



# VAN TILLIAN Apologetics

April 24th, 2022 - Part 3

Jon Kaus



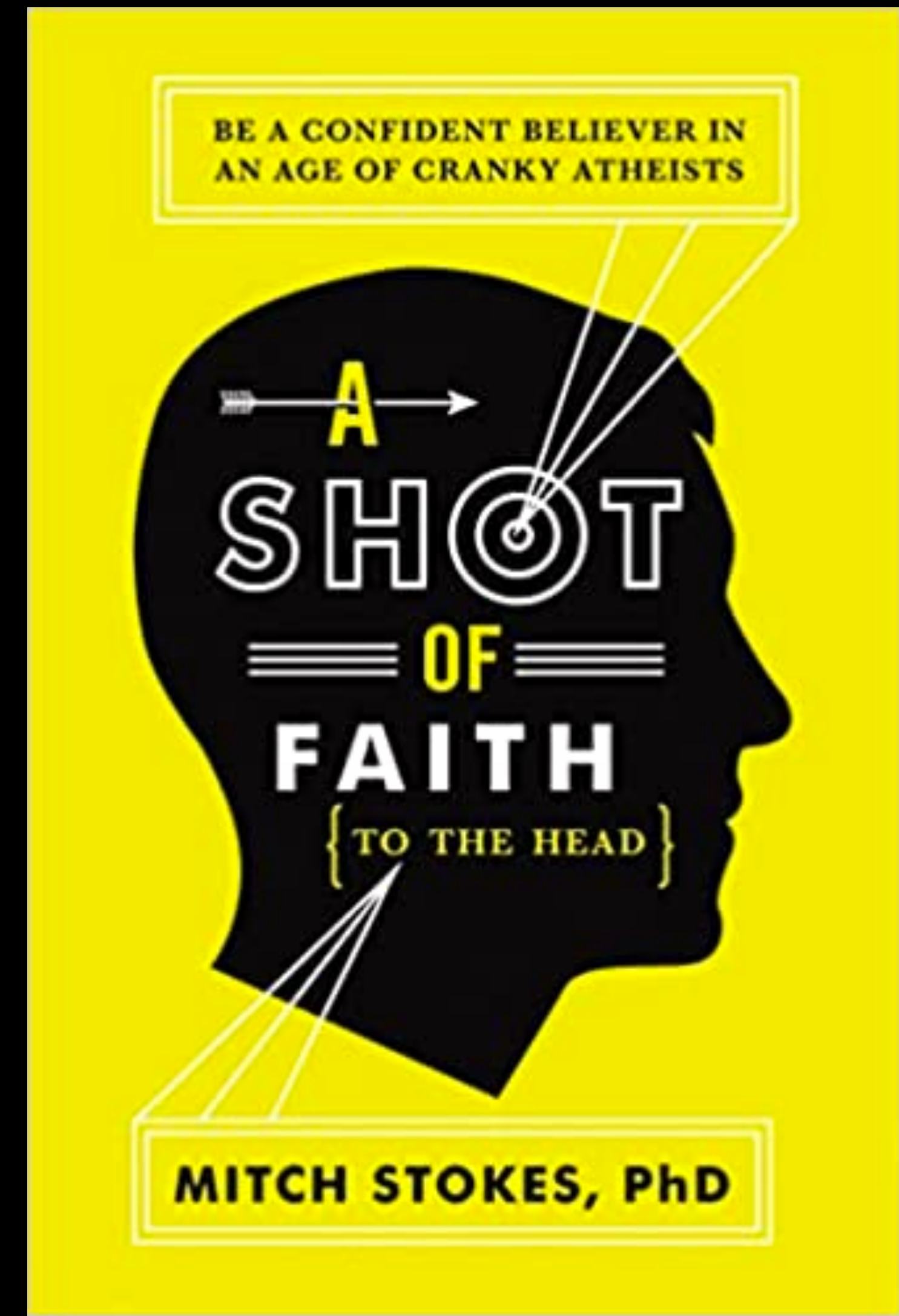
- 1 Critiqued fideism.
- 2 Attacks against Christianity require either defensive or offensive responses.
- 3 Differences in apologetic methodology arise when giving offensive responses.
- 4 Man's neutral experience is a basic commitment in all evidential arguments.
- 5 Demonstrated how to refute all evidential arguments.

As I said in the preface, the purpose of this book is to take a few of the most important intellectual weapons, tactics, and strategies from recent Christian philosophy and put them in your hands.

These are, in my estimation, the main things you need to know, providing excellent results with minimal effort.

Mitch Stokes

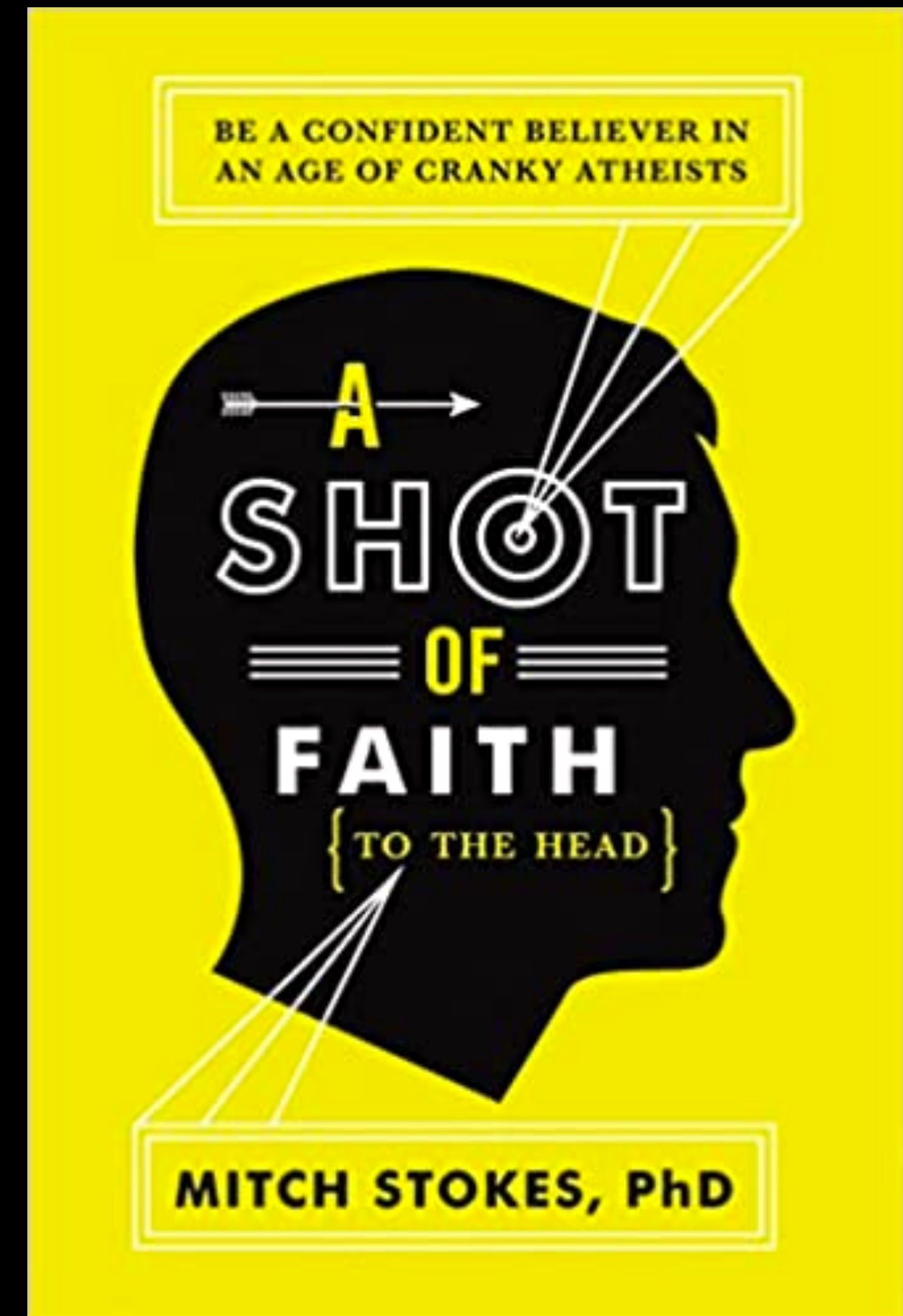
A Shot of Faith to the Head, xvii-xviii



Without these resources,  
we'll lose the current  
battle, leaving it for our  
children and  
grandchildren to fight.

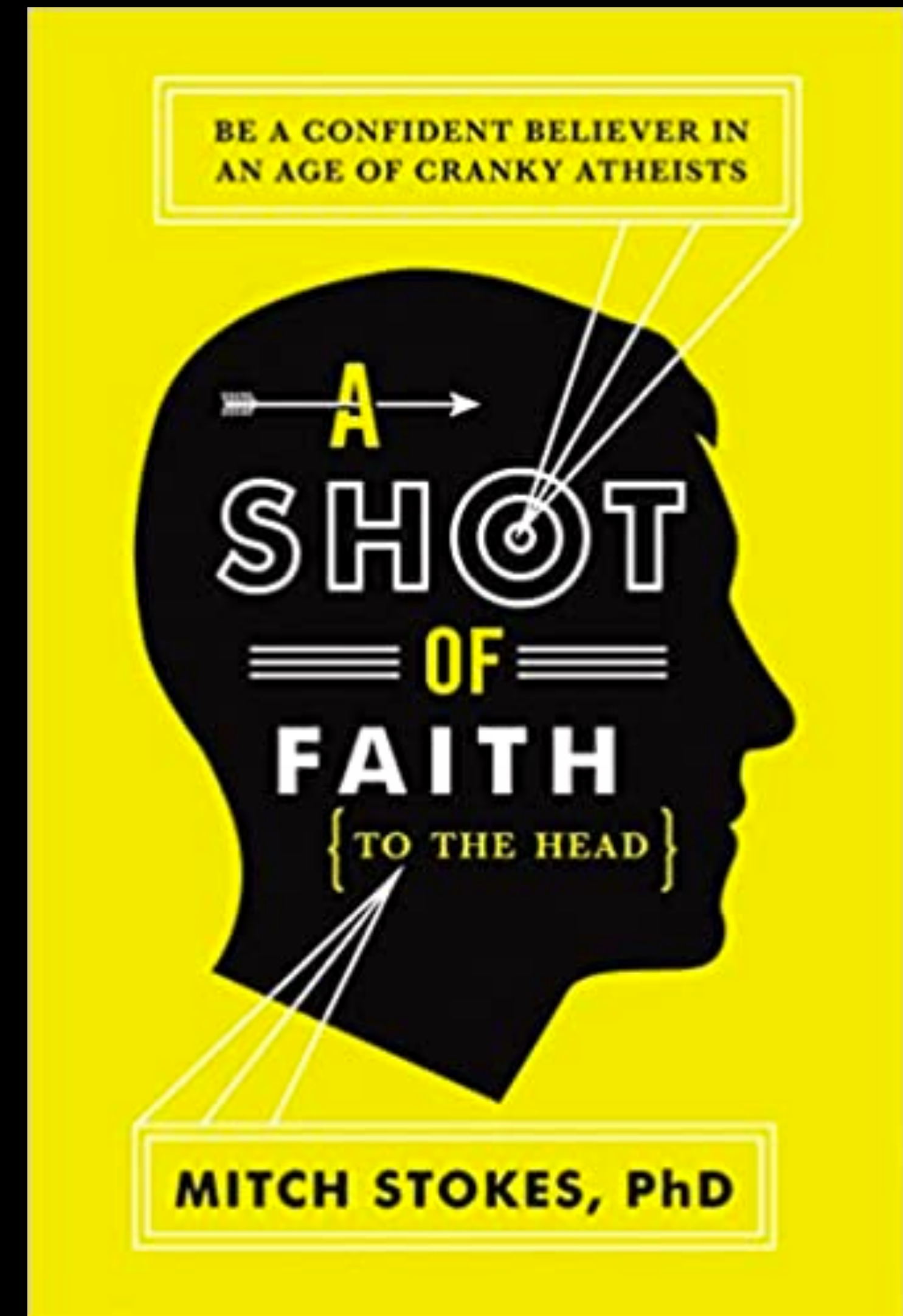
Mitch Stokes

*A Shot of Faith to the Head*, xvii-xviii

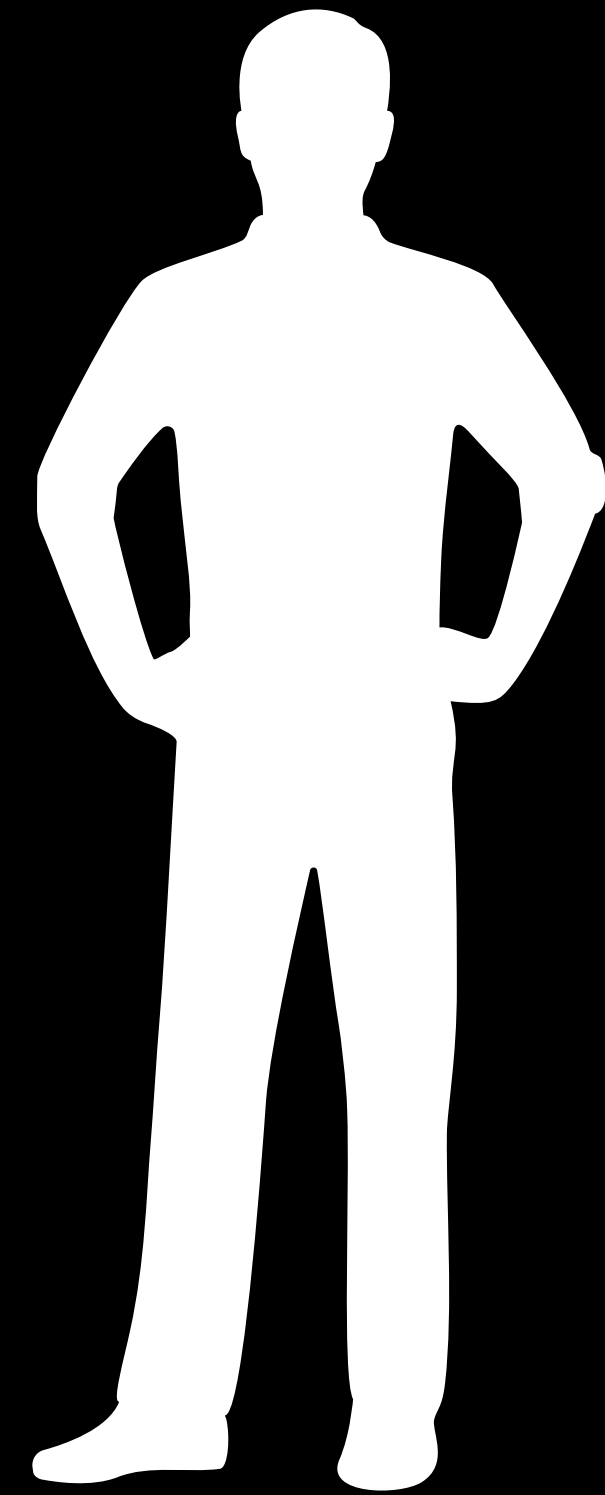
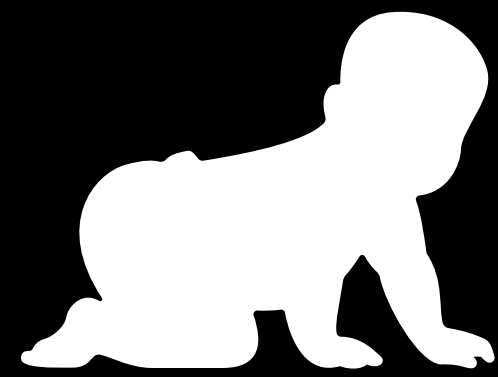


**1** Neutralize the objection that Christianity is Irrational

**2** Refute atheism with a high degree of probability



Christianity is irrational

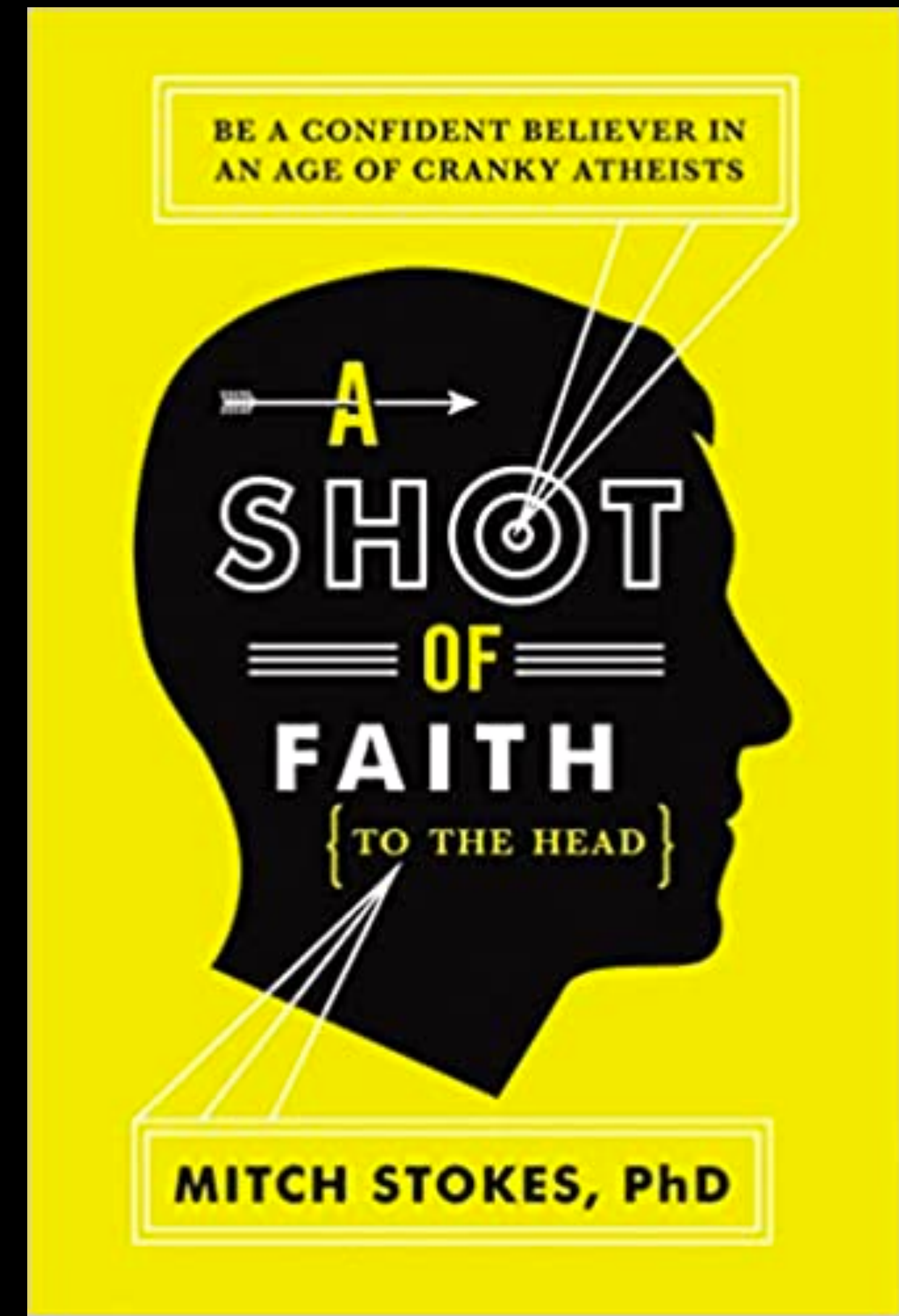


Christianity is irrational



Christianity is rational

# Properly Basic Beliefs

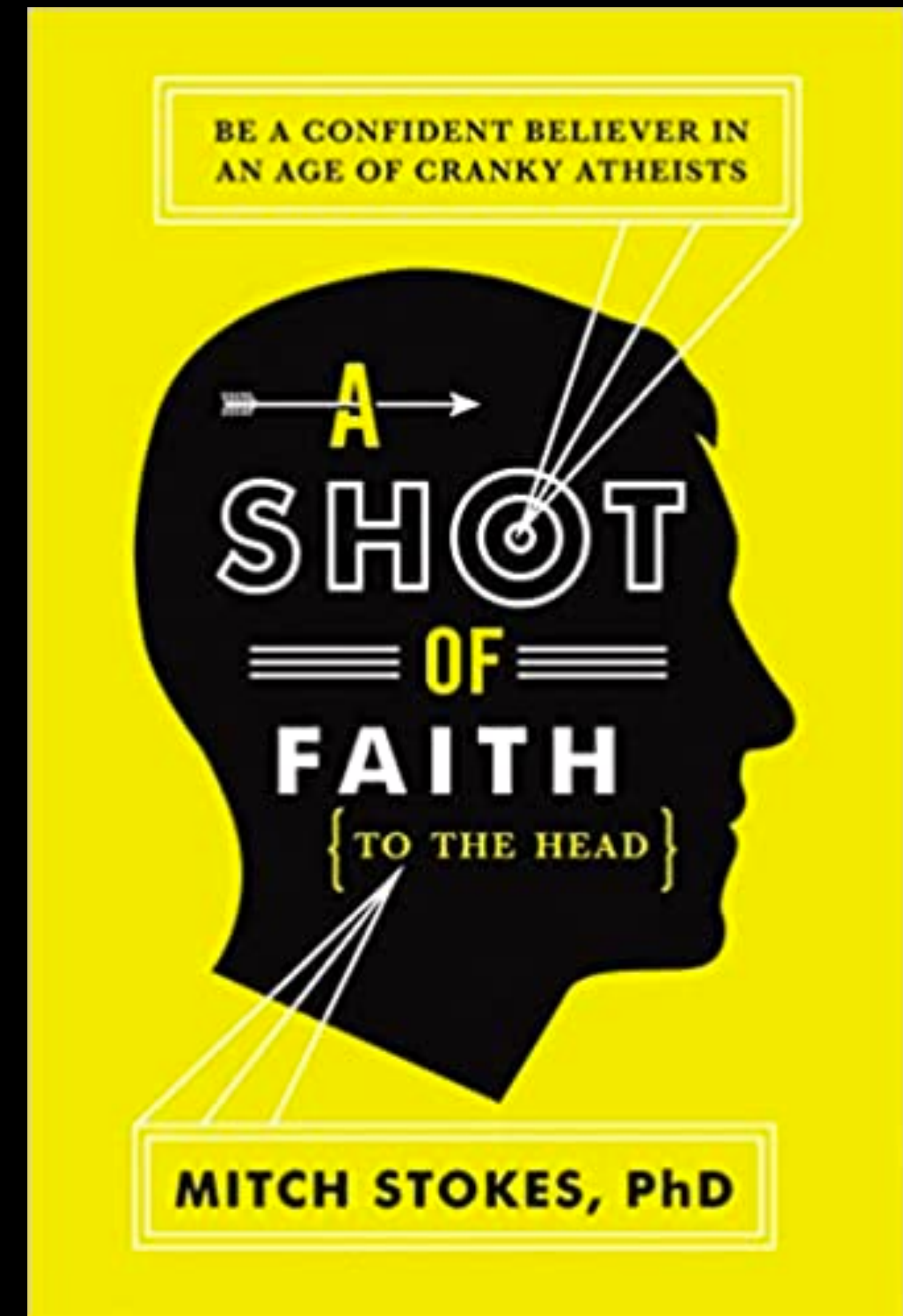




Even though **basic beliefs** have  
**no supporting arguments**,  
they're **not formed arbitrarily**.  
Rather, they're **immediately**  
**caused or triggered by**  
**experiences**.

Mitch Stokes

A Shot of Faith to the Head, 27



## Romans 1:18-25

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:



## Romans 1:18-25

21 Because that, when **they knew God**, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

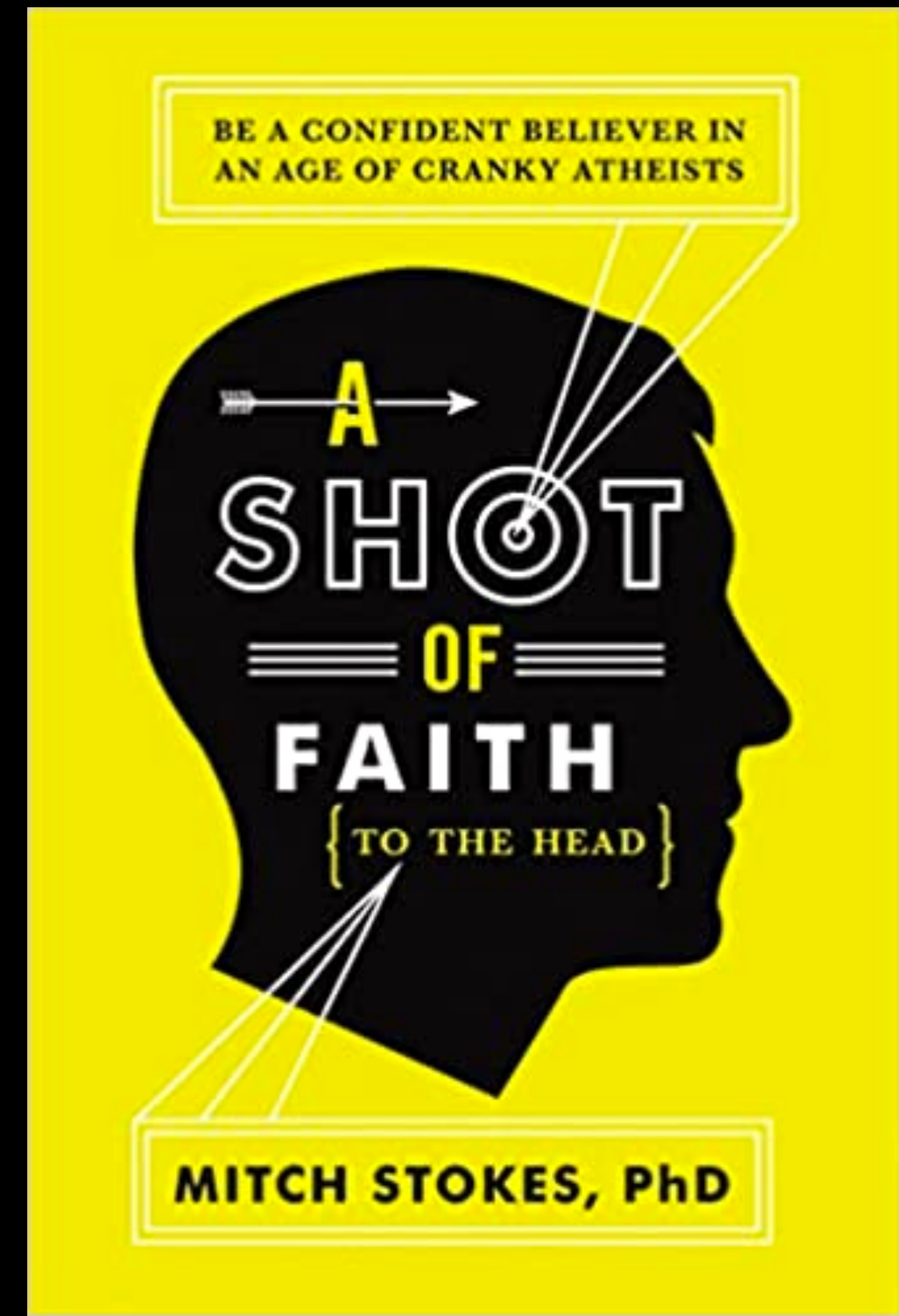
24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who **changed the truth of God into a lie**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Even though **basic beliefs** have  
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# Colossians 2:8

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

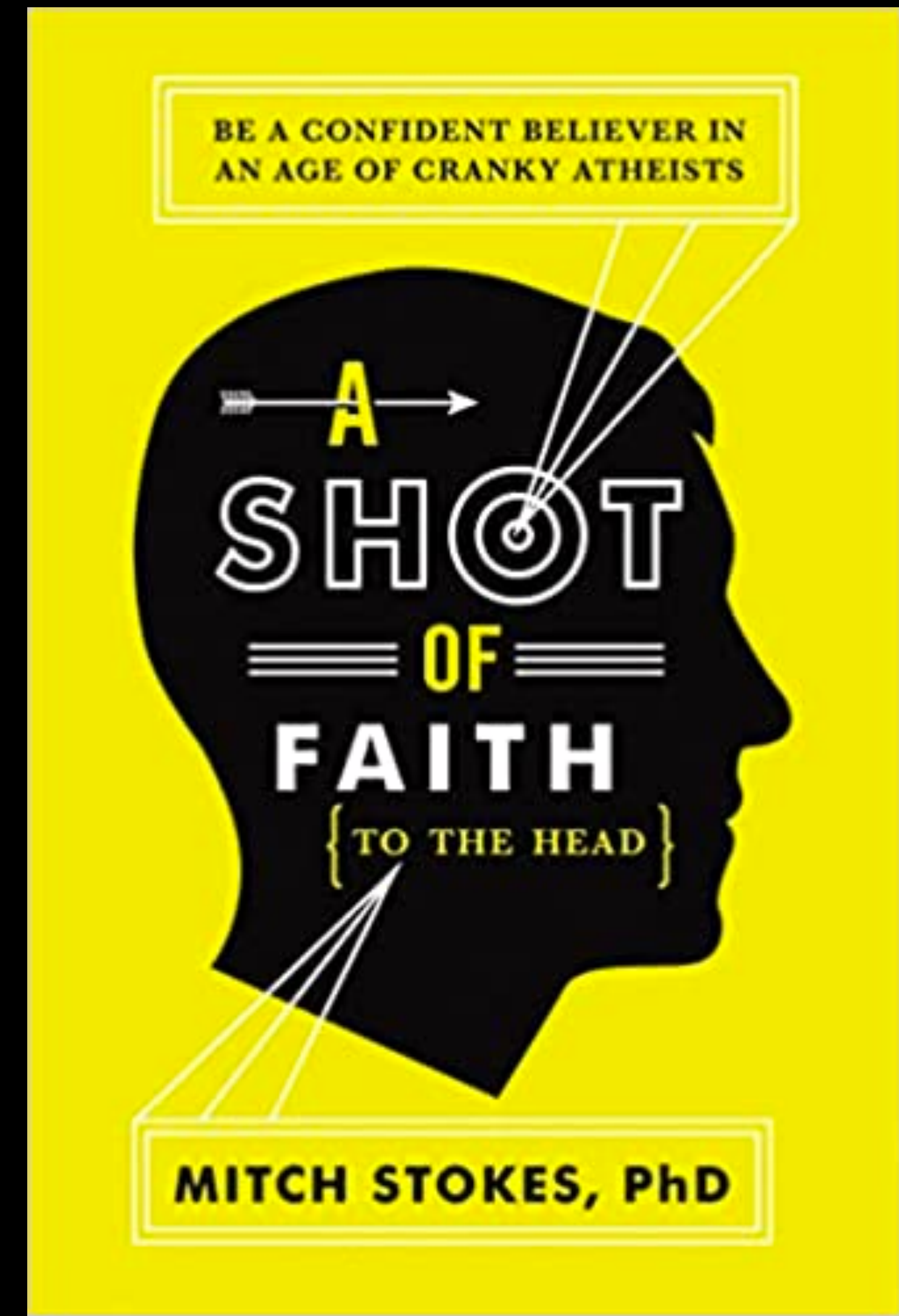
# Colossians 2:20

Wherefore if ye be **dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world**, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances.

Even though **basic beliefs** have  
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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 27

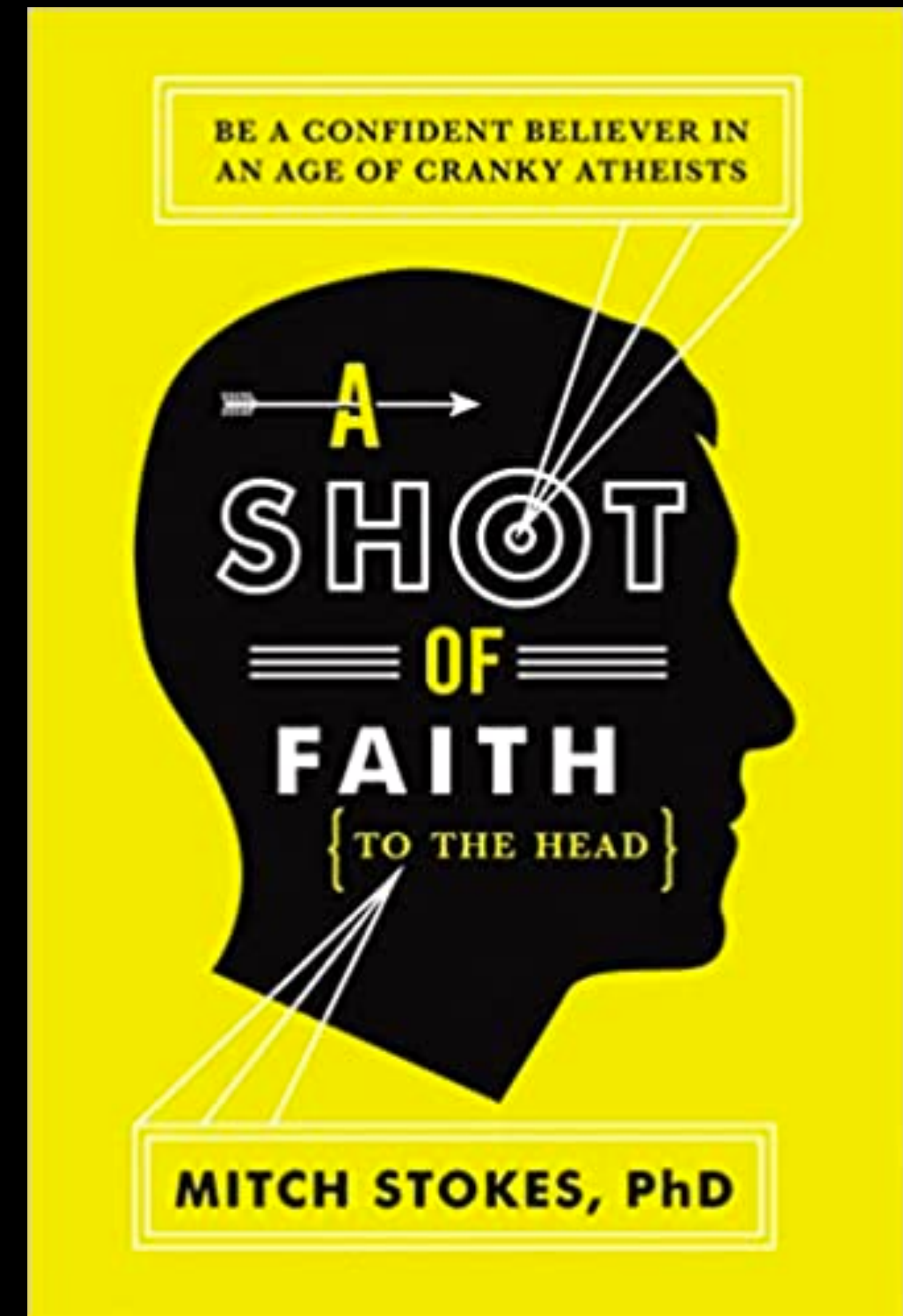




Whatever the case, arguments can dislodge belief in God. Belief in God, in other words, isn't immune to what we might call defeaters, arguments that provide enough evidence to overthrow or defeat your initial belief.

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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 65-66



Is Christianity rational?

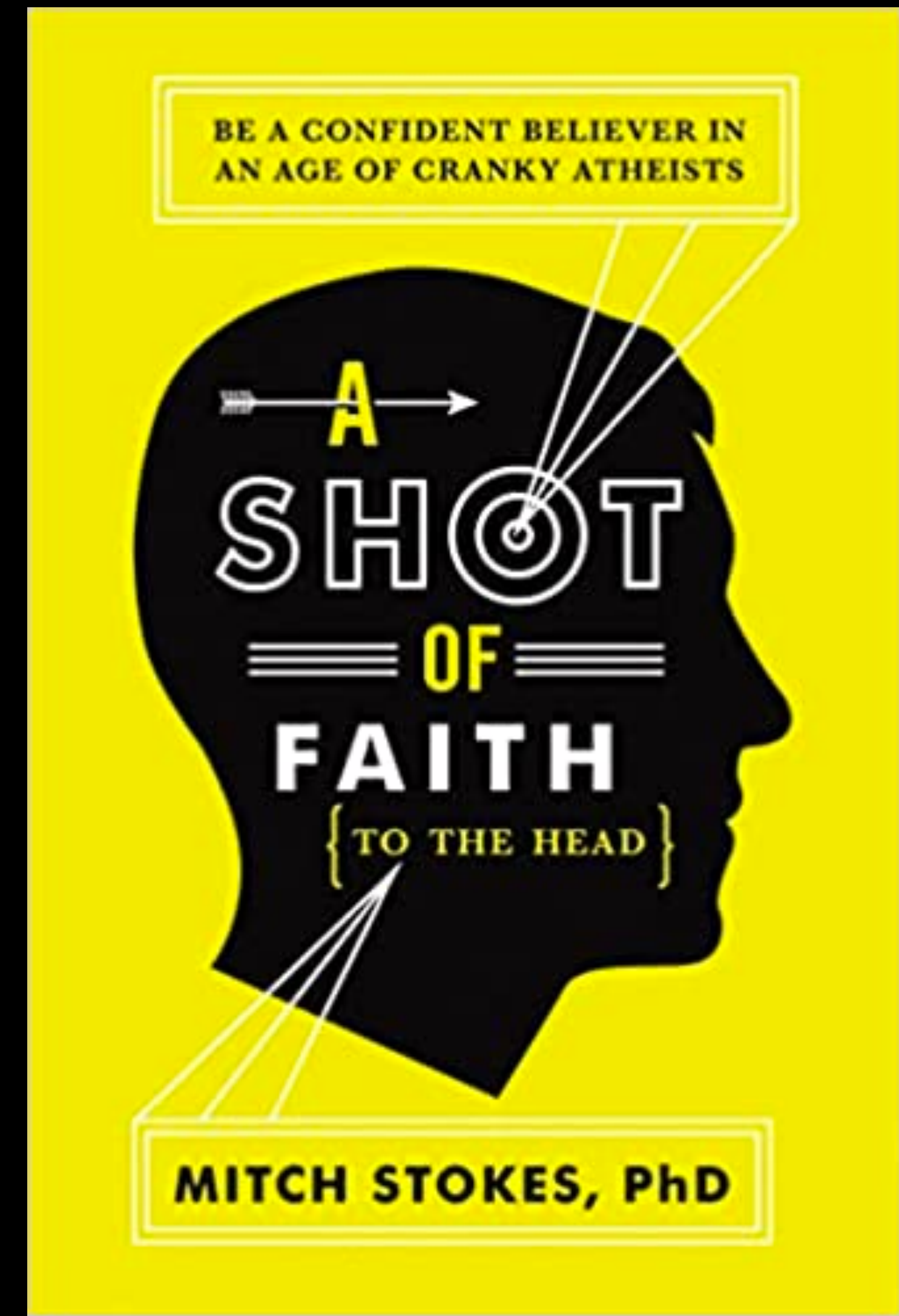
Only Christianity is rational



When it comes to arguing for God, Plantinga immediately concedes that he sees no way to conclusively prove that God exists. . . . So, very few arguments are unassailable, and the sooner we disavow ourselves of this impossible standard, the better.

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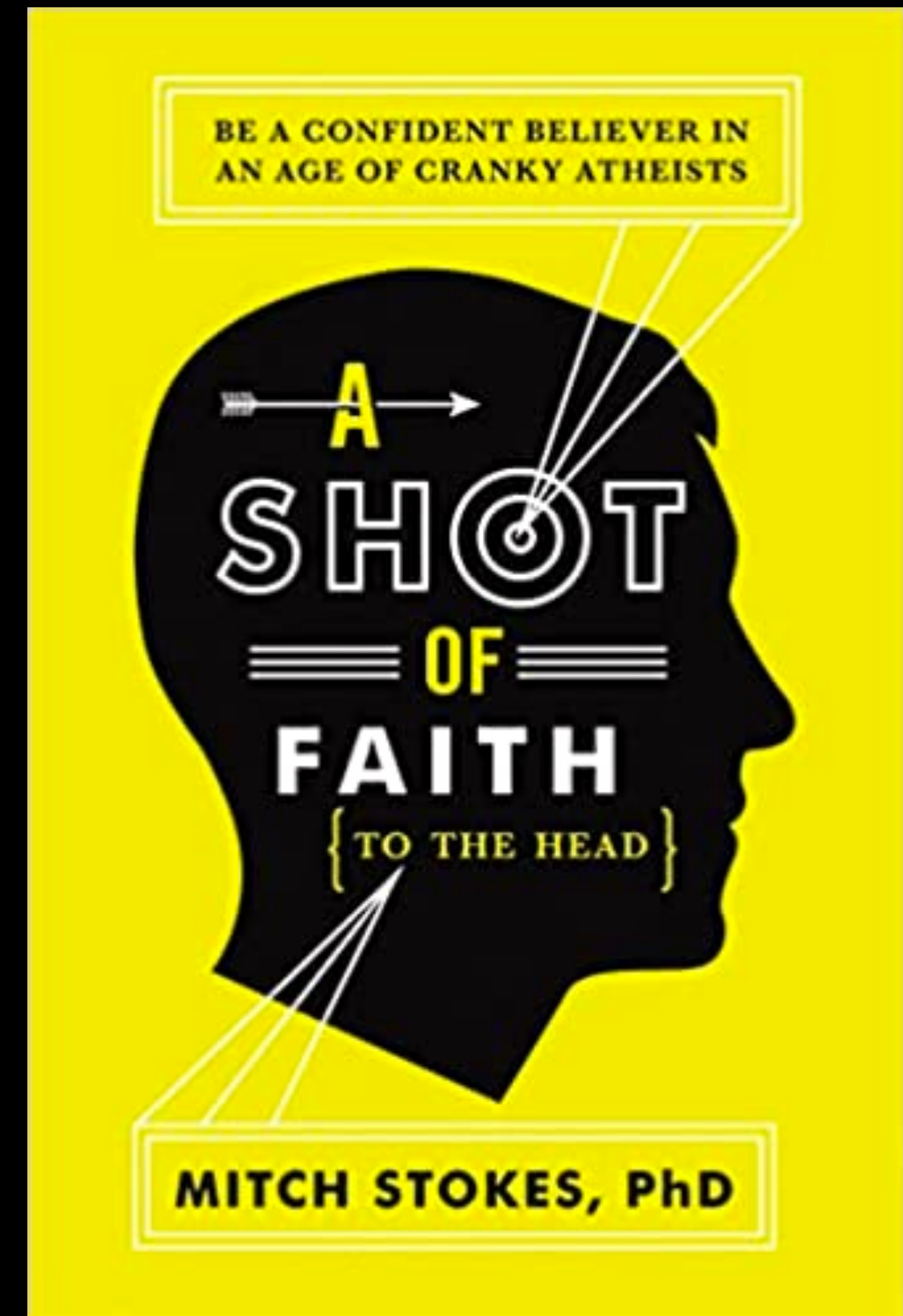
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 74



It's helpful to think about arguments for (and against) God's existence as providing clues rather than proofs. A clue isn't usually irrefutable evidence for some conclusion, but rather, it points toward a conclusion, suggesting one possibility over others.

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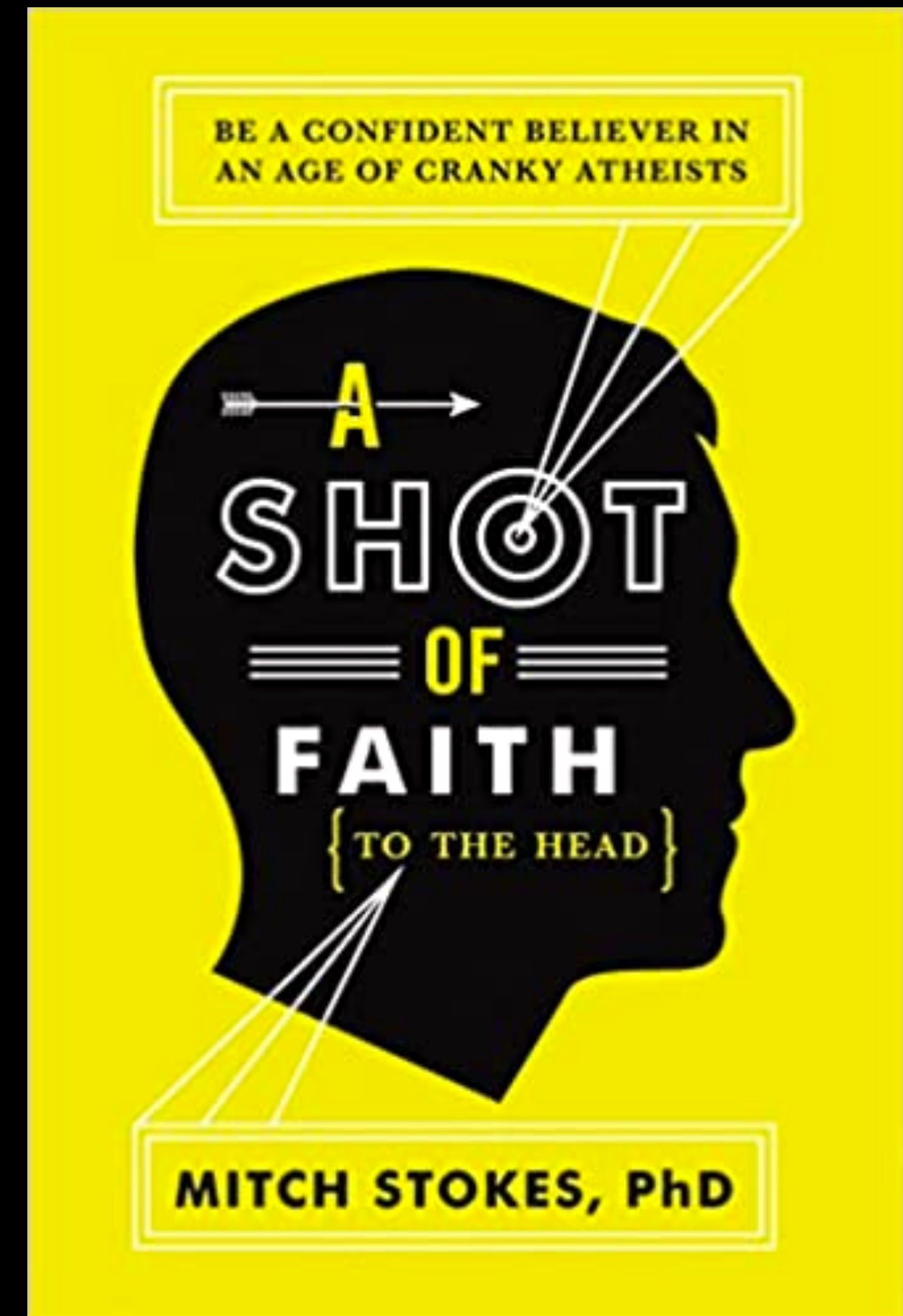
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 75



And even though there is almost always some uncertainty about where clues point, they still objectively restrict the options. Clues aren't compatible with just any old situation; otherwise they wouldn't be clues. Clues have to clue us in, lead us down a specific path.

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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 75

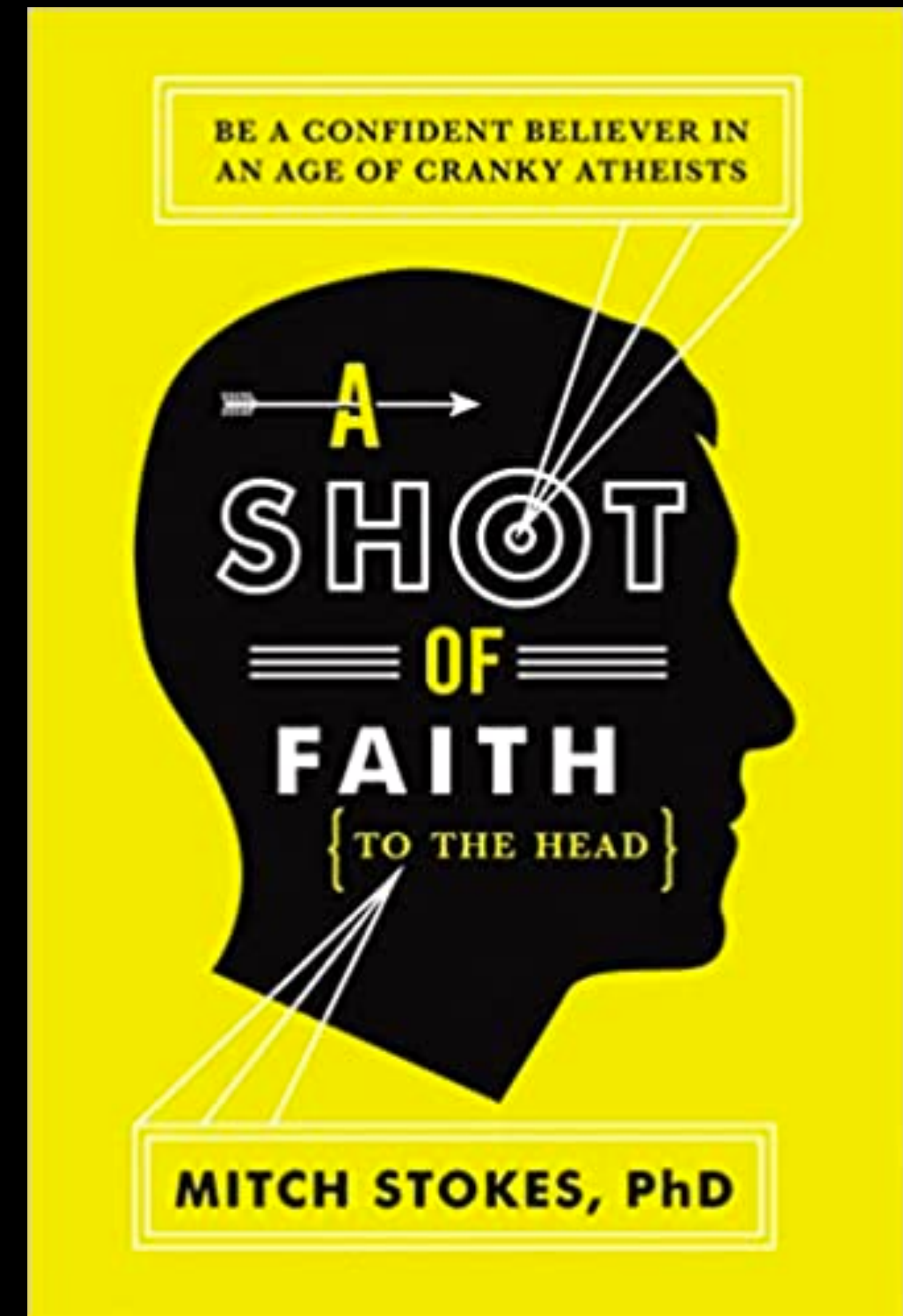




Rather than an irrefutable proof for (or against) God's existence, we should, at best, expect arguments that provide clues—arguments that, although not irrefutable, make the conclusion plausible.

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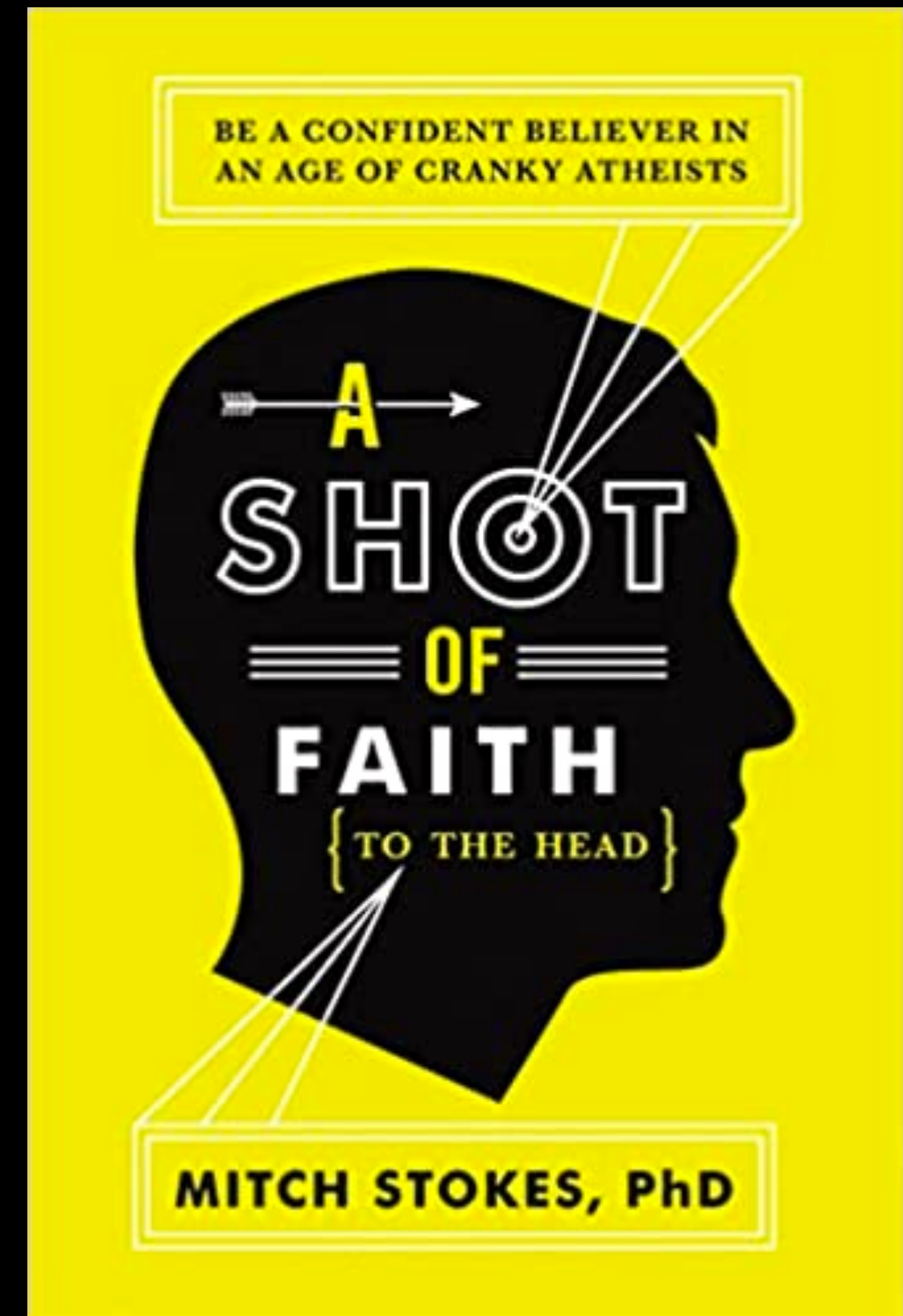
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 84



On the **Christian view of things**, the **sensus divinitatis** is just such a belief-forming mechanism, a naturally occurring one. It will **generally form beliefs closer to the truth, the less it is damaged**. Some people's **sensus divinitatis**

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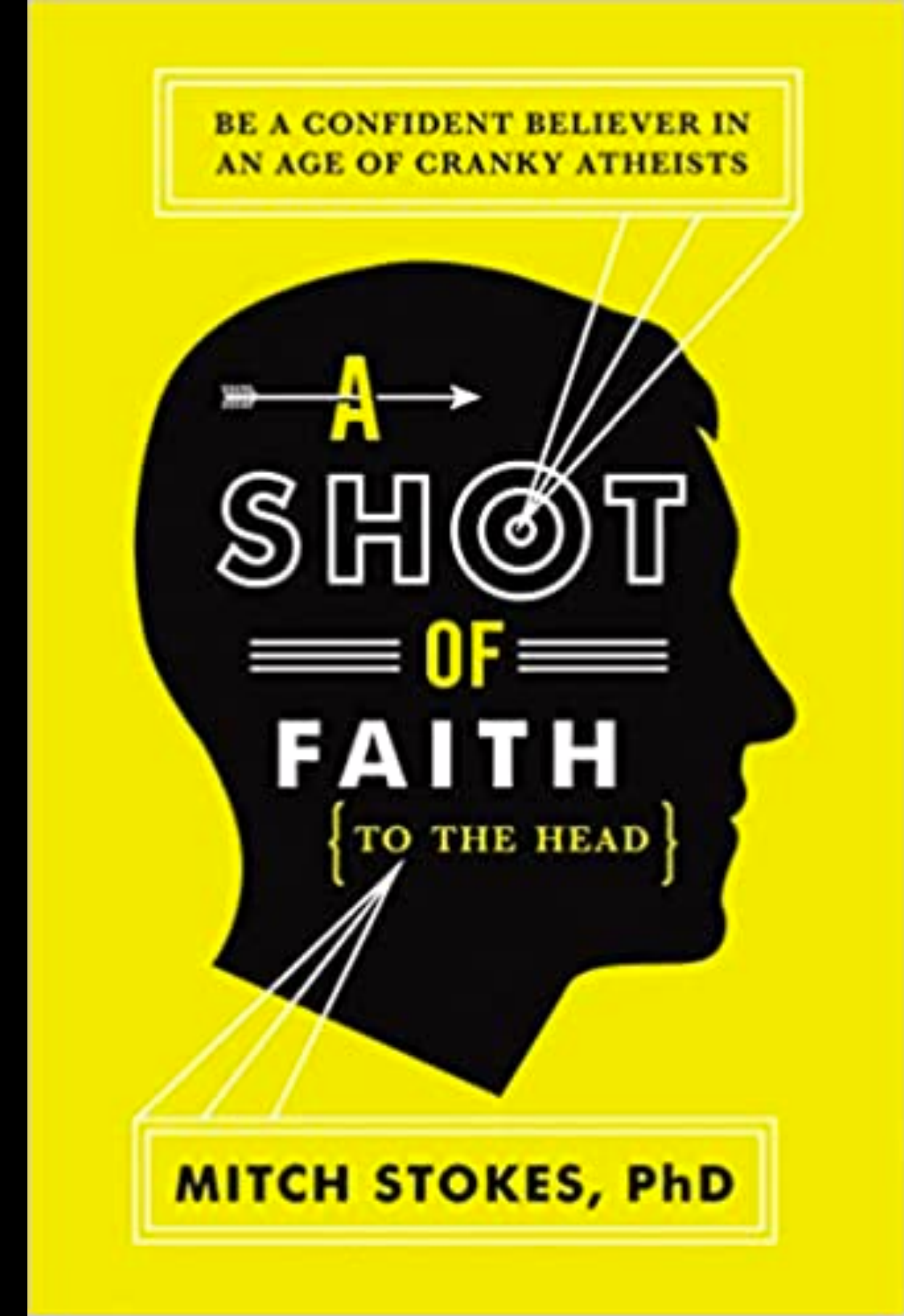
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 57-58



produces beliefs that are wide of the mark; in others, it is suppressed almost entirely. . . . And if you don't believe the gospel, yet believe in a god of some kind, this belief, too, can be rational to some degree, since it was likely formed by your sensus divinitatis, albeit one not dialed in.

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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 57-58

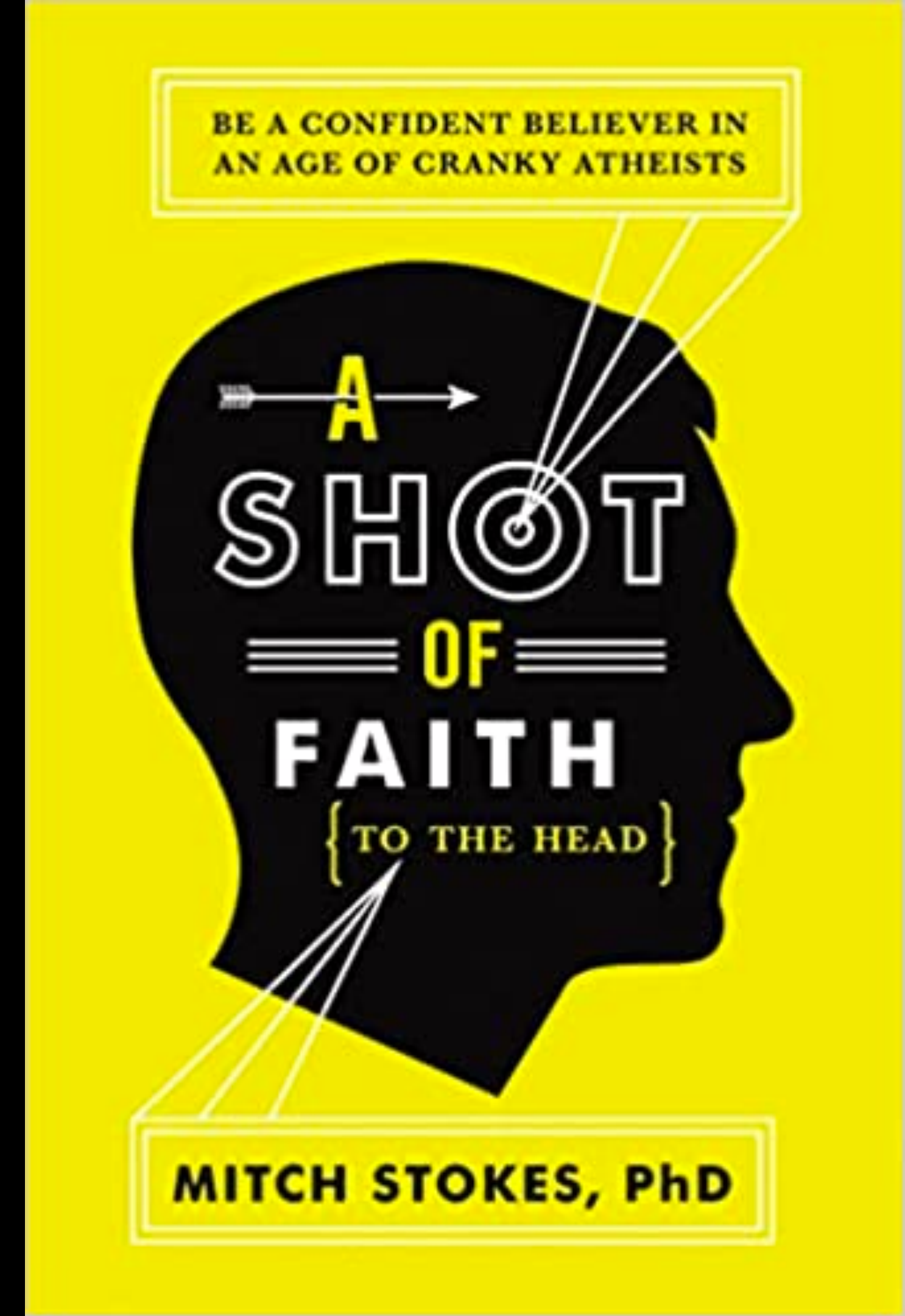




As an aside, **Romans 1 and Psalm 19** have traditionally been used to support “natural theology,” the practice of arguing for God’s existence without reliance on Scripture. But I think this use misses the point of these passages—**they say nothing at all about arguments.**

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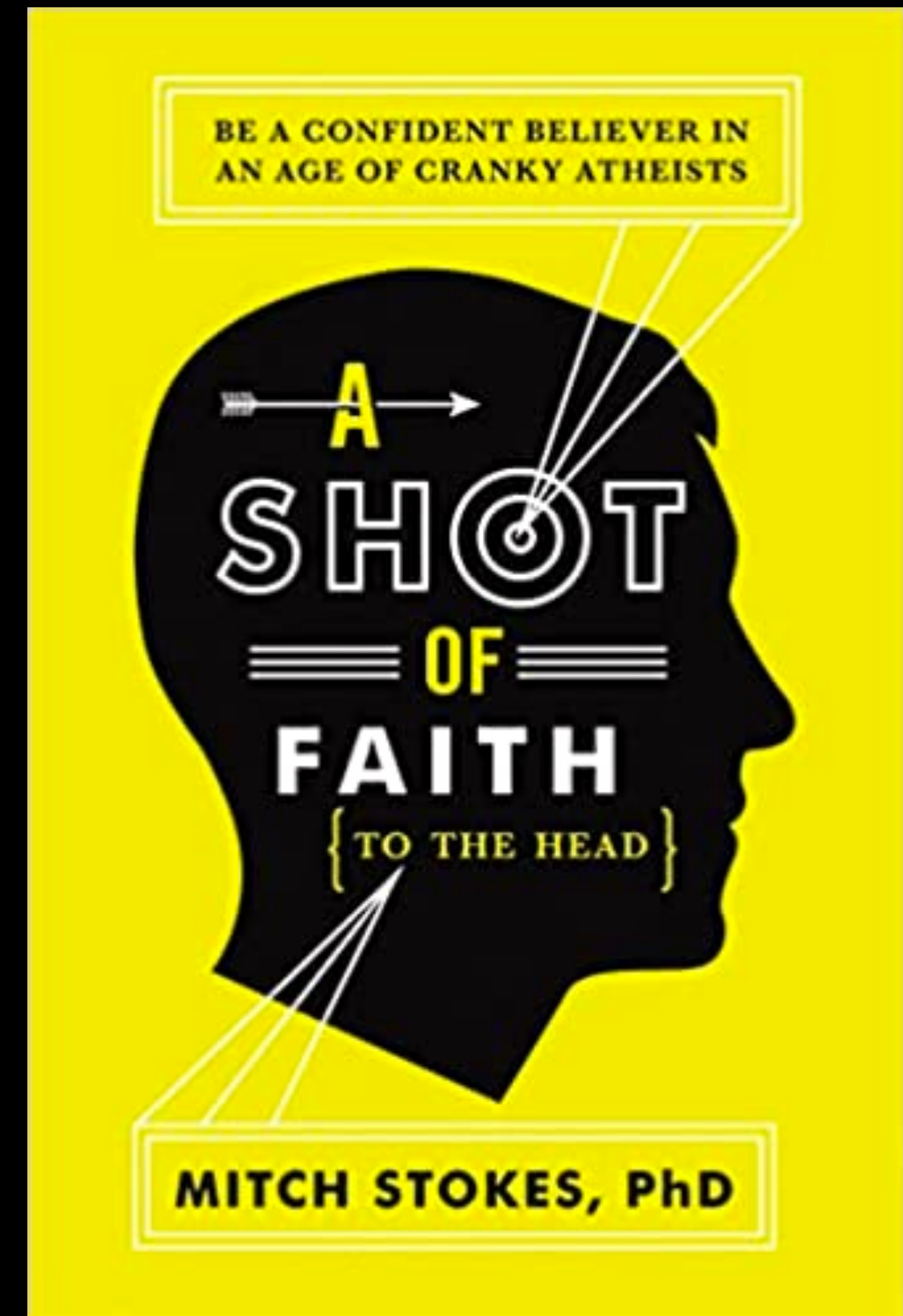
*A Shot of Faith to the Head*, 96



Instead, they use the metaphors of sense perception and testimony. Nature just shows us God's glory; we just see God's attributes. Arguments are the least of it.

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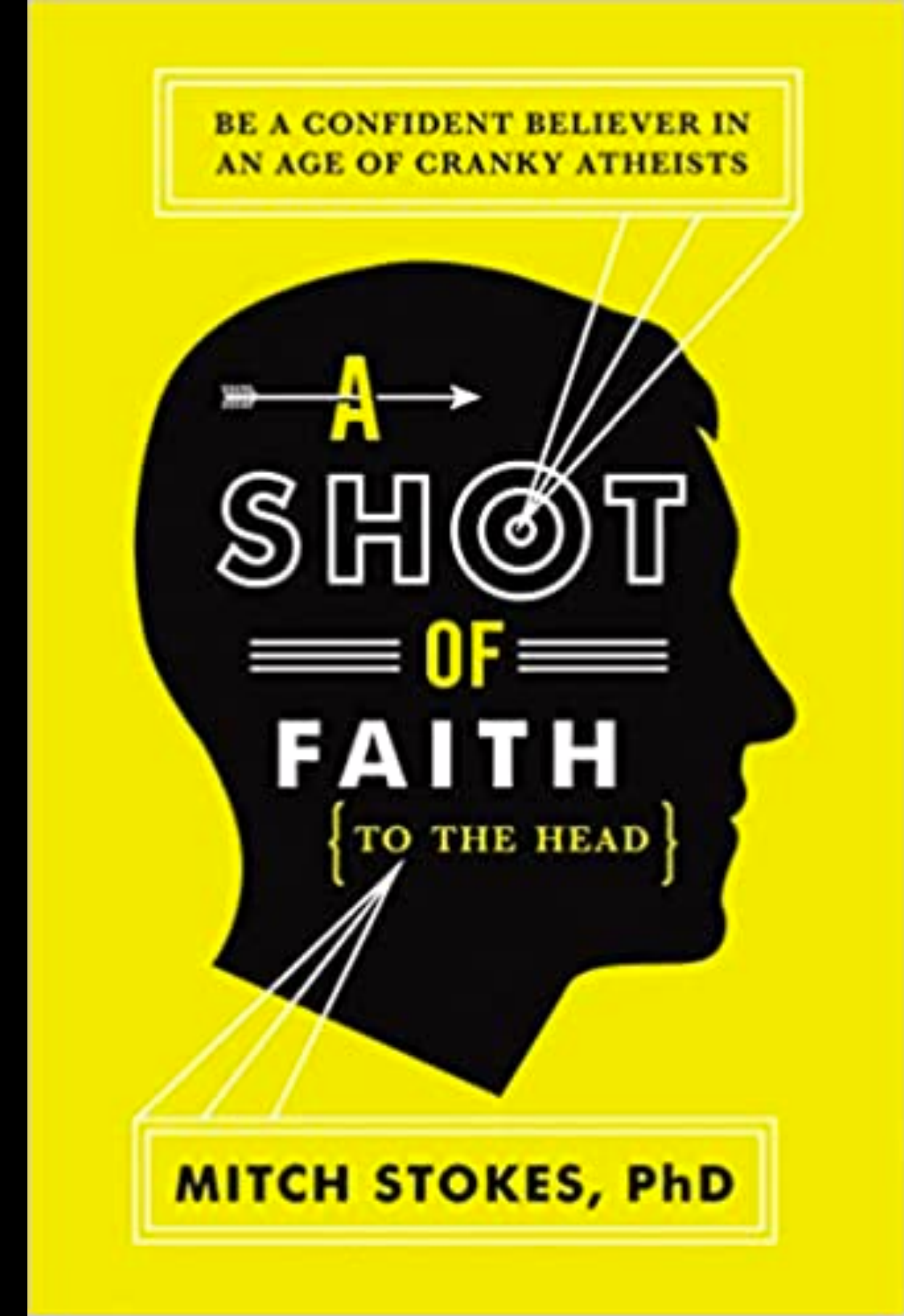
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 96



Again, there's an important difference between the claim that belief in God is irrational and the claim that God doesn't exist. **God could exist without there being any evidence for his existence.** There are surely all sorts of things that exist for which we have no evidence.

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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 65

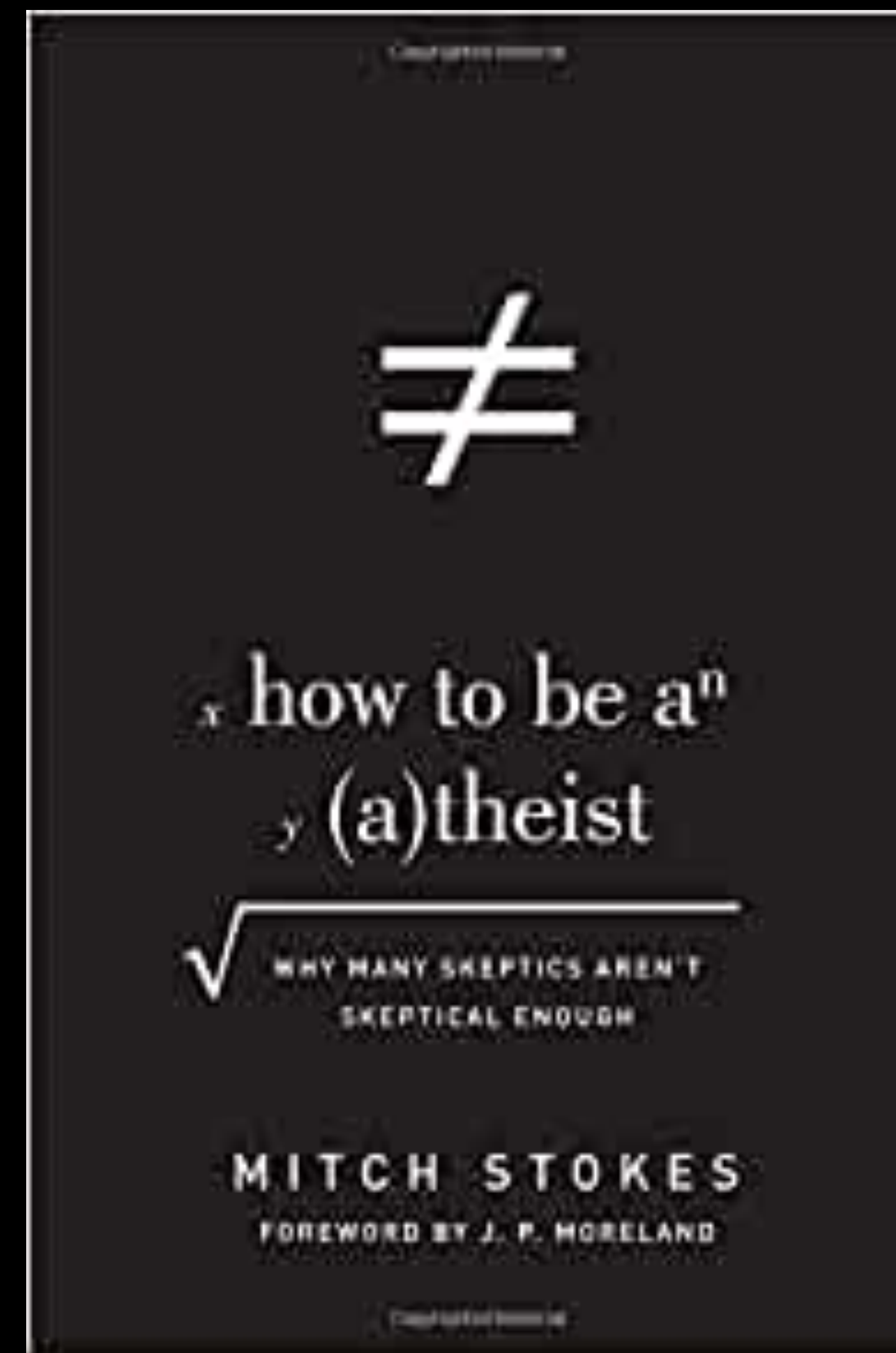




But weakening, or even defeating my belief that God is the universe's cause wouldn't take away my ground for believing that God exists. . . . And even if Hawking and Krauss's arguments were entirely successful, the most they may have shown is that it's not impossible that God didn't create the universe.

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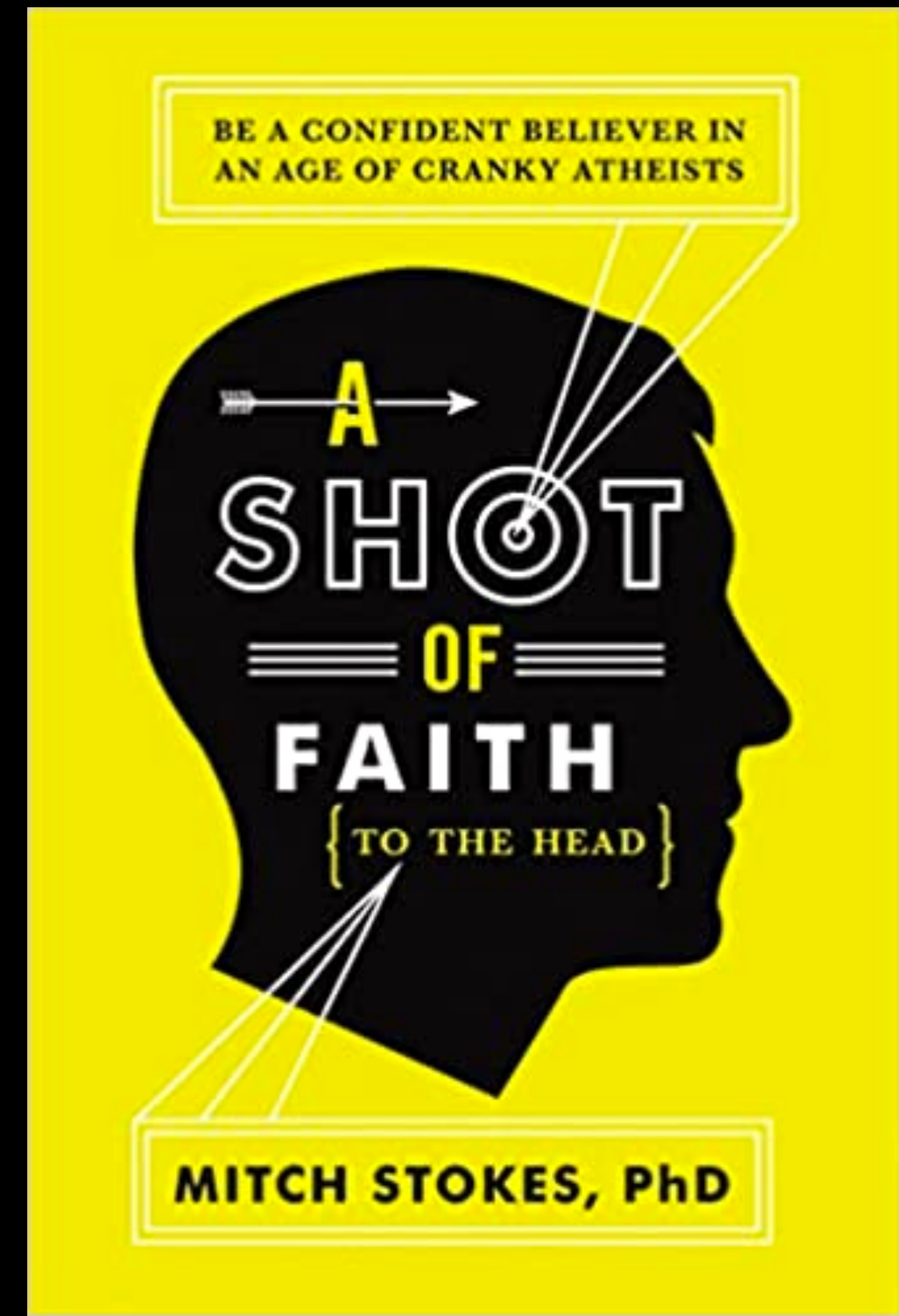
How to Be an Atheist, 146



So, Platinga argues—using some fairly sophisticated logical machinery—that, for all we know, God might not have been able to create free men who always do what is right, even though he's all powerful. Again, the reason it's possible that God couldn't have

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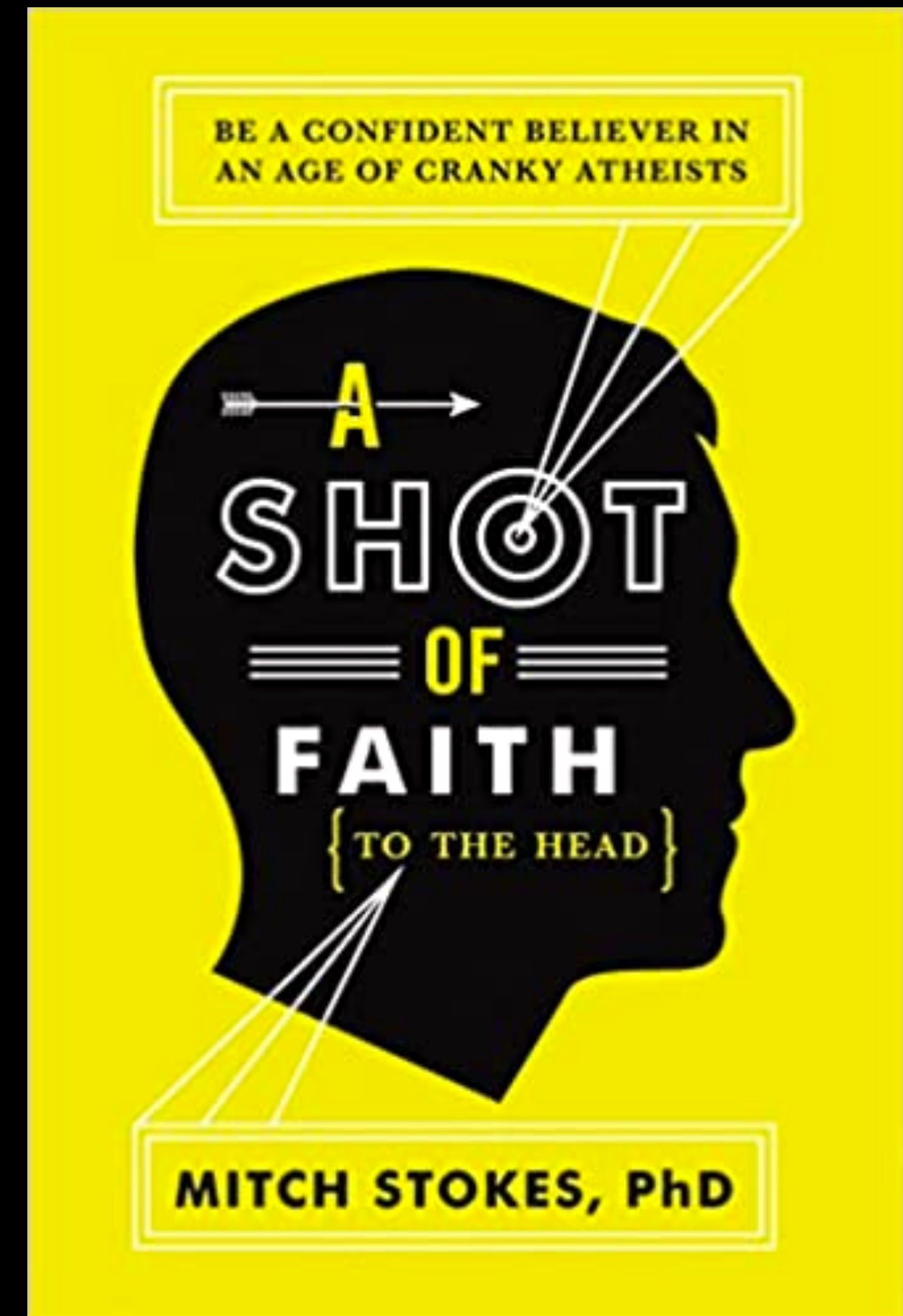
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 192-193



done this has to do with the nature of freedom and the fact that no one can be forced to freely do something. The situation Platinga describes is at least possible (although I think it is close to the sober truth).

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A Shot of Faith to the Head, 192-193

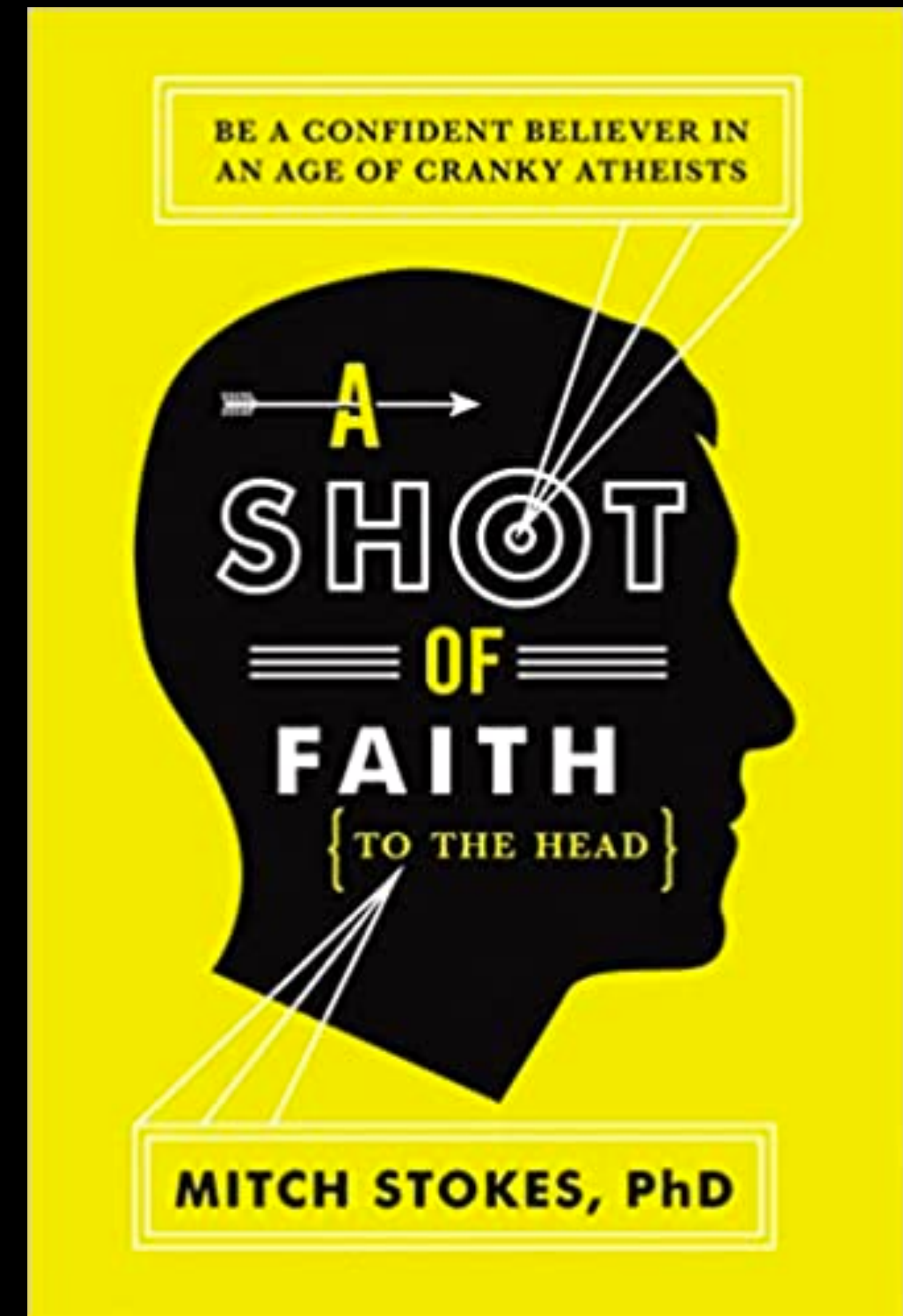




Even if God, in order to avoid making puppets pressed into loving him, had to create humans with free will and therefore with **the distinct possibility of turning away from God**, this doesn't explain the origin of our initial desire to rebel.

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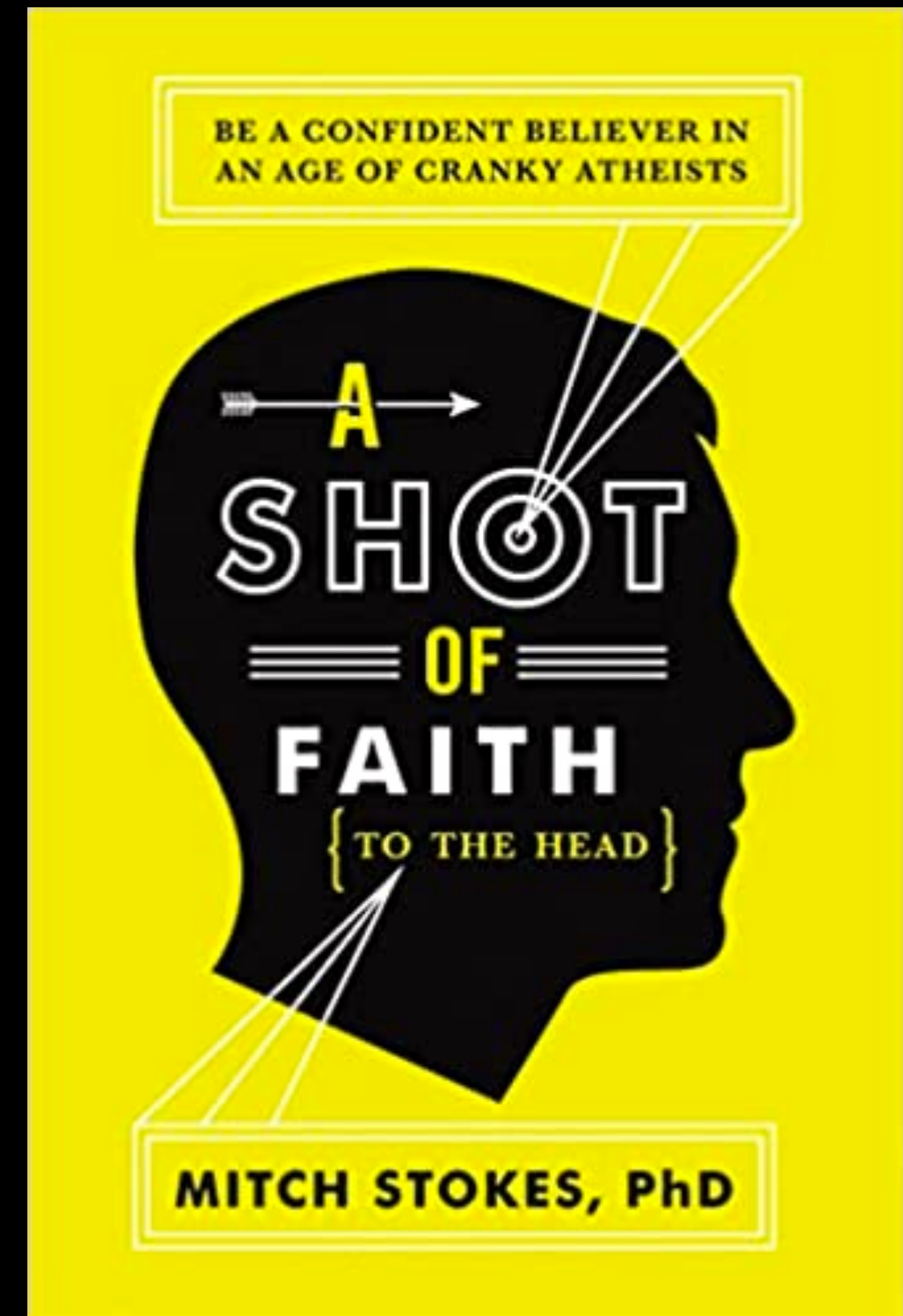
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 1971



If so, then there would be the **risk** of these impressive creatures wishing to see themselves exalted. And perhaps **this danger is extremely great.**

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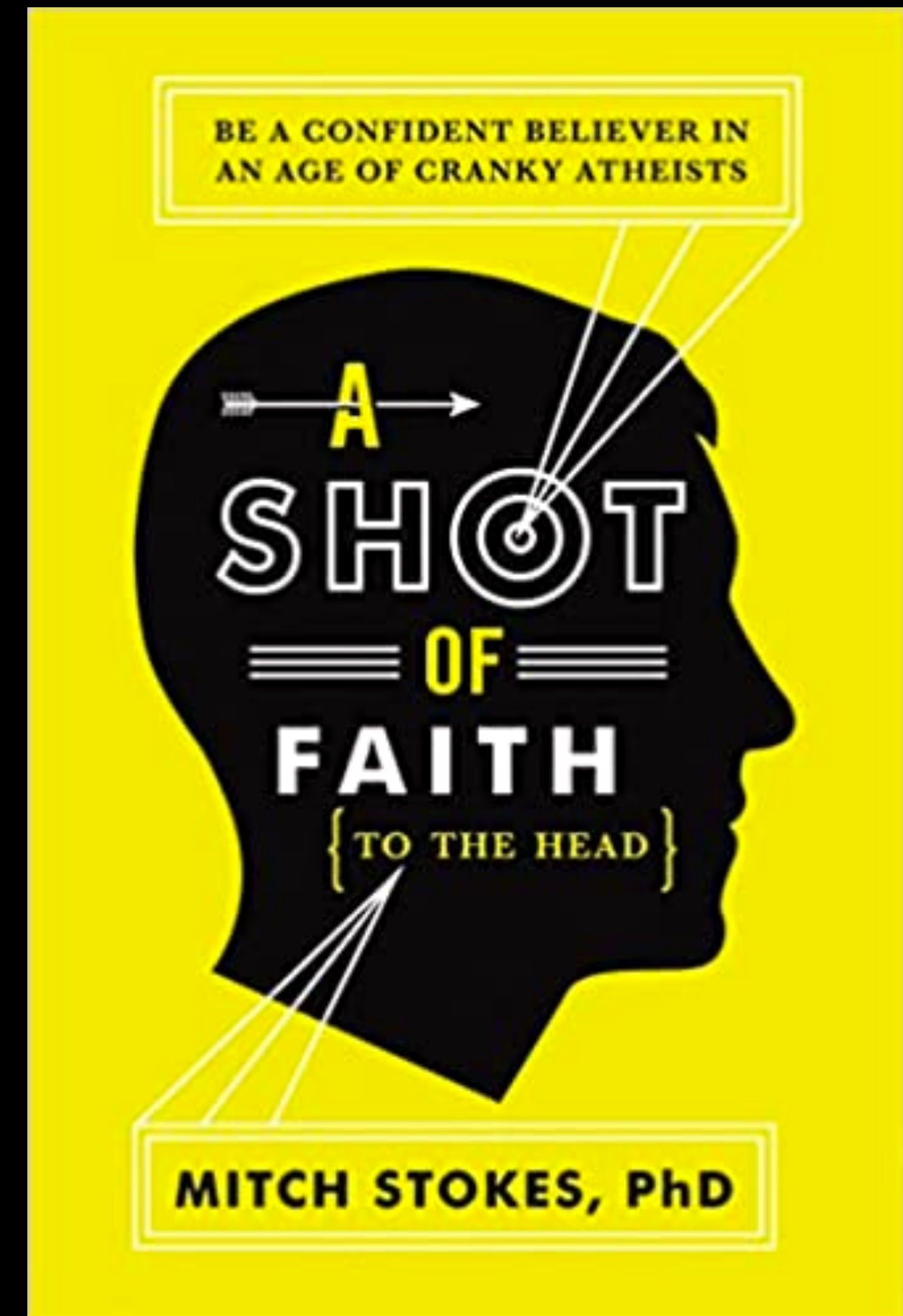
A Shot of Faith to the Head, 198



And perhaps, furthermore, the risk was well worth it, despite present appearances; after all, God had in mind a daring and costly plan to rescue our race in case that danger materialized.

Mitch Stokes

A Shot of Faith to the Head, 1988





Schaeffer should have  
heeded his own advice:  
once **autonomy is allowed**  
in any realm of our thought  
it will **engulf the whole.**

Greg Bahnsen

Presuppositional Apologetics, 257

