not a very moral god. I'm talking about original sin now; Adam and
1049 Eve and the Garden of Eden.

1050

1051 There are many instances on the earth, which no distinction seems to be made
1052 between the innocent, and the guilty, between the Christian and the non-believer. For
1053 example, in natural disasters, like an earthquake or a fire; it kills Christians, it kills
1054 babies; it kills animals; it kills non-Christians. You certainly can't say that these people
1055 were punished in some way for something that they did. It also demolishes churches
1056 and hospitals without distinction. Isn't this evidence that at the very least, whatever
1057 force there is controlling these things doesn't care if people are Christians or not? Or
whether they're innocent or not?

1058

1059 If there's only one god, and he cares at all how he is worshipped, why are there so
1060 many different conceptions of god and so many different religions, all claiming to be
1061 the one true religion? Does this mean that they're all mistaken? Does it mean that one
1062 is correct and all the others are mistaken? There's an old joke about an atheist in
1063 which he said to a believer:

1064

1065 "You know you believe that 99 of the 100 gods are false,; I just go one step
1066 further and say that the 100th one is also false."

1067

1068 So I'm sure that Dr. Bahnsen, in fact he even agreed that he would help me refute any
1069 other gods, but the Christian God. If Christianity is the one true religion, why are so
1070 many people who sincerely believe in it found in prisons, slums and in organized crime?
1071 I'm not saying that all people there are Christians. I'm not saying that all people in
1072 organized crime are Christians either. But it evidently, if Christianity led to an elevation
1073 of moral standards which we haven't gotten into yet about morality, but I'm going to
1074 jump the gun here a little bit, Christians would be expected to be highly moral, not less
1075 moral. In fact studies of the religious beliefs of prisoners have shown that almost all
1076 were devout Christians. The number of atheists is less than one percent; and these
1077 statistics were in fact so disturbing to the people who've conducted them that they've
1078 stopped collecting them recently. Can't argue with the facts though.

1079

1080 Any system which seems to fail in its application as frequently as Christianity does, is
1081 not a very good or practical system for mankind to follow. I don't want to get into a
1082 real discussion of Christianity except that Dr. Bahnsen insists that the Christian God and
1083 Jesus and the other evidences that come from the Christian God are true and the
1084 others are not.

1085

1086 What are we left with after this exercise? Well, we can see that we can't prove the
1087 existence of god by any rational or logical process, and Dr. Bahnsen has not offered us
1088 any. We have a factual issue here. Again, as I've said, because the proofs fail, it
1089 doesn't mean that the existence is disproved, but I think that it certainly is unproved.
1090 We can, as I will say in my closing statement, this does not leave us in a bleak and
1091 horrible world. There are many many things that the atheist does with his life which
1092 make this world a nice place and enable him to get to solving of the problems of this
1093 world instead of hoping for pie in the sky which does not seem to be very probable.

1094

1095 [David:

1096 Thank you Dr. Stein. Dr. Bahnsen, may we please have your ten-minute opening
1097 statement?]

1098

1099 **Dr. Bahnsen**

1100 You've heard Dr. Stein refer to the transcendental argument and try to dismiss it simply
1101 as wishful thinking. If our debate is going to degenerate to that level then I dismiss
1102 everything that he has said as wishful thinking and delusion and why don't we all go
1103 home? No, we're here to argue. We're here to argue a point and I'm going to stay just
1104 with the argument that has been proposed and see if Dr. Stein has any better answer
1105 than just to engage in name-calling.

1106

1107 Dr. Stein proposes an atheist world-view, I propose a Christian theistic world-view.
1108 There are other proposals out there that may want their evening to debate as well. I'm
1109 maintaining that the proof of the Christian world-view is that the denial of it leads to
1110 irrationality. That is, without the Christian God, you cannot prove anything. As one
1111 illustration of that, although I want to get into more than that in the second speech, I
1112 have referred to the Laws of Logic. An atheist universe cannot account for the laws of
1113 logic. Dr. Stein innocently in responding to that, spoke more about scientific law than

1114 he did about the laws of logic, and I'm going to come back to that in my rebuttal to ask
1115 about his understanding of scientific law. However we still hear him saying that laws of
1116 logic are a matter of consensus and are just this way. That is to say "I don't have to
1117 prove that the laws of logic exist, or that they are justified, it's just this way." Now
1118 friends, how would you like it if I were to have conducted the debate in that fashion
1119 this evening. "God exists because it's just that way, you just can't avoid it."

1120

1121 You see, that's not debate, that's not argument and it's not rational. And therefore we
1122 have interestingly an illustration in our very debate tonight that atheists cannot sustain
1123 a rational approach to this question. What are the laws of logic Dr. Stein, and how are
1124 they justified? We still have to answer that question from a materialist standpoint.
1125 From a Christian standpoint, we have an answer obviously; they reflect the thinking of
1126 God. They are if you will a reflection of the way God thinks and expects us to think.
1127 But if you don't take that approach, and want to justify the laws of logic in some a-
1128 priori fashion that is apart from experience, sometimes that suggests when he says',
1129 "these things are self-verified," then we can ask why the laws of logic are universal,
1130 unchanging, and invariant truths. Why they in fact apply repeatedly in the realm of
1131 contingent experience. Dr. Stein told you, "well we use the laws of logic because we
1132 can make accurate predictions using them." Well, as a matter of fact, that doesn't
1133 come anywhere close to discussing the vast majority of the laws of logic. That isn't the
1134 way they are proven. It's very difficult to conduct experiments on the laws of logic of
1135 that sort. They are more conceptual in nature rather than empirical or predicting
1136 certain outcome in empirical experience. But even if you want to try to justify all of
1137 them in that way, we have to ask, "why is it that they apply repeatedly in a contingent
1138 realm of experience?" Why in a world that is random, not subject to personal order as
1139 I believe Christian God, why is it that the laws of logic continue to have that success
1140 generating feature about them? Why should they be assumed to have anything to do
1141 with the realm of history, or why should reasoning about history or science or empirical
1142 experience have these laws of thought imposed upon it?

1143

1144 Once again we have to come back to this really unacceptable idea that they are
1145 conventional. If they are conventional, then across the rock would be just numerous
1146 approaches to scholarship everywhere, different approaches to history, to science and
1147 so forth because people just adopt different laws of logic. That just isn't the way
1148 scholarship proceeds, and if anybody thinks that is adequate, then they just need to go
1149 to the library and read a bit more. The laws of logic are not treated as conventions.
1150 To say that they are merely conventions is simply to say "I haven't got an answer."

1151

1152 Now if you want to justify logical truths along aposteriori lines, that is rather than
1153 arguing that they are self evident; but rather arguing that there is evidence for them
1154 that we can find in experience or by observation (that approach was used by the way,
1155 by John Stewart Mill), people will say we gain confidence in the laws of logic through
1156 repeated experience, and then that experience is generalized (in some weaker
1157 moments I think Dr. Stein was trying to say that).

1158

1159 Of course some of the suggested logical truths it turns out are so complex or so
1160 unusual that it's difficult to believe anyone has perceived their instances in experience.
1161 But even if we restrict our attention to the other more simple laws of logic, it should be
1162 seen that if their truth cannot be decided independently of experience, then they

1163 actually become contingent. That is, if people cannot justify the laws of logic
1164 independent of experience, then you can only say they apply as far as I know in the
1165 past experience that I've had. They are contingent, they lose their necessity,
1166 universality and invariance.

1167

1168 Why should a law of logic, which is verified in one domain of experience by the way, be
1169 taken as true for un-experienced domains as well? Why should we universalize or
1170 generalize about the laws of logic? Especially in a materialistic universe not subject to
1171 the control of a personal God?

1172

1173 Now it turns out if the apriori and the aposteriori lines of justification for logical truths
1174 are unconvincing as I'm suggesting briefly they both are, perhaps we could say they
1175 are linguistic conventions about certain symbols. Certain philosophers have suggested
1176 that. The laws of logic would not be taken as an exhorably dictated, but rather we
1177 impose their necessity on our language. They become therefore somewhat like rules of
1178 grammar, and as John Dewey pointed out so persuasively earlier in the century, the
1179 laws of grammar, you see, are just culturally relative. That the laws of logic are like
1180 grammar, then the laws of logic are culturally relative too. Why then are not
1181 contradictory systems deemed equally rational? If the laws of logic can be made
1182 culturally relative, then we can win the debate by simply stipulating a law of logic that
1183 says, "Anybody who argues in this way has got a tautology on his hands, and therefore
1184 it's true."

1185

1186 Why are arbitrary conventions like the logical truths so useful if they are only
1187 conventional? Why are they so useful in dealing with problems in the world of
1188 experience? You see, we must ask whether the atheist has a rational basis for his
1189 claims. Atheists love to talk about laws of science, laws of logic, they speak as though
1190 there are certain moral absolutes for which Christians were just a few minutes ago
1191 being indicted because they didn't live up to them. But who is the atheist to tell us
1192 about laws? In a materialistic universe, there are no laws, much less laws of morality
1193 that anybody has to live up to. When we consider that the lectures and essays that are
1194 written by logicians and others are not likely filled with just uninterrupted series of
1195 tautologies, we can examine those propositions which logicians are most concerned to
1196 convey. For instance, logicians will say things like "a proposition has the opposite truth
1197 value from its negation." Now when we look at those kinds of propositions, we have to
1198 ask the general question, "what type of evidence do people have for that kind of
1199 teaching? Is it the same sort of evidence that's utilized by the biologist, by the
1200 mathematician, the lawyer, the mechanic, by your beautician?" What is it that justifies
1201 a law of logic? Or even belief that there is such a thing? What is a law of logic after
1202 all? There is no agreement on that question. If we had universal agreement perhaps it
1203 would be silly to ask the question. It has been suggested to you that it is absurd to ask
1204 these sorts of things, although the analogy that was used by Dr. Stein about the
1205 absurdity of asking about the cause of the world is not at all relevant because that isn't
1206 what my argument is. By the way that's not absurd to ask that question either. It may
1207 be unnecessary to ask it if you are an atheist, but it certainly is not absurd to ask it.

1208

1209 But it isn't absurd to ask the question that I'm asking about logic. You see, logicians
1210 are having a great deal of difficulty deciding on the nature of their claims. Anybody
1211 who reads the philosophy of logic must be impressed with that today. Some say that

1212 the laws of logic are inferences comprised of judgments made up of concepts. Others
1213 say that they are arguments comprised of propositions made up of terms. Others say
1214 they are proofs, comprised of sentences made up of names. Others would simply say
1215 they are electrochemical processes in the brain. In the end, what you think the laws of
1216 logic are will determine the nature of evidence that you will suggest for them.

1217

1218 Now in an atheist universe, what are the laws of logic? How can they be universal,
1219 abstract, invariant? And how does an atheist justify the use of them? Are they merely
1220 conventions imposed on our experience or are they something that reflect absolute
1221 truth?

1222

1223 Dr. Stein tonight has wanted to use the laws of logic. I want to suggest to you one
1224 more time that Dr. Stein in so doing is borrowing my world-view. He is using the
1225 Christian approach to the world, so that there can be such laws of logic, scientific
1226 inference or what have you. But then he wants to deny the very foundation of it.

1227

1228 [DAVID: Thank you Dr. Bahnsen. Dr. Stein, you now have an opportunity to cross
1229 examine Dr. Bahnsen. This will last 4 minutes.]

1230

1231 **Stein:**

1232 Is mathematics either atheistic or theistic?

1233 **Bahnsen:**

1234 The foundations of mathematics? Yes.

1235 **Stein:**

1236 Which?

1237 **Bahnsen:**

1238 Theistic.

1239 **Stein:**

1240 Theistic?

1241 **Bahnsen:**

1242 Christian theistic.

1243 **Stein:**

1244 How do you figure that?

1245 **Bahnsen:**

1246 From the impossibility of the contrary. No other world-view can justify the
1247 laws of mathematics or of logic. Because no other world-view can account
1248 for universal, invariant, abstract entities such as them.

1249 **Stein:**

1250 Do you think it's fair since you pointed out that logicians themselves are in
1251 great disagreement about the nature of the laws of logic, to ask me to
1252 explain them in a way that you would find satisfactory?

1253 **Bahnsen:**
1254 Yes it's fair.
1255 [Audience laughter]
1256
1257 **Stein:**
1258 Why?
1259 **Bahnsen:**
1260 Because this is a rational debate about world-views. You have a naturalistic
1261 world-view, I have a super-naturalistic one. I want something even
1262 beginning to be an answer how a naturalist can justify a universal abstract
1263 entity. I haven't heard one yet.
1264 **Stein:**
1265 Okay, is logic based upon mathematics?
1266 **Bahnsen:**
1267 No.
1268 **Stein:**
1269 Never? Not symbolic logic for example?
1270 **Bahnsen:**
1271 No.
1272 **Stein:**
1273 I would disagree with you.
1274 **Bahnsen:**
1275 Well if we want to get into Russell and Whitehead and debate those issues,
1276 we would be glad to do that, but if you ask a simple question, I can only
1277 give you a simple answer.
1278 **Stein:**
1279 You said that.
1280 **Bahnsen:**
1281 Assume the opposite. As far as I'm concerned as a Christian, I'm not
1282 committed one way or another to that. If you want to say mathematical
1283 laws and the permutation laws of math are the same as those used in logic,
1284 that's fine. How do you justify either one of them is my question.
1285 **Stein:**
1286 Well I would ask you a more fundamental question that as you explained
1287 that the laws of logic reflect the thinking of God. Number one, how do you
1288 know this? Number two, what does it mean?
1289 **Bahnsen:**
1290 What question? What difficulty I'm having understanding "what does it
1291 mean?"

1292 **Stein:**
1293 I don't know how you are privy to the thinking of God.

1294 **Bahnsen:**
1295 He revealed himself through the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

1296 **Stein:**
1297 And that explains the logic?

1298 **Bahnsen:**
1299 That explains why there are universal standards of reasoning, yes.

1300 **Stein:**
1301 That doesn't explain'em to me. Could you explainem again?

1302 **Bahnsen:**
1303 Yeah, we have bible studies from time to time, where those things can be
1304 delved into.

1305
1306 *[Audience laughter]*
1307

1308 **Stein:**
1309 You mean you spend some time rationalizing the irreconcilable, or
1310 reconciling the irreconcilable?

1311 **Bahnsen:**
1312 That's just, I mean [interrupted]
1313

1314 [Stein interrupting]
1315

1316 **Stein:**
1317 Like the two accounts in Genesis, the two
1318

1319 [Bahnsen interrupting]
1320
1321

1322 **Bahnsen:**
1323 This is a cross-examination. If you have something other than a rhetorical
1324 question I'll try to answer it.

1325 **Stein:**
1326 Well it's not intended as a rhetorical question, it's intended as a
1327
1328 [Bahnsen interrupting]

1329

1330 **Bahnsen:**

1331 The previous one was rhetorical only.

1332 **Stein:**

1333 No, it was intended to show that your last statement was disingenuous,
1334 and, and uh ... [David interrupts]

1335

1336 [DAVID: Please limit your comments to questions]

1337

1338 **Stein:**

1339 Yes, okay. Saying that logic reflects the thinking of God is to make a non-
1340 statement. How is that an answer to anything that's relevant in this
1341 discussion?

1342 **Bahnsen:**

1343 It answers the general metaphysical issue of how there can be universal
1344 invariant abstract entities in a particular person's world-view. If you want to
1345 know the precise relationship, for instance, if somebody wants to know how
1346 did God make a cow, okay? The statement that God made the cow has
1347 meaning apart from my being able to explain the mechanics of God making
1348 a cow. Likewise, the statement that the laws of logic are intelligible within a
1349 Christian theistic universe, has meaning because there are things which are
1350 in fact, spiritual, immaterial and have a universal quality such as God's
1351 thinking, and those standards that he imposes on people. And so again, we
1352 can at least metaphysically make sense of invariant abstract entities in one
1353 universe, whereas we can't make sense of them at all in the other.

1354

1355 We're not asking for the mechanics here, or anything precise such as
1356 resolving the relationship of logic to math and that sort of thing. I'm simply
1357 asking a more general question: if you're an atheist, how is it that... how in
1358 the atheist universe is it possible to have an abstract universal law?

1359

1360 [DAVID: Thank you Dr. Stein. Dr. Bahnsen, you now have a 4 minute opportunity to cross
1361 examine Dr. Stein.

1362

1363

1364 Bahnsen:

1365 Okay Dr. Stein; you made reference to David Hume and his rejection of
1366 miracles. Have you also read David Hume and his discussion of induction or
1367 more popularly, the uniformity of nature?

1368 Stein:

1369 A long time ago. I can't recall exactly what he said. But I have read David
1370 Hume.

1371 Bahnsen:
1372 All right. Were you convinced along time ago that you had an answer to
1373 Hume's skepticism about induction?
1374 Stein:
1375 Can't answer that question honestly. I don't remember what... this is at
1376 least 15 years ago that I read this.
1377 Bahnsen:
1378 Scientific Laws were [correcting himself] the validity of Scientific Laws were
1379 undermined by Hume when he contended that we have no rational basis for
1380 expecting the future to be like the past. Or if you will, for there to be types
1381 of events so that one event happening can be understood as a type of
1382 event so where it's seen happening somewhere else, the same consequence
1383 can be expected from similar causation. Hume said we have no rational
1384 basis for that... [David interrupts].
1385 [DAVID: Excuse me Dr. Bahnsen...could we please have a question please, for Dr. Stein?]
1386 Bahnsen:
1387 Yeah, I'm trying to set up a question.
1388 Hume suggested that there was no rational basis for expecting the future to
1389 be like the past, in which case science is based simply on convention, or if
1390 you will, habits of thought.
1391
1392 Do you agree with Hume?
1393 Stein:
1394 Not on this issue I don't.
1395 Bahnsen:
1396 Do you now have an answer for Hume?
1397 Stein:
1398 I think he was wrong about that one thing, but he was also right about a lot
1399 of other things. Nobody is perfect.
1400 Bahnsen:
1401 What is the basis for the uniformity of nature?
1402 Stein:
1403 I went through this, but I'll be glad to reiterate it.
1404 Bahnsen:
1405 Okay.
1406 Stein:
1407 The uniformity of nature comes from the fact that matter has certain
1408 properties which it regularly exhibits. It's part of the nature of matter:
1409 Electrons, oppositely charged things attract, the same charges repel. There
1410 are certain valences that can fill up the shell of an atom, and that is as far
1411 as it can combine...

1412 Bahnsen:
1413 Do all electrons repel each other?
1414 Stein:
1415 If they are within a certain distance of each other, yes.
1416 Bahnsen:
1417 Have you, um... tested all electrons?
1418 Stein:
1419 All electrons that have ever been tested repel each other. I have not tested
1420 all.
1421 Bahnsen:
1422 Have you read all the tests on electrons?
1423 Stein:
1424 Me personally or can I go on the witness of experts?
1425 Bahnsen:
1426 Have you read all of the witnesses about electrons?
1427 Stein:
1428 All it takes is one witness to say no and it would be on the front pages of
1429 every physics journal, and there are none so therefore I would say yes in
1430 effect; by default.
1431 Bahnsen:
1432 Well, physicists have their presuppositions by which they exclude contrary
1433 evidence too; but in other words, you haven't experienced all electrons but
1434 you would generalize that all electrons under certain conditions repel each
1435 other?
1436 Stein:
1437 Just statistically, on the basis of past observation.
1438 Bahnsen:
1439 And we don't know that it's gonna be that way ten minutes after this debate
1440 then?
1441 Stein:
1442 No, but we see no evidence that things have switched around either.
1443
1444 Bahnsen:
1445 Do you accept the Zen Buddhist logic that allows for cones, the different
1446 kind of logic that you referred to, used by Zen Buddhists?
1447 Stein:
1448 I used the word extra logical, and I think that's the right word. It is outside
1449 of the normal kinds of logic. And it is not necessarily a different kind of
1450 logic but it's just non-logical.

1451 Bahnsen:
1452 Okay.
1453 Stein:
1454 But accepted in place of logic.
1455 Bahnsen:
1456 Is it also... are extra logical things absurd?
1457
1458 Stein:
1459 It may seem that way to us, but no, I would say they are not absurd in the
1460 grand scheme of things.
1461 Bahnsen:
1462 Can extra logical things be true? Can claims about extra logical matters be
1463 true?
1464 Stein:
1465 That's an impossible question to answer because if we are using logic to
1466 answer whether something is true or not, then extra logical things are not
1467 subject to the analysis given by logic.
1468 Bahnsen:
1469 All right. So are claims about extra logical entities allowed or disallowed in
1470 your world-view?
1471
1472 Stein:
1473 In my world-view? That depends on what we are talking about. If we are
1474 talking about things like Zen Buddhists, and they confine themselves to
1475 these philosophical speculations there then yes. If we are talking about
1476 science, no.
1477 Bahnsen:
1478 Sounds very arbitrary.
1479
1480
1481 END OF TAPE 1.
1482
1483 [The Voice: For the continuation of this presentation, please go to the next cassette.]
1484
1485 BEGIN TAPE 2: Side 1
1486
1487 [David: Thank you. We will now move to rebuttals. Dr. Stein, 6 minute rebuttal please.]
1488
1489 **Stein:**

1490

1491 I would first like to make one little factual rebuttal about a statement that, which was
1492 slipped by in the first speech of Dr. Bahnsen, but that atheists caused the French
1493 Revolution, this is a false statement. The leader of the French Revolution, the most
1494 important person was Ropes Pierre, who was a Christian, so; I mean there may have been
1495 some atheists there but that doesn't mean that they caused the French Revolution. There
1496 are atheists everywhere.

1497

1498 Okay, now. We've spent a lot of time talking about logic, and yet I'd like to know why, and
1499 this is not a question that is addressed right now for an answer, but just as a put out for
1500 future response. Why has Dr. Bahnsen stressed the laws of logic so much when he has
1501 refused to apply them to the existence of god? I'm not so sure that it's even falsifiable, so
1502 therefore it isn't even a statement that can be tested in any way. He has stressed the laws
1503 of logic because he knows that there is no explanation for the laws of logic that philosophers
1504 agree upon. This is a trap in effect. I may have fallen into it; if so, fine. The point is it's
1505 not relevant to his position. To say that he doesn't have an answer to the laws of logic
1506 either, to say that they reflect the thinking of a god is to make a non-statement. First of all,
1507 he doesn't know what the thinking of a god is. All he knows is what has been said by men
1508 to be what they thought the thinking of a god might have been many, many years ago
1509 (maybe if we keep granting all of these possible things in his favor).

1510

1511 It's like saying, as I said before that god created the universe. Unless you explain how he
1512 created it, you have not made a statement that has any intrinsic value to it. I mean, you
1513 may have made a part of a statement, but I want to hear the other half. What is there in
1514 the method that god used that we can learn something from? I mean, why did god do it if
1515 you want to be a little bit more nasty. It's not valid to ask science why something happens.
1516 We can ask how it happens, but science doesn't try to answer the question why. But
1517 theologians do ask the question why, and try an answer it. I have not heard an answer as
1518 to why god did anything that he supposedly did, nor have I heard how god did it. These are
1519 the two most essential, meaningful answers to asking a question. If we don't supply those,
1520 we have ducked the whole center of the issue and just given you another mumbling, which
1521 doesn't go anywhere. I'll give you an example.

1522

1523 If I said "How did that car that's parked in the parking lot, that red car right in front, how
1524 did it get here?" And you say, "General Motors made it." That does not explain how the car
1525 got here. Now if you want to go and explain that: in Detroit, a hundred men worked a
1526 certain number of hours to make this car out of steel that they got from Youngstown Ohio
1527 from the smelting plant, and then maybe we're getting somewhere as to how that car got
1528 here. I don't mean how it got onto Irvine campus; I mean how did it get here in existence?

1529

1530 So until we have that kind of an answer, we have not said anything. To say that General
1531 motors made it is not answering the question of how that car got here. Neither is there an
1532 answer to say that God made it. And I would ask Dr. Bahnsen to explain if he thinks he
1533 knows the answer, which none of these philosophers know about the laws of logic, to put
1534 his answer in some kind of meaningful language. To say that the laws of logic reflect the
1535 thinking of god is to make a non-meaningful statement. And not just to me; to anyone!

1536

1537 I want to know whether god thinks rationally all the time, whether he can be irrational; how
1538 do we know when he is being irrational? Is it possible for him to be irrational? I want to
1539 know what kind of logic god uses. Does he use the kind of logic that we can demonstrate,
1540 that we can test in the same way that we use the logic that we are talking about in science?
1541 If so, should it be impossible for god to contradict himself in any way? Can he make a stone
1542 so big he can't lift it? Is that a logical impossibility? Is god limited by that kind of a thing?
1543 Can god make a square circle? I mean these are little logical games that we play that don't
1544 really ask important questions, but they have a reflection on some kind of a problem that he
1545 is having with his concept of god. I mean if god can do anything, if he is omnipotent,
1546 omniscient and omni benevolent, can he do those two things I said, or asked? And if he
1547 does, what kind of logic is he using? The logic of self contradiction?

1548

1549 Until we have some answers to these questions, I don't think we've got very much
1550 meaningful from Dr. Bahnsen in the first place (about any issue). He certainly hasn't applied
1551 logic to the proofs for the existence of god that have been offered by philosophers.

1552

1553 [David: Thank you Dr. Stein. Dr. Bahnsen, you now have 6 minutes allocated for your
1554 rebuttal.]

1555

1556 **Bahnsen:**

1557

1558 Dr. Stein has demonstrated it seems to me repeatedly in the course of tonight's debate, the
1559 claim that was made very early on in my original statement, and that's that the atheist
1560 world-view cannot give an account of those things which are necessary for rational
1561 discourse in science. When asked about Hume and the skepticism that he generated about
1562 induction or the uniformity of nature, we don't hear an answer coming forth. I don't think
1563 there will be an answer coming forth from the atheist world-view. However, Dr. Stein who
1564 is an atheist has said, and I think this is close to a quote, "If there were no uniformity,
1565 science would be impossible." Exactly Dr. Stein! If there were no uniformity, science would
1566 be impossible. So on what basis in an atheist universe is science possible, since in an
1567 atheist universe, there's no basis for assuming that there is going to be uniformity.

1568

1569 For someone to say, "Well, it's been that way in all the cases in the past that we know of,
1570 and therefore very probably it's going to be that way in the future," is to assume (because
1571 you are using probability) that the future is going to be like the past. That is to say, it is to
1572 beg the very question that is being asked you.

1573

1574 Now of course if you don't like the tough philosophical questions that are asked you about
1575 the nature of the laws of logic, how they are justified, the nature of natural law, how it is
1576 justified and so forth, and just dismiss it as absurd questions or "non-questions," that no
1577 one understands and does not have meaning, seems to me is just to try to give medicine to
1578 a dead man. You see, it's to say, "I'm not going to reason about that because I haven't got
1579 an answer to it, and that's just uncomfortable."

1580

1581 But you see, these are philosophical question which not just Christians by the way but all
1582 philosophers have had to ask and face throughout the centuries. Dr. Stein doesn't even

1583 begin to scratch the surface of giving us an answer how an atheist world-view can account
1584 for laws. Laws of science, laws of logic, laws of morality. And yet he does tell us, without
1585 them, science would be impossible.

1586

1587 As for the transcendental argument not being logical; Um, I mean you can claim that, but I
1588 have yet to see Dr. Stein show any self contradiction or any violation of the laws of logic in
1589 it. And of course if he were, I would immediately ask him if that law of logic is one of the
1590 things that we are necessarily to live according to. Do we reason by this law, or is it just a
1591 convention? Should I say, "well that's your convention, but it's not mine!" Or is that law of
1592 logic universal and invariant and something that must be followed if we're going to arrive at
1593 truth? If it is, then I'm going to ask him how it's possible to have such a thing in his
1594 universe. How he can justify it at all. But he hasn't shown any contradiction; he's simply
1595 again, called it illogical.

1596

1597 Whether it's falsifiable or not, I mean even asking that question I think shows that Dr. Stein
1598 is not really aware of the philosophical nature of the question in the debate before us. No,
1599 transcendentals are not falsifiable. That's right. But they are very meaningful, and the very
1600 sorts of things that philosophers deal with all the time. If you look at Kant, or Aristotle, or
1601 other philosophers, you'll see that they deal with the preconditions of experience. And since
1602 they are the preconditions of experience, they are not falsifiable and yet they are
1603 meaningful.

1604

1605 He says that I do not have an answer to these questions either. Well I certainly do. It's just
1606 that he doesn't like the answer. The answer is that God created the world, and this world
1607 reflects the uniformity that he imposes on it by his governing, and our thinking is to reflect
1608 the same consistency or logical coherence that is in God's thinking. How do we learn about
1609 those things? He revealed himself to us. Again, these are simple answers and the sorts of
1610 things that Sunday school children learn. But you know I have yet to find any reason not to
1611 believe them.

1612

1613 For Dr. Stein to say, "Well, these aren't answers!" doesn't convince me at all. He says
1614 they're not gonna be answers unless I include how it took place; what is God's method and
1615 why did he do it? Well, I don't accept those standards. I don't accept that that's a
1616 requirement for an explanation at all. And he hasn't given us any good reason except that
1617 he's not gonna be satisfied or it's unhelpful to him. He says it's a non-meaningful statement
1618 to say that the laws of logic reflect the thinking of God. He wants to know things like: can
1619 God be irrational?

1620

1621 Well, if he would ask those questions in cross examination, I'd answer them. No, God
1622 cannot be irrational. Rationality is measured by the standard of His thinking and His
1623 revelation.

1624

1625 The atheist world-view cannot account for the laws of logic; cannot account for any
1626 universal or abstract entities for that matter; cannot account for the uniformity of nature
1627 and therefore cannot account for the successes of science. Nor can the atheist universe
1628 give us universal and absolute laws of morality. And so on three of the most important

1629 issues philosophically, that men must face; logic, science and morality, the atheist universe
1630 is completely at odds with those things.

1631

1632 Well, we have one minute left here. I want to answer very quickly those few things that Dr.
1633 Stein brought up in his second presentation so that I might rebut them. He wants to know
1634 about the problem of evil. My answer to the problem of evil is this: There is no problem of
1635 evil in an atheist universe because there is no evil in an atheist universe. Since there's no
1636 god, there's no absolute moral standard and nothing is wrong. The torture of little children
1637 is not wrong in an atheist universe. It may be painful, but it is not wrong. It is morally
1638 wrong in a theistic universe, and therefore there is a problem of evil, of perhaps the
1639 psychological or emotional sort, but philosophically the answer to the problem of evil is, you
1640 don't have an absolute standard of good by which to measure evil in an atheist universe.
1641 You only have that in a theistic universe, and therefore the very posing of the problem
1642 presupposes my world-view, rather than his own. God has a good reason for the evil that
1643 he plans or allows.

1644

1645 [David: Thank you Dr. Bahnsen. We have now concluded segment number two of this
1646 evening's debate, and we will move very quickly into segment number three, which is
1647 closing statement. Dr. Stein has the first closing statement which will be of a ten minute
1648 duration.]

1649

1650 **Dr. Stein:**

1651

1652 Dr. Bahnsen in his last response and indeed throughout his entire talk has made a number
1653 odd claims about what is possible in an atheist universe, and what is not possible in an
1654 atheist universe. All I can say is that he has a very strange conception of an atheist
1655 universe, and perhaps of the universe in general.

1656

1657 First of all, evil in an atheist universe. Yes, indeed there can be evil in an atheist universe.
1658 Evil is by definition in an atheist universe that which decreases the happiness of people.
1659 The most unhappiness of people. In other words, if we have two things that we want to
1660 make a comparative evil statement: which is more evil than another. The thing, which is
1661 more evil, which causes more people to be unhappy. Now how do we know this? Well, we
1662 don't know it. It is a consensus, just like morality in general is a consensus. It's a
1663 consensus reinforced by the teachings of society through its parents to children, teachers to
1664 students, the media, literature, the bible. All of these things reinforce morality through
1665 teaching and the socialization process. And also we pass laws to punish people that violate
1666 some of the more blatant cases that we have said are no's.

1667

1668 So the idea that there is no evil in an atheist universe is utter hogwash. But our evil is at
1669 least a rational determinant thing. We don't say, "well did god make this evil?", and then
1670 we have to go flipping through the bible to see if it was covered at all. You know, there is a
1671 hundred volumes of commentary, at least a hundred volumes more, called the Talmud
1672 which is the Jews interpretation of all the places that the Old Testament didn't give them
1673 any guidance on for ethical or moral issues. So I mean these things are not clearly spelled
1674 out in the bible. We have no guidance on a lot of things as to what's evil. Is ovum
1675 transplant evil? I mean you won't find that in your bible. You've got to go and look at the

1676 issues. And you do an analysis just the way any rational philosopher would do it, or et,
1677 ethic , e e ethi [whistles].. what do call that person? Ethicist.. couldn't think of the word.
1678
1679 So I mean we have standards by which we determine evil and good and in an atheistic
1680 world, the atheistic world-view. I think I have demonstrated that the regularity of matter
1681 which is an inherent property of matter explains that the way we are able to make laws
1682 which are generalizations in the field of science.
1683
1684 First of all, many many scientists are atheists. It has been shown by studies over and over
1685 again. So the claim as Dr. Bahnsen's claims to claim that science doesn't give us an
1686 atheistic world-view that is inconformity with, I mean that science is not in conformity with
1687 an atheistic world-view is utter nonsense. Science is in itself not in conformity with an
1688 atheistic world-view is utter nonsense. Science is in itself atheistic. It doesn't use God to
1689 explain things, and it understands that matter behaves in a regular and therefore predictable
1690 way. And that is the way in which scientific research is done.
1691
1692 The same with logic. Logic is a consensus. I think it has a mathematical and linguistic
1693 basis. It has some conformity to the reality of the world. I don't know how many times we
1694 have to repeat that for it to get through to Dr. Bahnsen, but it doesn't seem to be. And he
1695 seems to specialize in what we call the "thinking makes it so, school of logic."
1696
1697 If you want to call it that. Because he says something is so, because he knows what god's
1698 thinking was, therefore it is so. The omniscient Dr. Bahnsen has answered.
1699
1700 Well that doesn't answer anything if we are going to apply the tests of reason to what he
1701 says. His statements are not only irrational, they are unreasonable. The idea that the
1702 future is gonna be like the past, it's a statistical probability statement. We have never seen
1703 a future, today is the future from yesterday. And yesterday, what is happening today is the
1704 future. We have not seen anything in that time period that we have observed which is
1705 several hundred years, to show that the regularity of matter and its behavior is gonna
1706 change. If it changes, scientific experiments will go haywire and we'll know it right off the
1707 bat, and then we'll have to revise a lot of things. I think the chances of that happening are
1708 pretty small.
1709
1710 Now, let me just finish by saying that atheism is not a bleak and negative concept. It frees
1711 man, it sweeps away the theological debris that has prevented man from taking action to
1712 correct the problems of this world. We wanna to feed the hungry, we wanna to educate the
1713 illiterate, we wanna clothe the naked, we wanna raise the standard of living, we wanna
1714 spread reason and thinking and progress and science. These are all things which are and in
1715 of themselves atheistic. We don't do them because god tells us to do them. We do them
1716 because they are right, they need to be done in this world. And if we do them because they
1717 are right and we make people happy, we will be made happy ourselves by making other
1718 people happy. It's a very positive world outlook, which is something I don't think Dr.
1719 Bahnsen has even mentioned, but it is certainly the other side of the coin. I mean, what
1720 happens when you wipe away the god concept. Are you left with nothing? No, you're left
1721 with responsibility that you have to take on yourself. You are responsible for your actions,
1722 and also you get the credit for the things that you do. And I would rather have a realistic

1723 world-view, that gives up a few things that would be nice to have but just don't happen to
1724 be true. And I would rather operate on a world-view like that than I would on making a
1725 wish fulfillment of things that just are not so.

1726

1727 [David: thank you Dr. Stein. Dr. Bahnsen, your ten minute closing statement please.]

1728

1729 Dr. Bahnsen.

1730

1731 I would like to begin my closing statement by thanking the debate team for inviting both Dr.
1732 Stein and myself here for this interesting evening of interchange, and thank you all for
1733 giving up an evening to discuss what I consider a very important question. And I thank Dr.
1734 Stein for coming and for his graciousness toward me.

1735

1736 As far as my rebuttal, or excuse, my close closing statement, I need to deal I think first of
1737 all, perhaps even the entire time, analyzing this remark that my statements have been
1738 tonight irrational. Well, perhaps they have, but you see, saying so doesn't make it so.
1739 That's something we've just heard as well. And so if my statements have been irrational,
1740 then we're going to need some standards of reasoning by which these statements have
1741 been shown to be irrational.

1742

1743 Dr. Stein has yet to explain to us in even the broadest, simplest Sunday school child
1744 manner, that I told you about laws of logic, laws of science, and laws of morality. He hasn't
1745 even begun to scratch the surface to tell us how in his world-view, there can be laws of any
1746 sort. And if there can't be laws or standards in his world-view, then he can't worry about
1747 my irrationality (my alleged irrationality).

1748

1749 The transcendental argument for the existence of God has not been answered by Dr. Stein.
1750 It has been evaded, it's been made fun of, but it hasn't been answered. And that's what
1751 we're here for; rational interchange. The transcendental argument says the proof of the
1752 Christian God is that without Him, you can't prove anything. Notice, the argument does not
1753 say that atheists don't prove things. The argument doesn't say that atheists don't use logic,
1754 science or laws of morality. In fact they do. The argument is that their world-view cannot
1755 account for what they are doing. Their world-view is not consistent with what they are
1756 doing. In their world-view, there are no laws, there are no abstract entities, there are no
1757 universals, there are no prescriptions. There is just the material universe, naturalistically
1758 explained and the way things happen to be. That's not law like or universal and therefore
1759 their world-view doesn't account for logic, science or morality.

1760

1761 But atheists of course use logic, science and morality. And in so doing, atheists give
1762 continual evidence of the fact that in their heart of hearts, they aren't atheist. In their heart
1763 of hearts, they know the god I'm talking about. This God made them, this God reveals
1764 himself continually to them through the natural order, through their conscience and through
1765 their very use of reason. They know this God and they suppress the truth about him. One
1766 of the ways we see that they suppress the truth about him is because they do continue to
1767 use the laws of logic, science, and morality though their world-view cannot account for
1768 them.

1769

1770 Dr. Stein has said the laws of logic are merely conventional. If so, then on convention he
1771 wins tonight's debate; on convention I win tonight's debate; and if you're satisfied with that,
1772 you didn't need to come in the first place. You expected the laws of logic to be applied as
1773 universal standards of rationality. Rationality is not possible in a universe that just consigns
1774 them to convention.

1775

1776 Dr. Stein said the laws of science are law-like because of the inherent character of matter.
1777 But Dr. Stein doesn't know the inherent character of matter. Now if he were God, he might
1778 reveal that to us as I think God has revealed certain things to us about the operation of the
1779 universe. But he's not God; he doesn't even believe that there is a god. Since he hasn't
1780 experienced all the instances of matter and all of the electron reactions, all of the other
1781 things scientists look at, since he hasn't experienced all of those, he doesn't know that those
1782 things are universal. He doesn't know that that the future is going to be like the past.

1783

1784 When he says, "Well it always has been in the past, and boy if it changes tomorrow won't
1785 that make the front pages!" that's not an answer. You see what we're asking? What
1786 justifies your proceeding on the expectations that the future is like the past. To say, "well
1787 it's always been that way in the past" is just to beg the question. We want to know on what
1788 basis your world-view allows for the uniformity of nature, and laws of science.

1789

1790 Thirdly, we've spoken of laws of morality tonight. He says they have laws of morality. The
1791 utilitarian standard of what brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number. Well, that
1792 doesn't justify utilitarianism to announce it. He's announced that it's the standard. Well
1793 why in an atheist universe should we live by that standard. Marquis De Sad enjoyed
1794 torturing women. Now why should he give up torturing women so that he might bring
1795 greater happiness to those women he's torturing? Now I've got an answer for that; it's not
1796 one that Dr. Stein likes, and maybe some of you up there don't like it, but at least I can
1797 begin philosophically to deal with that. I have an answer. A universal absolute about
1798 morality. Dr. Stein does not. He simply has an announced stipulated standard. And if
1799 morality can be stipulated, then of course Marquis De Sad can stipulate his own, even if Dr.
1800 Stein has stipulated his own.

1801

1802 Why should he feed the poor? He says they want to do that. I grant that. My argument
1803 tonight has never been that atheists are the lousiest people in the world. That's not the
1804 point. Some Christians can be pretty lousy too. But why is it that I call atheists or
1805 Christians lousy when they act in the ways we are thinking of. Because I have absolute
1806 standards of morality to judge, Dr. Stein does not. And therefore once again, from the
1807 transcendental standpoint, the atheistic world-view cannot account for this debate tonight.
1808 Because this debate tonight has assumed that we're going to use the laws of logic as
1809 standards of reasoning. Or else we're irrational. That we're going to use laws of science,
1810 we're going to be intelligent men that way. We're going to assume induction and causation
1811 and all those things that scientists do, and it's assumed moral stance. And we're not going
1812 to be dishonest and try to lie or just try to deceive you.

1813

1814 I mean if there aren't laws of morality, I can just take out a gun right now and say "Okay
1815 Dr. Stein, make my day. Is there a god or not?" You see if he argues "oh no! You can't
1816 murder me because there are laws of morality", then of course he's made my day because I

1817 win the debate. That shows that the atheist universe is not correct. But if he says "Oh no,
1818 there are no absolute standards; it's all by convention and stipulation" and that sort of thing,
1819 then I just pull the trigger and it's all over and I win the debate anyway.

1820

1821 [audience pause, then laughter and applause.]

1822

1823 Would you expect me to win the debate in that fashion? Absolutely not. You came here
1824 expecting rational interchange. I don't think we've heard much from Dr. Stein. I've asked
1825 him repeatedly, it's very simple. I don't want a lot of details, just begin to scratch the
1826 surface. How in a materialistic, naturalistic outlook on life, man in his place in the world,
1827 can you account for laws of logic, laws of science, and laws of morality. The atheist world-
1828 view cannot do it and therefore I feel justified in concluding as I did in my opening
1829 presentation this evening, by saying that the proof of the Christian God is the impossibility of
1830 the contrary. Without the Christian world-view, this debate wouldn't make sense.

1831

1832 The bible tells us, "the fool has said in his heart, there is no god". Don't misunderstand
1833 that. When the bible uses the term fool, it's not engaging in name calling. It's trying to
1834 describe somebody who is dense in the sense that they will not use his reason as God has
1835 given it. Somebody who is rebellious, who is hard-hearted. It's the fool who says in his
1836 heart there is no god. Paul tells us in first Corinthians, the first chapter, that God has made
1837 foolish the wisdom of this world. He calls rhetorically, "where is the wise? Where is the
1838 disputer or debater of this age? Hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

1839

1840 In a sense, I think what Paul is telling us, if I can amplify and read between the lines, is the
1841 whole history of philosophy is an argument for the existence of God. The whole history of
1842 philosophy is an argument for the existence of God because of the impossibility of the
1843 contrary.

1844

1845 Someone who wants to say contrary to what the bible says about God, let him stand up and
1846 answer these questions. Let him show that in his heart he may say there is no God, but he
1847 can't live that way. He can't reason that way.

1848

1849 In Romans, the first chapter, Paul says God is making himself known continually to all men,
1850 and persuasively so that men do not have an excuse for the rejection of the existence of the
1851 Christian God. That isn't to say that all men confess this God. Not all will own up to him as
1852 their heavenly father. Not all will submit to him. Some continue to rebel. Some continue to
1853 devise their fools errs and rationalization for why they don't have to believe in Him. That's
1854 what the bible teaches. I didn't come here and make this up. I didn't come here tonight to
1855 say well, if you don't agree, you see you're just being rebellious. That's what the bible says.

1856

1857 What I want you to do tonight, is to go home and to consider whether there isn't something
1858 to that. Why is it that some people continue to use laws of logic, laws of morality, laws of
1859 science and yet they have a world-view that just clashes with that, and they just won't do
1860 anything to resolve contradiction.

1861

1862 Dr. Stein tonight made reference to my doctoral dissertation on self-deception. He
1863 wondered how relevant it might be. Well, it's very relevant. It's very relevant because what
1864 I do in that doctoral dissertation is to show that there are some people who know the truth,
1865 and yet work very hard to convince themselves that it's not true. Now of course atheists
1866 think that's what Christians are doing, I recognize that, and we'd have to argue what the
1867 evidence for and against self deception is. All I want to leave with you tonight is the fact
1868 that self deception is a real phenomenon. It does happen to people. People who know the
1869 truth and yet work very hard to rationalize the evidence, convince themselves (as Paul says
1870 "Suppress the truth in unrighteousness"), convince themselves that there is no God.

1871

1872 Well, you can choose tonight between the Christian world-view, the atheist world-view. We
1873 haven't touched all of the issues you may want to look into. But in broad strokes, we have
1874 touched on a very important issue. If you're going to be a rational man, a moral man, a
1875 man of science. Can you do so in atheist universe? I say you can't.

1876

1877 [DAVID: Thank you Dr. Bahnsen. To continue the conversation that has already begun, not a
1878 religious conversion, but the conversion to answer question. What we are going to do now
1879 is I'm going to reiterate what I stated at the beginning. You have a sheet of paper included
1880 in your evening program. If you have a question for either Dr. Bahnsen or Dr. Stein, I
1881 would ask that you would take that paper out, write your question quickly. They are being
1882 rapidly collected by speech and debate team members. Obviously we cannot answer every
1883 single question that's going to be posed here this evening. They will be sorted through by
1884 our question panelists that we have here this evening. They will be read by me at the
1885 podium. The person to whom the question is directed will have an opportunity to respond
1886 for two minutes. His opponent will have an opportunity to respond for one minute.]

1887

1888 BEGIN SIDE 2 of Tape Two

1889

1890 [DAVID: Then first question in keeping with our format this evening will be directed to Dr.
1891 Bahnsen. Dr. Bahnsen, the question reads:

1892

1893 Question 1 [Addressed To Dr. Bahnsen]:

1894 What solid evidence do you have to maintain that the Christian faith is the only true religion
1895 with a god? There are religions far older, and more or just as wide spread which millions of
1896 people consider valid.

1897

1898 Dr. Bahnsen

1899

1900 That's a very good and relevant question. I wanna say two things just by way of preface.
1901 One, that isn't what the subject of our debate was tonight, however that can't just be taken
1902 for granted. I mean it's worthy of a debate, it's just that we couldn't do everything in one
1903 debate.

1904

1905 Secondly, you might be interested to know that in my original opening statement, I had a
1906 long paragraph dealing with that very question so that it wouldn't be thought that I was just

1907 flying over it arbitrarily in dealing with that matter. But when I read it back to myself and
1908 timed myself, it just turned out I had to cut a number of things out and so I cut that down.
1909
1910 What I did say, however, was that if I can find it here), that I have not found the non-
1911 Christian religions to be philosophically defensible, each of them being either internally
1912 incoherent or undermining human reason and experience. Unless it will violate your debate
1913 format, I will give just a couple of illustrations. Obviously I'm not going to cover all of them.
1914
1915 For instance, Hinduism assumes that God, or Raman is the impersonal and universal soul of
1916 the unchanging one of which all things are part (for instance). And because of that
1917 particular outlook, Hinduism says that everything in terms of my normal experience of the
1918 world and thinking is Maya, or illusion. Because everything in experience and thinking
1919 presupposes distinctions. But that is contrary to the most fundamental metaphysical fact,
1920 and that's that there are no distinctions, all is one. So basically, Hinduism tells me that all
1921 my thinking, all of my reasoning is illusion. In so doing, it undermines reason.
1922
1923 You can take religions such as Shintoism, it's view of Commi, the forces that permeate the
1924 universe, or Taoism, the ordering force of the universe. And they are impersonal forces,
1925 and as such are even less than human beings because they don't have volition or
1926 intelligence.
1927
1928 [Dr. Bahnsen to David: Is that an indication that I should stop?]
1929
1930 [DAVID: Yeah, thank you. Let me just re-explain the format. We will allow the person to
1931 whom the question is directed to have a one minute response, and his opponent will have a
1932 one minute opportunity to rebut. Dr. Stein, your one minute rebuttal please.
1933
1934 Dr. Stein.
1935
1936 Well, Dr. Bahnsen has criticized Hinduism. I would make the case that Hinduism is no more
1937 irrational than Christianity is. Nor do I think that it is any more irrational than Islam is. Nor
1938 is it any more irrational than almost any other religion that you wanna name. With one
1939 exception; I'd say Buddhism is more rational than either Christianity or Hinduism. That
1940 doesn't mean that I accept Buddhism either, but I just think it's more rational. At least it
1941 makes some psychological sense, if nothing else.
1942
1943 [DAVID: Thank you Dr. Stein. The next question will be directed to you Dr. Stein. And the
1944 question reads as follows.]
1945
1946 Question 2 [Addressed To Dr. Stein]:
1947
1948 According to your definition and basis for evil, why was Hitler's Germany wrong. Or was it?
1949 Note, Jews and others were defined as non-persons, so their happiness doesn't really count.

1950

1951 Dr. Stein:

1952

1953 Well, Germany is part of the Western, European tradition. It's not deepest Africa or some
1954 place on Mars. They have the same judeo Christian background, and basically the same
1955 connection with the rest of the developed world. So therefore, the standards of morality
1956 that have been worked out as consensus' of that society apply to them too. They can't
1957 arbitrarily (Hitler can't arbitrarily) say, "well, I'm not going by the consensus' that genocide
1958 is evil and wrong, I'm just gonna change it and make it right." He has not the prerogative
1959 to do that. Neither does the German society as a whole. Cause it is still part of a larger
1960 society which you might call Western society. So even though morality is a consensus, it's
1961 not a consensus of one person or two people, it's a consensus of entire civilizations. And he
1962 cannot just arbitrarily do that, so what he did was evil and wrong.

1963

1964 [DAVID: Okay, Dr. Bahnsen, your one minute rebuttal please]:

1965

1966 Dr. Bahnsen [One minute rebuttal of Question #2]:

1967

1968 Dr. Stein continues to beg the most important questions that are brought up. He tells us
1969 that Hitler's German was wrong because Hitler, or the German people didn't have the right
1970 to break out of the consensus of western civilization. Why not? Why is there any moral
1971 obligation upon Hitler or the German people to live up to the past tradition of western
1972 morality. In an atheist universe, there's no answer to that question. He gives the answer,
1973 but it is totally arbitrary.

1974

1975 [DAVID: Our next set of question lease, from the panelists. Our next question is directed
1976 towards you Dr. Bahnsen. If I could read it for just a second.]

1977

1978 Question 3

1979

1980 Why is there pain and evil in the world?

1981

1982 Dr. Bahnsen:

1983

1984 There are a number of answers that could be given to a question "why is something the way
1985 that it is." One relevant one, but not the most ultimate answer would be that there is pain
1986 and evil in this world because men have decided to rebel against God their maker, and that's
1987 one of the consequences of rebelling against God. Now somebody could say, well that's not
1988 fair. God shouldn't punish people for rebelling against him. Well, I mean if there is a God,
1989 as I have maintained, and if he is the Christian God as revealed in the scriptures, it won't do
1990 any good to complain about that. That's the way God governs mankind. And if you think
1991 you know better than God about morality, then you're in Job's position. You wanna have an
1992 interview with God, and you'll end up like Job. You'll put your hand over your mouth and
1993 you'll say, "I've spoken too soon. I can't contend with the almighty."

1994

1995 Okay, so one answer is that God has decided that that would be the outcome if people
1996 decided to rebel against Him. If they want to be their own little gods, if they want to make
1997 their own rules of morality and live by them, then the consequences are going to be such
1998 and such. And that includes pain for animals, and the created order because in so doing
1999 man represented all of creation. Even as the second man Jesus Christ represents all of
2000 creation in the new heavens and the new earth, which I believe based on faith in the
2001 scriptures, is yet to come. In that new heavens and new earth there will be a redeemed
2002 earth, where pain and suffering will be removed.

2003

2004 Why is there evil ultimately? The answer is obviously because God has planned it. I believe
2005 that he governs everything that's in history. Does that mean that he caused it? No, I don't
2006 believe he compelled Adam to fall into sin.

2007

2008 [DAVID: Dr. Stein, your one minute rebuttal please.]

2009

2010 Dr. Stein:

2011

2012 Well, Dr. Bahnsen has given us another one of his famous non-answers. Basically what he
2013 said is, anything God does is what he does. It's a tautology. It doesn't say anything. Now
2014 how can someone rebel against an omnipotent god? This is a logical self contradiction. If
2015 god is omnipotent, he has the power to prevent man from rebelling against him. And
2016 assuming he doesn't like rebellion, which I think Dr. Bahnsen would concede, because man
2017 evidently gonna be punished for this in some way, for his rebellion, eventually (the day of
2018 judgment). If God had the power to prevent him from rebelling, then he ought to prevent
2019 him from rebelling. And just to say that God does what he does is not to give us an answer
2020 at all.

2021

2022

2023 [David: Thank you. The next question is directed to you Dr. Stein. It reads]

2024

2025 Question 4

2026

2027 If you haven't examined all the evidence, then is it not true that you are really an agnostic?
2028 Isn't it true that you are open to the fact that God may exist?

2029

2030 Dr. Stein:

2031

2032 Well, agnostic is a word that's very badly used. Thomas Huxley, who invented the word,
2033 used it in an entirely different way from the way we use it today. And in fact the way we
2034 use it today is entirely different from the way Herbert Spencer used it. I would define an
2035 agnostic as a sub-type of atheist.

2036

2037 An atheist is someone who does not believe in a god. A theist is someone who does believe
2038 in god. There is no middle ground. You either do or you don't. Now an agnostic does not
2039 believe in a god either, because of one of two things. Either he thinks it is impossible ever
2040 to know whether there is one or not (that's the Spenserian, Herbert Spencer type agnostic
2041 that thinks there are unknowables), or secondly because he or she has never examined the
2042 evidence that exists, and therefore has not made up his or her mind. But still at this point,
2043 he does not believe in a god. Now if he examined the evidence and found it convincing,
2044 then he would move into the theist camp.

2045

2046

2047 So, no, I am not an agnostic, because I do think that these questions are solvable. That
2048 not, maybe we don't know the answers now, but I think we can eventually know the
2049 answer. So I'm not a Spencerian agnostic. And I have examined the thing, so I'm not the
2050 other kind of agnostic, whatever that kind is called. It doesn't have a name for it.

2051

2052

2053 [DAVID: Dr. Bahnsen, your one minute rebuttal please.]

2054

2055 Dr. Bahnsen [rebuttal to Question 4]

2056

2057 It's interesting that the word agnostic is being used as a sub-class of atheist. I would agree
2058 with that but for reasons different than have been suggested. It's also interesting that
2059 atheist is being redefined. Earlier in the debate, Dr. Stein said an atheist is one who finds
2060 the theistic proofs inadequate. I said no, traditionally an atheist is one that denies the
2061 existence of God or doesn't believe in the existence of God. Now, he's using the traditional
2062 definition to answer the question.

2063

2064 One more interesting comment about that, and then I'll let it go. He says, we do believe
2065 there are answers to these problems, we have yet to find them. You see, that's the
2066 problem; atheists live by faith.

2067

2068

2069 [DAVID: Okay, the final set of questions are here before me. Dr. Bahnsen. Question for
2070 you reads.]

2071

2072 Question 5

2073

2074 Why is it necessary for the abstract universal laws to be decided from the transcendental
2075 nature of God, or derived from the transcendental nature of God. Why not assume the
2076 transcendental nature of logic?

2077

2078 Dr. Bahnsen

2079

2080 Somebody who wrote the question is good in that you've studied some of these
2081 philosophical issues. The answer may not be meaningful to everybody in the audience, but
2082 very briefly, is that I do believe in the transcendental nature of the laws of logic. However
2083 the laws of logic do not justify themselves. Just because they are transcendental, that isn't
2084 a precondition of intelligibility. I mean, why isn't it just sound and fury signifying nothing?
2085 That's a possibility too.

2086

2087 So the laws of logic do have a transcendental necessity about them, but it seems to me you
2088 need to have a world-view in which the laws of logic are meaningful. Especially when you
2089 consider such a possible antimonies as the laws of logic being universal, categorizing things
2090 in that way. And yet, we have novelties in our experience. Universal, categorizing things in
2091 that way. and yet we have novelties in our experience.

2092

2093 I mean, the world of empirical observation isn't set rigidly by uniformity and by sameness as
2094 it were. There isn't a continuity in experience in that way, as there is a necessary continuity
2095 in the laws of logic. How can the laws of logic then be utilized when it comes to matters of
2096 personal experience in the world? We have a contingent changing world, and unchanging
2097 invariant laws of logic. How can these two be brought together? You need a world-view in
2098 which that transcendental necessity of logic can be made sense of in terms of my human
2099 experience. And I believe that Christianity provides that, and I just can't find any other one
2100 that competes with it that way.

2101

2102

2103 [DAVID: And Dr. Stein, your one minute rebuttal.]

2104

2105 Dr. Stein

2106

2107 I do not have a rebuttal to that particular answer. I don't have a rebuttal to the last one, to
2108 his last rebuttal if I may make that very briefly.

2109

2110 [David talks with Dr. Bahnsen in the background) is it okay with you? Then talking to Dr.
2111 Stein: "okay, well, can you keep your limits to the questions that are before us?"]

2112

2113 Dr. Stein

2114

2115 All right, then I have no response.

2116

2117 Dr. Bahnsen [cutting in]

2118

2119 May I ask David; is this my last response? Have I given it?

2120

2121 [DAVID: No, we have one more question for Dr. Stein.]
2122
2123 Dr. Bahnsen
2124
2125 I'm sorry. If the same rule be applied so that I can respond the, I would be happy to. I
2126 thought we were ending the debate.
2127
2128 Dr. Stein
2129
2130 Certainly.
2131
2132 Dr. Bahnsen
2133
2134 Go ahead.
2135
2136 Dr. Stein
2137
2138 Dr. Bahnsen's comment that atheists believe things on faith is a false statement. We have
2139 confidence based on experience. Confidence that things happen in a certain way, that we
2140 have learned a lot of things about the world, and therefore we will continue to learn a lot
2141 more about the world. Things that we do not know now, we will eventually have answers
2142 to. That's not faith, that's confidence based on experience. So I think he's misusing the
2143 word faith.
2144
2145 [DAVID: Okay. Dr. Stein, the final question is directed to you. It reads:]
2146
2147 Question 6
2148
2149 You have said that there has been no adequate evidence put forth for God's existence.
2150 What for you personally would constitute adequate evidence for God's existence?
2151
2152 Dr. Stein
2153
2154 Well it's very simple. I could give you two examples. If that podium suddenly rose into the
2155 air five feet, stayed there for a minute, and then dropped right down again, I would say that
2156 that was evidence of a supernatural because it would violate everything we knew about the
2157 laws of physics and chemistry. Assuming that there were, wasn't an engine under there or
2158 a wire attached to it. I mean you can make those obvious exclusions.
2159

2160 That would be evidence for a supernatural, violation of the laws. It might be, I'd call it a
2161 miracle right in front of your eyes. That would be evidence I would accept. Any kind of a
2162 supernatural being putting in an appearance and doing miracles that could no be stage
2163 magic would also be evidence that I would accept.

2164

2165 Those are the two simplest ways. I would also accept any evidence that' logically non-
2166 contradictory, and I have not heard any yet tonight that hasn't been offered already.

2167

2168 [DAVID: Okay, Dr. Bahnsen, your one minute rebuttal please.]

2169

2170 Dr. Bahnsen

2171

2172 Yes, Dr. Stein I think is really not reflecting on the true nature of atheism and human nature
2173 when he says all it would take is a miracle in my very presence to believe in God. History is
2174 replete with first of all, things which would be apparently miracles to people. Now from a
2175 atheistic or naturalistic standpoint, I will grant in terms of the hypothesis that that's because
2176 they were ignorant of all the causal factors, and so it appeared to be miraculous.

2177

2178 But you see that didn't make everybody into a theist. In fact the scripture tells us there are
2179 instances of people who witnessed miracles who all the more hardened their heart and
2180 eventually crucified the Lord of Glory. They saw his miracles. That didn't change their
2181 mind. People are not made theists by miracles. People must change their world-view.
2182 Their hearts must be changed. They need to be converted. That's what it takes, and that's
2183 what it would take for Dr. Stein to finally believe in it.

2184

2185 If this podium rose up five feet off the ground and stayed there, Dr. Stein would eventually
2186 have in the future some naturalistic explanation. Cause you see, they believe things on
2187 faith, by which I mean they believe things they have not proven as yet by their senses.

2188

2189 [DAVID: Thank you Dr. Bahnsen. I'd like to thank the many people who made tonight
2190 possible before we dismiss. I'd like to thank Bryant Moffet and the associated students of
2191 the University of California at Irvine for their assistance. I'd like to thank the speech and
2192 debate team members. And I'd like to thank the speakers Dr. Greg Bahnsen and Dr. Gordon
2193 Stein.]