



This and several other reviews were contained in the celebrations of Ken's work that we recently posted to KenWilber.com. The editors of the site went through the archives and pulled out dozens of old reviews, containing mostly positive criticism, and put them together as a type of celebration of Ken's work over the past 25 years. For the full collections, please see: **Meta-genius: A Celebration of Ken's Writings—[Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#)**

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**Integral Vision
Foreword
Frances Vaughan
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The depth and scope of Ken Wilber's vision is not easy for most of us to encompass. Many of his critics take issue with the details of one small segment or another, but never address his philosophical position as a whole. It seems that there are few people who can challenge the over arching view that integrates so many disciplines and perspectives.

For many years I have told students of transpersonal psychology that they must read Ken Wilber if they want to know how transpersonal theory integrates psychology and spiritual teachings from the world's religions. No one is expected to agree with everything he says, but they need to understand why his perspective is important.

My own acquaintance with Wilber's work dates back to 1975, when I was an associate editor of the Journal of Transpersonal Psychology and we had the privilege of being the first to publish his paper, The Spectrum of Consciousness. When his book by the same title was published soon afterwards, I realized what a great service he was doing for us all. His ability to articulate in a clear and coherent manner the integral vision that many of us had been attempting to formulate, with limited success, expanded the field of psychological and spiritual inquiry to encompass a truly global view of the spiritual quest.

Wilber is undoubtedly one of the greatest thinkers of our time. His cross-disciplinary syntheses encompass the psychology, philosophy and religion of East and West, as well as sociology, anthropology and post-modern thought. In the last two decades Wilber has been widely recognized as an outstanding philosopher. Some people have compared him to Hegel, but to my mind he is much easier to read! He has

been hailed as the Einstein of consciousness studies, and his work offers a healthy antidote to the dogmatic reductive thinking in many disciplines. His contribution to psychology has been compared to that of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and William James. His brilliant and fundamental reformulation of theories of human development and the evolution of consciousness have earned him an international reputation and the respect of scholars in a wide range of fields. I believe he offers a worldview that will, in time, affect all of our academic, social, medical, religious and scientific institutions.

In his work Wilber demonstrates an indomitable warrior spirit that matches any adversary with fearless integrity. His dedication to service is evident in his uncompromising commitment to doing the work that he feels called to do, despite the arduous discipline that it demands. Through it all he remains open to feedback and keeps a cheerful sense of humor about his own human foibles in personal relationships. He has also demonstrated his willingness to revise his ideas in response to new information, as evidenced by the evolution of his own thinking whose phases he calls Wilber I, II and III.

When he responds to critics Wilber often reflects the tone of their own remarks, and this leads some observers to feel that he can be unduly sharp. However, it seems to me that he has demonstrated both wisdom and compassion in his willingness to reply to critics that are familiar with only a small portion of his work. His compassion may seem ruthless at times, but I know his heart is open and he writes from experience as well as a prodigious amount of reading. I have been a student psychology, religion and philosophy for nearly forty years and, with the possible exception of the Dalai Lama, I have yet to meet or read anyone who can match the laser-like quality of his intellect.

Wilber's rare intellectual genius is matched by an emotional intensity that we can feel by reading the account of his passionate love relationship with his late wife, Treya, as portrayed in his book about her life and death entitled *Grace and Grit*. I know many people whose lives have been deeply affected by reading this book, and many who have been helped to deal with their own illness or loss of a loved one.

I have had the privilege of knowing Ken very well for the better part of two decades. He has been a spiritual friend, a teacher, and a shining star of inspiration. What I value most about his work is the fact that I see it always pointing to liberation and enlightenment. His exquisite mastery of language always points beyond itself to the ineffable mystery. For those inclined to jnana yoga, a thorough study of Wilber's work can be deeply rewarding. For those who feel confused on the spiritual path, his clarity is unmatched. For those who are familiar with the farther reaches of spiritual practice, his pointing out instructions are a delight. In each of the dozen books he has written to date, his penetrating vision-logic brings a kaleidoscope of ideas into a meaningful pattern that offers us a window on the wisdom of the ages.

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