

Almighty? No Way! Coming to Know the God We Already Love

by Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

Sometimes life presents us with challenges so arresting, so shattering that they change everything. This is the tale of a series of such moments, which began with my son's diagnosis with autism, sending me into a tailspin and sundering my conventional ideas of God and Torah. This is the tale of my grieving, hopeful journey through libraries of science and philosophy as well as walking the streets of Jerusalem, out of which I began to articulate what I believe is a revolutionary way of loving God, God's creation and God's Torah. And, in the end, it is a tale of finding these revolutionary, liberating ideas hidden right where I had started—in the Torah, in the Talmud, in the Siddur, in the kabbalah. I just needed open eyes to see what had been there from the beginning, hidden under the crust of the theology most

people think religion is supposed to mean.

In this season of Shavuot, I want to share a new way to receive and embrace God and Torah. But it's also not new at all, because the God I now love is, I believe, the One you love too, and already know.

When my beautiful son, Jacob, was diagnosed with autism as a child, some 14 years ago at the age of 3, I stopped putting on my tallit and tefillin. I had been taught that God was all-powerful, which would mean God could have prevented Jacob's autism but didn't. I could not pray to someone who could inflict autism (or choose not to prevent it). I said to God, "It's better if we don't talk for awhile. You're not going to want to hear what I have to say, and I don't want to talk to you. So I am not going to." And for a year and a half, God and I just didn't talk (which is a bit awkward professionally, because I am, after all, a rabbi). I wrestled with tormenting thoughts: "I'm a good person; how could He do this to me? I keep kosher, I don't mix linen and wool in my clothing, I help people all day long. I am fighting for the survival of the Jewish people. How could God let this happen to my beautiful, innocent son?" Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of the wonderful book "When Bad Things Happen to Good People," says that expecting the universe to make exceptions for you because you are a good person is like expecting a bull not to charge because you are a vegetarian.

If God didn't give Jacob his autism, doesn't cause suffering and evil, then what is the explanation? In the words of Job: "If not God, then who?"

In order to uncover a deeper answer to this age-old question, we have to revisit the dogma of creation from nothing, a teaching derived from Aristotle and one that makes belief in God's goodness so difficult for so many. What the Torah actually says is, "When God began creating heaven and earth, there was *tohu va-vohu* (chaos), and the *ruach* (wind/breath/spirit) of God was vibrating over the face of *tehom*, the deep, and God said, 'Let there be light,'

Roland Faber Named Kilsby Family/John B. Cobb Professor of Process Studies

Roland Faber has been named the inaugural Kilsby Family/John B. Cobb Professor of Process Studies. The new chair—believed to be the first of this kind devoted to process studies—was made possible by nearly \$1 million in gifts and pledges from Claremont alumna Mary Ellen Kilsby and her family, in honor of her Professor and friend John Cobb.

Dr. Faber gave his inaugural lecture as the Kilsby/Cobb Professor on Thursday, April 22, in Mudd Theater. The title of his lecture was "Theopoetic Justice: Towards an Ecology of Living Together." A two-day conference entitled "Theopoetics and the Divine Manifold: Towards Process Theologies of Multiplicity" followed.

A full report on the new chair, Roland Faber's inaugural lecture, and the theopoetics conference will follow in the next issue of *Process Perspectives*.

PROCESS PERSPECTIVES

The Newsmagazine of
the Center for Process Studies

...a relational worldview for the common good

Volume 33.1 Spring 2010

Editor

Ashley Riordan

Published three times per year
by the Center for Process Studies, 1325
North College Avenue, Claremont, CA
91711-3154

Individual Annual Subscriptions

USA: \$21

Elsewhere: \$30

US Funds Only

Membership Rates

Subscriptions are included with mem-
bership, along with a subscription to
Process Studies—the academic journal
devoted primarily to Whiteheadian
thought.

More information on
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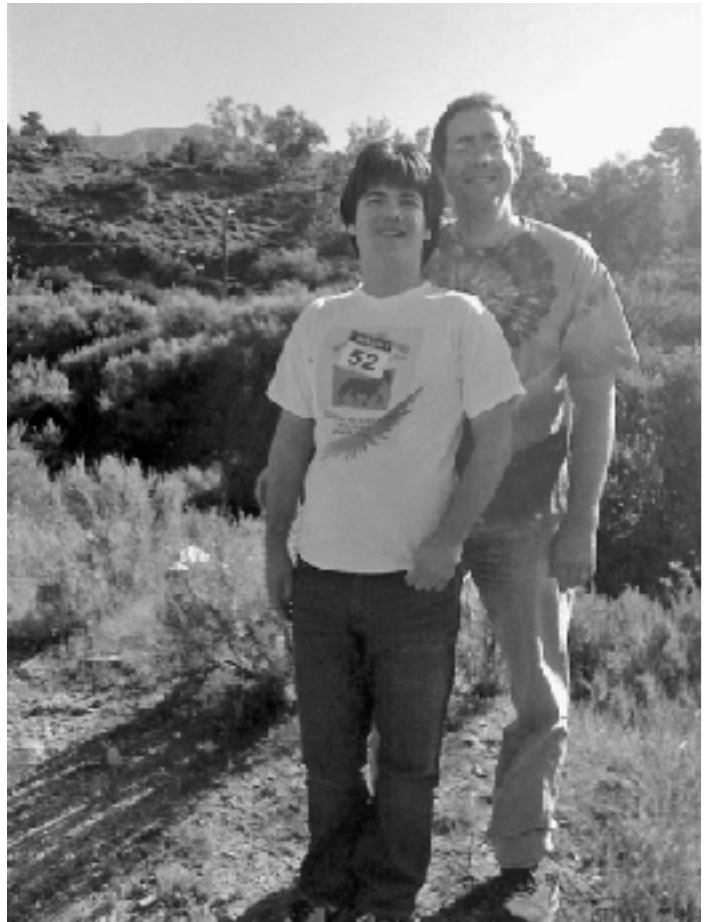
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and there was light.” According to the Torah, was there *tohu va-vohu*, chaos, before God started creating? Yes. Unambiguously yes. At the instant God began creating, *tohu va-vohu* was already existent, and the *ruach* of God flutters over *tehom* (that had to be there already for the spirit of God to be able to flutter over it). The simple meaning of Genesis 1 is that there is pre-existent darkness and chaos. The *tehom*, the chaos, already exists—bubbly, uncontainable and undomesticated. God’s creative act is not the special effect of something from nothing, but the steady *chesed* (lovingkindness) of converting chaos into cosmos. *Tohu va-vohu* and the *tehom* have always existed, and threaten still. God has always been, and is still, inviting/commanding the chaos into cosmos. We have misunderstood the nature of Divine creativity and power.

We are taught to think about God’s power as coercive, I suspect, because when we think about human strength and force, we think of coercive power—warriors, despots, pharaohs, *führers*, commissars and terrorists. But it turns out throughout history that long-term power is not coercive; the most transformative power is persuasive. Pharaoh was brought down—and the persuasive ideals revealed among those ancient Hebrew slaves has been liberating people ever since. In your own life, think about the abiding impact of a really inspiring teacher. Reflect on how you have been transformed by a great mentor, or parent, or lover—people who broadened your vision, encouraged you and made it possible for you to do something you never thought possible. They did not accomplish this task using mere coercive power; they invited you to be yourself, lured you to exceed your prior limitations, inspired you to live in the light. The Bible is full of examples of God using not coercive, but persuasive power to enlist our participation in creating a worthy, covenanted future.

During my decade of reckoning with God and coming to terms with Jacob’s autism, I began to develop a different relationship with God and a different understanding of God’s relationship to our world.

I now advocate what is called process thought, which was first articulated by mathematician/philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, enhanced by philosopher Charles Hartshorne and applied by theologian John Cobb, among a growing circle of thinkers. According to process thought, everything is in the process of becoming, and every process—you, me, the world, the cosmos, God—is not a substance, a thing, but rather a distinctive pattern of energy that retains some measure of constancy in the midst of change and growth. It is God who provides the grounds for our creativity, our becoming more connected, more just, more compassionate. It is God, working through Jacob, that



Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson and his son Jacob

allows Jacob to triumph over his autism day by day.

I stumbled upon process thought almost by accident, researching new approaches to integrating science and religion, and to how God relates to the world. About four years ago, I found an anthology, “Philosophers Speak of God,” co-edited by Hartshorne, which offers a range of philosophical understandings of God—Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and philosophical. I was drawn to these brave process thinkers, which led me to the contemporary writings of Catherine Keller and Cobb, and the scientific reflections of John Polkinghorne, Arthur Peacocke and Philip Clayton. Through them I returned to the writings of Milton Steinberg, Max Kadushin, Martin Buber and others. Reading them was like slipping into a soothing bath, a healing *mikveh*. The external, bullying, punishing ideas of God melted in the mist, leaving the transformative, healing balm of relationship, novelty and persuasion. I fell in love again—with God as understood through process and with God’s creation as a continuing expression of loving, relating and of novelty.

The insights of process thought saved my love of God,

because instead of looking to God to be the all-powerful exception to the rules (the up there/out there bully in the sky), I started looking to God as the very exemplar of the rules—the One who makes it possible for us to surpass ourselves, the One who inspires us to ever-new levels of love and creativity. Instead of looking for God in magic, I look for God in Jacob's refusal to let himself be defined or limited by his autism. I see God in Elana, my resilient and courageous wife, who refuses to abandon our son to a marginal existence. I see God's persistent lure in people in the community who look past the autistic label and embrace Jacob—a young man of hope, strength, joy and astonishing wisdom. Working with, in and through creation is the arena for God's unique, amazing, persuasive power. Tanks can knock down walls, but there isn't an army in the world that can give Jacob the capacity to sit through a class for an hour and a half. That transformation requires the resilient, determined, persuasive love of God, manifest not as the exception to the rules of physics and biology, not in the suspension of Jacob's autism, but as the way the very universe is tilted toward interrelationship, complexity and creativity. God doesn't work from outside creation—intervening from afar. God bubbles up from within, working in us, through us and with us.

Reflect for a moment: The universe operates according to unchanging physical laws. If you were to do the same thing over and over and over again without change, wouldn't the result be the same each time? Yet the universe has instantiated the same unchanging laws for 14 billion years, and new and increasingly complex events continue to emerge. You have got to ask yourself—why? I see God in that emerging novelty and increasing complexity. God is the One who makes relationships possible, the force that makes for greater complexity and deepening experience. God makes possible our ability to love, reach and help each other.

I don't think God gave my son autism or could have stopped it. Tohu va-vohu is always present. I don't believe God caused the Holocaust or could have prevented it. Creation is about containing the chaos, inviting order where there was none. The tehom is always bubbling chaos, and God is steadily extending cosmos. But the tohu va-vohu remains real, innovative and dangerous. The tehom continues to threaten and to beckon, bubbling over in crisis, tragedy and novelty alike.

God is the resilient force luring us/commanding us to rise to the best choices, celebrating our creation into freedom and asking us to covenant as partners (the rabbinic

term is *shutafim*) in the continuing creation of the world. That we are given the God-like ability to create, to innovate, to perform deeds of lovingkindness and acts of justice is what it means to embody *tzelem Elohim*, God's image, in the world. And God's persuasive love is sufficiently resilient, sufficiently determined, to see us through in love.

In that sense, God is like the GPS system in my wife's car; I call its voice "Glynnis." When we drive, Glynnis routinely shows that it understands God better than I do. Glynnis and I will both say to my wife (the driver), "When you get to the stop sign, take a left." And then, Elana, for reasons neither Glynnis nor I comprehend, will drive to the stop sign and keep going straight. This is where Glynnis and

**God doesn't judge or condemn us;
God doesn't coerce us. God offers us
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this (and every) moment.**

I part ways. Because I want to blurt out, "What are you doing? I told you you were supposed to ... ! You're going to miss the exit!" But Glynnis simply says, "Recalibrating." Then it offers a corrective next choice: "At the next corner, take a right, then a right, then a right."

Glynnis remains calm, unruffled and will recalibrate however often a driver makes a wrong choice.

I now know that God is like the GPS in that way. God doesn't judge or condemn us; God doesn't coerce us. God offers us the best possible choice (*mitzvah*) at this (and every) moment. If we rise to God's lure, then God says, "Good—now here's the subsequent best choice" (the next *mitzvah*). If we don't accept the lure, God says, "Recalibrating. OK, given your last choice, here's the best possible choice you can now make." Like Glynnis, God persistently invites us, lures us, commands us to make the best choice. That model of God invites us onto a path of compassion, justice and resilient strength that the bully in the sky never could.

There is an old rabbinic tale about the wind and the sun arguing about who is stronger. Turns out it is a process story: The wind says, "I'll show you that I'm stronger. I'm going to get those people to remove their jackets." But the more the wind blew to force their jackets off, the more the people clutched their jackets tight. The sun said, "You're trying the wrong kind of strength. Watch." And the sun simply radiated light. And as the sun's beams beckoned, the people loosened up their jackets. Eventually the sun's light was so beautiful and so intoxicating that they chose to take their jackets off, because they wanted to. A God of invitational power is actually the God we believe in and one that process thought allows us to see in the unvarnished beauty of Torah and *masorah* (tradition). We now have the science and the philosophy to be able to embrace what we know and to live

continued on page 21 . . .

Beloved Community: East and West

by Jay McDaniel

Five Impressions of a Trip to China:

In March of 2010, the Institute for the Postmodern Development of China (IPDC) and the China Project of Center for Process Studies, enabled me to offer six lectures in China. This is but one kind of activity which IPDC/CHINA PROJECT makes possible for Chinese and Westerners alike, and I am very grateful. The schedule was invigorating and delightful:

March 14, 2010: Harbin Normal University on ‘Process Philosophy and Engaged Education.’ Hosted by Prof. Helin Zhao

March 15, 2010: Beijing International Culture Studies University on “Process Philosophy and Its Contemporary Relevance.” Hosted by Dean Fubin Yang

March 16, 2010: Tianjin Normal University on ‘Process Philosophy and Engaged Education.’ Hosted by Dean Xige Wang

March 17, 2010: Peking University on “Whitehead’s Philosophy and Its Contemporary Relevance” (morning) Hosted by Prof. Guangwu Zhao, former dean of Graduate School of Peking University.

March 17, 2010: Beijing Normal University on “Whitehead’s Philosophy and its Contemporary Relevance” (evening) Hosted by Prof. Xiaoting Liu and Chengbing Wang

March, 20, 2010: Lecture at IBM Office in Shanghai on “Process Philosophy and Postmodern Parenting.” Hosted by Xiaoxia Yan, director of Whitehead Wisdom Kindergarten Project.

This was the ninth time I had been in China in five years. I left this time, as every other time, with a very positive feeling about the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT under the strong leadership of Dr. Zhihe Wang and Dr. Meijun Fan.

First, the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is making a real and important difference in the lives of individuals from different walks of life. I say “different walks of life” because I found myself speaking to young parents of pre-school children who were interested in postmodern parenting, as well as to retired professors who had spent a lifetime teaching Marxist philosophy, and to college students who are looking for ways to help their nation. Of course they were all urban, but in times past I have also spoken to rural

peoples, including farmers. I left China thinking that these people’s lives are being changed, in very constructive ways, by the ideas that become available to them through IPDC/CHINA PROJECT and its communication of a process or postmodern tradition in China.

Second, the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is creative in the way it stretches the process tradition. As I talked with the parents of pre-school children, I realized anew that the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT can be to address areas of life that are tremendously important in any society, but that often go unnoticed in philosophical circles that are preoccupied with metaphysical questions. Just as the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas says that philosophy must begin with ethics, if it is to be philosophy at all; so IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is helping process thinkers like me realize that philosophy must begin with daily life, if it is to be valuable.

Third, the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is important, not only because it is helpful to a developing China but also because it can help a developing west. By a developing west I mean the ongoing cultural development of western nations as their people realize that they have entered into a new world, where Asian nations are playing a dominant role politically, culturally, and economically. Westerners who work with IPDC/CHINA PROJECT, and who get to visit China, quickly realize that they – we – have as much to learn from the Chinese as the other way around. Not only can we learn from traditional East Asian forms of thinking, we can also learn from the experience of contemporary Chinese who are struggling to remember and reclaim what is distinctive about their traditions while at the same time moving into a new postmodern era. In so many ways Chinese citizens have become, and are becoming, vivid exemplars of a postmodern sensibility to which western peoples can also aspire.

Fourth, the work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is important in China because it can help shape and form public policy broadly understood. Two areas where IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is already having an impact are educational policy and agricultural policy. The hope of China, as for many parts of the world, is that communities can develop which are creative, compassionate, equitable, ecologically wise, and spiritually satisfying, with no one left behind. If these communities are to develop, young children must discover their own capacities for creativity, kindness, and curiosity, and IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is doing powerful work to help make this possible. Whereas in the West



Jay McDaniel at Tianjin Nomal University

one of the primary venues in which process thought has been promulgated to ordinary citizens has been through religion, in China it will be through education, at least for now. To be sure, religion and interest in religion is growing in China. But education is already at the heart of so much Chinese society. As Whitehead well recognized, education can be religion, too: that is, a place where people find their deepest values.

Finally, and at a very different level, I left China with a strong impression about philosophy in China. Graduate students and their professors in China are deeply interested in western philosophy, including and perhaps especially continental philosophy. In China today it is very important for process thinkers who are interested in philosophy, and who want Whitehead's philosophy, to have a place at the table of discussions, to show connections with continental philosophy. This means, among other things, that it is no longer helpful, if it ever was, to distinguish constructive postmodernism from deconstructive postmodernism, but rather to present Whitehead's philosophy as a kind of postmodern thinking which is complementary to, and can be enriched by, the thinking of "postmodern" philosophers such as Derrida, Levinas, and Deleuze, and also the "post-colonial" thinkers such as Spivak, Said, and Bhabha. This means that the emerging tradition of post-structural and less metaphysically inclined process thinking, as pioneered

in the States by thinkers such as Roland Faber and Catharine Keller, can play an important role in the future.

As readers know, the process tradition works at many different levels simultaneously. Zhihe Wang and Meijun Fan are committed to the idea that this well-being can emerge when people from China and the West enter into fruitful discussions and are transformed in the process. They believe, as do all Whiteheadian-influenced thinkers, that this transformation begins with listening to others with respect and care; allowing their own preconceptions to be deconstructed by the wisdom and the integrity of the other person; but simultaneously having the freedom to share with others. They believe further that in this very process new ideas emerge, and that relationships can be established which have beauty in their own right.

The beauty is not so much the beauty of objects perceived at a distance, as it is the beauty of felt relationships which evolve over time and which enrich all parties involved. Whiteheadians sometimes speak of this beauty as the common good, but other words can also suffice. Martin Luther King called it beloved community. The work of IPDC/CHINA PROJECT is to foster this beauty in a cross-cultural way, within nations and across oceans. In a quiet and enduring way, through the relationships it helps establish, it is fostering beloved community East and West. ☺

New Religious Movements in Korea

by Hye Kyung Park



The 2010 International Conference on *New Religions in Korea*, sponsored by both the Korea Project of the Center for Process Studies (USA) and the Korean Academy of New Religions (Korea), was held on January 29, 2010, in Claremont, California. The theme of the conference was “New Religious Movements in Korea as a Paradigm Shift.” Some fifty-five scholars, ministers, and new religion groups, including representatives of Daesoonjinrihoe, Kumkang-Daedo, Unification Church, and Won Buddhism from Korea, participated in this conference. The conference consisted of eight presentations and eight responses, ranging from a history of new religions in Korea to contemporary thinking about these new religions.

The presenters were 1) Hae-Ran Woo from Catholic University of Korea, 2) Eungtae Jo, professor at Sun Moon University, 3) Kiyul Chung, Adjunct Professor at Tsinghua University, 4) Young-Woon Ko from Lorain College, 5) Gyung-Won Lee, professor at Daejin University, 6) Jae-Hun Lee and Hyung Sook Park, both from Keumgang-Samjong University, 7) Do-Gong Kim, professor at Wonkwang University, 8) Pyun-Seung Yang, professor at Sun Moon University.

Hae-Ran Woo’s paper was titled “New Religious Movements in South Korea-Focused on the Contemporary Situation.” Woo summarized the Korean religious situation and concluded by drawing attention to individual experiences of the new religions, such as Donghak, Chongsangyo, Taejonggyo, Won-Buddhism, or Dahn-hak Sonwon.

The title of Eungtae Jo’s paper was “The ‘Water-Faith’ of Korean New Religions,” and focused on water’s role as an important device to connect deities and human beings in various religions from ancient to contemporary times.

Kiyul Chung’s paper, entitled “Donghak as the Most Authentic Korean Thought Tradition,” exam-

ined Donghak as Korea’s socio-political and “inter-religious,” “inter-cultural,” “inter-ideological,” and “inter-traditional” tradition in a Minjung movement.

Young-Woon Ko delivered a talk titled “Jung’s Theory of Synchronicity in Terms of Kim Ilbu’s Jeongyeok Thoughts.” Ko expressed the relationship of the two theories, claiming that “Jung’s synchronicity is a meaningful parallel between a physical event and an inner psychic situation causally unrelated to each other.” At the same time, Kim Ilbu’s main argument in *Jeongyeokdo*, which was written in the 19th century, shows that “there is no obstacle among nations, neighbors, and communities but keeping harmony.”

Gyung-Won Lee’s paper was titled “A New Paradigm of the Daesoon (Great Itineration) Thought with Special References to Characteristics of the Ideas of Resolution of Grievances for the Mutual Beneficence of All Life (Haewon-Sangsaeng).” Haewon translates as “resolve grievances.” This concept tries “to attain the ultimate truth or solution so as to implement the self-realization of every being in the universe.” The mutual beneficence of all life, *Sangsaeng*, is a helpful idea for creating a new order to replace mutual conflicts which can often cause disorder.

Jae-Hun Lee and Hyun-Sook Park presented the lessons of Kumkangdaedo, titled “The Cosmic Equality and the Philosophy of Familial Harmony in Kumkangadaedo.” According to Lee and Park, Kumkangadaedo proposes the union of three teachings: Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. In addition, one of humanity’s greatest tasks is “reconciliation between man [sic] and nature.” This task can “provide profound inspiration to the present deep theory of ecology and ecofeminism.”

Do-Gong Kim presented “Relation between Buddhism and Won-Buddhism.” Won-Buddhism, the Korean tradi-

tional Buddhism founded in 1916, currently practices the three major missions—edification, education, and charity. “Won-Buddhism has quietly established itself as a pillar of the spiritual world, pointing to the global setting.” Kim concluded that “Won-Buddhism can absolutely be shown to be a Buddhism from the wide angle of history, religion, and thought. However, from a more narrow angle, it has the figure of a Buddhist order that pursues new Buddhist movements.”

Pyun Seung Yang’s paper was titled “A Study of Korean New Religion- Love for All Beings in Nature-Centering on Unification Church.” In his conclusion, titled “Friendly Thoughts for All Things of Unification Church, as an Important Theory of the Divine Principle and Unification Thought,” Yang explains first that all humans and all things are individual truth bodies. Second, all things are united bodies with dual purposes. Third, understanding God’s Heart. Fourth, the true love movement of the Unification Church. Fifth, Godism and Unification Thought. Sixth, understanding all things as harmonious beings. Seventh, establishing the Day of All Things.



The diversity of papers presented at the conference exemplified the new religious movements in Korea. Most of these presentations brought out the important relationship between human beings and nature. The togetherness of all beings in nature will be helpful for the understanding of nature. ♪

Whitehead’s Letter to George Leonard

by Steve Hulbert

On January 20, 2010, we were treated to a fascinating lecture from Ron Phipps about a letter from Whitehead to Henry S. Leonard, for whom Phipps was a long-time research assistant. The letter was a response to Leonard’s contribution to the 1936 book, *Philosophical Essays for Alfred North Whitehead*, essays from nine of Whitehead’s students. Leonard’s chapter was titled “Logical Positivism and Speculative Philosophy” wherein Leonard takes a rather positive look at logical positivism which was coming into vogue at the time. The paper is interesting in that Leonard’s initial view of logical positivism was positive and something that he viewed as compatible with speculative philosophy – not one or the other but both/and. Of logical positivism he remarked, “not an annihilator of existence but an analyzer of meanings.”

He believed that both Whitehead and logical positivism were concerned with method. Philosophy must be sharpened and disciplined but analysis alone is not enough. To this Whitehead adds that logical positivism has a “sterilizing effect” in that there is an absorption with detail but it misses the general patterns of things. As is well known, Whitehead cannot be considered orthodox, as his own philosophy had to be critically appraised and developed in his attempt to create a coherent understanding of the world—one united system of thought that addresses all fields of study in a process of synthesis and unification.

The strongest influences on Leonard at this time were C. I. Lewis, Rudolf Carnap, and Nelson Goodman, the latter with whom he created and developed the field of mereol-

ogy—the study of the relation of parts to wholes and parts to parts. He also worked with Gödel in the development of “Wide Language W” which married modal logic with propositional logic.

Although Leonard was initially struck by the promise of combining logical positivism with speculative philosophy, he eventually viewed the former as creating a wall between science and philosophy. He—with Whitehead—believed it was important to maintain a bridge between the two fields of study. In his letter to Leonard, Whitehead was critical of Russell, Wittgenstein, and Carnap—calling them “smart boys”—but questioned their mode of rationalism—“the notion that no pattern can be directly discerned unless it is symbolized. Of course, symbolism enormously facilitates the discernment of the pattern.”

In 1948 Leonard made the following statement—“I made a point of ceasing to call myself a logical positivist.” He added, “I tried to explain logical positivism but over the next dozen years those who called themselves logical positivists were not doing philosophy in the manner in which I had in this paper described the positivist as doing it.” He contrasted the methods of logical positivism—nominalism and extensional logic—with his method of modal, intensional logic—not just analysis but “philosophy as an enterprise including speculative analysis, but as also including legitimate speculative inquiry which incorporates both a critique of current scientific speculations and venturing beyond them.” This is certainly something Whitehead would endorse. ♪

The Practical Importance of Metaphysics

by Ramon Cisneros-Ruelas

On February 9th John B. Cobb, Jr. gave a seminar at Claremont School of Theology on “The Practical Importance of Metaphysics”. He began by acknowledging that metaphysics has the reputation of being neither important nor practical. However, he genuinely believes it is both. Taking a historical perspective, he points out how the dualistic metaphysics Descartes developed has dominated scientific thinking and virtually every academic discipline in the modern world. This is the notion that the soul, or mind, and matter have nothing to do with each other and that nature is just matter-in-motion. What really matters is the soul. This idea, tied to Kant’s notion that our minds function merely in the organizing of phenomena as they are presented, but cannot know anything beyond it, has shaped our modern thought. What is supposed to be the best thinking of the modern world turned up bad metaphysics. Cobb illustrated how this bad metaphysics has shaped the academic disciplines, and, as a result, we have witnessed great destruction in our world.

For example, today economics is the queen of the sciences and has far-reaching effects in culture. In past societies economic thought assumed the importance of its relationship to the society in which it emerged. There was a relationship between economic life and the community since both supported each other. In the modern world, however, economic theory and practice have developed around individuals who are supposed to be self-contained. Because of a dualistic notion of the nature, no notion of community is included in economic theory and practice, and the result is the destruction of entire communities.

The dualism of mind and matter continued to shape evolutionary ideas. The emergence of evolutionary theory showed that mind and nature were related since the mind comes from nature. If the mind and human souls come from nature, as evolutionary theory explains, there must be a relationship, and the mind and nature are a part of each other. This suggests mind and matter are only a part of each other, but equally important. This idea has been explored in Teilhard de Chardin’s popular writings, but these remain marginalized. In the academy, the official theory reigns generally unchanged. In this view genes determine

our bodies and behaviors. This amounts to saying that the behavior of the organism does not affect its nature and genetic variation. But there is evidence to show that animal behavior effects mutations. Animal behavior is ruled out because it assumes purpose, which it is not allowed by a dualistic metaphysics.

In physics the same materialistic thinking dominates the theoretical categories. After the atom was split, and the material idea of the atom was demolished, instead of abandoning materialistic

categories and embracing the particle/wave reality by thinking in different terms, physicists instead choose a “fig leaf to cover the facts.” Some things were explained as waves and others as particles. Dualistic thinking persisted over the truth. To get used to thinking in contradictory

ways was the chosen path. So physics measures things, but cannot tell you what the world is like. This is crazy-making, Cobb argued. In language things get worse. If language does not really refer to something outside us and only refers to language itself, then it is no longer possible to have a conversation about what is real. All this amounts to saying that there is no relationship between the words we say, the way our mouth moves when we say them, and the real world, or even how words affect those who hear them.

But insights in science offer paths to alternative metaphysics. Einstein realized that matter is mass and energy. But there are forms of energy that have no matter. This suggests that the world is made up of energy and this is not simply passive, but active. Energy and activity take different forms and one affects the other. Matter, mass, and energy are connected through energy and relationships that are connected to activities. This is process thought and it affirms that the things that make up the world are not merely objects but also subjects. The subject affects others and is affected by others. This is how the world is made. Dr. Cobb argues that until we repent from the Cartesian dualistic metaphysics it will be difficult to stop the destruction of the world. Metaphysics is the most practical thinking any one can engage in. ☛

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Ain't I a Womanist Too?: Third Wave Womanist Religious Thought

by *Katie Schubert*

On Thursday, February 25, 2010, Dr. Monica Coleman delivered her inaugural lecture at Claremont School of Theology (CST) in which she challenged identity politics in womanism, offering a descriptive and constructive account of a new third wave womanist religious thought.

Coleman began her lecture reading an excerpt of Sojourner Truth's call to redefine woman in her famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman?" In this speech, Sojourner Truth critiqued the limited definition of woman in the first-wave of the women's movement, a definition that excluded African American women like Truth. Coleman explains that third wave womanist religious thought asks a similar question, "Ain't I a Womanist, too?" Such women similarly seek to redefine or extend the concept of womanist while continuing to "place black women's religious experience at the center of theological activity and religious reflection."

More than a century later, Dr. Monica Coleman spoke to a very different audience than the primarily white group of women Truth addressed. The Kresge Chapel was filled—standing room only—with all kinds of people, young and old, church folks, academics, women, men, black, white, people who identified with every sort of group who all wanted to learn about the third wave womanism that Dr. Monica Coleman would introduce.

Coleman recounted Alice Walker's 1979 coining of the term "womanist." Although Walker's definition was more poetic than analytic, the term womanism is a self-expression similar to, but markedly different from, feminism, centering on African American women's experience. This new term brought to the foreground the experience of racism and classism and made explicit the inclusion of women-loving women. Coleman suggests that perhaps the most important part of womanism is the self-naming; calling oneself a womanist is a claim to power. Claiming an identity is an especially powerful tool for those who have been named, treated as objects rather than subjects. And yet, when identities imprison these identifications and their usages must be interrogated.

Coleman suggested a third wave of womanism could overcome these problems. Waves in feminism refer to major shifts in thought in feminist work. First wave feminists fought for abolition and women's suffrage. Some second wave feminism encompasses a large range of feminists, including those who focus on equality and justice and those who combat patriarchy and multiple oppressions. Third wave feminism can be characterized by contradiction, ambiguity, multiplicity, hybridity, and activism. This wave



Monica A. Coleman

includes people with various backgrounds, identities and aspirations—from self-identified bitches to stay-at-home mothers.

Coleman uses third wave feminism to inform third wave womanism. She appreciates the metaphor of wave because it suggests movement, focuses on where and when it arrives, and it reinforces the connection with third wave feminist thought in the image of a single ocean. The first wave was an ocean roar, a call to focus on intersections of oppressions, to recognize religious experience of black women. Second wave womanism develops religious scholarship further, looking at specifics within religious and theological studies with a womanist lens. This wave created a canon, a normative endeavor. Third wave womanism is a departure from previous waves but also relies on gains of past womanist thought.

Perhaps most significantly, third wave womanism shifts focus from identity to ideology so that a womanist need not be a black woman but must consider black women. Hence the personal experience of being a black woman is not necessary. Coleman explicitly defends this controversial claim explaining that what is most important is to recognize to whom one is indebted for their material gains and their scholarship. She supports her position with an effective critique: “Black women relinquished ownership of the term womanism when they published it and brought it into the academy.” Because the academy still proves to be inaccessible to many, claiming exclusivity, excluding the privileged, seems rather absurd. It is also a pragmatic move: Relinquishing ownership can help to forge alliances with other feminist movements and allows for people with more privilege who become intimately familiar with black women’s struggles to affect change.

If the race and gender of the scholar are not markers of a third wave womanist, what are defining characteristics of such work? Coleman notes there are “marks” of third wave womanist religious thought rather than essential attributes. Third wave religious womanists engage religious lives of women of African descent, work for justice, survival, freedom, liberation and/or quality of life, claim the tradition of womanist scholarship, and use thinkers both inside and outside the womanist canon.

In addition to opening up womanism to men and non-blacks, third wave womanist religious thought opens itself to fields that are not explicitly religious but may be most



useful for an argument, fields as disparate as psychoanalysis and disability studies. A third wave religious thinker chooses a community of accountability that grounds and supports, and a third wave religious womanist brings one’s whole self to one’s work.

As part of Coleman’s descriptive and constructive move to name third wave feminism, she organized a conference, inviting scholars whose work could be considered third wave womanist thought. The following day scholars of a variety of identities presented papers and together worked through their ideas, in an important step in the formation of third wave religious womanist thought. 🌱

“We must not expect simple answers to far-reaching questions. However far our gaze penetrates, there are always heights beyond which block our visions.”

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD, *PROCESS AND REALITY*, p. 519

Everlasting *Hesed* and Essential *Kenosis* as Pillars for a Theology of Love

by Justin Heinzekehr

On March 3, 2010, Dr. Thomas Oord, Professor of Philosophy and Theology at Northwest Nazarene University, presented a twist on current kenotic theologies. In particular, Oord introduced the idea of “essential kenosis,” which asserts that God’s nature is necessarily self-giving. A theology of essential kenosis, Oord argues, avoids making God culpable for the evil of the world and remains more faithful to the biblical representation of God. Oord articulated how the “everlasting *hesed*” of the Bible implies a God of essential, rather than voluntary, kenosis.

Oord began with a tradition common to his Nazarene background: offering one’s “testimony,” or faith journey. Oord’s testimony begins with the Pietist/Calvinist milieu in which he grew up. He was very serious about his faith as a youth.

It was common for him to witness to others, using the Bible as a prooftext. He was used to striking up conversations with people who had thought less about religion than he had. This all changed when he took a philosophy of religion course in college. Here he encountered sophisticated arguments made by people who had thought very deeply about religious issues. The course challenged him to the point that he began to lose faith, even realizing that he could no longer believe in God with integrity. However, he gradually began to reconstruct his theology and chose natural theology as the topic for his senior research paper. In the course of writing, Oord encountered *A Natural Theology for Our Time* by Charles Hartshorne, which introduced him to process thought. For Oord, process theology offered a welcome framework that allowed him to embrace Christianity once again. He studied at a conservative seminary and then came to Claremont, where he found himself mediating between conservative and liberal views. By the end of his studies, Oord was convinced that the central idea of religion, and the focus of his work, should revolve around the idea of love.

Oord says, “To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic or empathetic response to God and others, to promote overall well-being.” He brings this definition to bear on current kenotic theologies, such as those of Moltmann, Pinnock or Polkinghorne, and finds them inadequate. Voluntary kenosis, in which

God chooses to limit God’s own omnipotence or omnipresence, leads logically to a God that falls short of Oord’s definition of love. For example, if God was originally omnipotent but chose to limit God’s own power in order to give creatures freedom, then theoretically God would be able to reverse the process at will in order to intervene in the events of the world. In the face of radical evil, God would be morally responsible for the choice to uphold free will rather than intervene.

On the contrary, Oord suggests that we replace voluntary kenosis with “essential kenosis.” In this paradigm, God necessarily loves in a self-giving manner. It is part of God’s nature to give agency, freedom, value, and relationship to creation. Since God’s self-giving love is based on the very nature of God rather than a choice, it is impossible for God to withdraw, override or fail to provide such love. God cannot “un-self-limit.”

Oord says, “To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic or empathetic response to God and others, to promote overall well-being.”

Oord supports this argument by appealing to the biblical theme of *hesed*, or steadfast love, attributed consistently to God in the Psalms and prophetic literature. When biblical authors use the term *hesed*, Oord points out, it always refers to the love that God has for the world. To take this biblical idea seriously is to critique many traditional theological assumptions. For instance, Barth says that love is a part of the nature of God, but only in terms of the love that God shares in the Trinity. In Barth’s formulation, it is not necessary for God to love anything else. God is self-sufficient, without any need for the world at all. Oord challenges the assumption that we must choose between essential love in the Trinity and essential love for the world. If God is essentially kenotic, we can affirm both. God is necessarily loving within the Trinity, but also necessarily loves creation.

Most Christians affirm God’s unconditional love – “God loves us no matter what we do.” However, if God could choose not to love us, then we would be in constant danger of losing this acceptance. We could not be confident that God would continue to love the world. Ultimately, Oord suggests, we would not be able to worship God enthusiastically. On the other hand, if God is essentially kenotic, then God’s love is indeed unconditional, for there is no possible way for the self-giving nature of God to be suspended. ☪

I'd Rather Be Dead Than Be a Girl

by Nathan Greeley

On Monday, March 22nd, at 4 pm, Dr. John Sweeney treated those gathered at the Haddon Conference Center on the campus of the Claremont School of Theology to a stimulating discussion of matters related to the use of gender-inclusive language in religious education. Sweeney, who is the managing director of the Center for Process Studies and an adjunct professor at the Claremont School of Theology, was present to share the chief insights contained in his new book, *I'd Rather be Dead than be a Girl*, which was published this past fall. Thinkers such as Whitehead, Whorf, and Piaget, Sweeney suggested, can assist us in productively navigating the issues of inclusive language and the construction of gender identities by offering us ways of understanding how language is largely responsible for gender concept development in early childhood. This knowledge can then be utilized to create an understanding of what means and methods might be used to combat the pernicious and deep-rooted legacy of patriarchalism and sexism in contemporary culture.

Sweeney began by sharing an anecdote about a group of young children who were asked what they would want to be when they grew up if they happened to be a member of the opposite sex. While the girls in the group had little or no difficulty imagining themselves doing so-called male jobs, the boys who were present struggled greatly in imagining themselves restricted to what they saw as female occupations. One boy, speaking frankly, replied that he would rather kill himself when asked what he would become if he was a girl. This revealing and troubling story was the inspiration for the provocative title of Sweeney's new book. Sweeney wished to point out with this account that the creation of gender roles and associations begins very early, is pervasive and insidious, and establishes life-long habits in terms of speech, thought, and behavior. The injustice represented by the fact that anything



John Sweeney

which is associated with the female or femininity is consistently devalued in our culture should be, Sweeney entreated, proactively addressed by those seeking a reversal of this age-old tendency. In turning to some of the ideas of Whitehead, Whorf, and Piaget, Sweeney next pointed out that rarely acknowledged resources in this struggle are available.

Alfred North Whitehead understood the power that the past exercises over us, and the way in which it largely limits and determines our possibilities and potentialities for the future. However, Whitehead also believed that all entities possess an openness to the future and a freedom in the present which means that genuine novelty can always become a reality, provided we are receptive to its becoming actual. In his discussion of Benjamin Whorf, an often overlooked early 20th century American linguist and philosopher of language, Sweeney noted that Whorf argued that languages, far from being neutral in the schematization of reality, actually contribute markedly to the way in which the world is conceptualized. If we change our language, according to Whorf, we in effect change our world. The last thinker Sweeney mentioned was the Swiss epistemologist and psychologist Jean Piaget, whom Sweeney said offered a need-

ed pragmatic insight in that changes sought in our language usage must be established gradually and contextualized if we wish for them to be maximally effective. Attempting too much too soon, in other words, tends to be counterproductive.

In conclusion, Sweeney summarized the way in which the ideas of these diverse thinkers can be appropriated and used to move forward the discussion of the need for the implementation of gender-inclusive language, particularly in the sphere of religious education. Whitehead gave us the possibility of novelty and transformation, Whorf noted the power of language, and Piaget advised that we be realistic about what is attainable. Advocates of gender-inclusive language must be both smart and persistent, according to Sweeney, in that they must understand the magnitude of the problem of sexist language, maintain an appropriate level of sensitivity to those habituated to its use, and at the same time consistently press for and promote the adoption of gender-inclusive language in schools, churches, and in families. A lively discussion among the attendees followed Dr. Sweeney's presentation. 🌱

The audio of this seminar is available at <http://www.ctr4process.org/media/>.

Featured Works in Process Thought

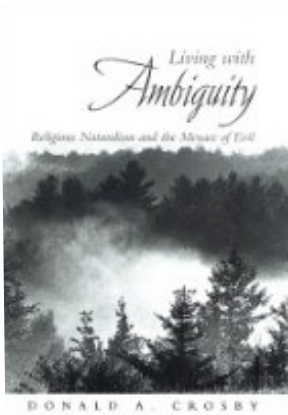


The Beauty of Balance: A Theological Inquiry Into Paradox

by Young Woon Ko

128 pages, University Press of America (February 2010)

This book examines the significance of balance between the opposites in order to understand God and the world. The author argues that opposites—the subject and object, mind and nature, good and evil, truth and falsehood—are not separated from each other but interdependent in the relational paradigm. ☛

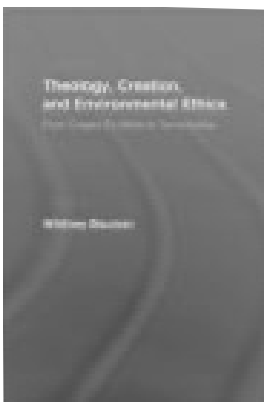


Living with Ambiguity: Religious Naturalism and the Menace of Evil

by Donald A. Crosby

124 pages, State University of New York Press (July 2009)

In this book Donald A. Crosby looks at how a religion based on the sacredness of nature deals with the problem of evil. Further developing and defending the vision of religious thought and life elaborated in his previous work, *A Religion of Nature*, Crosby explores how such a vision can enable us to interpret, respond to, and cope with the diverse forms of evil in the world, arguing that an ambiguity of goods and evils in human life, in nature as a whole, and in any conceivable or desirable realm of existence is inevitable. It is therefore futile to seek recourse in powers, presences, states, or realms thought to wholly transcend a combination of goods and evils or to be entirely devoid of evil. This being the case, the central problem of an adequate religious faith is how to live a constructive, meaningful life in the face of this intractable ambiguity. Religion of nature, as it is laid out and explained here, confronts this problem and offers a comprehensive, sustaining, and fully adequate way of conceiving and living a religious life. ☛



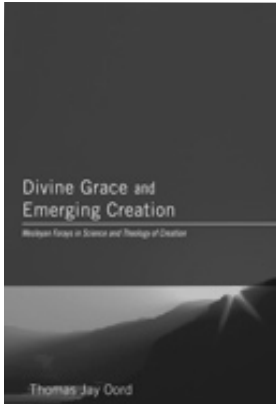
Theology, Creation, and Environmental Ethics: From Creatio Ex Nihilo to Terra Nullius

by Whitney Bauman

260 pages, Routledge (March 2009)

This book argues that the Christian doctrine of creatio ex nihilo (creation out of nothing) sets up a support system for a “logic of domination” toward human and earth others. Conceptually inspired by the work of theologian Catherine Keller and feminist philosopher of the environment Val Plumwood, it follows a genealogical method in examining how the concept of creation out of nothing materializes in the world throughout different periods in the history of the Christian West. ☛

Featured Works in Process Thought

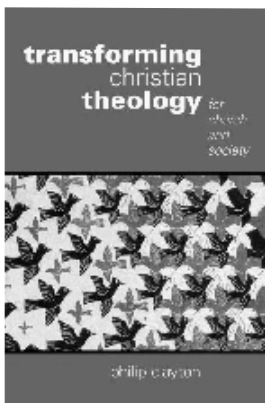


Divine Grace and Emerging Creation

by Thomas Jay Oord (Editor)

229 pages, Wipf and Stock Publishers (May 2009)

Wesleyans and Wesleyan theology have long been interested in the sciences. John Wesley kept abreast of scientific developments in his own day, and he engaged science in his theological construction. *Divine Grace and Emerging Creation* offers explorations by contemporary scholars into the themes and issues pertinent to contemporary science and Wesleyan Theology. In addition to groundbreaking research by leading Wesleyan theologians, Jürgen Moltmann contributes an essay. Moltmann's work derives from his keynote address at the joint Wesleyan Theological Society and Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting on science and theology at Duke University. Other contributions address key contemporary themes in theology and science, including evolution, ecology, neurology, emergence theory, intelligent design, scientific and theological method, and biblical cosmology. John Wesley's own approach to science, explored by many contributors, offers insights for how two of humanity's central concerns—science and theology—can now be understood in fruitful and complementary ways. ☺

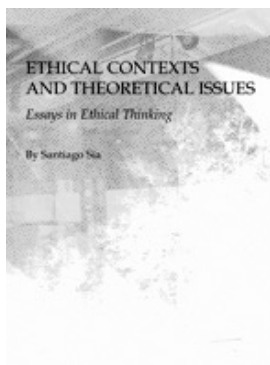


Transforming Christian Theology: For Church and Society

by Philip Clayton

144 pages, Fortress Press (November 2009)

This compact volume offers a way for Christians to reflect deeply on how best to conceive Christian identity, commitment, and discipleship in today's challenged, globalized, pluralistic scene. Growing out of the recent "Rekindling Theological Imagination" initiative and led by esteemed theologian Philip Clayton and his colleagues, this volume seeks to capture and articulate the ferment in grassroots North American Christianity today and to relate it directly to the recent strong resurgence of progressive thought and politics. It argues strongly for a mediating role specifically for Christian theology, conceived first as a life practice of Christian discipleship, and its call has found enormous response from popular audiences in conferences, online, in informal Christian settings, as well as in mainline denominations and the academy. ☺



Ethical Contexts and Theoretical Issues: Essays in Ethical Thinking

by Santiago Sia

265 pages, Cambridge Scholars Publishing (January 2010)

Ethics has become a particularly relevant topic for discussion and a subject for serious study. It has a very long tradition, of course; but nowadays one hears frequently of the need, because of abuses or concerns, to formulate and adopt ethical codes in various areas or professions. This book aims to make a philosophical contribution to the discussions and debates on the topic. Compared to the traditional approach to the philosophical study of ethics, however, this book adopts a different strategy. It shows that such ethical thinking, in the concrete particulars, originates in various academic and professional contexts, among others. But inasmuch as theoretical issues require wider and more intensive attention, it argues that ethical thinking needs to be pursued further and that it can be aided by philosophical investigations. In its concluding chapters the book presents an alternative foundation for ethical decision-making. Philosophically grounded, it moves away from an individualistic ethical perspective to a relational one that has been shaped through dialogue with the various contexts in which ethical thinking arises. ☺

Process & Faith: Process Theology Summer Institute

**June 7-11, 2010
Claremont, California**

Study process theology in a relaxed summer setting with world-renowned process theologians and a community of like-minded learners.

- 9 am-noon ***Process Theology and Biblical Interpretation with Ronald L. Farmer***
Biblical interpretation from a process perspective. The class will look at texts from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament.
- 9 am-noon ***Process Theology, Religion, and Secularism with John B. Cobb, Jr.***
In a book to be published by Abingdon, *Spiritual Bankruptcy*, Dr.Cobb argues that, in face of the global crises, both religiousness and secularism do more harm than good. Only the secularizing of our great wisdom traditions can help. Modern philosophy works against this, but the new start in William James, noted and developed by Whitehead, can help.
- 1:30-4 pm **Process & Film:** 1 film a day, followed by discussion led by Marjorie Suchocki
Theme: Christ of the Cinema
Monday: *King of Kings*
Tuesday: *The Gospel According to St.Matthew*
Wednesday: *Jesus Christ Superstar*
Thursday: *The Last Temptation of Christ*
Friday: *Jesus of Montreal*
- (No charge; open to all registered institute students & their guests)
- 7-9 pm ***Emerging Process Spirituality with Bruce G. Epperly***
This course explores the resources of process theology for 21st century spiritual formation. Process theology provides resources for transforming spiritual practices in dialogue with new spiritual movements, emerging Christianity, world religions, and post modernism. This course asks the questions, “How do we transform spiritual practices, originated hundreds of years ago, so that they are relevant to pluralist, postmodern, and global communication culture? How do we practice sabbath in a nano-second culture?”
- 7-9 pm ***Introduction to Process Theology with Marjorie Suchocki***
An introduction to process-relational theology, especially as it relates to the nature and power of God, incarnation, community, and eschatology.

For More Information and to Register, visit processandfaith.org

Cost: \$300 per course (P&F members \$250)

Each class meets once a day for all five days.

All classes take place at Claremont School of Theology

Interconnections: News from around the World

Applied Process Metaphysics Summer Institute

The Centre for Philosophical Practice “Chromatiques whiteheadiennes” (non-profit org, Brussels, www.chromatika.org) is organizing its first Applied Process Metaphysics Summer Institute. It will take place in Paris, at the Cité universitaire’s Fondation Biermans Lapôte (www.ciup.fr/fr/les_maisons/fondation_biermans_lapotre), on July 27th and 28th.

Applied process metaphysics seeks to provide and to move beyond detailed technical renderings of process philosophy (cf. Dibben and Kelly, *Applied Process Thought I*, 2008). What matters is personal experience and how to refresh our shared understanding of experience.

Over the course of two days, participants will have the opportunity to travel through most aspects of Whitehead’s legacy: anthropology, ecology, education, epistemology, metaphysics, psychology, political theory, quantum mechanics, and relativity physics. Additionally, some special attention will be devoted to the heuristics of *Process and Reality* and to the complementarity among its five parts.

Drawing upon the major Harvard works — *Science and the Modern World* (1925), *Process and Reality* (1929), *Adventures of Ideas* (1933)—the relevant entries of the *Handbook of Whiteheadian Process Thought* (2008) and on their own most recent research, the instructors will seek, first, to introduce Whitehead’s thought by clarifying what’s at stake in this kind of philosophizing and by providing a synoptic vision of his key categories in light of their historical developments; second, to foster a creative dialogue among all participants; third, to provide assistance on the participants’ own research projects or inquiries.

To allow this, the work sessions will be paced in the following way: in the morning, introductory talks on specific epistemic fields; in the afternoon, guided discussions on these fields; at night, private tutorial sessions. We will make sure that Whitehead is interpreted *secundum Whitehead* and always bearing actual experience in mind; it makes little sense either to propose an exegesis-type of inquiry or to confine it to secondary literature. Papers finalized during the workshops could be submitted to the *Chromatikon Yearbook*.

Instructors are Dr. Ronny Desmet and Dr. Michel Weber. All sessions will be held in English; tutorials could also take place in Dutch or in French. An attendance certificate will be provided on request. A maximum of 15 applications will be accepted.

Ronny Desmet holds an MA in mathematics (1983), an MA in philosophy (2005) and a PhD in philosophy (2010). He is currently research assistant at the Centre of Logic and Philosophy of Science, Free University of Brussels (VUB). His research and publications have focused on Whitehead’s philosophy of mathematics and relativity.

Michel Weber holds an MA and a PhD in philosophy (1991 and 1997). He is the director of the Centre for Philosophical Practice. He has published more than 30 books, e.g., *Whitehead’s Pancreativism: The Basics* (2006).

Full program available upon request at info@chromatika.org. Applicants should first contact the organisers to introduce themselves and specify their expectations, and second contact the Foundation to book their accommodation (accueil@fbl-paris.org). The deadline to register for those wishing to stay at the foundation is May 31, 2010. Registration fee: 250€ (\$330); reduced rate upon request; accommodation fee: 50 € / night (\$67). ☎

New SSPP Listserv

The Society for the Study of Process Philosophies has created a new listserv to facilitate communication and the dissemination of information. To join the list, please visit <http://lists.gonzaga.edu/mailman/listinfo/sspp-1>.

Founded in 1966, SSPP was one of the first satellite organizations of the American Philosophical Association. The Society is a group of scholars in philosophy and related fields with a specialty or interest in process thought. The Society holds periodic meetings in conjunction with each of the divisional meetings of the American Philosophical Association, as well as at the annual meeting of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. ☎

Audio of Lectures Available on CPS Website

The Center for Process Studies maintains a small but growing digital library of multimedia presentations, featuring lectures and seminars from 1972 to the present.

Recently added:

“Topics in Process Theism,” John B. Cobb, Jr., recorded October 22, 2009, at Claremont School of Theology.

“The Practical Importance of Metaphysics,” John B. Cobb, Jr., recorded February 9, 2010, at Claremont School of Theology.

I’d Rather Be Dead Than Be a Girl, John Sweeney, recorded March 22, 2010, at Claremont School of Theology.

Find the collection at <http://www.ctr4process.org/media/>. ☎

Interconnections: News from around the World

Latin America Project Conferece in Managua

September 1-3, a conference entitled *Encuentro de Cosmologias: Cardenal, Teilhard de Chardin y Whitehead* will take place in Managua, Nicaragua at the UPOLI (Politechnic University.) The event will explore points of contact and divergence between these three process thinkers using Cardenal's *Magnus Opus, Cantico Cosmico* (English Translation *Cosmic Canticle*, John Lyons Translator) as the main text to compare and contrast cosmological perspectives. In Managua, Dr. Jerjes Ruiz has been the contact person for CPS in this endeavor.

The event is the result of a combination of ideas and efforts of Catherine Keller, Ignacio Castuera, John Cobb, and George Pixley. Dr. Pixley did the bulk of the work contacting his colleagues in Managua and other places in Latin America. An homage to Cardenal with presentations by CPS members and UPOLI faculty will be a central part of the event. ☛

Process Political Theory Conference

A political theory conference, engaging process and other perspectives, will be held October 14-16, 2010, at the University of Chicago Divinity School. "Politics as a Moral Question" is organized by Prof. Franklin Gamwell, and is sponsored by the Martin E. Marty Center, in coordination with the Center for Process Studies. Discussion is intended to focus on arguments about the authorization of politics and religious freedom at various levels—specific situations, moral principles, and forms of metaphysics.

Jean Bethke Elshtain will give the keynote address on the 14th. The working conference on the 15th and 16th will discuss pre-read papers from the process perspective by Daniel Dombrowski (Seattle University), David Griffin (Claremont School of Theology, Emeritus), Catherine Keller (Drew University), Derek Malone-France (George Washington University), and Mark Modak-Truran (Mississippi College School of Law); and papers from other perspectives by Daniel Brudney and Jean Bethke Elshtain (University of Chicago), Samuel Fleischacker (University of Illinois), Michael Perry (Emory School of Law), and Stephen White (University of Virginia).

Respondents representing process thought are Clifford Cobb (*The End of Poverty?*), Franklin Gamwell (University of Chicago), William Meyer (Maryville College), Kevin Schilbrack (Western Carolina University), and Howard Vogel (Hamline School of Law). Respondents from other contexts are Robert Burns (Northwestern Law School), Ryan Coyne and William Schweiker (University of Chicago), and Jennifer Herdt and Paul Weithman (Notre Dame University). For further information, please contact Mr. Matt Petrussek at petrussek@uchicago.edu. ☛

The Hocking-Cabot Seminar

Sponsored by the The Hocking-Cabot Fund for Systematic Philosophy, The Hocking-Cabot Seminar will be held July 12-16, 2010, in Carbondale, Illinois.

The purpose of the Hocking-Cabot Seminar is to foster original systematic philosophy. In recent decades, the trend in professional philosophy has been toward increasingly specialized discussion of minutely portioned problems, or endless scholarly commentary upon figures long past. The Hocking-Cabot Seminar is designed to encourage bolder, more comprehensive, more systematic, and more speculative projects.

The setting is the comfortable Little Grassy Lodge in the beautiful Shawnee National Forest. The Lodge is part of a larger complex called "A Touch of Nature," affiliated with Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, which is the institutional host of the Hocking-Cabot Seminar.

For more information, please visit www.hocking-cabot.org. ☛

The Passing of a Friend

With deep sadness and regret we announce the passing of Mary Herczog, a friend of the Center (and to many of us individually) and a strong supporter of process thought. After a twelve-year battle with cancer, Mary died peacefully in her home on Tuesday, February 16th. Mary was working on her PhD in philosophy of religion and theology at Claremont Graduate University, with particular interest in the social implications of process metaphysics and in process and the arts. Deeply influenced by Whitehead, she was relentlessly seeking the deeper mysteries in Whitehead's texts. Mary's last paper, a defense of process agnosticism, is available on the CPS website. For more information on Mary's life, please visit her website cancerchick.com. A memorial service was held on March 6, 2010. ☛

Satrey: Engaging Khmer Women's Wisdom

Katie Schubert, a student at Claremont Graduate University and part of the Whitehead Research Project, will be supporting Rev. Than Heak, Summer 2010, in the exciting work of developing an association for women pastors in the Cambodian Methodist Church. Informed by post-colonial feminist thought, Katie is interested in how Khmer women in Cambodia within Methodist Christianity and modern Buddhism relate to the *chhap srey* (or women's code of conduct) and the ideal woman presented in this work. You can follow Katie's project at <http://www.satrey.com/>. ☛

Interconnections: News from around the World

Mysticism Without Bounds

Mysticism Without Bounds in an International Conference to be held January 5-8, 2011, in Bangalore, India.

Mysticism without Bounds (MwB2011) will explore interdisciplinary as a way of naming the phenomenon of crossing-over boundaries that mysticism makes possible and concrete. Certain common grounds do exist among the various forms of consciousness, scattered among the world's religions and theologies, sciences, philosophies, and various art forms.

- In fact, differing religious and theological traditions have described this fundamental mystical experience in different ways. However, at the core of all the major religions and theologies, there exists a current of mystical teachings which, when compared to one another, exhibit a startling degree of cross-cultural agreement.
- Sciences and mysticism appear antithetical, but we find in mysticism a type of spirituality which has close epistemological parallels to science. Studies in several areas of science address the same issues that concern the mystics, and while quantum physics, for instance, does not "prove" mystical teachings, the fundamental reality which it describes is not at all incompatible with the fundamental reality testified to by the mystics.
- Various philosophical fields such as ontology (which is concerned with the nature of reality), epistemology (which deals with the nature, acquisition and limitations of knowledge), and phenomenology (which insists on the first-person, experiential stance that mystics try to achieve) would appear to relate to various aspects of mystical experience, although they have not yet been correlated in a systematic way.
- Many art forms not only can be ways for mystics to communicate what they are trying to teach, but they have also helped shape the minds and imaginations of the mystics. Poetry, music, dance, visual arts and rituals have emerged

as fascinating ways to connect the undifferentiated states of oneness, non-duality, and the differentiated states of diversity and multiplicity.

The discovery of such points of convergence among religions, sciences, arts, and philosophies on "mysticism" is intellectually very exciting; and it holds out the possibility of creating a "new worldview" in which these disciplines would be seen as distinct yet complementary ways of exploring the same underlying reality.

This new world view can create an awareness of the essential unity of humanity, and work for the welfare of all, irrespective of social, political and religious differences.

For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.mwb2011bangalore.in/>

8th International Whitehead Conference

The 8th International Whitehead Conference, sponsored by the International Process Network (IPN) and organized by the Japanese Society for Process Studies (JSPS), will be held September 12-15, 2011. The website for the conference will open in October 2010.

The International Process Network (IPN) is a global network for process-relational philosophies. IPN came into being in 2001 at the International Whitehead Summit held in Claremont, California. Its purpose, as stated in its bylaws, is "to support, generate and disseminate an international discourse on the meaning and implications of process thought across academic disciplines and conflicting truth-claims, and in relation to the entire community of life and the cosmos."

IPN has sponsored International Whitehead Conferences in Beijing (2002), Seoul (2004), Salzburg (2006), and Bangalore (2009). Information about the network is available at www.processnetwork.org.

Events of Interest

June 22-26, 2010; Cullowhee, NC; Eighth Biennial Personalist Seminar, Charles Hartshorne and Robert Neville: "Examining Personalist Options in Philosophy"; Western Carolina University; for more information, please email Dr. James M. McLachlan. at jmclachla@email.wcu.edu

July 12-16, 2010; Carbondale, IL; The Hocking-Cabot Seminar; Southern Illinois University; for more information, please visit <http://www.hocking-cabot.org/about.html>

July 27-28, 2010; Paris, France; Applied Process Metaphysics Summer Institute; The Centre for Philosophical Practice "Chromatiques Whiteheadiennes"; For more information, please email info@chromatika.org.

November 19-20, 2010; University of Münster, Germany; A symposium on Charles Hartshorne's concept of God and world; For more information, please contact Julia Enxing at julia.enxing@uni-muenster.de.

January 5-8, 2011; Bangalore India; Mysticism Without Bounds; Dharmaram College; for more information, please visit <http://www.mwb2011bangalore.in/> or email Dr. Kurian Kachappilly at kkachappilly@hotmail.com.

Center Announcements

Membership Corner

by John Sweeney

Publication of *Process Studies* Volume 38/Issue 2 (Fall-Winter 2009) was delayed and now is due out in June 2010. Renewal notices will be in the mail after PS has been mailed. However, one need not wait for a mailing in order to renew. Memberships can be renewed at any time, using MasterCard or VISA, on the CPS website (www.ctr4process.org). Please go to the "Quick Links" box and click on the "Join/Renew/Subscribe" button; the payment pages are secure.

To completely avoid renewal notices, please consider a Hartshorne Lifetime Member which requires a onetime donation of \$1,500. [For Hartshorne Members there are no renewal notices and no interruptions in receiving either the journal or the newsletter.]

Tax deductible donations are gratefully received at any time and can be made either via the website ("Make a Donation" button on the CPS homepage) or by sending a check, payable to CST/CPS, to Center for Process Studies, 1325 North College Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711.

In these economic times, we realize there are difficult decisions to make, and we appreciate very much your consideration in renewing your membership or in making a donation to CPS.

If you have questions about your membership or about a donation, please contact me—either via e-mail at sweeney@ctr4process.org or telephone at 909-621-5330 or by post at 1325 North College Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711-3154. Thank you for your ongoing support of CPS. ☺

Library Corner

by Steve Hulbert

We have recently added the following books to the CPS Library:

Murata, Yasuto, ed. *Whitehead and Existentialism*. Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 2008.

Mampally, Joy, MSFS. *Reality in Process: A Comparative Study of Rāmānuja and Alfred North Whitehead*. Alwaye, India: Intercultural Books, 2007

Kalloor, Scaria, OFM Cap. *Creative Transformation: A New Paradigm for Christology. A Study on the Process Christology of John B. Cobb, Jr.* Delhi, India: Media House, 2009.

Happy Reading! ☺

Visiting Scholars

by John Quiring

Fr. Pawel Duda, Ph.D., was a CPS Visiting Scholar in August 2009 and February 2010. Dr. Duda is Adjunct Professor of Moral Theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Michigan. His S. T. L. thesis at the Krakow Papal Theological Academy was on the primordial nature of God in *Science and the Modern World*. He is now researching the relation of ontology and ethics in process philosophy.

Mr. Yiyu Liu, is a Visiting Student from September 1, 2009 through September 1, 2010. He is conducting research for his dissertation project at Beijing Normal University, College of Philosophy and Sociology. The title is "Rethinking the Relationship between Science and Faith from a Process Perspective," concentrating on the work of Ian Barbour. ☺

Process Studies Supplements

Process Studies Supplements (PSS) is a scholarly journal published in electronic format. It is intended to make available to scholars long articles or short monographs that are too large for the journal *Process Studies*. Material submitted to PSS is peer reviewed in the traditional scholarly fashion, but the mode of delivery is in electronic form. For more information, please visit <http://www.ctr4process.org/publications/ProcessStudies/PSS/>. ☺

“Almighty?”

continued from page 4 . . .

what we love.

I do not believe in the up there/out there bully in the sky. I would much rather celebrate the cosmic companion who is creating a universe in which I, and the rest of creation, am invited toward cosmos, connection, justice and love. You already know in your heart what your best choice is at this moment. Yet, even now, you remain free to demur, free to indulge your anger, your pettiness, your hunger, your exhaustion—whatever it is that makes you deviate from the mitzvah that awaits, and your truest, best self, the tzelem Elohim within. But God loves you with an ahavat olam, an abiding love. God bids you to make the best choice and gives you the capacity to make it. “See,” God says, “I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your children may live.” 🕊

Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson (bradartson.com) holds the Abner and Roslyn Goldstine dean’s chair of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at American Jewish University, where he is vice president. He teaches Jewish theology and philosophy as well as homiletics, and is the author of more than 200 articles and nine books, most recently “The Everyday Torah: Weekly Reflections and Inspirations” (McGraw-Hill). Rabbi Artson just received his doctorate from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Philosophy & Theology. He and his son, Jacob Artson, are co-authoring a popular book on process theology through the life journeys that brought them to these liberating insights.

This article first appeared in the Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles. It is reprinted here with the permission of both Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson and The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles (www.jewishjournal.com).

THANKS TO HARTSHORNE MEMBERS

The co-directors and staff of the Center for Process Studies would like to recognize members who have honored Charles Hartshorne by purchasing a lifetime Hartshorne Membership. With gratitude, we give thanks to Hartshorne members:

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Lifetime Hartshorne memberships are available for a onetime contribution of \$1,500. This money is deposited directly into the CPS Endowment Fund. Interest earned on that money is more than most annual memberships. This membership also reduces administrative costs for the Center. We save time and money by not having to send renewal notices. One benefit for members is knowing that the Center’s endowment fund is growing, which enables us to plan for future development. A Hartshorne Lifetime Membership is also tax deductible, less \$500 for lifetime journal and newsletter subscriptions.

CALENDAR

Process & Faith Summer Institute

June 7-11, 2010
Claremont, California
www.processandfaith.org

Constrained by Boundaries: The Limits of Knowledge in Science, Buddhism, and Christianity

Paul Ingram
June 30, 2010
4:00-5:30pm
Location: Haddon Conference Center
Claremont School of Theology

The 4th Whitehead Wisdom Education Conference

China Project
July 18-19, 2010
Location: Beijing, China
For more info, email claremontmei@gmail.com.

Encuentro de Cosmologias: Cardenal, Teilhard de Chardin y Whitehead

Latin America Project
September 1-3, 2010
Location: Managua, Nicaragua
For more info, email agne23@aol.com

Deep Postmodernism: Whitehead, Wittgenstein, Merleau-Ponty, and Polanyi

Jerry Gill
Thursday, October 7, 2010
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Location: TBA

Politics as a Moral Question: A Conference on Process Philosophy and Political Theory

3rd Political Theory Conference
October 14-16, 2010
University of Chicago
Organized by Franklin Gamwell

Metaphysics and Things: New Forms of Speculative Thought

Whitehead Research Project
December 2-4, 2010
Location: TBA
For more info, email jfackenthal@gmail.com.

SEMINAR PAPERS

Upon request, the following papers are available free of charge to Center members. New members may purchase older Seminar papers for \$3 each (plus shipping). You may also download these and others (provided the author has granted permission) from the Center for Process Studies Web site at www.ctr4process.org under the "Seminar Papers" link.

John B. Cobb, Jr.

The Practical Importance of Metaphysics

Thomas Jay Oord

Everlasting Hesus and Essential Kenosis as Pillars for a Theology of Love
(PowerPoint slides)

Please send correspondence to:
Ashley Riordan, Editor
Process Perspectives
Center for Process Studies
1325 North College Avenue
Claremont, California, 91711
Telephone (909) 621-5330
e-mail: ashley@ctr4process.org

Make checks payable to CST/Center for Process Studies and mail to: Center for Process Studies, 1325 North College Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711. U.S. dollars only, and drawn on a U.S. bank, please. VISA and MasterCard are also accepted.

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OUR PURPOSE...

The Center for Process Studies seeks to promote the common good by means of the relational approach found in process thought, which emphasizes the reality of becoming and change over static being. Process thought helps to harmonize moral, aesthetic, and religious intuitions with scientific insights, grounds discussion between Eastern and Western cultural traditions, and brings issues of human justice together with a concern for ecology.

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