

The Idiot's Guide to Atheism by Mel Gibson

"I contend that we are both atheists. I just believe in one fewer god than you do. When you understand why you dismiss all the other possible gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours." -Stephen Roberts

Assuming nothing exists until proven otherwise eliminates thousands of false conceptions, such as Zeus, Big Foot and government conspiracies, for every factual one, a compromise that is far too convenient to ignore, which is why we are all non-believers regarding most unproven conceptions.

Theists are simply willing to make an exception for their god; substituting blind faith for the logic they already used to dismiss all other gods. This is not only hypocritical, it's pointless, for we can have faith in anything, including that God does not exist.

In addition, the truth is only a fraction of what we can imagine, so most of our desires, including the theistic desire to believe in God, will inevitably be false, as are my desires to fly like a bird, never get sick and live in a peaceful world.

God either is or is not, regardless of what we want or choose to have faith in, so only by questioning our faith and repressing our desires can we hope to discover the truth.

Chapter 1: Scientific Atheism

"I do not think it is necessary to believe that the same God who has given us our senses, reason, and intelligence wished us to abandon their use." -Galileo Galilei

According to scientists reality would be unaffected by God's absence. That is, just as we previously learned that natural phenomena, such as lightning & rain, were unaffected by the absence of ancient gods, we've recently learned that our universe, and everything in it, would be unaffected by the absence of any god.

In short, a relatively simple energy fluctuation, guided by only a handful of physical laws, inevitably condensed into matter, which in turn condensed into stars, which in turn released heavier elements, which in turn formed rocky planets and a vast number of atomic combinations, including those found in life, such as amino acids & nucleotides, and so on, as confirmed by countless observations, experiments and computer simulations; for example, fossils & the microwave background radiation.

Although unexplained phenomena still exist; for example, dark energy, we've found countless scientific explanations for previously unknown phenomena, strongly suggesting that the remaining unknowns also have scientific explanations, especially since (1) we're constantly validating this assumption with new scientific discoveries (and 2) the remaining unknowns are patterned and repetitive, a clear indication that they're being caused by as yet unknown physical laws, as opposed to the variable whim of God.

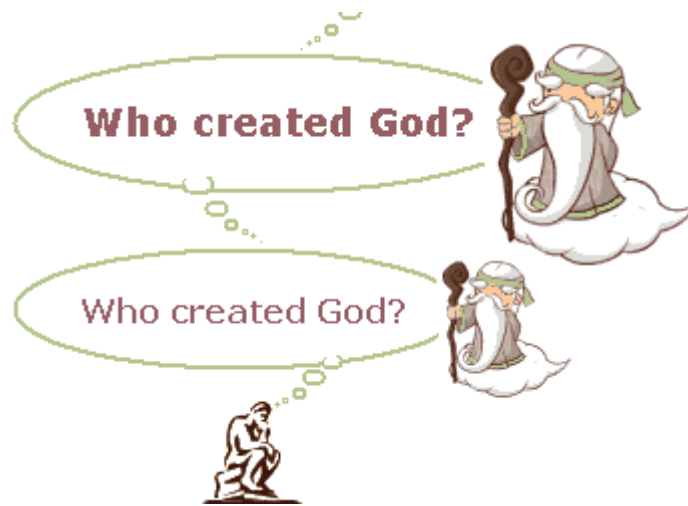
Chapter 2: Logical Atheism

According to philosophers God's existence is logically impossible. That is, all possible origins of God have been successfully refuted; for example, God cannot use that which defines himself, such as his power & intelligence, in order to create himself.

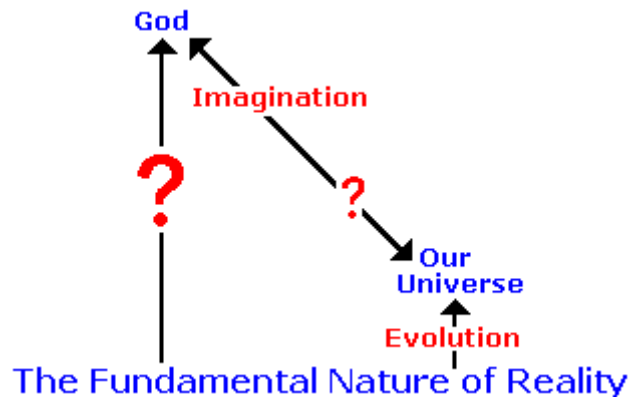


Put differently, if God didn't already exist, then he would have had less power & intelligence than an insect; therefore, would have been unable to create himself.

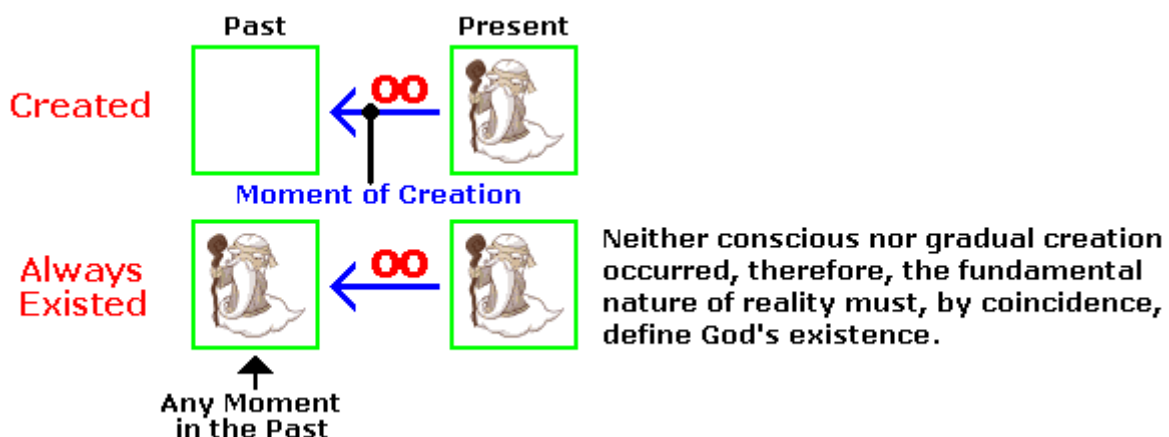
Since self-creation is impossible all conscious beings ultimately owe their existence to the unconscious nature of things. That is, if God had a god, and so on, then the supreme god, with nobody around to create him, and unable to create himself (as stated above), must owe his existence to something other than conscious creation, which is exactly where we were before assuming God had a god.



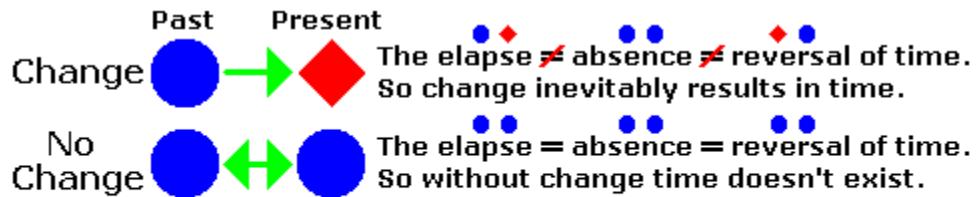
The unconscious creation of God, unlike his conscious creation, is logically possible; however, it's both extremely unlikely and entirely unnecessary. That is, we have undeniable evidence for the unconscious creation of our universe (ex. fossils & the microwave background radiation), yet we have no such evidence, or even a theoretical explanation, for the unconscious creation of God. In addition, it's far more reasonable to assume that reality gave rise to us versus a relatively complex god.



A fourth possibility is that God was never created; and therefore, always existed. However, an eternal existence would require that God existed prior to every moment in time, so no creative power, including himself, had the opportunity to create him; consequently, the fundamental nature of reality must, without conscious intervention or time, coincidentally define his existence, which is like a whale spontaneously appearing a mile above the ground for absolutely no reason, conscious or otherwise.



Some theists, realizing the impossibility of both God's creation and eternal existence, have suggested that he exists beyond time. However, if God changes in any way; for example, has a thought, then the elapse of time (**old-thought** to **new-thought**) can be distinguished from the absence of time (**old-thought** to **old-thought**), so any change, no matter how insignificant or what form it takes, inevitably results in time. Consequently, if God exists beyond time, then he would be reduced to an impotent statue, unable to create the earth, let alone think.



*** Therefore, if God exists beyond time he's incapable of thought or action (ex. **old thought** to **new thought**).**

Chapter 3: Historical Atheism

"The invisible and the non-existent look very much alike." -Delo McKown

Even if we ignore science & logic we're still left with an entirely unproven God. That is, it's a statistical fact that no evidence = no existence = being right well over 99% of the time. For example, we've believed in countless gods, such as Zeus & Ra, creatures, such as the fairies & Big Foot, and theories, such as government conspiracies & alien abductions, so there's far less than 1% chance that any unproven conception exists, especially one as mystical and amazing as God.

More importantly, despite being credited with the creation of our entire universe we've found absolutely no evidence that he created anything. In contrast, evolution is supported by an overwhelming number of perfectly consistent facts, such as fossils, genetics and embryology, as are all other known creative forces.

There's no reason to assume that all of God's numerous creations, such as life and the earth, should contain no evidence of their godly origins. On the other hand, this is exactly what we would expect if God created nothing.

In addition, most theists claim that God meddles in our affairs; however, according to all studies, including those performed by religious institutions, God does not answer prayers, performs miracles or modifies reality in any other way. For example, according to all relevant statistics, devout believers are no more favored by God than the amoral or atheistic.

In Conclusion

Even if we ignore the logical impossibility of God's existence, and the fact that reality would be unaffected by his absence, it would still be unreasonable to believe in an unproven god, especially because ...

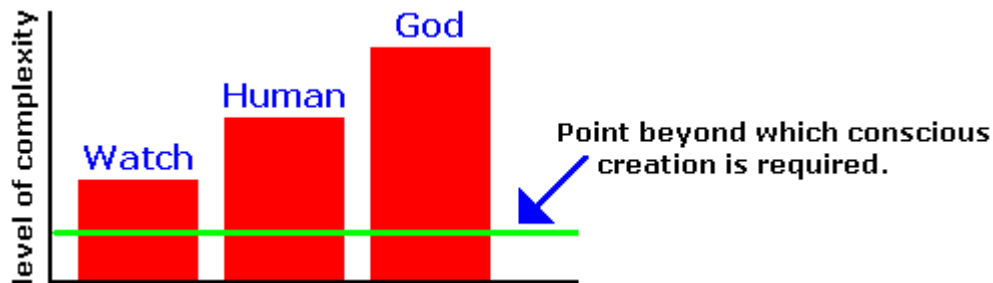
- (1) Despite the best efforts by millions over thousands of years we've found absolutely no evidence that God exists, created our universe or modified a single thing.
- (2) We've already imagined countless gods, strongly suggesting that God, like all gods before him, is only a figment of our imagination.

"Gods are fragile things; they may be killed by a whiff of science or a dose of common sense." -Chapman Cohen

Counterarguments

Since a watch requires a watchmaker, and a human is more complex than a watch, a human requires a human maker.

This is obviously not true, for unless we make the sacrilegious assumption that God is less complex than a watch, then he too would require a conscious creator, and so on. In other words, it makes absolutely no sense to account for our complexity by assuming that we were made by an even more complex, and entirely unproven, God.



The truth is, humans, unlike watches, have everything needed for their unconscious creation, such as self-contained blueprints (DNA), dividing and differentiating building blocks (cells), nutrient uptake (hunting & digestion) and so on. Consequently, a bucket of watches, sprinkled with an aphrodisiac, and surrounded by the appropriate building materials, will never give rise to new watches, yet there's little anybody can do to prevent a cage of rabbits from giving rise to new rabbits. Obviously the creative power of billions of years of evolution wasn't matched the day we started shaping stone tools, or shortly after with mechanical watches.

Many theists simply claim that they've found God in their lives; however, their examples are either of natural phenomena or are completely unsubstantiated. For example, finding God in beauty (ex. sunsets) and emotion (ex. love) is absurd, for they are either caused by simple physical laws (ex. the refraction of light) or serve an obvious evolutionary purpose (ex. our love for helpless babies keeps them alive, the love between a husband and wife keeps them together and the general kindness of strangers has allowed the human race to achieve a level of security and prosperity that would otherwise be impossible).

"Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful without having to believe that there are fairies at the bottom of it too?"

—Douglas Adams