

Arguments for The Existence of God

The Ontological and
Cosmological Arguments

Anselm's Version

- Assume God doesn't exist
- God exists only in the mind
- The Greatest Conceivable Being (GCB) exists only in the mind
- But you can imagine a greater being, which exists not only in the mind but in reality as well

Anselm's Version

- The GCB exists ONLY in the mind
- The GCB isn't the GCB
- A is not A <-- Contradiction
- Atheism leads to a contradiction
- Atheism is false
- It's *not* true that God *doesn't* exist
- God exists

Anselm's Version

- Assume not-G.
- If not-G, then GCB = not-GCB
- Not-not-G
- G

Gaunillo's Objection

- The Greatest Conceivable Island Objection (Perfect Island, Lost Island)
- Assume the GCI exists only in the mind.
- If the GCI exists only in the mind, then a greater island can be imagined, which exists not only in the mind but in reality
- The GCI isn't really the GCI (contrad.)
- The GCI must exist.

Gaunillo's Objection

- Anselm: My argument doesn't work for the greatest conceivable kind of type of being, just the greatest conceivable being in general.
- Once the limiting, imperfect particulars of the island are eliminated, the Island starts to look like God.

Kant's Objection

- Existence isn't a property (real predicate)
- The concept of a real \$100 is the same as an imaginary \$100; it's just that one is instantiated.
- Existence applies to a thing and its properties together; it is not itself a property.

Malcolm's Modal Version

- God is a necessary being.
- If God's existence is possible, then it's actual.
- God's existence is possible.
- God must exist.
- Objection: Maybe God's existence isn't possible

Other Objections

- God doesn't exist in the mind.
- Exist "in the mind" equivocates on the term "exists."
- The terms "greater" and "greatest" are vague, value-laden or assume a Platonic metaphysics with degrees of reality.
- Which is greater Jupiter or the DNA molecule?

The Cosmological Argument

- *A posteriori*
- Aquinas 5 ways
- Motion
- Change
- Possibility and necessity
- Gradation of being
- Governance of the world