

## 2. Paley 1800, The argument from design

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Three cases:

- 1) **Stone.** I trip on a stone on my way into work.
- 2) **Watch.** I trip on a watch on my way into work.

Paley: In (1), it's reasonable for me to conclude that the stone "just so happened" to be made like that; in (2), it's *not* reasonable to conclude as much—I should believe that the watch had a designer.

Why? Not just that the arrangement of the watch is improbable, but that its parts work together to accomplish a purpose, so its improbability would be *explained* by positing a designer.

Now consider:

- 3) **Human.** I trip on Nikki on my way into work.

Paley: case (3) is like case (2). Both involve intricate arrangements of parts to serve very particular functions such that, if any of those parts were missing, the function would not be performed.

### Disanalogies?

*I know that there are watch-designers.*

Even if I didn't know that, I should still think there was a designer.

E.g. stumble across a mini-UFO.

*Every part of the watch works toward a single function.*

Even if it didn't, I should still think there was a designer.

E.g. a Swiss-army watch.

*I know that there are designers with an interest in telling time.*

Not essential. Imagine I found a contraption which gathered nearby objects and stacked them in a specific (but unrecognizable) shape.

*I know that the watch was not made by other watches.*

Not essential. Suppose the watch creates copies of itself!

### **Argument:**

**P1** We have reason to think there was a designer of the watch.

An "inference to the best explanation".

**P2** If we have reason to think there was a designer of the watch, then we have reason to think there was a designer of living organisms.

Argument by analogy.

**C** We have reason to think there is a designer of living organisms.