Overall, it seems that the crux of the debate between the realists about abstract objects and the anti-realists is if endorsing a deflationary theory of truth is a plausible substitute for endorsing the existence of propositions. Welty, Gould, and Davis for example, make very compelling arguments for divine conceptualism that are based on the character of propositions; however, as Craig points out (p. 101), one could deny the existence of propositions altogether and avoid the consequence of their arguments. Of course, Welty, Gould, and Davis responded briefly (and their responses were given even briefer responses) to the anti-realists in the book who argued this way, but due to the format of the book, there was hardly any room to make a thorough response (or a counter response). This being so, I think a lot of readers who do not yet have an opinion on deflationary theory, will go away unsure of what position to prefer and those who already have an opinion, aren't likely to be challenged to rethink their current position. The brief responses (and even briefer counter responses) aren't thorough enough to make the winner of this debate obvious.

With this stated however, I think the book clearly gives an articulate and updated account of each position. Moreover, if this book is seen as an introduction to this debate, I think it will help the reader understand the current questions that need to be asked, in addition to equipping the reader with the basic tools to answer them. In concluding, it would behoove anyone who wants a good introduction into this field to read this book.

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Hugh J. McCann. *Creation and the Sovereignty of God* (Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion). Indiana University Press, 2012.

In *Creation and the Sovereignty of God*, Hugh McCann defends a conception of God akin to what medieval thinkers like Aquinas and Anselm adopted, arguing 'that God is an absolutely perfect being, who as creator exercises complete sovereignty over all that was, is, and will be. This sovereignty ... extends not only over all that comprises the physical world, but also over human decisions and actions, over what is moral and what is not, over conceptual reality, and even reaches to God's own nature' (p. 1). McCann's intent is to provide a thorough explanation of the nature of God's relationship to the different spheres of creation, along with an explanation of God's relationship to his own nature. In what follows I will provide a brief summary of the major portions of each chapter, while reserving my critique for McCann's treatment of causation in chapters 1 – 2, and human agency in chapter 5. With regards to issues of causation, I will argue that McCann's objections to event-causation are misguided and unnecessary to his project as a whole; concerning human agency, I will argue that his adoption of libertarianism over competing views lacks demonstration.

McCann's primary aim in chapters 1 – 2 is to provide a plausible portrayal of God's relationship to the created world. In chapter 1 McCann proposes an abductive version of the cosmological argument, attempting to show that a personal, self-existent creator is the best explanation of two facts about the world: (i) that the universe exists, and (ii) that this type of universe exists. The majority of the first chapter focuses on analyzing alternative explanations for (i) and (ii). The naturalistic alternative is insufficient because of its impotence in explaining the contingency in the world, for 'even if contingent beings can derive their existence one from another, this will enable us to explain the existence of one such being only by assuming the existence of others' (p. 16). McCann says only a being or cause that exists *a se*, or of itself, has the necessary transcendency to account for the existence of the universe. McCann closes out the chapter by providing a preliminary argument against event-causation (arguing more thoroughly in the following chapter). His argument is a response to an assumption within the naturalistic hypothesis: 'earlier states of the universe produce later ones, in the sense of conferring existence on them, and so explain their existence. So once the universe is in place it will never be necessary to invoke anything more than natural causation to explain its continuation.' (p. 18) In response, McCann says,

> But this assumption is completely false. There is, first of all, no process by which past events confer existence on future ones. Indeed, it is difficult if not impossible even to imagine such a thing. Suppose an event e causes another, e', and that the causation is direct: that is, it does not occur through the mediation of intervening events that e causes, and which in turn cause e'. If so, then whatever we make of the claim that e causes e', it cannot be that there is something the former does to generate the latter. (p. 18)

In chapter 2 McCann attempts to show how God can be causally responsible for the existence of every event in the universe, without leading to the view that all experience of causal interactions are mere illusion. In addition to rejecting event-causal views, McCann also discounts occasionalist views of causation – every event in the universe is the direct product of God's causal activity – for the view implies that there are no genuine interactions between created entities, which is highly inconsistent with normal experience. Rather, according to McCann, when God acts to create the universe, he also acts to sustain the entirety of the universe; in fact, the act of creating is the same act of sustaining.

Now, in chapter 2, like chapter 1, McCann argues that event-causal views should be rejected, and while he provides more argumentation in chapter 2 than chapter 1, the additional arguments do not really support his claim in chapter 1 that the naturalistic alternative of the cosmological argument should be rejected because of its dependence on event-causation. The major problem I see with McCann's attack against event-causal views is that he seems to identify event-causation with Humean regularity theories. That is, event-causation is specified just as a constant conjunction of a temporally prior event to a temporally posterior event in proximate or contiguous physical space. The existence of the posterior event is caused or brought about by the prior event, even though no necessary causal link is evidenced between the two events. Now if this is all there is to event-causation then McCann does a laudable job in showing why such regularity views should be rejected. However I see no reason why someone, naturalist or theist, who affirms an event-causal view to explain the interactions in the physical world must adopt such a Humean position concerning event-causation. For instance, someone could adopt a Kimian view of event-causation in order to avoid most, if not all, of McCann's objections. A Kimian event-causal view states that an event just is an exemplification of a property by an object at a time, and causation between events amounts to the changing of the exemplification of properties by an object from *T*1 to *T*2 (Jaegwon Kim, 'Causation, Nomic Subsumption, and the Concept of Event' in *The Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. 70, No. 8 (1973), 217-236). Rather than arguing against such a position, McCann seems to be aware of the plausibility of this view as applied to God's relationship to the interactions of the physical world: 'On one widely held account, an event or state may be understood to consist in an entity's exemplifying a property at a time. So if God creates substances with their properties then it is he, and not prior occurrences, that is responsible for the existence of the events and states in which substances participate.' (p. 29) Now if McCann is willing to adopt such a view of causation while at the same maintaining that the naturalistic alternative is dependent on a faulty view of causation, McCann needs to show why the naturalist cannot adopt this Kimian form of event-causation; I see nowhere in McCann's book in which he attempts this. Because of such, it seems as though McCann should have conserved his attack against the naturalistic alternative to arguments showing the naturalistic alternative's inability to explain general contingency in the world.

In chapter 3 McCann moves on to the issue of God's relationship with time, defending the position that God is timeless or eternal. McCann spends the majority of the chapter arguing that God's timelessness does not diminish God's omniscience or demonstrate that temporal becoming in the created world is merely illusion. God's relationship to the world of temporal becoming is described as an immediate availability of all created reality to God's awareness. From issues concerning time, McCann progresses to an examination of God's relationship to evil and suffering. The bulk of chapter 4 focuses on the merits of the free will defence against the problem of evil from Boethian, Open, and Molinist points of view. God's providence is insufficiently meagre on a Boethian or Open position; the Molinist view fails because of its dependence on middle knowledge, which even if such knowledge exists for God (which McCann doubts), using such knowledge to create the world would strip God of any spontaneity in acting toward created agents, thus limiting his freedom.

It is in chapter 5 that McCann discusses human agency, and rejecting event-causal and agent-causal positions, McCann defends a libertarian, non-causal position which can be characterized by three necessary components of human agency: (i) 'the operations of free will cannot be the product of independent event-causal conditions' (p. 101); (ii) there must be a phenomenal quality like spontaneity, which is apparent to the agent performing the action; and (iii) there must be intentionality from the agent to the acts of will he or she performs. Against such a view of agency, McCann raises a couple of versions of the infamous 'luck' objection which appears ubiquitous in literature on libertarianism. The first version argues that agents cannot have sufficient control over their actions, and the second argues that a sufficient explanation cannot be given for the particular actions performed. McCann argues that God's act of will in creation can be supplied to refute each version of the objection without compromising any of the necessary features of agency mentioned earlier. When God creates the world, along with the agents there in, he is also creating the actions the agents perform. Thus the act of creating agents cannot be divorced from the act of creating agents performing their acts of will. McCann believes that such a tight relation between God's will and the created agents' will is too close to hold God's will as an independent or external cause of the created agents' actions. He also thinks that such a relation does not do away with the created agents' ability to engage in acts of will that are intentional and spontaneous. Because the created agents' act of will are grounded in God's act of will, there is a sufficient explanation for the agents' actions; further, since God is not to be considered an independent or external cause of the agents' acts of will, there is no danger in claiming that the agents are sufficiently in control of the act of will they perform.

My first reaction to chapter 5 is that while McCann's responses to both versions of the luck objection are interesting and persuasive, I see no reason why someone who affirms an event-causal form of libertarianism could not also adopt McCann's position. Assuming the plausibility of McCann's proposal that God's causal activity can be supplied to respond to both versions of the objection, it is not obvious why someone should adopt a non-causal view of agency over a Kimian form of event-causation. For instance someone might argue that God's act of will to create the world (and the agents in the world) could amount to his creating these agents exemplifying their acts of will at each moment they exercise such acts. Such a view is not apparently inconsistent with McCann's position or a Kimian view.

My second reaction to McCann's treatment of human agency is that he spends little to no space arguing for the plausibility of a libertarian position over its competitors. Libertarian freedom is by no means the dominant position in contemporary action theory, even if it is the dominant position among theists. The problems with libertarianism are vast and many believe are more significant than competing compatibilist positions. And while McCann responds to particular objections to libertarianism, someone who affirmed theological determinism may not find the sections defending libertarianism particularly persuasive.

In chapters 6 and 7 McCann constructs his own theodicy focused around God's intention to defeat evil. 'Indeed, I think a very plausible approach to theodicy is to adopt the view that one of God's major enterprises in creating the universe is the defeat of evil. If that is so, then the process of sin and repentance is of value in the plan of creation not just because it allows rational creatures to enter into authentic friendship with God, but also because it fits into a larger project of defeating moral evil.' (p. 125) Suffering also provides God an occasion to defeat evil, providing the agents who endure it the occasion to grow in virtue and thus resemble their creator. Thus McCann argues the sin and suffering in the world are in fact necessary to allow God to defeat evil, hence further showcasing his sovereignty by allowing created agents the ability to experience and respond to hardships in such a way to become virtuous agents.

In chapter 8 McCann affirms that the actual world is the best possible world God could create, not because this world ranks highest in relation to all other possible worlds, but because this is the world that God in fact created. Assuming the medieval doctrine that God is pure act, McCann argues that there is no deliberation or preparatory process prior to creation in which God evaluates his options for the world he will create. Rather, God simply acts in creating the world and since such an act is a proper expression of the perfection and goodness of who God is, such a world will be the best possible.

Chapters 9-11 concern God's relationship to the abstract realm. First, McCann attempts to explain the basis for the underlying moral order of created agents by proposing a version of divine-command theory. The imperatives God commands are known to humans through normal experience, and humans can know these imperatives through experiential means because such imperatives were 'built' into humans at their creation, and thus, are part of their very nature. According to McCann, the imperatives 'are not superimposed on creation but embedded in it, a dimension of reality that arouses our will as naturally as the descriptive nature of things awakens our intellect' (p. 191). Next, McCann argues in support of a fairly robust ontology of abstract objects like properties, propositions, numbers, etc., while rejecting the extremes of Platonism and nominalism. When God creates the world of the concrete, he also brings about the world of the abstract since the concrete particulars of creation give rise to the entities of the conceptual realm. Universals, thus, are real, but their existence is also dependent on the existence of the objects and events that make up the concrete world. Finally, with regard to the abstract objects that relate directly to God, McCann defends a doctrine of divine simplicity; God is best thought of as a primordial event in which all of his properties or features (omniscience, omnipotence, etc.) are together present in the pure act that is God. Just as one event can be described in more than one way – the act of *Booth committing treason* and the act of *Booth killing Lincoln* – so the event that is God can be described as *him being omnipotent* or *him being omniscient*. Both descriptions are true and refer to one and the same actual state of affairs, God himself.

In sum, *Creation* as a whole has a host of positive features which contribute to its overall value. While much of the content might be on the level for an intermediate or advanced philosophy reader, McCann's ability as a communicator allows for the possibility that a lay student comprehend the majority of the content. Further, McCann provides a thorough defence of a medieval conception of God, taking his time to show the coherence of some of the morally difficult doctrines such as timelessness and simplicity. I recommend this book for anyone looking for a defence of the God of Augustine, Aquinas, and Anselm.

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Corey L. Barnes. *Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Thought: The Christology of Aquinas and Its Historical Contexts* (Studies and Texts 178). PIMS, 2012.

In the stream of scholarship on Thomas Aquinas' thought, Corey L. Barnes' study of the wills of Christ stands out as a good example of historical theology: a careful reading and evaluation of the sources, clear and accessible presentation of the historical influences and opponents, and a comprehensive analysis. The author is now assistant professor of Religion at Oberlin College, Ohio. *Christ's Two Wills* originated at Notre Dame University, Indiana, as a doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Joseph Wawrykow. The book version included more material, notably the last chapter where Aquinas is put in dialogue with Giles of Rome, Peter Olivi and John Duns Scotus.

Central to the whole debate on Christ's two wills is the correct interpretation of Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane (Math. 26:39). Barnes' draws attention to a difference between patristic and medieval approaches to this issue (chapters one to four). Generally speaking the