

# A rational argument against the existence of god philosophy essay



The existence of, and belief in, god has long been the subject of heated debate. Most affirmations of the existence of god are posited in explanation of the mysteries involved in the nature and origin of our universe and of human life. While it is true that in all of human history we have failed to arrive at definitive answers for perplexing questions of this variety, belief in the existence of god nevertheless serves as a poor and unnecessary explanation.

This paper seeks to illustrate how one should not believe in god because there is simply no good reason to do so. I shall argue how such belief is both superfluous and irrational, and I shall make my argument primarily on the principal of parsimony.

My argument is as follows:

We lack any empirical proof of gods existence

We lack any priori proof of gods existence

If premises [1] and [2], it is not rational to believe that god exists

Belief in god is irrational

God in this argument refers to the standard omni Christian god, but is applicable to any metaphysical, supernatural entity. Premises 1 and 2 assert the fact that no evidence of the existence of god has been produced to date that is self-evident, observable, or can be reproduced. I am fairly certain it's safe to consider at least the first of the two to be infallible. Keep in mind that

I do not seek to prove that god does not exist, simply that it is irrational to place belief in an entity for which there is no physical evidence.

Premise three is the heart of my argument. Reason here is of the generic variety and operates primarily on the principals of parsimony and “burden of proof”. Also referred to as “Occam’s Razor”, parsimony in this argument can be roughly defined as the principal that among competing hypotheses, the one that makes the fewest assumptions should be selected[1].

The principal of parsimony is central to my argument. Here is one analogical example that illustrates how the principal of parsimony can be used to refute nearly any pro-god argument:

Imagine I come to you one day and explain to that fire is created through the process of combustion wherein fuel is combined with an oxidizing agent and an invisible magic fairy to produce heat energy. You go home later that evening and discover, low and behold, you are able to produce the same effect without a magical fairy! Thus the fairy adds nothing to your understanding of combustion and is altogether unnecessary.

Now suppose I present you with another theory: combustion is the product of the interaction between fuel, an oxidizing agent, and two magical fairies. In turn, you experiment and discover again that magical fairies add nothing to the process. We repeat the process few more times until finally, exasperated, you snap, “fairies contribute nothing to the process, the number you add is irrelevant. The flame’s identical either way!”

And here we have illustrated the principal of parsimony: asserting a theory that is discernably identical to another except for the existence of an inconsequential being, the evidence of which can neither be seen nor reproduced, is altogether irrational. As there remains unquestionably a litany of aspects of our reality to which we are at present oblivious to, an argument such as this could not be contrived to disprove the existence of such a being. However, in same way that you could feasibly win the 649 when you buy a ticket, it is just as irrational to believe that god exists as it is to believe that you will win the lotto.

Conversely, throughout history, progress in the field of science and technology has continued to deepen our knowledge of a universe once taken to be understood a priori, the geocentric model for example. Time and time again it has been demonstrated that there are natural explanations to the seemingly unknowable. The burden of proof lies in our material world and it is irrational to believe that god must necessarily exist in the absence of a better answer.

Some might seek to challenge this argument by asking how one is to explain the seemingly obvious existence of something immaterial such as the mind. And if the mind is immaterial, why could the same not be said for the soul and of god?

Again, in strict accordance to my argument, one can see plainly enough that this challenge fails to pass the first premise although it could be feasibly seen to pass the second. In any case, advances in neuroscience make a very strong argument for the mind, morality, all that which is personal, simply

being the consequences of our physical brain. The recorded chemical imbalances in individuals who have committed atrocities and cases of memory loss, sometimes so severe that the individual even forgets who they are, present in individuals who have sustained head trauma, are two compelling examples that could be considered evidence of a purely materialistic world. While the scientific community would never assert that examples such as these prove the existence of a purely material mind, they nevertheless hold the body of proof; what empirical evidence has been given for existence of an immaterial mind, soul, or god?

As to those who would seek to challenge this argument in kierkegaardian fashion by claiming that belief in god is not irrational as such belief, or faith, is arrived at independent or in direct opposition to reason - well, any argument made purely on grounds " independent" or in " direct opposition" to reason would surely be in " direct opposition" to any feasibly " rational" belief in god.