

Any rational religion, arguably, involves deriving an *ought* from an *is*. But, then, again arguably, either any rational religion is fallacious on the face of it, or it necessarily presupposes metaphysics in the strict sense of the word. Why? Well, because an *ought* can be derived from an *is* nonfallaciously, if, and only if, the *is* is strictly metaphysical, i.e., logically necessary, and therefore obtains and must obtain in any world that is so much as possible. As Hartshorne puts it: "Suppose that something which could not have been otherwise is yet held to be objectionable. What can it mean to say that what could not have been otherwise yet ought to have been otherwise? Only the contingent is open to rational criticism. . . . The only appropriate attitude toward the necessary is acceptance, positive appreciation" ("Equality, Freedom, and the Insufficiency of Empiricism": 24).

Post argues that values are "determined" ultimately by what physics shows, or will show, to be the case and that this includes even the "first principles" of values. But if the above argument is sound, values at the level of "first principles" require to be "determined" by what metaphysics, not physics, alone can show to be the case.

7 May 2005