

## Divine Hiddenness and *De Jure* Objections to Theism: You Can Have Both

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Hendricks (2021) argues that proponents of the Argument from Divine Hiddenness must abandon *De Jure* objections to theism. The Argument from Divine Hiddenness is supported by:

(H) God probably would either (a) directly cause (among the non-resistant) belief in him or (b) provide the non-resistant with an ability to form beliefs about him.

*De Jure* objections to theism, Hendricks suggests, depend on:

(P) If God exists, then theistic belief is probably formed by properly functioning, reliable faculties.

Hendricks' argument is this:

- (1) If (H) is true, then (P) is true.
- (2) If (P) is true, then *De Jure* objections to theism are unsound.
- (3) So, if (H) is true, then *De Jure* objections to theism are unsound.

We reject (2). Proponents of *De Jure* objections grant that (P) is true. But they think (P) is not sufficient to support belief in God.

### *Alleged Disanalogy With Perceptual Beliefs*

People who think (P) is sufficient to make belief in God acceptable point out that some reasons for thinking that belief in God is unacceptable extend to perceptual beliefs. So, for example, one might think that we can't prove that God exists. And that that is sufficient, by itself, to render belief in God problematic. But we can't prove that our beliefs based on sensory experiences are true. So rejecting belief in God, merely on the basis of our inability to prove that God exists, would lead to skepticism about the external world<sup>2</sup>.

Proponents of *De Jure* objections agree that requiring a proof for every belief one holds is too demanding. There are some beliefs we get for free and should be able to hold in the absence of proof. They grant that perceptual beliefs are among such beliefs. But they think there are important differences between belief in God and belief based on perceptual experiences. And they think that these differences render belief in God, but not perceptual belief, in need of support from proof<sup>3</sup>.

### *Alleged Counterexamples to Theism Friendly Epistemologies*

People who think (P) is sufficient to support belief in God point out that there are a number of plausible theories, motivated independently of considerations about God, that have the result that belief in God is unproblematic. Reliabilism and proper functioning views are set up to address a whole host of problems. And it seems easy to see how belief in God would be appropriate on such views<sup>4</sup>.

Proponents of *De Jure* objections think these views should be rejected because they make unproblematic belief too easy to attain. And the permissiveness of such views about belief in God is

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<sup>2</sup> See Plantinga (1967).

<sup>3</sup> See, Beilby (2005, 2007), Chignell (2002), Quinn (1985), (1993); Leon (2010, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> See Plantinga (1993), (2000).

one symptom this problem<sup>5</sup> They also support this line by advancing counterexamples to the relevant theories<sup>6</sup>.

#### *But Are De Jure Objections Any Good?*

The authors disagree about whether *De Jure* objections are sound. One of us thinks that such objections to theism don't work. The other finds them to be convincing. Although we disagree about this, we agree about another matter: *De Jure* objections do not depend on the denial of (P).

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<sup>5</sup> See Baldwin (2006), Baldwin and Thune (2008), Beilby (2005, 2007), Christian (1992), Leon (2010, 2012), Martin (1990).

<sup>6</sup> See Feldman (1993), Greco (2003), Lehrer (1996), Senor (2002).

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