

Contributions to the WdW

1. The definition of the term “aspect” as used by Dooyeweerd, and which he accepted. An aspect is: A basic kind of properties and laws, where “basic” means that the kind cannot be eliminated or reduced to any other aspect without incurring incoherence (MYTH, 267.)

BCW: By insisting via a clearly elaborated and logical argument that this is how “aspect” is to be philosophically understood, Clouser has also challenged a pervasive tendency among Christian and reformational thinkers to reduce Dooyeweerd’s philosophy to an *a priori* list derived from the General Theory of Modal Aspects. And so philosophical questions about “aspects” can be couched in genuinely theoretical terms.

2. The clarification and definition of six forms of incoherence (in addition to the strictly logical incoherencies of asserting contradictions or contraries) to be used in evaluating reduction arguments. These include a strong and a weak sense of Self-Referential Incoherence, Self-Assumptive Incoherence, and Self-Performative Incoherence. (MYTH, p. 83 ff.)
3. Formulating an “experiment in thought” argument to show that HD was right when he claimed that no aspect can be conceived in isolation from all the others. This is the heart of his critique as it means that no aspect can justifiably be said to qualify the nature of whatever is the self-existent Origin of all else. The experiment shows why all attempts to conceive of any aspect as independent of all the others are (minimally) self-performatively incoherent in the weak sense. This means that even if they were true, they can never be known to be true. (MYTH p.186, ff)

BCW: Clouser’s explanation of the intrinsic non-independence of any aspect allows for the timely clarification of Dooyeweerd’s transcendental critique allowing it to be understood as an intrinsic part of the scientific vocation at whatever level of academic education the student reckons with the inner connection between theoretical thought and religious (pre-theoretical) commitments. For students in the English-speaking world, and other parts of the world where Western academic influence is evident, Clouser’s Myth has de-mythologised Dooyeweerd’s philosophy.

4. Dooyeweerd’s critique of theory making has long been criticized as failing to show that theories cannot help including or presupposing some divinity belief or other. In my article on the subject, “The Transcendental Critique Revisited and Revised” (PR, 2009, n. 1), I showed why that criticism is justified but also showed how a simple shift in its statement makes it successful.
5. More generally, *The Myth of religious Neutrality* presented the main claims and conclusions of the WdW in clearer, more accessible language, and provided a background to both its transcendental critique and its ontology. This included, but is not limited to, such specifics as: stating the critique so as to make clear why it is not a version of Kant; substituting the term “type law” for the confusing expression “individuality structure;” and making clear(er)

why the transcendental critique itself yields no theories but opens a new direction for their construction.

BCW: Clouser's long-term academic involvement in the American academy has given an encouraging demonstration that a biblically-directed Christian scholarship is possible within academic institutions that cannot avoid reflecting the secularised presumptions of a post-modern, post-humanist pagan society.

For Christian students, and in particular Christian students of sociology, Clouser's philosophical contribution will prove of great benefit in a cultural context where "secularisation" theory is no longer ascribed *sine qua non* status for a scientific analysis of society. Clouser's philosophy will assist the student in rightly differentiating the variety of social responsibilities we take for granted in every-day life. His critique of the pervasive myth of religious neutrality within theories helps explain why religious assumptions, necessarily present as pre-theoretical commitments within sociological theorising, in actual fact confirm sociology's scientific goals.

Clouser's work will also encourage students to read the above statements as hypotheses to be tested when reading his philosophical work. Therefore I conclude with emphasising that they should not be read as statements that are beyond criticism.

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The Theory and Scholarship of Talcott Parsons to 1951 - a critical commentary Cambridge University Press 1989

"Christian Sociology between Appreciation, Dissent, Communication and Contribution" in Kaye V Cook (ed) *Faith in a Pluralist Age* Wipf and Stock 2018, pp. 17-28. (on the sociology of Peter L Berger (1929-2017)).

"A Heidelberg DrPhil: Talcott Parsons Anticipates his Academic Beruf" in Guenter Stummvoll and Bruce C Wearne (eds) *Der Kapitalismus bei Sombart und Max Weber - Capitalism according to Sombart and Max Weber - Talcott Parsons' Dr. Phil Dissertation in German and English*. Translation and introduction by Günter Stummvoll & Bruce C. Wearne in *Studies in the Theory of Action*, Lit Verlag, Berlin 2018.

"Philosophy as Dependable Analysis: Roy Clouser's Contribution to Christian Scholarship" *All of Life Redeemed* 2009. (annotated bibliography of the works of Roy A Clouser to 2008 - awaiting update).

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