passing reference to this multi-volume set (e.g., p. 169). Also, given Rehnman's particular focus on Owen's *Theologoumena*, it would seem helpful to discuss why he thinks Owen included so much "secular" history in this volume. Was it simply Owen's desperate need for an editor that allowed him to write so many pages on druids, or does this apparently random exploration have greater significance than is at first apparent? Finally, the absence of a discussion of Owen's wonderful notes on the study of theology, which conclude his *Theologoumena*, is a mystery. Rehnman had already written such a section in his original thesis but did not include it in this volume, and its absence is disappointing. Even without developing the above points, Rehnman deserves praise for giving us a disciplined and tightly focused piece of scholarship. After all, one cannot explore every possibility in 215 pages. Rehnman's book offers the reader far more than simply a study of Owen. Rather, this work offers a study of Protestant scholastic methodology as illustrated by John Owen, and in this way Rehnman has happily filled a void noted by Muller some fifteen years ago.

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"Many people are perplexed, even troubled, by the fact that God (if there be) has not made His existence sufficiently clear" (p. 1). Howard-Snyder and Moser, therefore, set out a number of intriguing essays in order to wrestle with the problem of God's hiddenness.

The question of just what, and how much, God reveals of Himself is not something that remains abstract and meant only for academia. It is a profoundly existential question. Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, considered it and concluded the following (p. 4):

A god who is all-knowing and all-powerful and who does not even make sure his creatures understand his intentions—could that be a god of goodness? Who allows countless doubts and dubieties to persist, for thousands of years, as though the salvation of mankind were unaffected by them, and who on the other hand holds out frightful consequences if any mistake is made as to the nature of truth? Would he not be a cruel god if he possessed the truth and could behold mankind miserably tormenting itself over the truth?

Not only in Nietzsche, however. There is a fairly sophisticated argument for atheism on the basis of God's hiddenness in J. L. Schellenberg's *Divine Hiddenness and Human Reason* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993). There Schellenberg argues the following: If there were a perfectly loving God, He would see to it that each person capable of a personal relationship with Him reasonably believes that He exists, unless a person culpably lacks such belief. But there are capable, inculpable nonbelievers. Therefore, there is no perfectly loving God.

Howard-Snyder and Moser seek, in this collection, to work through Schellenberg's argument. In order to frame the responses to Schellenberg in this book, it would be best to consider Schellenberg's own article in this collection first.
In “What the Hiddenness of God Reveals: A Collaborative Discussion,” J. L. Schellenberg continues his argument that divine hiddenness provides a good foundation for atheism. He notes that the theistic proposition “God exists” is epistemically nonsecured for so many of us (p. 41). His argument here can be summarized thus: “Would you say that the seeking of a personal relationship is . . . to be thought of as an essential part of the best human love? . . . Now suppose God loves us with an unsurpassable love. This must mean that God seeks to be personally related to us! That is, God . . . will see to it that the only thing that can prevent us from interacting with God is our own free choice (whether it is the free choice to ignore a God we are aware of, or to take steps to remove that awareness, and so to remove ourselves from that place where we are in a position to relate personally to God)” (p. 42).

Schellenberg anticipates the most obvious question, namely, that, in order for his argument to be plausible, he must claim to know the conditional in question. That is, he must claim to know that if God exists and is perfectly loving, those of us with the relevant capacities will always be in a position to relate personally to God—unless we are culpably in a contrary position (p. 44). In response, Schellenberg notes:

It all goes back to the discussion of human love at its best. This, I would argue, together with the points that emerge when we apply it to God (points about the lack of human limitations in God, for example), constitutes a prima facie good or justifying reason to believe the conditional in question, which I define as a reason sufficient to justify belief of that conditional in the absence of available undefeaters—undermining or rebutting—defeaters. (This way of putting it doesn’t reflect any hesitation on my part about the conditional. A prima facie reason may also be an ultima facie reason. I just think that one should treat all one’s beliefs and all one’s reasoning as fallible.) . . . and I’d say what gives our justification prima facie status is basically that its reasoning instantiates an intuitively very plausible and widely accepted way of determining the meaning of divine attributes—namely, extrapolation from mundane examples of the relevant properties. (p. 45)

Schellenberg further notes that “most philosophers assume” that when we use the word “love” or “good” we are using those words in their “ordinary sense, while making such adjustments as are required by certain relevant differences between God and ourselves which our background knowledge or belief concerning the nature of God suggests ought to be taken into account (and so, for example, God is said to know all true propositions, not just some)” (p. 45).

He claims, therefore, that his conditional is (likely) necessarily true. But, he says, even if it “should—contrary to my expectation—turn out to be implausible to suppose that my conditional is necessary, that wouldn’t remove its usefulness in an argument for atheism unless the conditions cited in the proof of non-necessity obtained in the actual world. Unless this were so, we could continue to affirm that the conditional were true, even if not necessarily true.”

In considering the so-called “sin strategy,” that is, “the Calvinian idea that all nonbelief is due to sin,” Schellenberg responds,

Well, that claim just seems to me to be falsified by empirical evidence. . . . Of course, if you suppose that you have weightier independent evidence for a doctrinal package including the proposition that all nonbelief is due to sin, you will think that the empirical evidence must be misleading. I myself cannot imagine holding on to such a doctrinal package in the face of the
evidence for inculpable nonbelief, especially when dropping the view that all nonbelief is due to sin does not entail dropping the rest of the package, or even the view that nonbelief is sometimes due to sin. In any case, it’s only if there’s incredibly powerful support for the whole package that this move can work. I surmise it will be a rational option for few. (pp. 52-53)

As Schellenberg sets the stage for the problem, the rest of the collection is an attempt to respond to it from different perspectives. Rather than touch on them all equally, it seems best to give the weaker responses a passing mention, while focusing some attention on the (surprisingly) stronger ones.

In their introduction, the editors give at least a passing glance at Rom 1:18ff. Their conclusion, however, shows that the glance is all too superficial:

Aside from what the psalmist and Paul actually had in mind (itself a matter of ongoing debate), if God is evident through creation, we need an explanation of why many normal people fail to believe that God exists. Some theists recommend their theism with arguments to the best explanation that have to do with historical events, like the history of Israel or the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. . . . If God is sufficiently well-known in any of the ways suggested, we need an explanation of why so many people fail to believe. A traditional answer is that, generally, failure to appreciate the evidence of creation and history or to hear the internal witness of conscience is a consequence of a person’s sinfulness. . . . The thesis would be that every normal adult nonbeliever culpably fails to believe. . . . Naturally enough, those who find such explanations unconvincing think charges of culpability are best laid elsewhere. (pp. 8-9)

Peter van Inwagen, in his essay “What is the Problem of the Hiddenness of God?,” makes the point that the problem of evil and the problem of the hiddenness of God are closely related, though not identical problems (p. 25). He goes on to affirm that the problem of divine hiddenness has two aspects to it: a moral aspect (or a cluster of moral aspects) and an epistemic aspect (or cluster of epistemic aspects). The cluster of moral problems, he says, is collectively called the problem of evil. The relatedness of the two problems has the general form, “If there were a God, the world would not look the way it does.” He recommends that, “because of the similarity, theists who attempt to solve the epistemic problem employ the same methods and techniques—mutatis mutandis—that theists have generally employed in their attempts to solve the problem of evil” (p. 32). We will return to this idea below.

The weaker essays begin with Michael J. Murray, who argues in “Deus Absconditus” that “divine hiddenness is, in most cases, the only way to go if God hopes to preserve the ability of free creatures to engage in soul-making” (which, I take it, means something like works righteousness or maybe sanctification). M. Jamie Ferreira in “A Kierkegaardian View of Divine Hiddenness” thinks that Schellenberg misunderstands the relation of God’s existence to His nature. He maintains that there cannot be degrees of evidence in that Kierkegaard’s view has to do with the “grammar of absoluteness” and with a “qualitative” difference. Jacob Joshua Ross’s “The Hiddenness of God—A Puzzle or a Real Problem?” defends the Moral Freedom Argument of John Hick and others. Paul Draper, in his “Seeking but not Believing: Confessions of a Practicing Agnostic,” thinks there is good evidence on both sides. Though he believes that twentieth-century cosmology supports theism over naturalism, he also thinks that evolution raises the ratio of the probability of naturalism to the probability of theism, since it is more likely on naturalism than on theism.
The most surprising aspect to this entire collection is the number of strong and (on a relative scale) biblically helpful responses to Schellenberg’s argument. The strong arguments follow along three lines: biblical, theological, and anthropological.

A hint toward a biblical argument is given in Laura L. Garcia’s “St. John of the Cross and the Necessity of Divine Hiddenness.” Garcia responds to those who would hold that God’s ultimate desire is for the salvation of all. In responding to Schellenberg, she notes:

Christians might claim that God has given every person sufficient evidence of His existence already, and that nonbelief often involves some voluntary suppression of the truth, as St. Paul suggests in the letter to the Romans. Where no such suppression is involved, presumably God would know how to act fairly and mercifully with the persons involved. That many nonbelievers aren’t aware of suppressing the truth in this way does not show that they aren’t in fact doing so, since there is at least some chance of self-deception in these matters. (p. 86)

Bringing into the discussion what Scripture says of the matter is virtually anathema in philosophical circles. Garcia plants the biblical seed of what would prove to be, in full bloom, a significant response to Schellenberg.

William Wainwright gives a strong theological response in “Jonathan Edwards and the Hiddenness of God.” In using Edwards to make his theological point, Wainwright rightly says:

If Edwards is right, the problem of God’s hiddenness isn’t a problem of evidences or proofs. God could convince doubters of the truths of natural religion by providing more internal and external evidence. But (as Schellenberg points out) the primary value of knowledge of God consists in the fact that it is needed to establish a proper relationship with Him, and increasing natural knowledge of God won’t further that end. There is no reason, then, why God should increase it. There does appear to be a reason why God would wish to distribute saving knowledge more widely. But since saving knowledge, true benevolence, and salvation are logically coextensive, asking why God hasn’t made Himself savingly known to more people is equivalent to asking why He hasn’t bestowed the gift of salvation more widely. The problem of God’s hiddenness is thus not really a problem of evidence but of grace: Why does God bestow it on some and not others? (p. 106)

Encouraging, as well, is the anthropological direction taken by Moser and Kvanvig. In “Cognitive Idolatry and Divine Hiding,” Paul Moser asks perhaps the question, a question, sadly, that is rarely asked in discussions of this kind: “Who is entitled to decide how one may know God—humans or God?” And Moser’s response to that question is to the point:

Given our complete inferiority relative to God, can we reasonably make demands on God in favor of our preferred ways of knowing God? Many people proceed as if we have a right to know God on our preferred terms. This is, however, nothing more than a self-serving assumption. Nothing requires that God supply knowledge of God on our preferred terms. God evidently owes us no such thing at all, despite common expectations to the contrary. (p. 126)

Or, says Moser, “God’s hiding from a casual or indifferent inquirer does not count against the reality of God’s existence.” How then do we “get over” the problem of God’s hiddenness? “God must work as an internal, convicting Authority and Assurer who makes people qualitatively new, in a way that makes Cartesian certainty look sterile and weak” (p. 129).
Most interesting, apologetically, is Moser's aversion to the idea of a neutral proof.

A prominent kind of cognitive idolatry may be called the idolatry of neutral proof. Such idolatry includes our demanding decisive evidence of God's existence regardless of the direction of our own will relative to God's will. We thereby place ourselves in the position of judge over God's reality without requiring ourselves to commit sincerely to God as Lord of our lives. (p. 130)

Continuing the anthropological emphasis, but from a different angle, is Jonathan Kvanvig's "Divine Hiddenness: What is the Problem?" Here Kvanvig notes that the problem of God's hiddenness lies, not in God, but in us:

Regarding the problem of hiddenness, for most traditional Christians such as I, the explanation of how God is perfectly loving and yet hidden lies in the doctrine of the Fall. Schellenberg considers, all too briefly, this line of response to the problem he raises. ... We are, according to this doctrine, damaged goods both conatively and cognitively, and the damage in question is so intimately linked to the nature and existence of God that there is a strong incentive for self-deception and confusion regarding the truth or falsity of theism. (pp. 151-52)

Two concluding observations. With respect to the argument from divine hiddenness to atheism, it seems a modified version of the Free Will Defense—one in which, given God's eternal decree, it became impossible for God not to be hidden to some people—might be an effective defense (though not a "theodicy") in the face of this kind of objection. For this argument to hold, Schellenberg's conditional would have to be known, and, thus, necessary. However, it seems that if the conditional is not known, the best that Schellenberg could offer would be an argument from probability, and that argument would struggle to gain any plausibility at all, given the problems inherent in probability itself.

More importantly, without taking away from the strong biblical, theological, and anthropological arguments given, it remains most discouraging in these discussions that there has yet to be any Christological dimension to them. A Christological argument against divine hiddenness would include, at least, the fact that, though God was climactically and visibly revealed in the Person of His Son, not only was He culpably (especially with respect to ethnic Israel) not recognized, but He was, in the end, put to death for being who He was. So, contra Schellenberg, the love of God fully and graciously manifested, clearly revealed in His Son, produced, not inculpable nonbelief, but the most heinous evil imaginable.

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Steven Bryan has produced a superb study that began as a doctoral dissertation under the direction of Andrew Chester and James Carleton Paget of Cambridge University. Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration is marked by clarity, logic, and fresh exegesis of the relevant materials. I found it stimulating reading, stopping often to jot down notes for further reference.
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