

Book Review**Review of George D. Shollenberger's Book: The First Scientific Proof of God: Reveals God's Intelligent Design and a Modern Creation Theory**

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ABSTRACT

This is a philosophic proof, but is it a scientific proof? Science has drifted into philosophy, and it finds itself unable to stay as a pure activity as Popper demanded. And so Shollenberger's proof can be seen as scientific in that all evidence must make sense within the unifying presence, and because science necessarily drifts into philosophy for big questions about what is beyond caricature (infinite). When science is limited to empiricism and existentialism, science can only test theories that permit predictions (that necessarily make a caricature of their subject). The caricature-giver is beyond Popper's science. You can find this book at Amazon http://www.amazon.com/First-Scientific-Proof-God-Intelligent/dp/1425932800/ref=cm_cr-mr-title.

Key Words: scientific proof, God, intelligent design, creation theory, one, equality, union.

Shollenberger (page 69) summarizes his proof: "In my proof of God's existence, I use the finitude of any thing in the universe. Then, I negate finite to produce not-finite, which is an attribute of God. Today, not-finite is expressed as infinite. If finite is positive, infinite is not a reality unless it is an attribute of a thing. This thing is God."

Here is what Shollenberger is saying: What emerged from the apparent singularity (the "big bang," or our birth) brought with it the unfolding of vast amounts of plurality. One may agree with Shollenberger that the vast plurality is left unexplained by the initial singularity so caricatured as something finite. The vast plurality shows signs of orderliness, indicative of a unifying presence (even infinite presence). The Many are found connected to the One, but this is now at the level of "number-symbols" or "word-symbols" that Shollenberger writes about.

In the beginning was the word, and the word has become flesh! The issues of evolution, and God's creation, are apparent in our ability to understand and express words. Shollenberger is keen to pick up on this connection. He tells us that a 1920 linguistic discovery says that sense-data are primarily symbolic. Shollenberger (page 8) writes, "the meaning of symbols must be precise to express truths." He (page 39) writes, "the significance of symbols is that reality can be conceived by us only imperfectly.... When one uses symbols, facts are never theory neutral. This is why a newspaper reporter cannot report pure facts. The facts in a news report are never independent of the theories and beliefs of the reporter."

Sense-data can only be subjected to interpretation, and to sense something involves the mystery of awareness and this synthesis cannot be undone. Shollenberger's investigation is now at the level of what Charles S. Peirce called "semiotics." This investigation enters philosophy, and is at the level of what Kant called "synthesis," and what Hegel called "dialectic." This is again the One and Many of Plato and Plotinus. No one has been able to explain away the unifying presence, despite the

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assertions of scientism that are presented unconvincingly. The mystery of awareness never goes away, even when we are mistaken. Shollenberger rightly concludes that the many finite expressions of plurality are connected to the infinite, and this is his proof of God.

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Is this the first such scientific proof? Not in a literal sense! Hegel writes a lot about the infinite, and the spurious infinite that sometimes captures our attention. If Hegel's dialectical system is accepted then it provides a strong argument for the existence of God, known as Hegel's "ontological proof of God." And Hegel likes to call this stuff science too, as his dialectical system comes in the book, "The Science of Logic." Rather than reading Hegel directly, I would recommend reading Francis Lieber's "The Metaphysical Religion of Hegel," and this essay can be found in the following book:

Mrs. Eddy Purloins from Hegel

Peirce also gave us his proof of God, known as the "neglected argument for the reality of God," and it is based on the three modes of human thinking: deduction, induction and abduction.

My guess is that these different proofs of God are all the same when distilled down to their most basic realization given by what Shollenberger calls "learned ignorance" or "negative theology": that reality can only be explained only so far until we run into a road block that signifies a unifying archetype (noted Trinity described in my book). It is the recognition of this archetype that constitutes finding God, and agreeing with the pantheism that Shollenberger endorses. This first proof of God underwrites language, and it is rediscovered many times.

I must say that I was pleasantly surprised by Shollenberger's treatment of Nicholas of Cusa. I have studied Hegel's philosophy, but did not appreciate the influence of Nicholas on the thinking of Hegel and others. Hegel's logical system is very much built on the foundation provided by Nicholas, and Shollenberger's book provides an excellent introduction to Nicholas. Those that still stop with Aristotle's logic, and the principle of excluded middle, will be amazed about how backward logic may become if it fails to reach the equivalent of Hegel's system.

Shollenberger gives heavy reference to Nicholas of Cusa and Trinity (given by One, Equality, and Union, the noted archetype).

Shollenberger writes (page 126): "The quality found in Trinity is (E)quality because it is equal to all quality found in the universe. When One and Equality are united by the Holy Spirit to form an identity, rather than a relation, the Trinity is expressed scientifically as One-Equality-Unity. Further, we see the One enfolds all real quantities, that Equality enfolds all real qualities, and that the Union enfolds all relations we find among the created things."

Shollenberger writes (page 128): "... One, Equality, and Union, never change and will never be found in the universe. Since God exists forever, these three word-symbols will exist forever in the mind of

every human. Thus when God creates, the opposing word-symbols - many, difference, and relation will apply to the universe. They form a general expression of all things found in the universe."

When the archetype is recognized for what it is the experience is transformative. This experience can be rediscovered in words that reflect the uniqueness and plurality of humanity. It becomes the "first" proof again, and the most vocal, the most partisan and one-sided, are unable to recognize such a proof. Note the other negative reviews written about this most interesting book! They feel something important, and there is no doubt about it. But these feelings fail to articulate themselves in a way that approaches the deeper truth while maintaining an internal consistency, missing Shollenberger's most important insights. Only people that are able to cultivate their emotions, and study philosophy and science together, are able to discover this first proof. This is hard work!

I don't agree with Shollenberger on every point, particularly as he drifts into politics with a level of heated urgency that is inexplicable. There are many diversions that detract from Shollenberger's book, and he can be rightly criticized for these. Other reviews have been critical. But my focus is different and narrow, because I wanted to share valuable information that went missing from the other reviews. Therefore, I recommend this book: but for the only reason that his message about proving the existence of God is accurate, in my view. The rest of the book needs work.

Any book, even a poorly written book, that leads the reader to a special archetype is itself special. The flaws melt away, and to additionally find a special meaning we may learn to recognize this particular archetype for what it is. This is the experience of finding God. Schollenberger's book holds a remarkable discovery. Indeed, it so remarkable that I wrote my own book, in my own words before I even knew of Schollenberger's book, and encountered the same archetype.

References

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