

The introduction offers a working definition of religious naturalism and helpfully compares it to other positions such as empiricism, physicalism, religious humanism, process theology, and pantheism. Part One, “The Birth of Religious Naturalism,” is divided into chapters on seminal philosophers, significant theologians, and substantive issues. After a nod to non-Western traditions, the first chapter on philosophers offers finely limned studies of George Santayana and Samuel Alexander, more selective renderings of John Dewey and George Herbert Mead, and quick sketches of three others. Here Stone mentions but too quickly dismisses C. Lloyd Morgan, whose pioneering formulations of emergentism make him at least as germane as Mead. The second chapter arrays eighteen theologians and humanists, with widely diverse perspectives, under the religious naturalist banner. This chapter is strongest in detailed discussions of Henry Nelson Wieman and seven other theologians of the Chicago School (which Stone has chronicled in a highly regarded two-volume work with Creighton Peden); it seems weakest in desultory afterthoughts on Gregory Bateson and Albert Einstein. Some of these figures return, in vigorous brush strokes, for an incisive third chapter on early debates that continued through Wieman’s *The Source of Human Good* in 1946. An “interlude on religious naturalism in literature” follows—marking the long hiatus from 1946 to 1987 during which, Stone judges, no major works on religious naturalism were published.

Part Two, “The Rebirth of Religious Naturalism,” resumes the narrative in 1987 with Bernard Loomer’s “The Size of God.” The fourth chapter discerns six sources of insight for religious naturalism—grace, justice, nature, science, religious traditions, and literature—and covers eighteen contemporary thinkers including Stone himself. Nine of these appear in the fifth chapter, focused on the nature of the religious object and the appropriateness of God-talk among other current issues. The sixth chapter assembles profiles of fourteen “other current religious naturalists” in a collage that, lacking a clearly articulated organizing principle, resembles bricolage; this is one of several instances that could have benefited from tighter editing. The conclusion, a moving personal reflection on “Living Religiously as a Naturalist,” completes Stone’s self-portrait within the group. An extensive bibliography, a thorough index, and the recent release of an affordable paperback make this already appealing survey even more accessible for scholars and students wishing to explore the landscape of religious naturalism today.

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Many of the contributions in this volume provide the very reasons by which the take-home message is loosed from its moorings. Fraser Watts’s diplomatic introduction, looking to reconcile the lawful faithfulness of divine action with the probabilistic openness of continued creation, invites us to infer divine purpose from the contingency of the universe. I think Watts hits the crucial nail on the

head when he highlights the difference between *nonagency* concepts from the philosophy of science such as lawfulness, determinism, and necessity (and their opposites) and *agency* concepts from philosophical theology such as freedom and purpose. He suggests that the leap from directional change in evolution or the fine-tuning of the universe to conclusions about purpose may also require a leap to the agency thinking of theology and the assumption of a personal agent. I call this Polkinghorne's Leap, which Sir John does not fail to make in the final words of the book.

I do not think that science would, could, or should view nature as a whole in anything but nonagentic terms, but I think it already has made huge purchase on the emergence of the agentic from the nonagentic, concepts long used in the human sciences, at least since Brentano's Thesis. The point is this: Does it continue to make sense to talk so anthropocentrically of God's *purposes, will, intention, or even mind* if we can trace the ontogenesis of such characteristics to biosocial evolution? One of the theological difficulties produced by a theory of natural selection is that it provides a mechanical account of directionality without purpose. There is an even greater difficulty in the likelihood that the acquisition of goals and intentions in the behavior of animals might itself be such a product, requiring no prior goals or intentions for it to occur. We need not take Polkinghorne's leap if the gap over which he leaps is the emergence of cognitive life; perhaps we should *mind* the gap. Note that this does not obviate the necessity of addressing metaphysical questions that are outside the limits of science, an insight pursued with vigor by Wesley Wildman.

Wildman's systematic program of comparative metaphysics provides a basis on which an ontology of "laws canalizing chance," his metaphysical abstraction from the selection logic of "constraint without determination," might discriminate between theories of ultimacy. He points out that "the ultimate contingency of nature itself, along with the principles by which we attempt to explain nature, demand a deeper metaphysical explanation" (p. 168). He argues that a natural theology impulse "inspires the postulate that a Ground of Being is the ontological condition for law-like and chance-like phenomena, as well as for the comprehensibility of nature" (p. 172). Nevertheless, he finds the laws-canalizing-chance ontology unsympathetic to views of self-grounded nature (for example, in religious naturalism) because such views provide no metaphysical help in explaining how the symbiosis of law and chance works so well. But personal-being views fare the most poorly. Wildman finds his ontology unfriendly to many versions of the personal-being view that do not accord moral symmetry and co-primality to the principles of law and chance, and bluntly hostile to versions of personal being that threaten the worldly autonomy of the symbiotic chance-law entanglement. It seems to me that personhood is a higher-order version of embodiment, including endowment with mental life, and therefore even more a product of, rather than a precursor or ground to, natural processes, and jumping from nonagency concepts over the rest of the biological and human sciences to a theological view of a personal God is a leap we need not make.

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