

Notes on Theism or Atheism / S Buchanan

I found this paper to be very thought provoking, and a complicated one at that. I read and re-read many passages in order to understand and recognize my own beliefs/non-beliefs. A brave subject that is rarely discussed openly, and I welcomed it.

- American pathways to faith

- I would think most of us are born and raised into a faith-based practice, one which over time may be followed, borrowed from or discarded. Rightly or wrongly, this “born into” faith creates a springboard from which lives proceed.
- America is overwhelmingly Christian. Is this a result of the Puritans? Why has it continued and gained such a strong foothold in our society?

- Worldwide Multiple Faiths

- “Other” faiths are not considered in the excerpt provided. Simply by the numbers (Christianity 2.5 billion, Islam 1.8 billion, Hindu 1.2 billion, Agnostic/Atheism 1.2 billion, Buddhism 506 million, Judaism 14.7 million - source Wiki list of religious populations), the excerpt’s thought was taken primarily from a Judeo-Christian perspective, and presented or me limited a viable understanding of the arguments.

- Ontological, Cosmological, Pragmatic Arguments

- Interesting information. I found truths in all. I am hard pressed to completely separate them, though. What is the origin of these arguments? Are there others?

- Conclusion Section (Faith, Reason and Science)

- Non-religious or atheists (“they believe moral issues are highly complex and are suspicious of any individual institutions that claim moral authority over the lives of others”) rang so true for me that I guess I should be categorized as one.
- “Certainty appropriate to faith, however, is not the same kind as that of an empirical scientific observation.” Is this ‘either-or’ scenario that simple?
- “We should make a distinction between organized religion and the teachings of Jesus Christ” — this statement disturbed me because, again, it is framed from a Judeo-Christian perspective. It proves the point of Christianity having dominance in America. Which somehow repels me.