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Evidence and Religious Belief

edited by

KELLY JAMES CLARK AND
RAYMOND J. VANARRAGON

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Kelly James Clark
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To George Mavrodes
In gratitude

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Introduction

Questions about the relation between evidence and religious belief have been front and center in recent philosophy of religion. This book takes up three of them. One question asks whether religious belief needs to be based on evidence in order to be justified, rational, or warranted. A second asks how what evidence we have for or against religious belief can depend on other factors, including our desires, attitudes, and background beliefs. A third question asks what evidence there actually is for and against particular religious beliefs. In this introduction we will sum up some of the contemporary discussion of these questions, in order to provide some background and context for the chapters to come.

1 Evidentialism and Reformed epistemology

The first question, we said, has to do with whether religious belief, in order to enjoy certain kinds of positive epistemic status, must be based on evidence. This topic has been among the most hotly debated in the last thirty years, and prominent philosophers have staked out positions that are diametrically opposed to each other. We'll briefly explore them here. On one side, evidentialists, whose contemporary adherents follow such luminaries as David Hume and W. K. Clifford, claim that religious belief must only be held on the basis of evidence, and that if it isn't, then such belief is deficient and irrational. On the other side, so-called Reformed epistemologists, echoing (from a distance) the pronouncements of John Calvin, claim that religious belief need not be based on evidence and should instead be thought of as properly basic, so that, for example, belief in God can serve as evidence without needing any itself. Religious beliefs can enjoy positive epistemic status, say Reformed epistemologists, but that status typically comes from something other than evidence. (And maybe it *has to* come from something else: many Reformed epistemologists hold that the evidence for religious claims is insufficient to justify belief in them.)

Evidentialists themselves fall into different camps: some believe that the evidence favors religious belief like belief in God, and some do not. For both camps the arguments for God's existence, in their many guises, are of great significance. If successful, they constitute the rock on which theistic religious beliefs can safely be built; but if not, then such beliefs should be abandoned even if they are true. Hence

the project of Natural Theology, understood roughly as the attempt to produce an argument for God's existence that would compel any rational person to accept it, is for evidentialists an enterprise where a great deal is at stake.

For Reformed epistemologists, the value of arguments for God's existence (and for other religious beliefs) is obviously limited. Not only are they unnecessary for rational belief in God, but, some allege, there may even be something wrong or impious with the pursuit of them, something reflecting a lack of faith or trust in God. Indeed, searching for evidence for God, and having one's belief depend on acquiring it, may be like perversely having one's belief that other people have minds depend on acquiring a convincing philosophical argument that they do. More modestly, some Reformed epistemologists suggest that arguments can 'prepare the way' for belief in God or perhaps help to shore up the faith the believer already has; but for the most part whatever positive epistemic status religious belief has comes from elsewhere.

Alvin Plantinga has been as responsible as anyone for pursuing this line of reasoning, and in the last twenty years he has developed a full-blooded theory of knowledge that bolsters the Reformed epistemologist's contention about the proper place of evidence. On Plantinga's theory, often called *proper functionalism*, all beliefs that have warrant—that quality enough of which turns true belief into knowledge—get it by virtue of the degree to which they are the products of properly functioning, reliably truth-aimed cognitive faculties, operating in the sort of environment for which they were designed.¹ For example, a visual belief acquires warrant not from being based on evidence but instead by virtue of how it is produced. Although some beliefs produced by our cognitive apparatus are first acquired on the basis of evidence, their connection to evidence is not fundamentally what gives them warrant. We may even cite evidence in explaining why we believe as we do; but in fact the evidence is almost incidental to the warrant that the beliefs have.

This theory in hand, Plantinga has gone on to argue that if belief in God is produced by the *sensus divinitatus*, a faculty which, by hypothesis, is part of our natural cognitive endowment and which generates belief in God in response to certain kinds of experiences, then that belief has warrant. This faculty does not require arguments as inputs—it produces foundational beliefs, beliefs that aren't themselves based on other beliefs, even though they can quite properly be used as evidence for other beliefs. Further, Plantinga argues, if specifically Christian beliefs (belief in the incarnation, atonement, trinity) are produced by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in us, they too have warrant despite the fact that evidence plays no role in their acquisition. Such beliefs are produced by properly functioning faculties and on that account they enjoy the same epistemic status that ordinary perceptual beliefs enjoy. Or at least they can enjoy that status, provided they are in fact produced in that way. An important part

¹ Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1993).

of his book *Warranted Christian Belief*² contains Plantinga's argument that if God exists and specifically Christian beliefs are true, then those beliefs probably are produced in those ways and hence probably are warranted. Critics, both Christian and not, have protested that it would be really nice if Plantinga would provide evidence that Christian beliefs are in fact true so that we might determine whether they are warranted; but Plantinga contends that the evidence available is not sufficient to settle the matter. Fortunately, on his view, such evidence is not needed, either.

Thus we have two positions, evidentialism and Reformed epistemology, offering opposing answers to the central question of whether religious belief must be based on evidence in order to be rational, justified, or the like. In recent years both positions have faced challenges. Here we shall consider a challenge to evidentialism and some responses which may serve to bridge the gap between it and Reformed epistemology. Doing so will help to set the context for the essays in Part I of this book.

2 Challenge and responses

An important challenge to evidentialism has been to its overall viability as an epistemological theory. The suggestion that all beliefs require evidence in order to be justified raises the specter of a vicious regress, particularly when the evidence in question must be *propositional*—that is, must take the form of other beliefs. (If so, then a belief must be justified by another, which must be justified by another, and so on ad infinitum, leaving it unclear how any belief could acquire justification in the first place.) That indeed is how Reformed epistemologists, led again by Plantinga, have often construed evidentialism.³ And they have not done so without reason. As Laurence Bonjour argued, a justification for a belief is a reason to think the belief is true, and it seems an essential feature of such reasons that they have propositional content and take the form of beliefs themselves.⁴ To avoid the regress, most evidentialists endorse some version of foundationalism and grant that certain beliefs need not be held on the basis of propositional evidence but instead can serve as the foundations of a doxastic system, passing justification (and other desirable epistemic properties) on to other beliefs without acquiring it from other beliefs themselves. Foundationalisms come in a variety of flavors, depending on their claims about how justification gets passed up the chain and, more importantly for our purposes, about what sorts of beliefs can serve in the foundation, and why.

Plantinga, in his original attack on evidentialism, chose what he labeled 'classical foundationalism' as his target. Classical foundationalism states that only beliefs which

² New York, Oxford University Press, 2000.

³ See especially Plantinga, 'Reason and Belief in God' in Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff (eds.), *Faith and Rationality* (Notre Dame, IN, Notre Dame Press, 1984), pp. 16–93.

⁴ Laurence Bonjour, 'Can Empirical Knowledge Have a Foundation?' (1978), *American Philosophical Quarterly* 15, pp. 1–14.

are incorrigible, self-evident, or evident to the senses can be justified without appeal to other beliefs; beliefs not justified in this fashion must be properly inferred ultimately from those. As Plantinga and others have pointed out, this version is fraught with difficulty, in part because it so restricts the content of foundational beliefs. It seems that many of our ordinary, widely-accepted beliefs turn out to be unjustified—and even unjustifiable—on this account; and hence classical foundationalism leads to skepticism. (It also leads to self-referential difficulties, since belief in classical foundationalism cannot be justified by its own standard.) Moreover, the picture of belief acquisition and justification proposed by classical foundationalism does not seem to fit with the way that people's belief systems actually work. If our epistemological theories don't match with epistemic reality, what is their point?

The challenge to evidentialism, then, is directed at its general viability as an account that adequately applies to our epistemic lives and doesn't, when conjoined with some form of foundationalism, lead to skepticism. In different ways, the first two chapters in Part I of this volume carry on this challenge. In the first chapter, James Ross offers a damning indictment of the notion that all our beliefs must be based on evidence and contends, in defense of ordinary believers, that all human belief systems are fundamentally faith-based. In the second, Linda Zagzebski argues that in the face of the failure of strong foundationalism and for other reasons besides, a certain degree of self-trust is necessary to leading a productive epistemic life. But the reasons we have for epistemically trusting ourselves can also be turned into reasons for trusting others, and this, Zagzebski continues, leads us to a *consensus gentium* argument for God's existence. The fact that belief in God is so widespread, together with our reasons for trusting others, gives us reason to adopt such belief ourselves.

The challenge to evidentialism has not gone unanswered. An important recent response has been to spell out more carefully—and perhaps more permissively—what can count as evidence for a belief. The Reformed epistemologist paints evidentialism into a corner on this point, restricting evidence to propositional evidence and saddling the evidentialist with classical foundationalism on top of all that. While some evidentialists have followed the strict classical line,⁵ it's probably fair to say that the restriction doesn't fit well with the way that we speak about evidence in ordinary life. Suppose I walk into a room and see a group of people in it. I don't explicitly *infer* from my visual experience that there are people there; instead, as the Reformed epistemologist insists, I have the experience and (at least if I am attentive to it) simply find myself with the belief that there are people in the room. The belief is produced in me automatically. On the Reformed epistemologist's construal of 'evidence' this belief is not based on it; on his account, the classical foundationalist would label this a basic belief in so far as it is one that is 'evident to the senses.' Yet this construal seems mistaken. Of course I believe on evidence: I *see* the people, I *experience* them, and then I believe that they are there.

⁵ See, for example, Richard Fumerton, 'Classical Foundationalism' in Michael DePaul (ed.), *Resurrecting Old-Fashioned Foundationalism* (Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), pp. 3–20.

Indeed, it seems that experiences can themselves serve as evidence that can justify belief. Evidentialists need not restrict evidence to propositional evidence. Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, prominent contemporary defenders of evidentialism, embrace this sort of approach in the following passage:

Some philosophers have argued that only believed propositions can be part of the evidence one has. Their typical ground for this claim is that only believed propositions can serve as premises of arguments. Our view differs radically from this one. We hold that experiences can be evidence, and beliefs are only derivatively evidence . . . all ultimate evidence is experiential.⁶

Many contemporary epistemologists would agree that experiences can constitute evidence, and they include as candidates for experiential evidence perceptual experiences as well as intuitions concerning math, morality, and what is possible in the broadly logical sense.

In the third chapter of this volume, C. Stephen Evans explores ways in which experiences can serve as evidence, and then develops the notion of ‘natural signs’ to attempt a reconciliation between evidentialists and Reformed epistemologists. Natural signs, which include experienced features of the natural world and the experiences of those features, can function non-inferentially to produce warranted belief in God, as Reformed epistemologists affirm. (In the broader sense of ‘evidence’, of course, these signs can also count as evidence.) Evans tries to show, however, that these very same signs can also be the basis for acceptance of the arguments for God’s existence, and thus can be the source of propositional evidence as well.

Another recent view of evidence that is particularly permissive concerning the justificatory power of experience is called *phenomenal conservatism*. It holds that, in the absence of defeaters, if it seems to S that P, then S has justification for P—no matter what P is and no matter how that seeming is caused. In favor of this permissive stance, Michael Huemer has argued that denying phenomenal conservatism is self-defeating and leads to skepticism. He contends that the view best captures the internalist intuition that for a belief to be justified, the believer must have access to what justifies it.⁷ On this view, if it seems to S that the New York Yankees are the best team in Major League Baseball, then, in the absence of defeaters, S is justified in believing that the Yankees are the best team. The same goes for religious beliefs.

⁶ ‘Evidence’ in Quentin Smith (ed.), *Epistemology: New Essays* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 87–8. Note that Conee and Feldman do not just acknowledge the possibility of experiential evidence; they contend that ultimately that is the *only* kind of evidence.

⁷ Defense of this view can be found in recent papers by Michael Huemer, including ‘Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism’ (2007), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 74, pp. 30–55; and ‘Phenomenal Conservatism and the Internalist Intuition’ (2006), *American Philosophical Quarterly* 43, pp. 147–58; and his book *Skepticism and the Veil of Perception* (Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001). Earl Conee expresses sympathy with the view, which he calls ‘seeming evidentialism’ but it isn’t clear whether he actually endorses it. See his ‘First Things First’ in Earl Conee and Richard Feldman (eds.), *Evidentialism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004).

In the fourth chapter of this book, Chris Tucker explores phenomenal conservatism and its implications for religious beliefs and argues that, if it is true, then the evidentialist demand for evidence does not in fact impose a significant constraint on justified religious beliefs. One might find such a claim boring because conservatism seems too permissive to take seriously. Tucker replies to this objection at length; he also contends that phenomenal conservatism has advantages over Plantinga's proper functionalism and suggests ways in which the functioning of the *sensus divinitatus* might be re-described in keeping with this more permissive evidentialism. Thus the fourth chapter, like the third, serves to bring Reformed epistemologists and evidentialists closer together.

3 Evidence evaluation

Essays in the first part of the book consider whether religious belief, if it is to be justified, rational, or warranted, must be based on evidence; and they do so by exploring both the general viability of evidentialism and the nature of evidence itself. Essays in the second part explore how what evidence we acquire, and how we assess it, can depend on a variety of factors including desires, attitudes, and other beliefs that we hold.

The notion that the acquisition and assessment of evidence can depend on prior beliefs and attitudes is commonplace. What appears as strong testimonial evidence to one person may be seen differently by another who believes the testifier to be a liar. A preconceived notion about the location of the doctor's office may cause one to misinterpret directions or misread a map. In contentious political matters, a candidate's success in graduate school may be taken by supporters as evidence of a strong intelligence and work ethic, but by opponents as evidence of lax standards at the particular school or favoritism extended on account of the candidate's deceptive charm. Similarly, one may consider a commentator to be a reliable source on a particular topic, but upon finding her to be aligned with an opposing political movement, one may have a defeater (or, better, think one has a defeater) for the original belief and cease to put any stock in the commentator's pronouncements. Thus evidence-assessment can differ from person to person, depending partly on their background beliefs and attitudes.

We can also see examples of this with religious belief. A person might give up belief in the resurrection upon becoming increasingly committed to the notion that miracles cannot happen. On the other side, a person who is open to the possibility of miraculous divine intervention in the world might find the evidence for the resurrection to be compelling and come to believe it on that account.⁸ A person disillusioned with her pastor could display a negative attitude towards the pastor's beliefs, and gradually find Christian belief less plausible on account of that. On the other hand, a person might

⁸ Thus Stephen Davis, in defense of his belief in the resurrection in Michael Peterson and Raymond VanArragon (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* (London, Blackwell, 2003), argues not that the resurrection happened, but instead that it is rational for some people—depending on their background beliefs—to believe that it did.

find certain atheists or unbelievers insufferable, and be drawn to the arguments for God's existence or to the witness of theists because of that.⁹

In the case of belief in God, what accounts for the differences in assessments of the evidence on the part of believers and unbelievers? (We'll understand evidence to be either propositional or experiential.) There are explanations of such disagreement available on both sides, some charitable and some not, but it might help us to sample briefly three suggestions, from a theistic perspective, of what might be going on in cases where people appear to lack evidence for God's existence, and cases where they have it.

Consider first Pascal's Wager. By hypothesis, the person considering whether to take the wager and choose belief in God is in a position of evidential gridlock: only pragmatic considerations can guide her choice. The considerations in question, of course, have to do with prospects for the afterlife should God happen to exist, the idea being that one is infinitely better off believing under those conditions than not. But if she decides on those grounds that it would be prudent to embrace belief, how can she do it? It's not like she can just flip a switch and begin to believe. Pascal's solution to this problem is quite remarkable:

But at least learn your inability to believe, since reason brings you to this, and yet you cannot believe. Endeavour, then, to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness. "But this is what I am afraid of." And why? What have you to lose? But to show you that this leads you there, it is this which will lessen the passions, which are your stumbling-blocks. (*Pensées*, 233)

By acting as if you believe, your conviction will grow, and you'll come to believe just as the saints do. On Pascal's view, the passions prevent us from seeing the evidence properly; if they are abated, then we can see what is in fact right before our eyes. Thus committing to belief in God and adjusting one's passions accordingly will enable one to see the evidence that God exists (and more particularly evidence for the Christian faith), evidence that will convict one of its truth.

A second theistic suggestion traces back to Reformed epistemology, and particularly to Plantinga's view that belief in God can serve as a foundational belief in a person's doxastic system. According to Plantinga, the *sensus divinitatus*, a faculty that is part of our natural cognitive equipment, takes certain kinds of experiences as input and then produces beliefs about God as output. Typical output beliefs may include the belief

⁹ We can see some of this in the 'spiritual autobiography' of Peter van Inwagen, who tells of how, prior to converting to Christianity, he was put off by the anti-religious attitude of academics who 'thought they were so smart.' See 'Quam Dilecta' in Thomas Morris (ed.), *God and the Philosophers* (New York, Oxford, 1994), pp. 31–60.

that *God is wondrous*, produced on the occasion of witnessing a beautiful sunset, or, upon sinning, the belief that *God is unhappy with me*. The important point here, the point which explains why some see evidence (understood broadly) for God where others don't, is that the *sensus divinitatus* doesn't work the same in everyone. Indeed, damage to it is one of the cognitive effects of sin—not necessarily the sin of the particular person whose faculty is damaged, but the sinful condition into which we are all born.¹⁰ In addition, people can be raised in ways that make them ignore the deliverances of the *sensus divinitatus*, or they can make conscious decisions with the same result. Similarly, they can form beliefs that serve as defeaters for those deliverances, which might further impede the faculty's function. On Plantinga's view, then, the malfunctioning of the *sensus divinitatus* can make it difficult for some people to come to warranted beliefs about God, unless God intervenes and repairs the faculty or conveys the relevant information in another way.

A third example that helps to explain from a theistic perspective why some people have evidence for God that others lack comes from recent debates over divine hiddenness.¹¹ Proponents of the argument from hiddenness against the existence of God focus on people who seek after God with great determination, who cry out to God but hear nothing in response. God remains hidden to them. If God existed, the argument goes, this would not happen; and more generally, the failure of God to make God's existence clearer to the world constitutes strong evidence that God does not exist. One response to this argument, suggested by Paul Moser,¹² is that critics are demanding evidence in the wrong way and are not appropriately positioned to see the evidence even if it is there. On the Christian view anyway, God does not want from people the mere belief that God exists; instead God wants commitment—God wants a relationship—which is only possible with people who are oriented appropriately towards God. (This fits with Pascal's suggestion that commitment and attitude adjustment will eventually result in convicting evidence and firm belief.) Thus God may have good reason to withhold evidence from people who seek God with an attitude unsuited to God's own aims. Those so confident in following whatever evidence may be available from an objective or disinterested perspective may be guilty of 'cognitive idolatry', demanding such evidence when God in fact is in control of the evidence and has reasons for handing it out more judiciously.

These issues are taken up in the fifth and sixth chapters of this book. In the fifth chapter, William Wainwright explores the person-relativity of religious arguments, the way in which evidence can work differently for different people, and considers some implications of person-relativity for the rationality of religious belief. One implication

¹⁰ See Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, esp. pp. 199–240.

¹¹ See Daniel Howard-Snyder and Paul Moser (eds.), *Divine Hiddenness: New Essays* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also the Schellenberg/Moser debate in Michael Peterson and Raymond VanArragon (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* (London, Blackwell, 2003), pp. 30–58.

¹² See for example 'Cognitive Idolatry and Divine Hiding' in *Divine Hiddenness: New Essays*.

in particular, he argues, is that it deflates the objection to belief in God which claims that agnosticism is preferable to belief in the face of a lack of objectively conclusive evidence for God's existence.¹³ In the sixth chapter, E. J. Coffman and Jeff Cervantez explore the hiddenness argument against God's existence and offer a detailed critique of Moser's response to it. They argue that his response, and particularly the notion that God purposefully withholds evidence, is vulnerable in so far as it depends on certain highly controversial epistemological claims.

We have been discussing the way that the evidence a person uses in belief formation—what evidence he has, how he sees and assesses it—can depend in part on his background beliefs and attitudes. But some theists have argued that religious belief affects evidence in another way as well: by strengthening the overall epistemic position of the believer. In doing so they have in effect turned on its head the evidentialist demand that justified religious belief must be based on evidence, by claiming that only with religious beliefs of some kind can a person have any evidence for anything. In the seventh chapter of this volume, Thomas Crisp explores this line of argument; we shall set it up by considering two versions of the argument that are less modest than his.

First, the argument that having evidence depends on religious belief is found implicitly in Descartes, who (on the usual understanding) thought that only by demonstrating the existence of God could he trust that his cognitive faculties supplied him with true beliefs when he used them properly. Without such grounding, Descartes couldn't trust himself at all since, for all he knew, an evil demon could be deceiving him into falsely believing as he did and making the world seem to him vastly different than what it really was. Thus God played an essential role for Descartes as he attempted to rebuild the belief structure which he had laid waste at the beginning of the *Meditations*.

An argument similar to this has been defended in recent years by Plantinga, the so-called Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism.¹⁴ This argument claims that a naturalist who accepts that her cognitive apparatus has been fashioned blindly by the evolutionary process has reason to doubt the reliability of that apparatus and hence has a defeater for everything she believes. Everything? Yes, Plantinga argues, because there are all sorts of ways in which our ancestors' (and our) belief systems could have promoted survival-enhancing behavior while being on the whole wildly false. Thus the naturalist should realize, upon reflecting on her beliefs about human origins, that

¹³ This objection has recently been pressed by John L. Schellenberg in "'Breaking Down the Walls that Divide:' Virtue and Warrant, Belief and Nonbelief' (2004), *Faith and Philosophy* 21, pp. 195–213.

¹⁴ For discussion of the argument, see James Beilby (ed.), *Naturalism Defeated* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2002). The chapters by Ernest Sosa and James Van Cleve are especially helpful in highlighting similarities between Plantinga's argument and Descartes'. See also Plantinga's discussion of the argument in *Warranted Christian Belief*, pp. 199–240; and Blake Roeber, 'Does the Theist Have an Epistemic Advantage over the Atheist? Plantinga and Descartes on Theism, Atheism and Skepticism' (2009), *The Journal of Philosophical Research* 34, pp. 305–28.

she has no undefeated evidence for anything she believes (including that!). Her epistemic position is woeful through and through.

Both arguments about the poor epistemic standing of naturalists have of course been controversial, even among theists, but again they highlight a different way in which one's religious beliefs, or lack of them, might affect the kinds of evidence one has and the type of justification that one's beliefs may enjoy. Crisp's essay in Chapter Seven presents a new and more modest argument along the lines of Plantinga's evolutionary argument. Crisp does not argue that naturalists have, in their view of human origins, a defeater for every belief that they hold; he instead argues that they have a defeater for certain key premises that some of them use in arguments for God's non-existence. Crisp contends that such arguments—arguments that have, as Crisp puts it, 'recondite premises'—cannot rationally be accepted as forceful by those most inclined to propound them.

The second part of the book thus considers, from different angles, ways in which the evidence for and against religious belief can depend on the passions, attitudes, and other beliefs the person considering it has.

4 Evidence and Religious Belief

The final section of this book considers the central question of what evidence there is for and against religious belief. The chapters provide discussion of new and amended arguments. Little needs to be said by way of background for them. Two chapters consider arguments for belief in God. Thomas Kelly in Chapter Eight explores *consensus gentium* arguments for God's existence (a version of which is defended by Linda Zagzebski in the second chapter). Does the 'common consent' of humanity—the fact that belief in God is widespread—constitute evidence that God exists? Kelly James Clark and Andrew Samuel, in Chapter Nine, contribute a pragmatic argument to show that belief in God is better than the alternatives for grounding moral motivation. The tenth chapter of the book, by William Rowe, contends that reflection on the notions of divine goodness and freedom can sensibly lead one to the conclusion that God does *not* exist. The final chapter, by William Hasker, explores the views of philosopher John Hick, who seems to take the variety and nature of human religious experiences to constitute evidence for the existence of individual divine beings. That chapter concludes with a response from Hick, where he acknowledges and clarifies his view that there may be intermediaries between human beings and the ultimate divine reality.¹⁵

¹⁵ Special thanks to Chris Tucker for helping with this introduction.

PART I

Exploring the Demand for Evidence

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