

PHL 278/REL 278
LOVE AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS
Interterm 2005
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is an interdisciplinary course that introduces students to the multiple manifestations of love including affection, friendship, human sexuality and self-emptying Christian love within the larger context of the discipline of ethics. We will approach these issues by considering contemporary research in biology and psychology as they affect the motivations and physiological origins of human love. We will also consider contemporary research in philosophy and theology and how these two disciplines can integrate the scientific data into a coherent perspective wherein we are able to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and your neighbor as yourself.”

Among the various questions we will consider are the following. What is love? Is it an emotion, an evolved adaptive strategy, a mimetic illusion, sex, friendship, a neural state of the brain, an emergent property, or a virtuous character trait—or even some combination of these? Is love something that can be taught? Is it merely biological? Are there universal aspects of it that apply across cultures? Is it possible only in humans? How are we to understand the basic Christian claim, found in the scriptures, that “God is love”?

I contend that all loves share two common elements: (1) a cognitive apprehension of the good, and (2) an affective affirmation of the good. A working definition of love for the course is that love is a cognitive apprehension of being (either uncreated or created) joined with an affective affirmation that leads to activities and dispositions intent on the flourishing of being as such. I propose that this definition is wide enough to cover all loves but also specific enough to distinguish love from the other virtues. I assume the idea that there are 4 fundamental species of love found in human nature: charity, friendship, beauty and affection.

A basic thesis for this course is that the many varieties of love cannot be discreetly identified, classified and categorized. All loves share in the basic definition I have given above, yet they all have distinctive themes. I contend that there is a perichoretic aspect to all the loves. There is a mutual interpenetration of the loves such that charity necessarily informs beauty while beauty

may inform friendship and so on. Moreover, this perichoretic relationship enriches each of loves.

The course will also explore related themes and questions such as, “What is the relationship between love and justice?” “What is altruism and is it an adequate term for use in discussions of Christian ethics?” “What obligations do we have to others and what exactly is the basis for these obligations?”

PRE-REQUISITE: COR 102

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Fromm, Erich. *The Art of Loving*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1956).

Lewis, C.S. *The Four Loves*. (New York: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1960).

Lewis, Thomas et alia. *A General Theory of Love*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

Post, Stephen. *Unlimited Love; Altruism, Compassion and Service*. (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2003).

*Other readings as assigned.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The College has committed itself to education for character and service. Therefore, through our curriculum and co-curriculum, we intend that each graduate:

1 - Seek truth. Seek it dynamically, integratively, comprehensively, biblically, and historically, with discipline and scholarship; and seek meaning in truth through recognition that it proceeds from God.

2 - Learn to think critically and creatively. Develop such thinking processes as induction; deduction; problem solving; quantitative reasoning; intuition; communication; interpretation; aesthetic discernment; creative expression; and perceptive reading, viewing, and listening.

3 - Understand and value the wholeness of creation. Integrate knowledge from many areas of study into a comprehensive point of view. Learn to discern truth, goodness, and beauty; take interest in ideas regardless of their immediate utility; and exercise stewardship over one's physical and biological environment.

4 - Understand our world. Know the basic content and processes of the physical and biological world, the human race, our civilization, our society, our technological environment, and other cultures.

5 - Respect human life and understand the human condition. Recognize humankind's best and worst capacities; affirm persons of all ethnic and racial backgrounds as creative bearers of God's image; respond to and love others, and work for reconciliation.

6 - Understand and apply basic social structures and processes. Recognize society's diverse manifestations, develop cultural sensitivity, and communicate effectively and responsibly.

7 - Develop self-understanding. Exercise integrity of character, personal expression, and stewardship of self; appreciate the value of one's own physical and psychological well-being; and recognize learning as a life-long process.

8 - Value personal accomplishment. Recognize talent as from God and accept responsibility for developing creative skills, demonstrate competence in at least one area of study, learn to make sound judgements, and develop a sense of vocation, which gives meaningful direction to one's life.

9 - Respond to God's expression. Understand the Judeo-Christian worldview as made manifest through Scripture, Tradition, and Experience; fully embrace one's role in the Body of Christ; respond to God's initiating grace; be sensitive to the Spirit of God at work in the individual, the church, and the world; affirm the values of truth, goodness, beauty, and the glory of God; express those values in responsible decisions and action; and join in God's creative and redemptive activity by becoming a servant leader.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The student will:

1. identify basic biological & psychological origins of pro-social behavior including kin selection theory, reciprocal altruism and indirect reciprocity (IO 1,2,4)
2. identify the evolutionary origins of cooperation in humans and nonhumans (IO 4)
3. evaluate the sufficiency of purely materialistic explanations of love (IO 1,2,3)
4. identify the various manifestations of love in biblical, classical Christian, and contemporary secular accounts (IO 1,3,4,5,9)
5. identify and explain the role of emotion in an ethics of love. (IO 1,4,9)
6. comprehend and evaluate C.S. Lewis' account of the *Four Loves* (IO 1,2,9)
7. identify and explain the moral virtues as found in the works of Aristotle and evaluate them from a Christian perspective (IO 1,2,9)
8. identify and explain the role of the theological virtues as found in the Christian tradition (IO 1,2,3,9)

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

The following will be used to evaluate the student's work in this class:

1. Daily attendance and participation is critical to the student's progress in the course. (CO 1,2,5)

2. Daily journal entries for each class period will be an important part of the class. For these journals the student will take an issue in the readings and do the following: (1) briefly summarize the key idea or ideas (2) evaluate these ideas (3) consider their implication for Christian views on ethics, and (4) consider how these ideas challenge, provoke or confirm the student's previous convictions and beliefs. (CO 1,2,3,4,5)
3. A two page single-space review/analysis of the movie "As Good as It Gets." The student will briefly summarize the movie by indicating how and what kinds of love are possible in human relationships.(CO 3)
4. A 4-5 page paper due on the 8th class period addressing the nature of Christian love. The paper must include at least 5 scholarly sources (ordinary dictionaries, the Bible and internet resources do not count as part of the 5). The paper must have a clearly stated thesis, use correct English grammar, and must develop the thesis in a coherent fashion. (CO 1,2,7)
5. A 6-8 page paper due on the last day of class that discusses any of the topics addressed in class. The paper must include at least 5 scholarly sources (ordinary dictionaries, the Bible and internet resources do not count as part of the 5). The paper must have a clearly stated thesis, use correct English grammar, and must develop the thesis in a coherent fashion. (CO 1,2,4)

Attendance/Participation	150 points
Journals	450 points
Movie Review	100 points
Paper #1	100 points
<u>Paper #2</u>	<u>200 Points</u>
Total	1000 points

GRADING SCALE:

950-1000	A
930-949	A-
900-929	B+
870-899	B
850-869	B-
820-849	C+
790-819	C
770-789	C-
750-769	D+
720-749	D
719 and below	F

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The course will address the role of love in Christian ethics. To that end, we will consider the many ways in which Christians talk about love (e.g., love of self, neighbor and God). As a basic orientation to the course we will use C.S. Lewis taxonomy of loves as a helpful device in

unpacking the various species of love. Lewis lists affection, erotic love, friendship and charity as the four basic forms of love. Lewis was not the first to do this but his writing and style make for a helpful introduction to the topics as well as a good framework for considering the various species of love.

The first of the loves is **affection**, or *storgé*. According to some theories, the more people evolved the more they exhibited paedomorphism (i.e. the adult retention of infant-like facial characteristics). This inclines humans to peaceful coexistence with other humans on the assumption that adults will have a natural aversion to harming conspecifics with child-like characteristics.

Beauty, also known as *eros*, is also a love that has a biological basis. Evolutionary psychologists and sociobiologists have maintained that the purpose of sex is to get as many of our genes as possible into succeeding generations. Sex is therefore a powerful drive that encourages gender specific kinds of behavior. Furthermore, the role of hormones, pheromones and sexual dimorphism also seem to affect the way humans reproduce. Yet, culture has guided and shaped human sexuality in ways that seem to curb the raw desire to procreate. I contend further that the scope of beauty can be widened significantly to include more than merely sexual attraction. It can also apply to that love (or desire) of anything that possesses beauty by virtue of its created nature. As such, beauty can apply to the love of a particularly beautiful painting, e.g., the Mona Lisa or the serenity of a sunset. It calls forth our aesthetic affirmation of all that awes and inspires us.

Friendship has a long history dating back to Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. The Greek word *philia* has often been used (and appears at least 34 times in the New Testament) to express the love of friendship. Friendship however does not begin with the beauty discovered in the other or with the affection and protective instinct of the parent. Rather, there is a common interest or manner of thinking that two discover so that they enjoy their time in each other's company simply because of a common bond that unites them.

Charity, or *agapé*, is a distinctively Christian contribution to the theory of love. It is a love that has sometimes been described as "unlimited" in its scope and orientation. It can also be understood as that love which loves without regard to the status, beauty, relationship, kinship or bias towards the object of love. Of course, when we consider charity we must be clear about how it operates in both the divine and human spheres. God demonstrates this kind of love by loving humanity in a limitless self-giving love that can be seen most clearly in the idea of the incarnation of Christ. In the incarnation, God loves *all* of humanity without regard to their status or accomplishments. Rather, God loves because God's nature is love and because this love encompasses *all* being. Yet, the human manifestation of charity is such that it is a call to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself." The first point to note is here is that the human creature, it is assumed without any hesitation **does** and **should** love herself. But she is also enjoined to love her neighbor as herself. Self-love, as grounded in creation is not evil or anathema to God. The second point here is that one's total being is to be committed to the love of God. Only when one commits to this kind of love can one ever find happiness. To search for happiness never results in the attainment of the goal, but to love God is the only way to achieve that happiness that all human creatures desire.

As Aquinas notes “*Caritas* is not just any kind of love of God, but a love for God that loves him as the object and author of happiness.”

Student Expectations

Students are expected to attend class faithfully and be responsible in completing their assignments. Late assignments will receive a grade of 0. Students will not plagiarize or cheat on exams, quizzes, papers or other assignments (see detailed description below). Students will refrain from talking while others are talking and will be courteous in all activities in class. Failure to respect others or these expectations will adversely affect a student’s grade. There will be no eating in class (unless it plays a part in a faculty presentation).

Greenville College Writing Standards

At Greenville College, we are committed to helping students improve their writing. Any course may contain a writing component. We expect written work that is focused, well developed, organized, and free of grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. If you fall very far short of this standard we will return the paper for revision within a reasonable time.

Academic Honesty Statement (from the College Catalog)

Students on a Christian college campus are expected to do all academic work with integrity. This means that they should practice academic honesty without exception. The College takes this so seriously we ask all incoming students to sign a statement guaranteeing that they understand the notion of academic integrity and will conform to the policies described below.

All forms of academic dishonesty, which include cheating and plagiarism, are inappropriate on our campus. Cheating and plagiarism are variations on a theme: both involve offering the work of another as one’s own. Students cheat and/or plagiarize when they:

- Give or receive aid from another student or another person during a test, quiz, or homework assignment when they were told to work alone.
- Use notes or books when taking a quiz or test (either in a class or on-line) unless an instructor has given permission to use them.
- Copy all or part of another student’s work—an exam, worksheet, homework assignment, essay, speech, musical composition, web production, etc.—and submit it as their own work.
- Copy all or part of any published or copyrighted source such as a book, periodical article, or musical composition and submit it as their own work.
- “Cut and paste” information from a digital source such as a CD-ROM or web page and submit it as their own work.
- Steal ideas or conceptual frameworks from another source and submit them as their own without giving proper credit to the source.
- Submit other people’s work as their own (e.g., a roommate’s term paper or one purchased over the Internet).
- Ask someone else to complete a writing project for them and revise and edit the work in such a way that they are not really the one responsible for the final document. (Please note: GC’s faculty often encourage students to share their work in progress with others, in fact, the College even pays writing

tutors to help students think through revising an assignment. This is simply a good habit for any scholar that we fully endorse. What we do not want students to do is let another person take over and complete an academic task that is their own responsibility.)

This list is not exhaustive, but should give a clear idea of what constitutes academic dishonesty. In general terms, academic dishonesty occurs when people knowingly or unknowingly take credit for words or ideas that are not their own in work that is produced for a class, presentation, publication, or other public domain. All forms of cheating and plagiarism involve intellectual theft, and thou shalt not steal! Students are responsible to use appropriate quotation marks whenever they use words from another source. They must cite sources for ideas that originated with others. They are responsible to learn the specific documentation methods required in their chosen academic disciplines. Whenever they are in doubt about how to cite sources or use others' writings in their own, they should ask a professor.

At GC, academic dishonesty has severe consequences. If instructors discover any instance of cheating or plagiarism, they are well within their rights to assign a failing grade for that assignment or for the course. Furthermore, they must report the student to the department head and the Office of Academic Affairs. This office will forward the information to the appropriate deans. If a second instance of academic dishonesty occurs, the student will normally receive a failing grade for the course, and the case will be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and possible further disciplinary action. A student may be expelled from the institution for repeated or extreme violations of academic integrity. Appeals can be handled through the normal judicial process.

SCHEDULE:

N.B. All items denoted with * indicate materials on reserve in the Ruby E. Dare Library.

Session	Topic/Assignment
1	Introduction to the Course/ The Nature of Christian Ethics/ The Problem of Love's definition: Biblical and Classical definitions of love. Description: In this class we will consider the various biblical ideas and words for love including <i>storgé</i> , <i>eros</i> , <i>philia</i> , <i>kenosis</i> , and <i>agapé</i> . We will also consider the various classical accounts of the term especially the medieval Christian concept of <i>caritas</i> . The problem of contemporary definitions will also be discussed.
2	Theological Issues 1: The Conflict of Eros and Agape. Assignment: Barth and Nygren's <i>Agape and Eros</i> , chapters 1-4*; Boyd's Chapter 1*. Description: Barth and Nygren argue that <i>eros</i> is fundamentally opposed to <i>agapé</i> . The key problem in western thought has been the insidious incorporation of Greek Aristotelian ideas of love into Christian theology. What is required is a radical rejection of self-fulfillment with the Christian idea of <i>agapé</i> .
3	Theological Issues 2: Charity and the Natural Loves. Assignment: Aquinas' "Treatise on Charity," Questions 23 & 26*; Pieper's <i>Faith, Hope, Love</i> section 3 on "Love"; Pope's <i>The Evolution of Altruism and the Ordering of Love</i> Chapters 2 & 3*. Description: In this class we consider Pieper's rejection of Barth and

- Nygren and how Pope attempts to incorporate the insights of evolutionary psychology into a Thomistic account of the loves.
- 4 How Selfish are Our Genes? Evolutionary Sources of Love: Kin Selection Theory, Direct Reciprocity, Indirect Reciprocity and Game Theory. **Assignment:** Post's *Unlimited Love*, Chapters 4-6; Wright's *The Moral Animal* "Part 1: Sex, Romance and Love"*; Sober & Wilson's *Unto Others: The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*, chapter 1*. **Description:** In this session we will consider how evolutionary psychology and sociobiology give accounts for human cooperation, pro-social behavior and sexual behavior. In particular we consider Dawkins' account of "selfish genes" and Sober and Wilson's approach to multi-level selection theory. Sober and Wilson argue that human cooperation must necessarily evolve since groups of "altruists" should do better than groups of egoists. We will also explore the limitations on these evolutionary explanations.
- 5 Biological Sources of Love: The Neo-cortical and Limbic Basis. **Journal #1** **Assignment:** Thomas Lewis' *A General Theory of Love*, chapters 1-6. **Description:** In this session we consider the similarities and differences of the human and non-human brain. We look at possible neural explanations for human altruism and love, especially in the relation between the neo-cortex and the limbic system.
- 6 Biological Sources continued. **Assignment:** Lewis' *A General Theory of Love*, chapters 7-10. **Due.** **Description:** We continue the discussion from the previous session.
- 7 Psychology and Attachment Theory. **Assignment:** Kail & Cavanaugh's *Human Development: A Life-Span View*, chapter 5 "Entering the Social World"; Post's *Unlimited Love* chapter 6; Nodding's *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* chapter 4 "An Ethic of Caring"*. **Description:** This class considers the importance of attachment theory and how we develop socially and emotionally. This development has important implications for how we are able to interact with others, especially in loving relationships. The issue of empathy plays a critical role in this discussion. We will also consider how an ethics of care might more naturally result from our nature as empathic emotional beings in contrast to our self-understanding as rational.
- 8 Psychological Approaches 1: Love, It's Work, Risks and Rewards. **Assignment:** Peck's *The Road Less Traveled*, Part II: Love*. **Description:** In this session we consider how Peck's account of love as "discipline" compares and contrasts with popular ideas in our culture and the idea of love as a "virtue" that enables us to act in consistently other-regarding ways.
- 9 Psychological Approaches 2: The Manifestations of Love. **Paper #1 Due.** **Assignment:** Fromm's *The Art of Loving* (entire text). **Description:** In this class we focus on the psychological basis for love and its importance with respect to finding meaning in our lives.
- 10 Movie: "As Good as It Gets"; **Journal #2 Due.** **Description:** In this class we will view the Academy Award Winning movie "As Good as It Gets" and use what we have learned to analyze the characters and their moral development into more loving and other-regarding persons.

- 11 Philosophical Issues, Justice, Friendship and Love: Just what is required of us? **Assignment:** Aristotle’s *Ethics* Selections on justice and friendship*; Roberts’ *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology*, chapter 3.15*. **Movie Review Due. Description:** In this class we consider the work of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle considers two very important ways of relating to the other: justice and friendship. Justice is a virtue by which we render to others what is their due—which varies with the nature of the other. Friendship is a relationship that is absolutely essential for flourishing within our community.
- 12 Philosophical Issues: Heroes and Saints. **Assignment:** Urmson’s “Heroes and Saints”*; Flescher’s *Heroes, Saints and Ordinary Morality*, Chapter 5*. **Description:** Urmson argues that we are only obligated to perform “minimal” duties and that acts of supererogation are merely optional. Flescher rejects Urmson’s account and contends that our moral obligations derive primarily from our stage of moral development. The more mature we are, the more that is required of us.
- 13 Integration 1: The Four Loves and their Domains. **Assignment:** C.S. Lewis’ *The Four Loves* (entire). **Description:** This class considers Lewis’ account of the four loves and their relationships to one another. Of particular interest is Lewis’ contention that agape necessarily fulfills and perfects the other loves.
- 14 Integration 2: The Perichoretic Nature of the Loves. **Assignment:** Post’s *Unlimited Love*, chapters 7-9; Boyd’s “The Perichoretic Nature of Love: Lewis’ Four Loves Revisited”*. **Journal #3 Due. Description:** In this class we consider the notion of *perichoresis* taken from the early Fathers as an attempt to explain the relationship of the Trinity. *Perichoresis* refers to the “interpenetration” of the members of the Trinity in a relationship of mutual love and fulfillment. I then take this term and use it to address the nature of the loves. That is, the four loves each have something to contribute to human fulfillment and each of them can, and should, alter the nature of the other loves.
- 15 Wrap-up: **Final paper due.**

LOVE AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS BIBLIOGRAPHY

I have included a variety of sources here on the various aspects of love as well as varieties of Christian ethics and its critiques. The books included contain brief annotations in order to help you sift through materials that are helpful to your particular project. I have also included articles, but I have not included descriptions of them

Adams, Robert M. 1987. "Pure Love" in *The Virtue of Faith and Other Essays in Philosophical Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press. See especially the essays "Saints," and "Pure Love."

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1960. *Treatise on Charity*, ed. Lottie Kensziersk. Marquette Univ. Press. Aquinas, the most prolific of all Christian writers, is most well-known for his theory of natural law. This is Aquinas' most extensive treatment of the most important of the Christian virtues. The materials vary in their contemporary relevance but the overall importance of the treatise is significant especially with respect to how Aquinas develops the idea of charity and its biblical basis in Jesus' comments on the "Greatest Commandment."

Aristotle. 1984. *Nichomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin. Hackett. Aristotle's great work on ethics is really a series of lectures copied down by his students. It also reads like a series of student lecture notes. Richard Blackwell once commented that "Philosophy students couldn't write as poorly as Aristotle, even if they tried." However, the materials on "friendship" are particularly interesting.

Barth, Karl. *Ethics*. 1981. New York: Harper-Collins. A series of lectures by the most well-know of the neo-orthodox theologians of the 20th century. Barth's existentialism and radical rejection of natural theology results in an extreme emphasis upon divine commands as found in the dictates of Christ. Since humans are radically fallen, any attempts at ethics, apart from theology, is doomed.

Batson, C. Daniel. 1991. *The Altruism Question: Toward a Social Psychological Answer*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. An interesting psychological approach to altruism that contends there is indeed a natural basis for human altruistic behavior. Batson basis his research on human empathy but seems not to give religious motivations much credibility.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Ethics*. New York: Macmillan. A series of essays edited posthumously by his brother-in-law Eberhard Bethge, brings together a variety of topics. Bonhoeffer's style is engaging and focuses upon the divine-human encounter.

Colby, Ann and Damon, William. 1992. *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral*

Commitment. New York: The Free Press. A case study approach to altruism that considers civil rights workers, college professors, and inner city ministers.

Dawkins, Richard. 1989. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford Univ. Press. The most interesting and popular book on sociobiology by its most outspoken advocate. Dawkins, a biologist at Oxford University, argues that humans are merely machines that our genes use to make more genes. Love can only be a biological urge that gets us to procreate. Any notion of self-giving love is a meme (i.e. merely a cultural idea) that is the result of a group fiction. The book is as entertaining as it is reductionistic and anti-religious.

Edwards, Denis. 1999. *The God of Evolution: A Trinitarian Theology*. Mahweh, NJ: Paulist Press. An interesting introduction to process theology that incorporates evolutionary thought into its understanding of the Trinity. The second and third chapters focus especially on the nature of friendship and love.

Flescher, Andrew Michael. 2003. *Heroes, Saints and Ordinary Morality*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. An important book that attempts to (1) critique Urmson's minimalist deontic ethics, and (2) reconcile deontic and aretaic ethics by an appeal to what the author calls "developmental ethics." Chapter 5 is the critical chapter wherein the author acknowledges (1) a universal minimalist account of duty all people have regardless of their personalities (2) an obligation all people have to "better themselves, and (3) an ever-increasing sense of obligation to others as a result of their drive to better themselves.

Frankena, William K. 1973. *Ethics*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. A standard introduction to ethics written by one of the most well-known ethicists of the last century. He covers a good deal of ground and has an interesting approach to the development of his own moral theory incorporating insights from teleological and deontological theories.

_____. "The Ethics of Love Conceived of as an Ethics of Virtue" *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1: 21-36.

Fromm, Erich. 1956. *The Art of Loving: An Enquiry into the Nature of Love*. Harper & Row. A classic work on love by a psychologist who argues that our basic need is not to be loved but to love. An interesting read by one of the most important psychologists of the last century.

Gill, Robin. Ed. 2001. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. A collection of introductory essays in Christian ethics. The strength of the anthology is its scope but a notable exception in the essays is any article on "Love and Christian Ethics."

Grant, Colin. 2001. *Altruism and Christian Ethics*. Cambridge Univ. Press. An interesting and ambitious attempt at recovering a specifically Christian understanding of agape. Grant addresses various attempts at secular discussions of other-related activity

from sociobiology to Rawlsian contractarianism. The rhetorical method is difficult at times and the writing is inconsistent.

Gustafson, James. 1981. *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. An interesting account of Christian ethics in the reformed tradition, with a focus upon the person and work of Christ.

Hallett, Garth. 1998. *Priorities and Christian Ethics*. Cambridge Univ. Press. A pedantic and often preachy volume that attempts to negotiate the competing demands of the nearest against the neediest. Hallett often times presents straw man arguments and oversimplifies complex moral relationships. The two features of the book that merit some attention are (1) his statement of the problem in chapter one, and (2) a brief, but problematic, history of the various solutions.

Jackson, Timothy P. 2003. *The Priority of Love: Christian Charity and Social Justice*. Princeton Univ. Press. An interesting post-modern Christian treatment of love by a theologian at Emory University.

Jones, Gregory and Hauerwas, Stanley. Eds. 1989. *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. A marvelous introduction to narrative theology and ethics. It includes seminal essays by H. Richard Niebuhr, Hans Frei, Nicholas Lash and a particularly interesting essay by Martha Nussbaum titled "Narrative Emotions: Beckett's Genealogy of Love."

Kail, Robert V. and Cavanaugh, John C. 2002. *Human Development: A Life-Span View*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. A basic introduction to developmental psychology. Of particular interest is the chapter on attachment theory.

Katz, Leonard D. ed. 2000. *Evolutionary Origins of Morality: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*. Imprint Academic. An interesting and interdisciplinary approach to various issues. It provides neat summaries of important issues and texts: almost a Cliff Notes guide to the issues.

Kierkegaard, Soren. 1962. *Works of Love*, trans. Howard Hong. New York: Harper and Row. Maybe the most important work by the great Danish existentialist philosopher. A penetrating and disturbing treatise on Jesus' "Greatest Commandment." In rhetorical style it is about as far removed from Aquinas as one could get. A truly important book.

Lewis, Thomas et alia. 2001. *A General Theory of Love*. Vintage Books. Written by a medical doctor and his associates, Lewis provides a nicely constructed biological account, with emphasis on the brain, of human emotion and how we understand love.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. 1981. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Notre Dame Univ. Press. The most important work on ethics in the last 50 years. MacIntyre argues that ethical theories are unintelligible apart from the "traditions" they inhabit. In this text

MacIntyre supplies a devastating critique of both rationalist theories—like those of Kant, Mill and their successors—as well as the post-modernists. In the end, he adopts an Aristotelian ethic of virtue. This earlier work by MacIntyre is not as sympathetic to biology as his later work, *Dependent Rational Animals*, is.

. 2001. *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*. Open Court Press.

. 1990. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*. Notre Dame Univ. Press. In this book MacIntyre presents three competing theories: encyclopedia (i.e. Enlightenment morality), genealogy (i.e. post-modern relativism) and tradition (i.e. virtue ethics). He argues that both encyclopedia and genealogy are incapable of incorporating the insights of their critics into their own rigid theories. Encyclopedia pretends to be universally applicable and thus has no need for improvement. Genealogy argues that there is no objective perspective and as a result one can never find any theory better than any other. The only theory capable of doing incorporating the insights of its critics into its own theory is tradition—as found in the work of Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas is able to combine the Christian scriptures with an Aristotelian psychology. This is MacIntyre’s “Gifford Lectures.”

Midgley, Mary. 1995. *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature*. New York: Routledge. A comprehensive and in depth study of human nature in light of sociobiology. Midgley’s account of ethics makes explicit appeal to Butler’s theory of the moral sentiments in an attempt to value sociobiology’s insights without committing herself to its inherent reductionism.

Monroe, Kristen Renwick. 1996. *The Heart of Altruism: Perceptions of a Common Humanity*. Princeton Univ. Press. A political scientist’s biased attempt at developing a theory of altruism based on qualitative studies (interviews) especially with holocaust rescuers. The book’s only redeeming quality is Monroe’s interesting and thoughtful definition of altruism in the introduction.

Murphy, Nancy and George Ellis. 1996. *On the Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1987. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books. One of the most powerful critiques of Christian ethics, written by a late 19th century existentialist. Nietzsche, the grandfather of post-modernism, contends that when we make a study of how moral words have been used historically, we find that “good” is merely a self-descriptor and “evil” is a description of the powerful, creative other. Christianity is simply a religion that appeals to the weak, unimaginative masses.

Noddings, Nel. 2003. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. The basic text in feminist ethics that takes as its starting point the insights of Carol Gilligan, who contends that women and men think and develop differently especially regarding moral reasoning. Noddings argues that an ethics of care

is preferable to an ethics of duty (as seen in the work of Immanuel Kant) since an ethics of care is more humane.

- Nouwen, Henri J.M. 1992. *The Return of the Prodigal: A Meditation on Fathers Brothers, and Sons*. New York: Doubleday. A marvelous interdisciplinary interpretation of Luke's famous parable. Nouwen engages art, human relationships and Scripture to illuminate the calling that all people have to be "like the Father."
- Nygren, Anders. 1953. *Eros and Agape*, trans. Philip S. Watson. Westminster Press. An important and highly controversial work in which Nygren argues that the entire history of western Christendom has made the mistake of grafting the Greek idea of *eros* into the Christian idea of *agape*. An interesting and important read not because Nygren solves the problem (He doesn't—and his failure is monumental), but because of how he raises the question of what is a distinctively Christian treatment of the ethics of love?
- O'Donovan, Oliver. 2002. *Common Objects of Love: Moral Reflection and the Shaping of Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. A brief but engaging essay on the nature of Christian moral philosophy and political thought. The author, a professor at Oxford, proposes an Augustinian account of love and its manifestation in community.
- Outka, Gene. *Agape: An Ethical Analysis*. 1972. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press. Here is an approach to *agape* that sees it as an egalitarian principle that extends universally to all people.
- Peck, M. Scott. 1978. *The Road Less Traveled*. New York: Simon and Schuster. Written by a well-known psychiatrist, this book is an excellent introduction to human relationships that shifts focus away from self-gratification to a life of discipline. The book includes an excellent phenomenology of love and how one is capable of "working on love."
- Penelhum, Terence. 2001 *Christian Ethics and Human Nature*. SCM Press. An excellent but brief work on Christian ethics in which Penelhum attempts to rethink Christian ethics in light of contemporary views on human nature. The author does a god job of incorporating evolutionary theory into a Christian account of ethics. It's major weaknesses is its brevity.
- Pieper, Josef. 1986. *Faith, Hope, Love*. Ignatius Press. A very good summary of the work of Thomas Aquinas on the theological virtues. The book appeals a good deal to the work of C.S. Lewis as well as a contemporary defense of Thomism against the more pessimistic approach to ethics as presented by Reformed Theology. The chapter on love, the longest and most engaging in the book, is particularly good.
- _____. 1966. *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance*. Notre

Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. A series of essays on the cardinal virtues and their relationship to one another. A particularly nice section is the essay on “Prudence and Charity.”

Pohl, Christine D. 1999. *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. An accessible and easy to read introduction to the historical importance of hospitality in the biblical and Christian traditions. A strength is its “how to” approach to implementing hospitality in Christian communities. However, the book fails to plumb the depths of the nature of community, ecclesiology and the nature of culture.

Polkinghorne, John, ed. 2001. *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*. Eerdmans. A very good collection of contemporary essays on love and its relation to human nature and cosmology. Authors included in the anthology are Polkinghorne, Ian Barbour, George Ellis, Holmes Rolston, Jurgen Moltmann, Keith Ward, and Sarah Coakley.

Pope, Stephen. 1994. *The Evolution of Altruism and the Ordering of Love*. Georgetown Univ. Press. An engaging attempt at synthesizing the findings of sociobiology and evolutionary psychology with the moral thought of the great Christian thinker, Thomas Aquinas. An excellent book and a fine example of interdisciplinary thinking.

Post, Stephen G. et alia. Eds. 2002. *Altruism & Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy & Religion in Dialogue*. New York: Oxford University Press. A very thorough, interdisciplinary treatment of the nature of altruism. Contributors range from the psychologist Daniel Batson to theologian Stephen Pope. The essays are all first rate. This is an excellent anthology on altruism and love.

Ridley, Matt. 1996. *The Origins of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Penguin. An interesting and engaging book that attempts to see the evolution of virtue as a necessity for human life. Ridley claims that humans must see their individual self-interest as tied to the interests of others.

_____. 1995. “Love in Contemporary Christian Ethics” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 23: 167-97.

Roberts, Robert C. 2003. *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press. An interesting account of human emotions written by a philosopher at Baylor. He sees emotions as “conceptual construals” that play a critical role in moral psychology.

Rolston, Holmes. 1999. *Genes, Genesis and God: Values and Their Origin in Natural and Human History*. Cambridge Univ. Press. A magnificent work on Christian ethics that integrates biology, theology and philosophy.

Shermer, Michael. 2004. *The Science of Good and Evil: Why People Cheat, Gossip,*

Care, Share and Follow the Golden Rule. Times Books. A poorly written, but at times engaging look at sociobiology. Some data and narratives are helpful in the book but little critical reflection is presented. The book has a decidedly anti-religious bias. A much better popular look at sociobiology is Robert Wright's *The Moral Animal*.

- Smith, Christian. 2003. *Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture*. Oxford Univ. Press. An engaging and interdisciplinary approach to Christian ethics that attempts to bring together narrative ethics, a critique of culture and an appeal to transcendent moral principles.
- Sober, Elliott and David Sloan Wilson. 1998. *Unto Others: The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*. Harvard Univ. Press. An interesting secular account of pro-social behavior based upon group selection theory co-written by an evolutionary biologist and a philosopher. Sober and Wilson argue that groups of altruists will always do better than groups of egoists, and as a result, altruism will not only evolve but thrive in human communities.
- Sorokin, Pitirim. 2002. *The Ways and Power of Love: Types, Factors, and Techniques of Moral Transformation*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press. An interesting study of love by a well-known Russian sociologist. Of particular interest is his "5 dimensional model of love" that could be used as a pattern for social science research. The five dimensions of love are: intensity, extensivity, duration, purity, and adequacy.
- Spurrier, William A. 1974. *Natural Law and the Ethics of Love: A New Synthesis*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press. A dated and not very illuminating book on either love or natural law ethics.
- Toner, Jules. 1968. *The Experience of Love*. Washington, DC: Corpus Books. The classic Thomistic approach to Christian love. Reminiscent of Pieper's work on the subject, Toner argues that in "the full concrete experience of love, our whole being, spirit and flesh is involved." Toner's approach that emphasizes the goodness of creation is a healthy corrective the depressed pessimism of many of his protestant contemporaries.
- Urmson, J. O. 1958. "Saints and Heroes" *Essays in Moral Philosophy*, ed. A.I. Melden. Seattle: Seattle University Press: 198-216.
- Vacek, S.J., Edward Collins. 1994. *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics*. Georgetown Univ. Press. A very interesting treatment of love by a Jesuit priest. Vacek's approach is to start with a neo-Thomistic theory of love and consider the various kinds of love manifested in human and divine encounters. Vacek's ethics may be Thomistic but his theology is Process.
- _____. "Divine-Command, Natural-Law and Mutual-Love Ethics." *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 633-53.

Vanier, Jean. 1998. *Becoming Human*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press. Written by the founder of the

L'Arche Communities (communities that intentionally minister with and to mentally challenged individuals), this book is a reflection on his 30 years of ministry and explores what he considers the 7 aspects of love. The seven are: the revelation of value, understanding, communication, celebration, empowerment, being in communion, and forgiveness.

Wilson, David Sloan. 2002. *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. Univ. of Chicago Press. Written by one of the few group selectionist theorists, this book provides a fascinating attempt to explain the evolutionary advantages of religious communities. Wilson uses Calvin's Geneva as a paradigm for the adaptationist advantages of religious communities.

Wilson, Edward O. 1998. *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*. Vintage Books. An interesting attempt to unify all knowledge under the authority of sociobiology. Considered here are religion, ethics and even the humanities. Wilson, a well-known entomologist and sociobiologist takes a reductionistic, but occasionally sympathetic, approach to religious issues. Of particular interest is Wilson's approach to ethics that divides the discipline into "transcendentalist" approaches (i.e. appeals to eternal universal principles of morality imposed upon humans extrinsically) and "empirical" approaches that emphasize human nature as normative.

Wright, Robert. 1994. *The Moral Animal: Evolutionary Psychology and Everyday Life*. Vintage Books. An engaging and popular book written by a non-scholar. The real strength in the book lies in the author's ability to communicate the insights of evolutionary psychology in an accessible manner. Particularly interesting is his analysis of sexual strategies and the differences in male and female approaches to this topic. Wright's illustrations and data are fascinating but lack the scholarly reflection that could make the book a powerful apologetic for evolutionary psychology.

Wyschogrod, Edith. 1990. *Saints and Postmodernism: Revisioning Moral Philosophy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.