**AUGUST 31, 2008 THESKEPTICARENA.COM**

**[Argument # 10: "Paranormal and supernatural phenomena aren’t possible because they contradict all known natural laws gained from science."](http://www.victorzammit.com/skeptics/winston.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22top)**

**First of all, natural laws as we define them are based on our interpretation of empirical testing and observation. Therefore, they are subject to constant change as new discoveries are found which challenge or contradict our models. Throughout history, we have constantly updated and expanded our understanding of the laws of how the universe works. In the past, it was said that things like heavier than air flight and going to the moon were impossibilities. Skeptics of those things were proven wrong of course. At one time, according to the law of aerodynamics, a hummingbird shouldn’t be able to hover, yet it did, so we had to figure out why and revise our laws of aerodynamics. When Albert Einstein discovered that light travels at a constant speed,**

**WINSTON, EINSTEIN DID NOT DISCOVER THAT LIGHT TRAVELS AT A CONSTANT SPEED. THAT FACT WAS ACCEPTED BY SCIENTISTS MORE THAN 200 YEARS EARLIER.**

**and formulated his theory of relativity, and postulated that gravity involves distortion of space, all these things contradicted the Newtonian laws of physics at the time, yet they were eventually validated.**

**WINSTON - THAT IS HOW SCIENCE WORKS: GIANTS STANDING UPON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS. IN SUCH A WORLD OF HEROES, WHY WOULD ANYONE WINSTON, CHOOSE TO BE A MIDGET?**

**As of now, special relativity and quantum mechanics are at odds with each other, and physicists are seeking a grand unified theory to unite them both.**

**WINSTON, SPECIAL RELATIVITY AND QUANTUM MECHANICS ARE NOT “AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER.” THEY OPERATE IN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT “DIMENSIONS” TO USE ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE TERMS. QUANTUM MECHANICS ONLY APPLIES AT THE SUB-ATOMIC LEVEL. RELATIVITY APPLIES ON THE GALACTIC SCALE.**

**THE “GRAND UNIFIED THEORY” YOU MENTION IS MEANT TO UNITE ALL PHYSICS, NOT JUST THE TWO YOU MENTIONED.**

**As history has shown, we constantly update and expand our laws of physics to fit the data, not deny the data and new discoveries just to protect our beliefs.**

**WINSTON, YOU FORGOT ABOUT YOUR BELOVED RELIGION - WHICH DOES EXACTLY THAT.**

**In fact, new discoveries in quantum physics each year are shattering the materialistic reductionist view we had of the universe, making psychic phenomena and other dimensions more plausible.**

**WINSTON, YOU WOULD SELL YOUR ONE GOOD TESTICLE IF ONLY THAT WERE TRUE. NOTHING DISCOVERED IN QUANTUM PHYSICS MAKE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AND OTHER DIMENSIONS MORE PLAUSIBLE.**

**These include the non-locality (meaning distance and space don’t exist) of twin particles,**

**NO WINSTON, DISTANCE AND SPACE ARE EXISTING JUST FINE AS THEY ALWAYS HAVE. IT IS ONLY IN YOUR IMAGINARY WORLD WHERE ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.**

**LISTENERS SHOULD GO TO MY WEBSITE AT “THESKEPTICARENA.COM” AND CLICK ON THE LINK TO “QUANTUM PHYSICS” WHERE A REAL PHYSICIST (NOT A WINSTON WU) WILL EXPLAIN THE DETAILS OF THE EXPERIMENT THAT WINSTON IS REFERRING TO. THEN IT WILL BECOME CLEAR HOW WINSTON AND HIS BAND OF BELIEVERS HAVE TWISTED, WHAT THEY CANNOT COMPREHEND, INTO SUPPORT FOR THEIR MAGICAL BELIEFS.**

**string theories that postulate several other dimensions beside our own,**

**WINSTON - IT’S STILL ONLY A THEORY. NO PROOF YET.**

**the discovery that particles behave differently when observed (making psychokinesis more probable), etc.**

**WINSTON, HOW DOES “PARTICLES BEHAVING DIFFERENTLY WHEN OBSERVED” HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH MAKING PSYCHOKINESIS MORE PROBABLE? I BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT WE CALL “WISHFUL THINKING.”**

**Each new discovery seems to prove the skeptics wrong and moves us further from their views and closer to metaphysical paradigms.**

**WINSTON, EACH ONE OF THOSE “DISCOVERIES” WERE NOTHING MORE THAN MISREPRESENTATIONS OR MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON YOUR PART. NOTHING HAS MOVED SCIENCE CLOSER TO METAPHYSICAL PARADIGMS EXCEPT IN YOUR IMAGINATION.**

**This is obviously not a good sign for their case. It appears that the skeptic camp is a sinking ship that one should get off to avoid embarrassment.**

**WINSTON, YOU WERE NEVER ON THAT SHIP TO BEGIN WITH. YOU’VE BEEN IN A LITTLE ROWBOAT WITHOUT ANY OARS THE WHOLE TIME.**

**Just the discovery alone in quantum physics that all matter is a form of vibrating energy makes paranormal and psychic phenomena much more plausible and understandable.**

**WINSTON, LIKE ALL TRUE-BELIEVERS, YOU ACCEPT THEORY AS PROVEN FACT WHEN IT IS WHAT YOU WANT TO BELIEVE. IT IS NOT PROVEN SCIENCE YET THAT MATTER IS VIBRATING ENERGY. IF, AND WHEN, IT IS PROVEN TO BE SO, THAT WILL STILL DO NOTHING FOR THE BELIEF IN PARANORMAL AND PSYCHIC PHENOMENA. THOSE SUBJECTS WILL REQUIRE PROOF JUST AS THE VIBRATING ENERGY THEORY REQUIRES PROOF.**

**Finally, good theories try to unify the data.**

**WINSTON, THAT WAS A VERY STUPID STATEMENT. THE OBJECT IS NOT TO MAKE THINGS THE WAY YOU WANT THEM TO BE, BUT TO FIND OUT HOW THEY REALLY ARE. IF THE DATA IS UNIFIED IN THE PROCESS, FINE. IF NOT, THEN THAT’S THE WAY IT IS. DEAL WITH IT.**

**As Ron Pearson notes in his article Theoretical Physics Back Survival: (http://www.ozemail.com.au/~vwzammit/afterlifech33.html#Heading34)**

**"Theories make sense of the experiments and show how apparently unrelated phenomena are aspects of the same thing. Good theories provide unifications.**

**WINSTON, GRAVITY IS A PRETTY GOOD THEORY AND IT “UNIFIES” NOTHING.**

 **For example, magnetism and electricity were separate fields when science was in its infancy. As understanding grew it was found that magnetic effects could be produced by electric currents and the converse also applied. Now we speak of electromagnetism as a single force; one of the four forces of nature.**

**WINSTON, THIS IS WHAT I WAS TELLING YOU EARLIER WHEN I STATED THAT UNIFICATION INVOLVED MORE THAN JUST RELATIVITY AND QUANTUM PHYSICS.**

**Theoretical physicists hope ultimately to join these by a unified field theory arising from a single 'superforce'."**

**WINSTON, BE AWARE THAT “HOPE” AND “REALITY” ARE NOT ALWAYS THE SAME THING.**

**Argument # 11: "Unexplainable does not mean inexplicable."**

**WINSTON, MY DICTIONARY SAYS THAT THEY ARE SYNONYMS. WHATEVER DIFFERENCES THERE MIGHT BE BETWEEN THEM WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE FACT THAT SYNONYMS HAVE “THE SAME MEANING.”**

**This phrase is emphasized by arch skeptic Michael Shermer, author of Why People Believe Weird Things.**

**WINSTON, I CAN TELL WHEN THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK IS STICKING UP LIKE A DOG READY TO FIGHT. IT IS WHEN YOU RESORT TO NAME-CALLING. LIKE ALL OF YOUR “ATTACK TECHNIQUES,”IT IS VERY CHILDISH. ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE NAME-CALLING TACTICS IS TO CALL SOMEONE AN “ARCH” SKEPTIC.**

**BY THE WAY, WINSTON, MICHAEL SHERMER ADMITS TO BEING A WU-WU ONCE HIMSELF. SOME PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO PULL THEMSELVES OUT OF THE QUICKSAND AND OTHERS AREN’T. SOMETIMES ALL PEOPLE NEED IS A LITTLE HELP. THEN THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE, WINSTON, WHO ARE DESTINED TO SUCK SAND THEIR WHOLE LIVES.**

**This argument means that just because something is unexplainable does not mean that paranormal forces must have been involved,**

**WINSTON, SCIENTISTS NEVER ASSUME THAT PARANORMAL FORCES ARE INVOLVED. THEY ONLY EXIST FOR PEOPLE IN YOUR WORLD WINSTON, IN THE LAND OF WU.**

**only that we haven’t found the explanation for it yet. However, skeptics who use this should also remember that the following converses are true as well:**

1. **Just because something happens that they think isn’t possible doesn’t mean that it didn’t happen. To do so would be to deny reality.**

**WINSTON, THAT IS WHY SCIENTISTS WOULD NOT DENY THAT SOMETHING WHICH HAPPENED DIDN’T HAPPEN. BUT THEY PROBABLY WOULD NOT AGREE WITH YOU AS TO WHY IT HAPPENED. WHEN YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND OR CAN’T EXPLAIN SOMETHING, YOU INSERT GOD, THE SPIRIT WORLD, OR OTHER MAGIC. WHEN SCIENTISTS DON’T UNDERSTAND OR CAN’T EXPLAIN SOMETHING, THEY SEARCH FOR THE ANSWERS - IN THE REAL WORLD.**

1. **Just because something happens that they think isn’t possible doesn’t mean that it must be due to misperception, fraud, or hallucination.**

**WINSTON, THOSE MIGHT BE GOOD EXPLANATIONS. MISPERCEPTION, FRAUD, AND HALLUCINATION ARE ALL POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR UNEXPLAINABLE EVENTS. HOWEVER, IF NONE OF THESE THREE ARE PRESENT, THEN SCIENTISTS WILL USUALLY GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PROBLEM IF GIVEN ENOUGH TIME; AND THEY WILL DO SO WITHOUT HAVING TO RESORT TO “MAGIC.”**

1. **Just because a natural explanation hasn’t been found for something unexplainable doesn’t mean that only a natural explanation could exist.**

**WINSTON, UNTIL YOU CAN PROVE OTHERWISE, THE ONLY EXPLANATIONS THAT HAVE EVER BEEN FOUND, ARE IN FACT, NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.**

1. **If a natural explanation doesn’t explain all the facts, that doesn’t mean that you should insist on it anyway just to protect your belief system.**

**WINSTON, IT MEANS THAT SCIENTISTS WILL KEEP WORKING ON THE THEORY UNTIL THEY LEARN MORE ABOUT IT. IT MAY TURN OUT THAT THEY HAVE TO DISCARD THE THEORY IN FAVOR OF A BETTER ONE. OR THEY MAY FIND CORROBORATING EVIDENCE FOR THE CURRENT THEORY. BUT ONE THING THEY HAVE NEVER HAD TO RESORT TO IS “MAGIC.”**

**Take the following example. In the reincarnation cases investigated by Dr. Ian Stevenson in his book Twenty Suggestive Cases of Reincarnation, none of the natural explanations account for the data and facts of the cases, such as babies and children having accurate detailed memories of their past lives which couldn’t have been obtained in their environment, but are later verified to be true.**

**WINSTON, I’VE SAID IT BEFORE AND I’LL SAY IT AGAIN - YOU ARE EVERY SALESMAN’S DREAM.**

**Dr. Stevenson concludes that the reincarnation hypothesis best fits the data he personally investigated.**

**WINSTON, IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THIS GUY ACTUALLY EARNED A DOCTORATE. IT JUST GOES TO SHOW, NO MATTER HOW MUCH EDUCATION YOU GIVE A PERSON - IT DOESN’T GUARANTEE THEY’LL BE SMART.**

**Though the skeptic is free to insist that a natural explanation must be the culprit anyway, (and often does) he does so by flatly denying the four converse rules above.**

**WINSTON, THOSE WOULD BE THE FOUR RULES YOU MADE UP?**

**Would Shermer approve of that, I wonder?**

**WINSTON, HE USED TO BE A WU-WU; HE’S NOT ANYMORE.**

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**elements Most abundant Earth elements are 1) oxygen and 2) silicon.**

**hole The Russians have dug the world's deepest hole = 9.3 miles.**

**iridium The Iridium layer is the main evidence in support of the**

**killer-asteroid theory.**

 **It occurred world-wide about 65 million years ago.**

**Old Faithful is now intermittant due to an earthquake.**

**quicksand Quicksand is nearly impossible to drown in.**

**richter scale Richter Scale: each 1/10 point in the scale represents a difference in strength of 50%.**

 **Therefore, a 4.0 is 60 times stronger than a 3.0.**

 **A quake that is 3.4 points higher than another (ex: 6.6 vs 3.2) is one**

 **million times stronger!**

**rocks igneous**

 **sedimentary**

 **metamorphic**

**half lives Radioactive Elements**

 **isotopes varying number of neutrons within the nucleus.**

 **radiometric dating started in 1911.**

 **Radioactive Parent Stable Daughter Half life**

 **Rubidium 87 Strontium 87 48.8 billion years Thorium 232 Lead 208 14 billion years Uranium 238 Lead 206 4.47 billion years Potassium 40 Argon 40 1.25 billion years Samarium 147 Neodymium 143 1.06 billion years Uranium 235 Lead 207 704 million years Carbon 14 Nitrogen 14 5,730 years carbon dating measures decay of c14 to n14. cosmic ray flux is adjusted for.**

 **usual for dating objects less than 50,000 years old.**

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**THE ARENA GOES ABROAD**

**Urbi & Orbi: Tony Blair opens the huge alms bag**

**British ex-premier Tony Blair has launched his “Tony Blair Faith Foundation” in New York on May 30, 2008. The ambitious charity is seeking hundreds of millions of dollars of funding to rescue religion and sell it as a force for good. The focus of its activities will be on interfaith dialogue – after 9/11 a bestseller in the Western world.

With its headquarters in New York and an “interfaith dialogue and conference center” in London, the new charity is according to Tony Blair “doing reasonably well in raising money in both places”. Supporters speak of tens of millions of dollars initial funding.

Tony Blair had been reticent about his religious ambitions while he was prime minister, not to alienate Britain’s largely secular society. Once his then spokesman, Alastair Campbell, told reporters "We don't do God". But his biographer Anthony Seldon described him a “profoundly religious figure”, whose faith had always been a major influence on his politics. Last year, Blair told TV chat show host Michael Parkinson he had prayed to God when deciding whether to send troops into Iraq.

In December, he converted from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism. The Vatican, says Blair, is very supportive of his new interfaith venture.**

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**FAMOUS SKEPTICAL QUOTES**

**DOUGLAS ADAMS (11 March 1952 – 11 May 2001) 49 years.**

**He was an English author, comic radio dramatist, and musician. He is best known as the author of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series. Hitchhiker's began on radio, and developed into a "trilogy" of five books (which sold more than fifteen million copies during his lifetime) as well as a television series, a comic book series, a computer game, and a feature film that was completed after Adams' death.**

**Adams also originated the idea for the computer game Starship Titanic, which was produced by a company that Adams co-founded, and adapted into a novel. His fans and friends also knew Adams as an environmental activist, a self-described 'radical atheist', and a lover of fast cars, cameras, the Macintosh computer, and other 'techno gizmos'. The biologist Richard Dawkins dedicated his book The God Delusion to Douglas Adams and in it described how Adams came to understand evolution, consequently becoming an atheist.**

**HIS QUOTE:**

**"I'd take the awe of understanding over the awe of ignorance any day."**