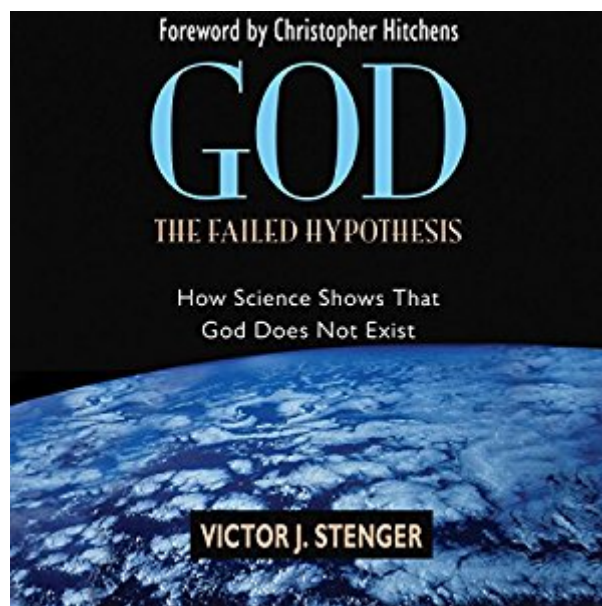




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God - The Failed Hypothesis: How Science Shows That God Does Not Exist



Synopsis

Throughout history, arguments for and against the existence of God have been largely confined to philosophy and theology, while science has sat on the sidelines. Despite the fact that science has revolutionized every aspect of human life and greatly clarified our understanding of the world, somehow the notion has arisen that it has nothing to say about the possibility of a supreme being, which much of humanity worships as the source of all reality. This book contends that, if God exists, some evidence for this existence should be detectable by scientific means, especially considering the central role that God is alleged to play in the operation of the universe and the lives of humans. Treating the traditional God concept, as conventionally presented in the Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions, like any other scientific hypothesis, physicist Stenger examines all of the claims made for God's existence. He considers the latest Intelligent Design arguments as evidence of God's influence in biology. He looks at human behavior for evidence of immaterial souls and the possible effects of prayer. He discusses the findings of physics and astronomy in weighing the suggestions that the universe is the work of a creator and that humans are God's special creation. After evaluating all the scientific evidence, Stenger concludes that beyond a reasonable doubt the universe and life appear exactly as we might expect if there were no God.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 4 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Pitchstone Publishing

Audible.com Release Date: April 4, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01DPY5L9M

Best Sellers Rank: #70 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science > Physics #295 in Books >

Religion & Spirituality > Atheism #716 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies >

Science & Religion

Customer Reviews

I have read numerous books over the years on this particular topic and what struck my interest in this volume (God: The failed hypothesis: How science shows that God does not exist by Victor J. Stenger) was it takes not so much a philosophical approach, even though the standard arguments

are included, but a pure scientific approach to this subject God. Being a scientific minded person, though not a scientist, I have always rejected any and all forms of theological mysticism. When I saw this book for a bargain price on I immediately purchased it. This excellent 294 page book is organized into ten well-written chapters. They are as follows: Chapter one introduces many models and methods in the search for a supreme being. The second chapter focuses on the illusion of design. The third chapter he provides some thoughts on searching for a world beyond matter. The fourth chapter looks at the cosmic evidence for a supreme being. The fifth chapter is about the uncongenial universe. The sixth chapter he shows the failures of revelation. The seventh chapter deals with the question of Do our values come from God? Chapter eight covers the argument from evil, which I found very revealing. The ninth chapter focuses on possible and impossible Gods. The final chapter is living in the Godless universe, which provides information on living a more scientific and logical life without mysticism. What I have discovered in my personal search for facts and truths when it comes to religion is in most cases, true believers cannot be reached through the mediums of reason, logic and science. Sadly, the people who most need to read this book will refuse to face the facts of reality. Unfortunately, the power of irrational and illogical faith seems to be winning today as can be seen in the spread of fanatical religious groups. This is a book for anyone who is searching for truth and facts when it comes to the subject of God and how science can guide them to true scientific enlightenment. Rating: 5 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Never Trust a Politician: A critical review of politics and politicians)

Victor John Stenger (born 1935) is an American particle physicist, philosopher, author, and religious skeptic; he is also a regular featured science columnist for the Huffington Post. He has written many other books, such as *God and the Multiverse: Humanity's Expanding View of the Cosmos*, *Not by Design*, *Has Science Found God? The Latest Results in the Search for Purpose in the Universe*, *God and the Folly of Faith: The Incompatibility of Science and Religion*, *The Fallacy of Fine-Tuning: Why the Universe Is Not Designed for Us*, etc. He wrote in the Preface of this 2007 book, "Many books have been published purporting that modern theoretical and empirical science supports the proposition that God exists. Very few books or media stories have directly challenged that assertion. But if scientific arguments for the existence of God are to be allowed into intellectual discourse, then those against his existence also have a legitimate place. In my 2003 book *Has Science Found God?* I critically examined the claims of scientific evidence for God and found them inadequate. In the present book, I will go much further and argue that by this moment in time science has advanced sufficiently to be able to make a definitive statement on the

existence or nonexistence of a God having the attributes that are traditionally associated with the Judeo-Christian-Islamic God. (Pg. 11) He continues, "My analysis will be based on the contention that God should be detectable by scientific means simply by virtue of the fact that he is supposed to play such a central role in the operation of the universe and the lives of humans. Thus, if God exists, he must appear somewhere within the gaps or errors of scientific models." (Pg. 13) He adds, "In this book I will show that a number of proposed supernatural or nonmaterial processes are empirically testable. In this book I will show that certain natural, material phenomena are implied by the God hypothesis. The observation of any of these phenomena would defy all reasonable natural, material descriptions." (Pg. 15) He states, "The thesis of this book is that the supernatural hypothesis of God is testable, verifiable, and falsifiable by the established methods of science. We can imagine all sorts of phenomena that, if observed by means of methodological naturalism, would suggest the possibility of some reality that is highly unlikely to be consistent with metaphysical naturalism. For example, it could happen that a series of carefully controlled experiments provide independent, replicable, statistically significant evidence that distant, intercessory prayer of a specific kind, say, Catholic, cures certain illnesses while the prayers of other religious groups do not. It is difficult to imagine any possible natural explanation for this hypothetical result." (Pg. 29-30) He admits, "The origin of life itself is not accounted for by the theory of evolution. Some prebiological process such as self-organization must have been involved. This is a current gap in scientific knowledge, but plausible natural mechanisms such as [Stuart] Kauffman's TM s are sufficient to keep God out of the picture." (Pg. 64-65) He addresses the argument about the Second Law of Thermodynamics: "parts of the universe can become more orderly as the rubbish, or entropy, produced during the ordering process is tossed out into the larger, ever-expanding surrounding space; the total entropy of the universe increases as the universe expands. However, the maximum possible entropy increases even faster, leaving increasingly more room for order to form. Thus, while becoming more disorderly on the whole as time goes by, our expanding universe is not maximally disordered. But, once it was." (Pg. 118-119) He states, "So where do the laws of physics come from? They came from nothing! Most are statements composed by humans that follow from the symmetries of the void out of which the universe spontaneously arose; they look exactly as they should look if they were not handed down from anywhere. And this is why, for example, a violation of energy conservation at the beginning of the big bang would be evidence for some external creator." (Pg. 131) He answers the question "Why is there something rather than nothing?" TM by asserting, "the natural state

of affairs is something rather than nothing. An empty universe requires supernatural intervention---not a full one. Only by constant action of an agent outside the universe, such as God, could a state of nothingness be maintained. The fact that we have something is just what we would expect if there is no God. (Pg. 133) He tentatively seems to accept the panspermia hypothesis: "Astrobiologists have now demonstrated that organic molecules occur under a wide range of conditions, including those that existed on the early Earth and those existing in space. Space origins are confirmed by the observation of these molecules in meteorites analyzed immediately after striking Earth so that effects of contamination by earthly matter are minimal. Perhaps the first ingredients of life came from space after Earth formed." (Pg. 151) After examining various arguments for God, he concludes, "A God who provides humans with important knowledge that they cannot obtain by material means should have produced testable evidence for his existence by now. He has not. The evidence points to the opposite conclusion. We can say with some confidence that such a God does not exist." (Pg. 173) He rejects the argument of Christian apologist Josh McDowell about messianic prophecies: "Each of the prophecies listed by McDowell is confirmed in no other place except in the Bible. We have no independent evidence that events actually took place as described---especially the ones happening in heaven. Before making the extraordinary claim that something supernatural occurred, simple common sense tells us that we must rule out the ordinary, far more plausible account that the events are fictional, written so as to confirm biblical prophecies." (Pg. 177) He says of the argument from evil, "Yet another common theistic defense for the problem of evil is that God has given us the freedom to choose to commit evil. This may apply to the suffering that results from human acts; but, great as that may be, much unnecessary suffering is of natural rather than supernatural origin. Examples include most diseases and natural disasters. And what is the purpose of the suffering of animals? And what about the hundreds of millions of living beings that died terrible deaths long before humans appeared on the scene?" (Pg. 219) This book goes far beyond Stenger's usual "scientific" arguments against the existence of God, and will be of great interest to anyone studying the Philosophy of Religion, or Christian apologetics.

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