

The Candidates for being the default

What does the null or default mean in relation to the God-or-not question?

It means for a start that it is where you start with. If you list all the things people can believe about religion such as God or gods or nature spirits then atheism could be the the 0.

There are a number of candidates for being the default position. Sometimes the starting position is the default position and vice versa. If it is not it should be.

The candidates need to move from lack of belief in God to total faith in God. People will criticise this as too narrow and too structured but it is the logical way it has to be done. Logic is structured. Will they criticise maths tables next as being too restrictive? The way it works is that if one candidate for the default is no good and is eliminated then you have to find out what the next most likely candidate is then. When one candidate is shown to be incorrect, it implies that other candidates should get a chance. But it does not follow that the other candidates are all equally good. That is why we have to grade the candidates.

The list starts with the best one and ends with the worst. The best one by default is the right candidate. The best is the most logical and important one. It is the default.

We will list the candidates in order of importance. If say the first is shown not to be a default it means we consider the second. And if the second isn't the default we look at the third and so on. Hypothetically if 1 is the default then

The starting default is atheism in the form of: I lack belief in God. Lack of belief in God, not disbelief in God will be the default. Why? Because disbelief is going further than mere lack of belief. We cannot start with God for it is logical to see there is reason to believe in anything before you believe. That need for evidence and reasons is what the first candidate is about.

The second is: agnosticism which says that you don't know if there is a God or not - it only says you don't know not that you can't. This position is the next step up from the lack of belief.

The third is: agnosticism or the idea that you can't know if there is a God or not. This is strong agnosticism.

The fourth is a weak belief that there is no God. Some say there are two candidates for this default: weak faith in God or mild atheism. Or you could say it is choosing between mild disbelief that there is a God or mild belief that there is a God. Soft atheism or soft theism is the default here. But weak faith in God is ridiculous. God cannot be God to you if you are only half-convinced. But atheism is atheism whether your belief is weak or strong.

Imagine it was weak theism or weak atheism. What one you go for depends on whether you think there is evidence in its favour. The God believed in will not be the Christian God to whom we owe our existence and all our devotion to. It would be contradictory to claim you accept the existence of such a God on weak evidence. You would need strong evidence to justify belief in a God who demands such a strong commitment from you. If you cannot get any further than weak belief in this Christian God, then you have evidence that he does not exist for the evidence would be better if he did.

The fifth is weak belief that there is a God. This is incoherent and not a real default but it is better to include it as not all the candidates are valid anyway.

The sixth is strong belief in atheism. This rates next because none of the previous is supportive of God.

The seventh is strong belief in God. The last resort.

We need go no further. We have shown that it is far from sensible to make a default of belief in a God to start off with. You need bias to make a default of anything other than the first one.

The proposed defaults show that the religious manipulators such as priests and popes and clergy who expect ordinary people to take their word for it that there is a God are cheating those people. To take the testimony of men as sufficient in such a serious matter is really thinking of these men as bigger gods than God! It is idolatry. The Christian version of God is not even worth considering as a default. A belief in deist creator "God" would deserve a higher listing in the defaults than it

would.

Our examination of the candidates in their correct order shows that people have to try so hard to defend belief in the existence of God that they end up looking and being desperate. Their belief is low in the ranking as a default.

Atheism is the only rational assumption.