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Jeff Jordan

It is widely recognized that Hume was a thoroughgoing critic of natural religion.¹ The standard seventeenth and eighteenth century case for natural religion consisted primarily of the design argument along with the cosmological argument, both of which were intended to prove that a god existed, and of an argument from miracles and fulfilled prophecies meant to show which god it was that existed. One finds this two-pronged apologetic approach, for example, in Paley's works, *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1795) and *Natural Theology* (1802). Much scholarly work has gone into analyzing and criticizing Hume's arguments against natural religion found in *The Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1777), *The Natural History of Religion* (1757), *Enquiry* 10 (1748), and elsewhere. Yet one part of Hume's attack on the seventeenth and eighteenth century case for natural religion has gone all but unnoticed.² Theists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often argued that religious belief provided prudential benefits quite apart from any evidence that God existed. Theistic belief, the argument went, because it conduces more to our happiness than does its competitors, is prudentially rational. Pascal and his famous wager is, of course, a prime example of the argument from prudence. Not only are there possible eternal benefits, Pascal argued, but there are also important temporal benefits which issue from theistic belief, "to what harm will you come by making this choice? You will be faithful, honest, humble, grateful, generous, a sincere friend, truthful ... I tell you, you will profit in this life."³ Pascal was not alone in this: Locke, Leibniz, John Craig, John Tillotson, and Paley can all be cited as expounding in one form or another the argument from prudence.⁴ Bishop Tillotson, that cleric whose antipapist argument against transubstantiation provided Hume with an ecumenical argument against miracles, declared that:

to persuade men to believe the principles of natural religion, such as the being of a God; the immortality of the soul; and future rewards after this life; I shall offer these two considerations: first, that it is most reasonable so to do. Secondly, that it is infinitely most prudent.⁵

Though the argument from prudence was not for Hume a major topic of discussion, he did subject it to a critical scrutiny which found it, not surprisingly, flawed.

In what follows I first examine Bishop Tillotson's argument from prudence. I concentrate on Tillotson for three reasons. First, because of an interesting historical connection between him and Hume: Tillotson's sermon, "The Wisdom of Being Religious" (1664), served, I will suggest, as Hume's target for much of Dialogue 12.⁶ Second, though Tillotson was a major proponent of the argument from prudence, his arguments have been ignored by modern commentators (and this even though Hume did not ignore Tillotson's arguments). Third, Tillotson's argument from prudence includes a Pascalian-like wager which is not only formally different from *The Port Royal Logic* version of the Wager, but is also formally superior to *The Port Royal* version. In the second section I examine Hume's response to Tillotson's argument from prudence. Philo's several objections to Cleanthes' endorsement of the moral necessity of even a "corrupted religion" serves as Hume's response to this argument from prudence. I set out in the final section six reasons which suggest that Tillotson's sermon was a source for much of Dialogue 12, just as another sermon of Tillotson was a source for much of *Enquiry* 10.

I

Bishop Tillotson delivered his sermon, "The Wisdom of Being Religious" to the mayor of London in March of 1664 and subsequently expanded and published it in May of that same year.⁷ This sermon is noteworthy if for no other reason than that it contains a Pascalian wager which, given the dates involved, is apparently independent of the famous wager of Pascal. Pascal's *Pensées* were not published until 1670. Though the *Port Royal Logic* (1662) contained a version of Pascal's wager which was widely known, Tillotson's wager is, as we will see, formally different from the *Port Royal Logic* version.⁸

Tillotson distinguished between speculative atheism and practical atheism. The former denies the existence of God; while the practical atheist, although professing a belief in the existence of God, lives as though there were no god (W 330). Speculative atheism was unreasonable, Tillotson claimed, because the weight of evidence was clearly on the side of the theist. His argument for this rests on a version of the cosmological argument. Concerning the imprudence of speculative atheism Tillotson's argument was twofold:

speculative atheism, as it is unreasonable, so is it a most imprudent and uncomfortable opinion: and that upon two accounts. First, because it is against the present interest and

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happiness of mankind. Secondly, because it is infinitely hazardous and unsafe in the issue. (W 362)

There are, then, two steps in Tillotson's argument that speculative atheism is imprudent. The first is that atheism is counter to the present good and the second is his version of the wager.

The claim that atheism is "against the present interest and happiness of mankind" is ambiguous between two senses. The first sense is that:

- (1) Atheism is detrimental to the interest and happiness of human society.

The second is:

- (2) Atheism is detrimental to the interest and happiness of each individual.

Both senses—(1) and (2)—were recognized by Tillotson in that he offered arguments for both in "The Wisdom of Being Religious," though he concentrates on (2).⁹ According to (1), atheism is counter to the social order as a whole. Proposition (2) asserts that atheism is harmful to the interests of particular persons, specifically those who are atheists. Tillotson not only recognized both senses, but he also held that (1) implied (2). This is clearly wrong. It may be true that, supposing (1) to hold, that many or even most persons would suffer if the social order as a whole were disrupted, but this is no reason to hold that all persons would be harmed.

Though Tillotson is wrong that (1) implied (2), perhaps he is correct that there is a 'Hobbesian' connection between the two. If (1) involves a widespread disintegration of social order, then (2) would not be wildly implausible. Given (1), that is, it may be true that individuals would find life to be "nasty, brutish, and short."

Tillotson's argument for (2) rests on the premise that the idea of God is necessary for happiness:

man is not sufficient of himself to his own happiness. He is liable to many evils and miseries which he can neither prevent nor redress ... without the protection and conduct of a superior being, he is secure of nothing that he enjoys in this world ... So that the atheist deprives himself of all the comfort that the apprehensions of a god can give a man. (W 362-63)

The idea seems to be this: one can have no sense of well-being without a belief in the providential care of a god. Since humans are created by God for God, one has well-being only if one is rightly related to God. There can be no rest, as Augustine put it, until one rests in God. Persons are so constituted that the idea of God is psychologically necessary to one's sense of well-being. And if there is no sense of well-being, no peace of mind, possible, then one cannot be happy. The speculative atheist forfeits the well-being which accompanies religious belief, Tillotson argues, because the dread of there being a god always arises. Dread is, Tillotson seems to suggest, a natural accompaniment of atheism which can only be palliated by theistic belief.¹⁰

Tillotson recognized that this sort of argument did not prove the existence of God, but it did prove, he thought, the necessity of religious belief for happiness. As he put it, "so necessary is God to the happiness of mankind, that though there were no god, yet the atheist himself, upon second thoughts, would judge it convenient that the generality of men should believe that there is one" (W 366).

This last quotation, by the way, is but one of several places in which Tillotson mentions a version of the "grand lie": even if God did not exist, it would be prudentially useful for persons to yet believe that he did.¹¹ It's not that Tillotson had his doubts; but rather, it's that he is so convinced that the idea of God is necessary to happiness that he insists that the idea is useful independently of its truth-value.

Tillotson's argument for (1), though not as fully addressed in this sermon as it is elsewhere, consists in the claim that theistic belief is necessary to the "quiet and happiness of human society." If the notion of God were blotted out of the minds of persons, "mankind would in all probability grow so melancholy and so unruly a thing, that [the atheist] would think it fit in policy to contribute his best endeavours to the restoring of men to their former belief" (W 368). Civility and social order are dependent upon the virtues which grow out of religious belief.

Propositions (1) and (2) together show, Tillotson argued, that speculative atheism is counter to the present interest and happiness of mankind. This was the first step to show atheism imprudent, the second step in Tillotson's argument consists of his version of the wager.

Speculative atheism is, in Tillotson's view, prudentially unsafe because:

the atheist contends against the religious man, that there is no God; but upon strange inequality and odds, for he ventures his eternal interest; whereas the religious man ventures only the loss of his lusts, which it is much better for him to be without, or at the utmost of some temporal convenience. (W 369-70)

The strange inequality concerns the stake which is risked. The atheist risks his eternal well-being; the theist, her temporal convenience. Not only are the stakes radically disparate, but so are, Tillotson argues, the odds involved.

Unlike the *Port Royal Logic* version of the wager, Tillotson's version of the wager is not based on the claim that since the possible reward of religious belief is infinite, then as long as there is some non-zero positive probability of God existing, one ought to believe. The *Port Royal Logic* version of the wager is what Thomas Morris has dubbed an "epistemically unconcerned" version of the wager.¹² In this version of the wager it does not matter what the precise epistemic status of theism or atheism is, as long as neither is certainly true. It is epistemically unconcerned because this sort of wager exploits the infinite reward which is offered if theism is true. That is, if one multiplies infinity by a non-zero positive probability, one has infinity; so a calculation of the expected utility of theistic belief will yield an infinite expected utility. And given a principle like:

- (A) For any two possible acts x and y , if x has a greater expected utility than does y and all other things are equal, one should do x ,

the conclusion that one should believe would follow. Tillotson's version of the wager, however, claims that it is at worst an even question whether God exists or not. This sort of the wager is epistemically concerned: if one assigns a probability of roughly one half to theism and its denial and one then calculates the prudential weight of each, it follows that one should believe.¹³

As Tillotson puts it:

if the arguments for and against a God were equal, and it were an even question whether there were one or not, yet the hazard and danger is so infinitely unequal, that in point of prudence and interest every man were obliged to incline to the affirmative ... for he that acts wisely, and is a thoroughly prudent man, will be provided against all events, and will take care to secure the main chance, whatever happens. (W 370)

Tillotson here seems to endorse and to use a maximin principle:

- (B) When choosing among several mutually exclusive acts, one should choose that act whose worst possible outcome is at least as good as the worst possible outcome of other

considered acts, and is better than the worst possible outcome of some considered acts.

According to this maximin principle, one should avoid the worst case scenario. If the considered acts are: (i) try to inculcate theistic belief, and (ii) do not try to inculcate theistic belief; and the states of nature are: (a) God exists, and (b) God does not exist, the decision matrix would look so:

		STATES	
		God exists	God does not exist
ACTS	inculcate belief	∞	r
	do not inculcate belief	$-\infty$	s

where ' ∞ ' represents an outcome worth an infinite utility (heaven or an eternity of happiness); and ' $-\infty$ ' one with an infinite disutility (hell or an eternity of unhappiness); and 'r' the finite utility associated with theistic belief (even if God does not exist); and 's' stands for the finite utility associated with nonbelief if God does not exist. Though Tillotson recommends theistic belief via a maximin principle, it is clear from the matrix and from Tillotson's argument for (2), that in fact his case is even stronger. If Tillotson's argument for (2) is sound, then $r > s$. And given that $\infty > -\infty$, it follows that the act of trying to inculcate belief would *dominate* that of not trying: theistic belief is preferable to nonbelief no matter how the world turns out.

This version of the wager argument differs from the three versions offered by Pascal in *Pensées* 343. The major difference is the inclusion of a disutility value. Despite the widespread belief to the contrary, Pascal does not include hell as part of the calculation. By including an infinite disutility, Tillotson has recourse to two decision-theoretic principles not available to Pascal: the maximin and the dominance principles.¹⁴

One might think that Tillotson's wager is just as vulnerable to that philosophical affliction which many think is the bane of Pascal's wager, the many-gods objection. According to the many-gods objection, one could perform a Pascalian wager for any number of contrary deities such that no single deity would be recommended by a Pascalian calculation.¹⁵ But Tillotson, because his is an epistemically concerned version of the wager, has a ready-made answer: one's betting partition should be limited only to those options which are considered real possibilities or, in Jamesian terms, 'live hypotheses'.

Tillotson's argument from prudence for natural religion consists in a two-step argument. Atheism is imprudent, hence theism must be prudent, Tillotson argues, because theistic belief is necessary for the present interest of humankind, and because, given a decision-theoretic

analysis, theism is preferable to atheism. The first step, that theistic belief is necessary for the present interest of humankind, involves two claims, (1) and (2). The second step of the argument just is Tillotson's wager. Though perhaps not as inspiring as Wesley's later heart-warming sermons, Tillotson's two-step argument is, if sound, a powerful reason for the rational preferability of theistic belief.

II

The issues which commentators concentrate on in Dialogue 12 are the discordant profession of faith made by Philo, and Philo's reduction of theological disputes to mere verbal quibbles.¹⁶ But slightly less than halfway through Dialogue 12, right after Philo has declared his strong disdain for vulgar superstitions, Cleanthes remarks:

My inclination, ..., lies, I own, a contrary way. Religion, however corrupted, is still better than no religion at all. The doctrine of a future state is so strong and necessary a security to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it. For if finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great an effect, as we daily find; how much greater must be expected from such as are infinite and eternal? (D 219-20)

According to Cleanthes, a corrupt religion is better than no religion at all since religion is a necessary safeguard of morality. Certain hopes and fears which result only from religious belief are necessary as motivation for common morality. Reconstructed, Cleanthes' argument runs so:

- (3) Finite rewards and punishments have an influence on behaviour proportionate to their respective magnitudes. So,
- (4) infinite rewards and punishments would also have an influence on behaviour proportionate to their magnitudes. And,
- (5) morality requires a motivation of a magnitude greater than that provided by any finite magnitude. So,
- (6) religion is necessary to protect morality. And,
- (7) morality is necessary to the public good.

Therefore,

(8) religion is necessary to the public good.

In the next several pages (D 220-27), Philo responds with three main points. The first is that religion has had and always will have pernicious effects on society: wars, persecutions, fanaticism, the corruption of morality and so on (D 220-24). Second, that there is a principle operative in human psychology which would render irrelevant any consideration involving infinite rewards or punishments (D 220-24). And third, that dread and terror rather than happiness is the primary accompaniment of religion (D 224-27).¹⁷ It is clear, I think, that these three points would, if true, work well as rebuttals of, respectively, Tillotson's arguments for (1), his wager, and his argument for (2).¹⁸

Philo's first response to Cleanthes' claim consists of the pointed question that if vulgar superstition is so salutary to society, how is it that "all history abounds so much with accounts of its pernicious consequences on public affairs?" (D 220). This first point is the claim that religion brings harmful effects on a society. One source of these bad effects is the attention granted the idea of an eternal salvation. This idea commands so much attention, Philo remarks, that it is apt to "extinguish the benevolent affections, and beget a narrow, contracted selfishness" (D 222). Religion, that is, corrupts morality with its emphasis on nonpareil other-worldly rewards. Cleanthes responds to Philo's first point by claiming that this harm occurs only when religion steps outside of its proper role of being a silent motivator of morality. But all religion, Philo insists, save the philosophical kind, will always step outside of its role.¹⁹

Philo next argues that Cleanthes' inference concerning finite and infinite rewards is invalid: "The inference is not just, because finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great influence, that therefore such as are infinite and eternal must have so much greater. Consider, ..., the attachment, which we have to present things, and the little concern which we discover for objects, so remote and uncertain" (D 220). Philo denies the inference from (3) to (4): (3) may be true even if (4) is not. In support of this Philo mentions the propensity of persons to prefer an immediate advantage to a long-range greater advantage. Put more formally, Hume endorses the principle that:

- (C) The influence of an object *O* on a subject *S* is proportionately related to *O*'s proximity to *S*: the closer *O* is to *S*, the more influence *O* exerts on *S*; and the more remote *O* is to *S*, the less influence *O* exerts on *S*.

By 'remote' Hume means not only spatial distance but also remoteness in time. It's not that a long-range gain is, just because it is long-range, uncertain; rather, according to (C), persons are incorrigibly myopic: persons are incapable of being guided by a proper appreciation of their long-range interest. Human persons have a weakness to prefer the immediate to the delayed, even if the latter is greater than the former:

Now as every thing, that is contiguous to us, either in space or time, strikes upon us with such an idea, it has a proportional effect on the will and passions, and commonly operates with more force than any object, that lies in a more distant and obscure light. Tho' we may be fully convinc'd, that the latter object excels the former, we are not able to regulate our actions by this judgment; but yield to the solicitations of our passions, which always plead in favour of whatever is near and contiguous.²⁰

The point of (C) is that, even if one believed that religious belief offered a future infinite gain, that fact would have little effect on one's behaviour. The notion of heaven is just too far in the future, too remote, to influence one's present behaviour much. Not only would the attraction of heaven be diminished by its futurity, but its attraction is further diminished by the contrary pull strongly exerted by proximate objects. Given (C) and the fact that infinite rewards and punishments are quite remote, then (4) would not seem to follow from (3). And without this step the argument, (3)-(8), stands invalid.

Though Hume does not apply (C) to the wager, the implications of (C) for the wager are obvious: even if the wager does show that theistic belief is in one's best interest, that fact is practically irrelevant. The notions of an infinite reward and of an infinite punishment are just too remote in time to have a substantial effect on behaviour. A Pascalian wager would be at most an interesting theoretical argument that has no practical effect.

Philo's third response to Cleanthes is the claim that "terror is the primary principle of religion, it is the passion, which always predominates in it, and admits but of short intervals of pleasure" (D 225-26). This terror arises out of the religious notions of heaven and hell:

nor is there any state of mind so happy as the calm and equable. But this state, it is impossible to support, where a man thinks, that he lies, in such profound darkness and uncertainty, between an eternity of happiness and an eternity of misery. No wonder, that such an opinion disjoins the

ordinary frame of the mind, and throws it into the utmost confusion. ... gloom and melancholy, so remarkable in all devout people. (D 226)

Theistic belief, with its notions of heaven and hell, is not a source of happiness according to Hume, it is rather a deterrent to happiness. Not only is religion not in the present interest of persons, but it is a powerful threat against the present happiness in that terror is always a constant companion of religious belief.

III

There are several indications that Hume had Bishop Tillotson in mind as he wrote parts of Dialogue 12. The first indication is Philo's mention of divines who "when they refute their speculative antagonists, suppose the motives of religion to be so powerful, that, without them, it were impossible for civil society to subsist" (D 221). This is, of course, what we've termed (1) in our discussion of Tillotson, the claim that theistic belief is necessary to the maintenance of civil society. Notice also the use of 'speculative' in the quoted passage: Tillotson specifically directs (1) against those whom he calls "speculative atheists" (W 330).

A second indication is that Cleanthes' claim that a corrupt religion is better than no religion at all, is strongly reminiscent of Tillotson's claim that atheism is counter to the present interest and happiness of humankind.²¹ In support of this claim Cleanthes invokes the great influence of infinite rewards and punishments, just as Tillotson invokes his version of the wager. Cleanthes' claim is reminiscent in another way also. Cleanthes asserts that even a corrupt religion is better than no religion at all for civil society to subsist; Tillotson, on the other hand, asserts a form of the grand lie: even if theism were false, it would still be in the interest of people to accept theism.

So much did Tillotson subscribe to the "better a corrupt religion than no religion at all" view, that, quite unlike Locke, Tillotson held that there was no right to rebellion. Even a rebellion against a tyrannical government was impermissible because government of any sort was a wall posed between good people and societal chaos.²²

Third, Philo charges certain clerics with an embarrassing contradiction:

When divines are declaiming against the common behaviour and conduct of the world, they always represent this principle as the strongest imaginable (which indeed it is) and describe almost all human kind as lying under the influence of it, and sunk into the deepest lethargy and unconcern about their religious interests. Yet these same divines, when they refute

their speculative antagonists, suppose the motives of religion to be so powerful, that, without them, it were impossible for civil society to subsist; nor are they ashamed of so palpable a contradiction. (D 220-21)

The principle referred to in the above passage is principle (C). The purported contradiction is that (a) theistic belief in general is necessary for civility; and (b) most persons in this civil society do not believe theistically. Both of these conjuncts, (a) and (b), are found in Tillotson: "if atheism were the general opinion of the world, it would be infinitely prejudicial to the peace and happiness of human society" (W 361); and, "But this is the mystery of atheism, men are wedded to their lusts, and resolved upon a wicked course" (W 369).²³

Fourth, Cleanthes makes a second claim in this discussion with Philo, that happiness results from a belief in divine providence:

Take care, PHILO, ... allow not your zeal against false religion to undermine your veneration for the true. Forfeit not this principle, the chief, the only great comfort in life; ... which represents us as the workmanship of a Being perfectly good, wise, and powerful; who created us for happiness, and who, having implanted in us immeasurable desires of good, will prolong our existence to all eternity, and will transfer us into an infinite variety of scenes, in order to satisfy those desires, and render our felicity compleat and durable. ... the happiest lot which we can imagine, is that of being under his guardianship and protection. (D 224)

Tillotson's argument for (2) was that persons can find happiness only if they hold a view of divine providence (W 362-63). Cleanthes' second claim is, like the first, found in Tillotson.

Closely connected to this, is Philo's claim that "terror is the primary principle of religion" (D 225-26). It is not just the speculative atheist who suffers from dread according to Philo, but all persons. Dread and terror underlie religious belief. So, Tillotson's argument from prudence is further diminished if it is true that terror and dread are the causal geneses of religion and its primary accompaniments.

Fifth, the use of the notion of "true religion" invoked by Cleanthes in Dialogue 12 is similar to what Tillotson also termed true religion. True religion, for Tillotson, is opposed to the enthusiasm of the vulgar. True religion is rational, almost scholastic in nature, and has a large role to play as a buttress of morality and of civil society. The inculcation and motivation of morality was the chief role of religion, according to Tillotson; worship and outward piety are of a secondary importance.²⁴

In Dialogue 12, Cleanthes asserts two points about true religion. First, that its proper office is as a silent motivator of morality and civility which should humanize the behaviour of persons (D 220). Second, true religion provides the idea of a caring, all-powerful, wise god who providentially watches over his creation. This idea provides comfort and happiness to persons (D 224). Both of these characterizations are found, as we have seen, in Tillotson.²⁶

Finally, there is some precedence for thinking that Hume had influential proponents of orthodoxy in mind as he wrote the *Dialogues*. Norman Kemp Smith thinks it likely that Demea's a priori argument found in Dialogue 12 is in fact a brief restatement of Samuel Clarke's cosmological argument set out in his *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God* (1704).²⁶ As well as being a leading proponent of the argument from prudence and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Tillotson's literary reputation would have made him an attractive target for Hume.²⁷

Though these six points do not conclusively prove that the sermons of Tillotson stand behind much of Dialogue 12, they do make that claim plausible. Just as Hume was aware of Tillotson's sermon against transubstantiation, he was also aware of Tillotson's argument from prudence as contained in the sermon, "The Wisdom of Being Religious" and elsewhere.²⁸ But Hume was not just aware of Tillotson's argument from prudence; it seems likely that he hoped to show that the argument failed, that rather than theistic belief being in one's interest, theistic belief was in fact detrimental to human well-being. Theism lacked, then, not only the evidential support of the design argument and of authenticating miracles, but it lacked also the support of prudence. So, even if the wise man proportions his belief to self-interest as well as the evidence, that would be of little doxastic comfort to theism.²⁹

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1. 'Natural religion' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries denoted knowledge of the divine which could be had via reason or instinct, independent of any purported special revelation.
2. Of the two best works on Hume's philosophy of religion, J. C. A. Gaskin, *Hume's Philosophy of Religion* (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, 1988); and K. Yandell, *Hume's "Inexplicable Mystery": His Views on Religion* (Philadelphia, 1990), only the first examines Hume's critique of the argument from prudence at all (see *Hume's Philosophy of Religion*, 194-203); but Gaskin's treatment of Hume's critique leaves untouched several important elements of the critique.

3. B. Pascal, *Pensées*, ed. L. Lafuma, trans. J. Warrington (1670; reprint, London, 1960), 92-96.
4. On Locke, see *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), bk. 2, chap. 21. On Leibniz, see *Die Philosophischen Schriften*, 3:621. On Craig, see *Theologiae Christianae Principia Mathematica* (1699), chap. 6. On Paley, see *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1795), pt. 3, chap. 8.
5. Tillotson, "The Wisdom of Being Religious," Sermon 1 in *Works of Tillotson* (London, 1820), 1:317-89 (hereafter cited as W).
6. I do not mean to suggest that Hume was aware only of the sermon "The Wisdom of Being Religious," but that Hume was aware of Tillotson's claims and arguments as found in several of his sermons. "The Wisdom of Being Religious" is important because (i) it is explicitly mentioned by Hume in his *A Letter From A Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh* (1745; reprint, Edinburgh, 1967), 23, so we know that Hume had read this sermon; (ii) it was one of the best known of Tillotson's sermons; and (iii) it contains all of the elements of Tillotson's argument from prudence.
7. T. Birch, "Life of the Author," in *Works of Tillotson*, 1:xix-xx. See also L. G. Locke, *Tillotson* (Copenhagen, 1954).
8. Tillotson may have been aware of the *Port Royal Logic* version of the wager through Locke with whom Tillotson was in correspondence. See *Tillotson*, 83.
9. Tillotson's case for (1) is treated extensively in his sermon, "The Advantage of Religion to Societies," Sermon 3 in *Works of Tillotson*, 1:409-23.
10. In the passage quoted (W 361-62), Tillotson claims that the atheist will naturally dread a superior being who can defeat one's plans and judge one's actions.
11. See also "The Efficacy, Usefulness, and Reasonableness Of Divine Faith," Sermon 223 in *Works of Tillotson*, 9:258-79. The idea of a grand lie is first found in Plato; see *Republic* 3:389, 414, 5:459.
12. "Pascalian Wagering," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 16, no. 3 (1986): 437-54.
13. Though Tillotson mentions "odds" and "hazards," he does not incorporate probability values in his version of the wager. His wager is a decision under uncertainty and not a decision under risk: he does not, that is, calculate the expected utility of theistic belief. Pascal was the first to formulate the wager as a decision under risk where the probability-weighted averages of the utility values (the expected utility) determine the right choice.
14. Of course, these principles were not stated explicitly until much later. See Ian Hacking, *The Emergence of Probability* (London, 1975).

15. For an example of the many-gods objection, see M. Martin, *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification* (Philadelphia, 1990), 232-34. For a response to the many-gods objection see my "Pascal's Wager and the Many-Gods Objection," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1991): 309-17.
16. See David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. N. Kemp Smith (1778; reprint, Indianapolis, 1947), 214, 218 (hereafter cited as "D").
17. It should be noted that Philo's first point is interrupted by the second and is not completed until after the second is completed.
18. I will assume that Philo speaks for Hume in this exchange with Cleanthes (D 219-27). Of the three points asserted by Philo in this exchange all three are asserted elsewhere by Hume. On the first point, see *The Natural History of Religion* (1757), secs. 9 and 14; on the second point, see *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1740), 3.2.7; on the third point, see *The Natural History of Religion*, sec. 10.
19. For a recent treatment of Hume's claim that religion corrupts morality, see Gerhard Streminger, "Religion a Threat to Morality: An Attempt to Throw Some New Light on Hume's Philosophy of Religion" *Hume Studies* 15, no. 2 (November 1989): 277-93.
20. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2d ed., rev., ed. P. H. Nidditch (1978; reprint, Oxford, 1987), 535 (hereafter cited as "T").
21. Compare D 220 and W 363ff.
22. See *The Works of Tillotson*, 4:539-40. Also see *Tillotson* (above, n. 7), 75-78.
23. Ironically, Philo, soon after commenting on the "palpable contradiction" of certain clerics, offers a palpable contradiction of his own by asserting both (C) and the claim that religious doctrines tend to extinguish morality (see D 220, 222 and 225-26). While (C) and the claim about religion extinguishing morality are not straightforward denials, the two are contraries because they cannot both be true.
24. Concerning the views of Tillotson on true religion, see A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought Before Kant* (New York, 1961), 194-200. Concerning Hume's use of the idea of true religion in general, see *Hume's Philosophy of Religion* (above, n. 2), 187-91.
25. The notion of true religion was much in use among Tillotson's contemporaries. Pascal used the notion as did John Milton in his *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and What Best means May Be Used Against the Growth of Popery* (1673).
26. See "Introduction," in *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (above, n. 16), 26.

27. L. G. Locke argues that "throughout the eighteenth century Tillotson was regarded as one of the greatest English authors." See *Tillotson* (above, n. 7), 131-63. Benjamin Franklin, for example, wrote that "the English Language might be taught by Grammar; in which some of our best Writers, as Tillotson, Addison, Pope, Algernoon Sidney, Cato's Letters, etc. should be classics" in his "Proposals Realating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania" (1749). See *Benjamin Franklin: Writings*, ed J. Leo Lemay (New York, 1987), 330-31.
28. As mentioned earlier, Hume explicitly mentions "The Wisdom of Being Religious" in his *A Letter From a Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh*, 23.
29. I thank an anonymous referee of *Hume Studies* for helpful comments concerning this paper.