

Houston Smith's criticism of "Process Theology" (in his *Why Religion Matters*: 74 f.) is pathetic. It not only relies naively on a crude distinction between "naturalistic theism" and a "mystic worldview," but also sins gravely against the ninth commandment—most certainly in the case of Hartshorne, if not also in that of Whitehead, between both of whom and "Wieman's naturalism" there is a great gulf fixed.

More seriously, it quite misses the real difference between "naturalism," properly so-called, and any axial religious outlook—namely, that the second, unlike the first, not only necessarily implies, but also explicitly affirms, a strictly ultimate reality, assertions about which either are or necessarily imply strictly metaphysical assertions, i.e., assertions such that anything that is so much as possible verifies them, even as nothing at all possible could ever falsify them. Otherwise put, any axial religious outlook asserts what Søren Kierkegaard called "the infinite qualitative difference between time and eternity." It necessarily implies that among the transcendental distinctions that must be made by any adequate metaphysics is a distinction between all ordinary realities that exist only contingently and the extraordinary reality that exists necessarily.

Because Whitehead and Hartshorne, in their different ways, both explicitly make just this distinction, whereas Wieman denies it or fails to make, to say, as Smith does, that "Process Theology remains naturalistic" misses the very difference that demands to be recognized.

As for his claims that, for Process Theology, "God is not outside time as its Creator, but within it. And God is not omnipotent, but like everything in the world is limited," they are so wide of the mark, in Hartshorne's case, certainly, as not to merit a response.

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