Debunking atheist dogma (notes)

Notes of: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-Jyj8xvOzM>

Video 1:

Debunking atheist dogma

Atheist dogma: fallacious or incorrect arguments that are presented by atheists

1. Reason and faith are contradictory
2. Mistakes in religious texts imply atheism
3. Science disproves god

Bertrand Russell: “the fundamental cause of the trouble is that in the modern world the stupid are cocksure while the intelligent are full of doubt”

Video 2:

Are reason and faith contradictory?

Reason: think understand, and form judgments by a process of logic

Faith: belief based on assumptions that are not justified

Two arguments:

1. Reason requires faith (more skeptically inclined): any act of reason requires an act of faith (from Munchausen’s trilemma we must take whatever beliefs we take as basic or able to justify themselves on faith. The laws of logic themselves rest on faith. You must have faith in your reason to put stock on it)

analysis:

1. This deeply relates to the problem of the criterion for reason and faith. Which beliefs are justified?

-- Reason provides us with a method of how to distinguish what to believe, but cannot justify belief in reason itself (it is like saying that all things are true thus this belief must be true).

-- Faith provides us with beliefs that are justified, but does not give us a method for distinguishing justified beliefs (we can say that my justification for pizza being healthy is because I like it but that does not mean I can justify or distinguish whether or not someone else should eat pizza, since it is my belief)

If we then combine these two methods, we can say that faith is the first base for even reason, then, reason is the base for everything else (I would guess that many people who call themselves skeptics unconsciously follow this form of belief structure, until the moment I wrote this, I myself was partially unconscious on this fact, even though I had the basis sense that yes, logic and reason are not definite truths, I did not actively apply that to my day to day).

1. An objection, is that there are two kinds of faith

-- Reasonable faith: faith that is based in logic or evidence

-- Faith that is not based in any evidence or logical claim

A response (this both goes too far and not far enough): people may disagree on what exactly is evidence, say, “I saw a white bird fly near me when I prayed for my surgery to go well and it did” may be a reasonable faith for God for some and for others may not. Then, the fundamental laws of logic can be argued to not be based on any other logical or evidentiary claim. So this is still vague

1. Another objection is that Reasonable faith is faith that is commonly accepted, and blind faith is unusual or strange faith, but, clearly, this is an Ad Populum Fallacy.
2. Yet another objection is that of coherentist justification. Reasonable faith is that is justified in relation to other beliefs we have, while blind faith is something that opposes most of our beliefs.

A response (Raft Problem): reasonable faith is a completely consistent set of beliefs that claims that I am in the matrix, and a blind faith that though may come as beneficial: some new scientific paradigm that opposes the current scientific paradigm like quantum physics for example

1. Yet Yet another objection is that of the foundationalist’s justification: reasonable faith is faith in propositions that are self evident, while blind faith is in those which aren’t self evident.

A response: the distinction is unjustified, people might argue “God self evidently exists”, and it thus is blind faith that propositions that are self evident are justified.

1. Reason cannot imply normative claims (not as skeptic): the “is” doesn’t imply an “ought” problem: reason and logic discuss what is, they might discuss that 1+1=2 is a true belief, but they would not discuss that you ought to believe in reason and logic. In order for you to do that, you would have to form an ethics of belief, which clearly is separate from logic.

Pope John Paul II: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth”

Video 3:

Do mistakes in scripture imply atheism?

Core of the objection: many theists do not subscribe to the exact claims found in scripture. You can validly pick and choose what you will believe

The argument:

1. If God exists he is infallible (cannot be wrong)
2. The Bible (bible being the religious text you believe in) is the word of God
3. The Bible is incorrect about a lot of things (people living for 900 years, the size of Noah’s arc, Evolution, Earth being 6,000 years old, marrying daughters into slavery, stoning for working on Sunday etc.)
4. Therefore, god does not exist

In logic form:

1. G=>I
2. B<=>G
3. B=>~I
4. ~G

Proof:

P4) G (AIP)

P5) I (1, 4, MP)

P6) (B=>G)^(G=>B) (2, Id)

P7) G=>B (6, Simp)

P8) B (4, 7, MP)

P9) ~I (3, 8, MP)

P10) I^~I (5, 9, Add)

P11) ~G (4-10, IP)

^^ I think that my logical phrasing for this proof is valid, but I may have gotten some parts wrong, since I may have messed up as to if I belongs to B or G ^^

In predicate calculus form:

1. (∀x)(Gx=>Ix)
2. (∀x)(Gx<=>Bx)
3. (∀x)(Bx=>~Ix)
4. (∀x)(~Gx)

Proof:

P4) Ga=>Ia (1, UI)

P5) Ga<=>Ba (2, UI)

P6) Ba=>~Ia (3, UI)

P7) (∃x)(Gx) (AIP)

P8) Ga (7, EI)

P9) Ia (4, 8, MP)

P10) (Ga=>Ba)^(Ba=>Ga) (5, Id)

P11) Ga=>Ba (10, Simp)

P12) Ba (8, 11, MP)

P13) ~Ia (6, 12, MP)

P14) Ia^~Ia (9, 13, Add)

P15) ~(∃x)(Gx) (4-14, IP)

Theist objections:

1. (1) God might change his opinions as we change our views on earth: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven” Matthew 16:19 (as we change what we think on earth those things shall change in heaven)
2. (2) The bible is not the direct word of God, but rather the word of God as interpreted by man. The fault lies not in God but in the translators. History tells us that what we know as the Bible was actually put together in the 4th century CE at the council of Nicaea, not by God.
3. (2) The bible is not the literal word of God, but rather a series of metaphors and parables to help us lead our lives. While many of the factual claims of the bible have been disputed, many of the ethical ones are still powerful. Perhaps then the whole text was meant to be an ethical homily.
4. (2) Many theists do not believe in a religious text at all. Many consider that all one needs to become Christian is to accept that Jesus is the son of God. Many theists do not have a religious text or take only a few parts of it to be true and construct their own understanding of religion

Note: this only works for scriptural literalists.

Joseph Campbell: “when you translate the bible with excessive literalism, you demythologize it. The possibility of a convincing reference to the individual’s own spiritual experience is lost.”

Video 4:

Does science disprove god?

Core of the objection: Science is unable to prove anything with certainty, and another argument is: many theist’s claims do not conflict with science

The objection:

Most scientists will aver that they are looking for theories of best fit based on the evidence, but if provided with further evidence would change their theories. Science does not claim that it seeks truth, simply best guesses based on the evidence present. If tomorrow significant evidence for God were to appear, science would assert such a claim, not because it was true, but because the evidence seemed to point to it.

Even when theories seem to be confirmed by evidence the best science can do is say that it currently works.

Some say that God is the best way to explain the evidence that we currently have.

There are many claims that science does not have the tools to investigate: “what happens to consciousness after death?”, “what, if anything happened before the big bang?”, “what is the right thing to do?”, but religion answers these.

Simply because a theist holds beliefs about things that science has yet to study, does not mean that science is in conflict with religion, simply some doxastic ethical principle that we should not believe things without evidence. Science does not say: “I am the only thing that can prove the truth”. You need an ethical principle to even say that it is wrong not to be scientific.

Important note: some theists do hold positions that are in direct conflict with science. While science may be unable to completely refute these claims, they can present a great deal of evidence to the contrary, such that it should at least convince theists to suspend judgment on the truth of their claims.

Richard Dawkins: “I constructed in “The God Delusion” a seven point scale of which one was I know God exists, and a seven was I know God doesn’t exist, I called myself a six.”