Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 5 | Issue 2

Article 9

4-1-1988

A Note on Rowe's "Response to Dicker"

Georges Dicker

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy>

Recommended Citation

Dicker, Georges (1988) "A Note on Rowe's "Response to Dicker"," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*: Vol. 5 : Iss. 2 , Article 9.

DOI: 10.5840/faithphil19885220

Available at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol5/iss2/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

A NOTE ON ROWE'S "RESPONSE TO DICKER"

Georges Dicker

I am inclined to accept Rowe's ingenious demonstration that Anselm's (own) argument begs the question, no less than the "Son of Anselm's Argument."¹ However, I would dispute the way in which Rowe represents the relation between his position and mine. He writes:

Dicker[']s] . . . position is that Anselm's argument does not fall prey to the objection of question-begging I advanced against the Son of Anselm's argument. Against Dicker, however, I shall argue that Anselm's argument does fall prey to the objection of question-begging I advanced against the Son of Anselm's argument.²

This implies that while my position is that Anselm's argument, unlike the Son of Anselm's Argument, does not beg the question, Rowe has shown that it does. But my position is, rather, that Anselm's argument does not beg the question *in the way that the Son of Anselm's Argument begs it* (by virtue of premiss 2, that God is a possible thing). That is why, as I put it, Rowe's original article leaves Anselm's own argument "unscathed."³ Now this criticism leaves quite open the possibility that Anselm's argument begs the question in some other way. Rowe's "Response" seems to show that Anselm's argument does indeed beg the question in another way (by virtue of premiss 1, that God exists in the understanding). Of course there is a resemblance between the two cases of question-begging: in both cases asserting that God has a certain status—either as a possible thing, or as a thing in the understanding—turns out to be tantamount to asserting that He exists in reality. But the two cases are nonetheless distinct. So far as I can see, then, the position in my paper and the one in Rowe's response to it are not incompatible.⁴

SUNY at Brockport

NOTES

1. William L. Rowe, "Response to Dicker," *Faith and Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp.204-205.
2. "Response to Dicker," 204.
3. Georges Dicker, "A Refutation of Rowe's Critique of Anselm's Ontological Argument," *Faith and Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No.2, p. 193.
4. Admittedly, however, the last two sentences of my paper require qualification if Rowe is right in thinking that Anselm's premiss 7 begs the question.