

	Christian Theism	Deism	Naturalism	Nihilism	Atheistic Existent.	Theistic Existent.	Eastern Pan Mon	New Age	Postmodernism
What is the Prime Reality?	"1. God is infinite and personal (triune), transcendent and immanent, omniscient, sovereign and good." (26)	"1. A transcendent God, as a First Cause, created the universe but then left it to run on its own. God is thus not immanent, not fully personal, not sovereign over human affairs, not providential." (48)	"1. Matter exists eternally and is all there is. God does not exist." (61)	Same as Naturalism.	Same as naturalism. Cf. 114	Same as Christian Theism.	"1. Atman is Brahman; that is, the soul of each and every human being is the Soul of the cosmos." (144)	"1. Whatever the nature of being (idea or matter, energy or particle), the self is the kingpin, the prime reality. As human beings grow in their awareness and grasp of this fact, the human race is on the verge of a radical change in human nature; even now we see harbingers of transformed humanity and prototypes of the New Age." (178)	"1. The first question postmodernism addresses is not what is there or how we know what is there but how language functions to construct meaning. In other words, there has been a shift in 'first things' from being to knowing to constructing meaning." (214)
What is the nature of external reality?	"2. God created the cosmos ex nihilo to operate with a uniformity of cause and effect in an open system." (29)	"2. The cosmos God created is determined, because it is created as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system; no miracle is possible." (49)	"2. The cosmos exists as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system." (62)	Same as Naturalism.	"1. The cosmos is composed solely of matter, but to human beings reality appears in two forms—subjective and objective." (114)	Same as Christian Theism.	"2. Some things are more one than others. . . . [This] is another way of saying that reality is a hierarchy of appearances." (146)	"2. The cosmos, while unified in the self, is manifested in two more dimensions: the visible universe, accessible through ordinary consciousness, and the invisible universe (or Mind at Large), accessible through altered states of consciousness." (183)	"2. The truth about the reality itself is forever hidden from us. All we can do is tell stories." (219)
What is a human being?	"3. Human beings are created in the image of God and thus possess personality, self-transcendence, intelligence, morality, gregariousness and creativity." (31) "5. Human beings were created good, but through the Fall the image of God became defaced, though not so ruined as not to be capable of restoration; through the work of Christ, God redeemed humanity and began the process of restoring people to goodness, though any given person may choose to reject that redemption." (37)	"3. Human beings, though personal, are a part of the clockwork of the universe." (50)	"3. Human beings are complex 'machines'; personality is an interrelation of chemical and physical properties we do not yet fully understand." (64)	"A person's self-consciousness is only an epiphenomenon; it is just part of the machinery looking at itself. But consciousness is only part of the machinery; there is no 'self' apart from the machinery." (93–94)	"2. For human beings alone existence precedes essence; people make themselves who they are." (116)	Same as Christian Theism. And yet, "1. Human beings are personal beings who, when they come to full consciousness, find themselves in an alien universe; whether or not God exists is a tough question to be solved not by reason but by faith." (128)	"4. To realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond personality." (150)	"3. The core experience of the New Age is cosmic consciousness, in which ordinary categories of space, time and morality tend to disappear." (188)	"3. Stories give communities their cohesive character." (223) "5. There is no substantial self. Human beings make themselves who they are by the languages they construct about themselves." (225)
What happens at a person's death?	"6. For each person death is either the gate to life with God and his people or the gate to eternal separation from the only thing that will ultimately fulfill human aspirations." (40)		"4. Death is extinction of personality and individuality." (67)			Same as Christian Theism.	"7. Death is the end of individual, personal existence, but it changes nothing essential in an individual's nature." (155)	"4. Physical death is not the end of the self; under the experience of cosmic consciousness, the fear of death is removed." (194)	
Why is it possible to know anything?	"4. Human beings can know both the world around them and God himself because God has built into them the capacity to do so and because he takes an active role in communicating with them." (34)	"4. The cosmos, this world, is understood to be in its normal state; it is not fallen or abnormal. We can know the universe, and we can determine what God is like by studying it." (50)		"There is no meaning in the universe, nihilists scream." (108).	"4. The highly wrought and tightly organized objective world stands over against human beings and appears absurd." (117)	"3. Knowledge is subjectivity; the whole truth is often paradoxical." (132)	"5. To realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond knowledge. The principle of noncontradiction does not apply where ultimate reality is concerned." (151)	"5. Three distinct attitudes are taken to the metaphysical question of the nature of reality under the general framework of the New Age: (1) the occult version . . . (2) the psychedelic version . . . and (3) the conceptual relativist version . . . none of which is any 'truer' than any other." (195)	"4. All narrative mask a play for power. Any one narrative used as a metanarrative is oppressive." (224)
How do we know right and wrong?	"7. Ethics is transcendent and is based on the character of God as good (holy and loving)." (41)	"5. Ethics is limited to general revelation; because the universe is normal, it reveals what is right." (53)	"6. Ethics is related only to human beings. . . . For a naturalist, values are constructed by human beings." (72)	"Strictly speaking, nihilism is not a philosophy at all. It is a denial of philosophy, a denial of the possibility of knowledge, a denial that anything is valuable." (87) There is no such thing as right and wrong, only the feeling of right and wrong. Cf 102–105.	"3. Each person is totally free as regards their nature and destiny." (117)	Same as Christian Theism	"6. To realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond good and evil; the cosmos is perfect at every moment." (152)		"6. Ethics, like knowledge, is a linguistic construct. Social good is whatever society takes it to be." (226)
What is the meaning of human history?	"8. History is linear, a meaningful sequence of events leading to the fulfillment of God's purposes for humanity." (42)	"6. History is linear, for the course of the cosmos was determined at creation." (54)	"5. History is a linear stream of events linked by cause and effect but without an overarching purpose." (68)	Human history has no meaning because nothing has meaning.	"5. In full recognition of and against the absurdity of the objective world, the authentic person must revolt and create value." (118)	"4. History as a record of events is uncertain and unimportant, but history as a model or type or myth to be made present and lived is of supreme importance." (135)	"8. To realize one's oneness with the One is to pass beyond time. Time is unreal. History is cyclical." (155)		"7. Postmodernism is in flux." (228)

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