

Atheism

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

In the study of religions there's also a significant amount of energy that gets spent on considering the philosophy of atheism, the belief that God doesn't exist. This is no small idea. It has impacted religions, religious thought, philosophy, and the lives of many people, religious and nonreligious alike.

Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Arguments for Atheism

2. Agnosticism

1. Arguments for Atheism

The definition of **atheism** suggests that there is some manner of commitment to the idea that there is no God. This is often to the extent that it might form a person's worldview, affecting many areas of his or her life. What would the reasons be for adopting an atheistic worldview?

One argument for atheism is that God is not provable or knowable through the senses. Another points to evil. If there is a supposedly beneficent god, why would this god allow evil in the world? The presence of evil is seen as proof of the absence of God.

One might also argue that, with the vast variety of religions in the world that in fact have logical differences, all claiming the ground of universal truth, how can there be one universal, all-encompassing truth? Science and certain rational arguments are leaned on in support of atheism. **Darwinism** could be used in such an argument. Darwinian evolution, according to some interpretations, undermines the uniqueness of human beings.

This theory of evolution effectively leaves space open to discredit the creation stories that are the foundations of the different religions. Evolution, according to some definitions, fills the logical gaps that many religions approach with a leap of faith.



TERMS TO KNOW

Atheism

The belief that god does not exist.

Darwinism

The natural philosophy of Charles Darwin, most often associated with the theory of evolution.

2. Agnosticism

Agnosticism is an approach to these arguments that does not exclude the possibility of the divine. One might just not know and therefore subscribe to the belief that the existence of God has not been proven or can never be proven.



TERM TO KNOW

Agnosticism

Either the belief that the existence of god(s) has not been proven, or the belief that the existence of god(s) can never be proven.



SUMMARY

Atheism is a philosophy that is committed to the idea that there is no God. You looked at several **arguments for atheism**. **Agnosticism** is the idea that one just cannot know and that it might be impossible to know at all whether or not there is a God.

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