

- atheists flout a “precautionary principle” (considering that supernatural punishment is possible).
- atheists are less risk-averse than others (given the possibility of a supernatural punishment, an atheist still chooses to behave as if there was no hell)
- atheists have a bad perception of risks, or possible costs. All those characteristics may be linked to free-riding, but not exclusively. They also have some importance in choosing a partner, for obvious reasons.

Principle 4: Trust people who are ideologically close to you

Distrust toward atheists may be explained by something more general, like a kind of “ideological distance” between believers and non-believers, which could be taken into account in the choice of a partner if it is relevant, and which would go beyond religion. Believers may fail to trust atheists because their opinions would be too far apart — that is to say, for the same reason that makes some vegans and animal-rights activists dislike meat-eaters and fur-wearers. Once this “ideological distance” is over a certain threshold (specifically set up for each specific task), the potential partner is seen as not trustworthy for the task at hand.

Principle 7: Big Groups for Big Gods?

Why are Big Gods worshipped by Big Groups? An alternative account could start from the hypothesis that Big Gods need Big Groups to sustain them, for one reason or another. One such reason may be that Big Gods flout our intuitions more than small ones (beyond the standard threshold of “minimal counter-intuitiveness”). If Big Gods are small gods that grew up, their worshippers adding new features to an old cult, the fact that Big Gods only appear in Big Groups would make sense. To me, neither the précis nor the book showed any strong evidence allowing this hypothesis to be dismissed.