

CONCLUSION

Most of us think we should love some people more than others. If we did not love our own children more than a new friend, something would be wrong. However, in *De doctrina christiana* Augustine makes the following argument, which I explained in Chapter One:

- (1) The degree to which we love something should be proportional to the value it has.
- (2) Every person has equal value.
- (3) Therefore, we should love all people equally.

Obviously, Augustine's conclusion conflicts with the intuition that we should, in fact, love some people unequally or preferentially. Thus, it seems there is something wrong with his argument. Premise (1) seems like the obvious point of attack. However, as I suggested in Chapter One, the problem with the first premise is not immediately obvious. Indeed, it seems there is *some* connection between appropriate love and value. Thus, even if premise (1) turns out to be false, it is worthwhile trying to say just what is wrong with it, since that effort promises to illuminate the connection between appropriate love and value. The first aim of the dissertation, then, was to point out the central problem with Augustine's argument and thereby to illuminate this

connection. The second aim of the dissertation was to give an explanation of why we should love some people more than others.

As I claimed in Chapter Five, I take the main problem with Augustine's argument to be an unstated assumption underlying premise (1): that love for a person should be a response to the value possessed by that person as such. My argument for this claim began in Chapter Four, where I considered different views of love's "proper grounds"—those valuable features in response to which love properly arises or is sustained. David Velleman agrees with Augustine that mere personhood is love's sole proper ground.²⁹⁹ Niko Kolodny argues that only certain relationships between lover and beloved (e.g., friendships, and romantic and familial relationships) may serve as proper grounds of love.³⁰⁰ Both Velleman and Kolodny oppose the view that qualities like wit, talent, or virtue might play this role. In Chapter Four I rejected the views of Velleman and Kolodny, arguing that love's proper grounds are plural and include, in addition to mere personhood and relationships, certain valuable qualities. With the pluralist view in hand, in Chapter Five I argued that Augustine has misunderstood the connection between love and value. Love need not be a response to the value of a person as such; rather it may appropriately be a response to the value of certain qualities of the beloved, or to the value of a relationship to the beloved, neither of which necessarily constitutes his value as a person. Thus, in the end, I claim that Augustine, Velleman, and Kolodny all take too narrow a view of love's connection to value.

Having understood the main problem with Augustine's argument for equal love, we might still wonder why we should love some people preferentially. Since addressing that aim required an account of what love is, in Chapters Two and Three I gave such an account. Harry

²⁹⁹ Velleman, "Love as a Moral Emotion."

³⁰⁰ Kolodny, "Love as Valuing a Relationship."

Frankfurt and Eleonore Stump have argued that love consists in certain desires.³⁰¹ Velleman holds that love is a certain emotion, while Kolodny has argued that love partially consists in certain standing intentions. In Chapter Two I claimed that none of these views are adequate. I began with Thomas Aquinas's claim that love aims at two targets: the good of the beloved and union with him. I then argued that love could not consist in occurrent desires for such things, or related emotions, since love often remains steady while desires and emotions come and go. It seemed more plausible that love consists of two standing intentions: to bring about the beloved's good and to bring about union with him. However, since the lover cannot always achieve love's two targets, it seems love cannot consist of intentions either, since we only intend things that seem achievable to us. For example, if the good of your beloved includes her promotion at work and you cannot bring this about, then you cannot intend this aspect of her good. Nevertheless, love involves some motivational attitude toward such goods.

Thus, in the end, I followed Aquinas in claiming that love consists of two conditional tendencies of the will—toward the beloved's good and toward union with him. Consider, for example, love's tendency toward the beloved's good: if some aspect of the beloved's good is lacking or threatened, and if it seems both possible and appropriate for the lover to remedy the situation, then the lover will intend to do so. If it seems either impossible or inappropriate to do so, then she will merely desire it for him. If no aspect of the beloved's good is lacking or threatened, then love's tendency toward the beloved's good simply remains in the background until relevant circumstances arise. On my view, then, the occurrent desires, emotions, and intentions often associated with love are all downstream effects of love and do not constitute the attitude itself.

Given this account of love, in Chapters Six and Seven I offered an explanation of why we should love some people more than others. I began by arguing that union between lover and

³⁰¹ Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*; Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*.

beloved—a collection of states and activities that make the people “one” in some sense—is a kind of properly love-grounding relationship, or “good relationship.” Since love is (in part) a tendency of will toward such union (as argued in Chapter Two), preferential love may be understood as a tendency of will to prefer or prioritize one good relationship over another. I then argued that since closer instances of such relationships are generally more valuable than more distant ones, we should (*ceteris paribus*) generally choose a closer relationship over a more distant one, if we cannot choose both. Finally, then, preferential love for those we are relationally closer to is called for by the fact that such love is, in part, a tendency of will to choose those closer and more valuable relationships over more distant and less valuable ones.

REFERENCES

- Bianca P. Acevedo et al., "Neural Correlates of Long-Term Intense Romantic Love," *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 7, no. 2 (2012): 145–59.
- Robert M. Adams, "Pure Love," in *The Virtue of Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 174–92.
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols. (New York: Ave Maria Press, 1981).
- Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson, trans. Benjamin Jowett and Jonathan Barnes, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, J. L. Ackrill, and J. O. Urmson, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- Arthur Aron et al., "Experiences of Falling in Love," *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 6 (1989): 243–57.
- Arthur Aron et al., "Close Relationships as Including Other in the Self," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 60, no. 2 (1991): 241–53.
- Arthur Aron et al., "Reward, Motivation, and Emotion Systems Associated with Early-Stage Intense Romantic Love," *Journal of Neurophysiology* 94 (2005): 327–37.
- Augustine, "Of True Religion (De Vera Religione)," in *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, trans. John H. S. Burleigh, vol. VI, The Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), 218–83.

- Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, trans. R.P.H. Green, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John 112-24, Tractates on the First Epistle of John*, trans. John W. Rettig, vol. 92, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995).
- Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R.W. Dyson, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- Augustine, *On the Trinity, Books 8-15*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans. Stephen McKenna, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Augustinus Hipponensis, *Tractatus in epistolam Ioannis ad Parthos*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 35, 162 vols., *Patrologia latina* (Paris, 1844).
- T. Berry Brazelton and J. Kevin Nugent, *Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale*, 4th Edition, vol. 190, *Clinics in Developmental Medicine* (London: Mac Keith Press, 2011).
- James A. Coan, Hillary S. Schaefer, and Richard J. Davidson, "Lending a Hand: Social Regulation of the Neural Response to Threat," *Psychological Science* 17, no. 12 (December 2006): 1032–39.
- John M. Cooper, "Friendship and the Good in Aristotle," *Philosophical Review* 86, no. 3 (July 1977): 290–315.
- Neil Delaney, "Romantic Love and Loving Commitment: Articulating a Modern Ideal," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (1996): 339–56.
- René Descartes, *Descartes: Philosophical Letters*, ed. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).
- Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Beverley Fehr, "Prototype Analysis of the Concepts of Love and Commitment," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 55, no. 4 (1988): 557–79.
- Harry Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
- Peter Geach, "Teleological Explanation," in *Explanation*, ed. Stephen Korner (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 76–95.
- Irving D. Harris and Kenneth I Howard, "Correlates of Perceived Parental Favoritism," *The Journal of Genetic Psychology* 146, no. 1 (1985): 45–56.
- Bennett Helm, *Love, Friendship, and the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

- Paul Hoffman, "Reasons, Causes, and Inclinations," in *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 156–75.
- Immanuel Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals," in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. Mary J. Gregor, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Niko Kolodny, "Love as Valuing a Relationship," *The Philosophical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 2003): 135–89.
- Roger E. Lamb, "Love and Rationality," in *Love Analyzed*, ed. Roger E. Lamb (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 23–47.
- C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harvest/HBJ, 1960).
- John Stuart Mill, "What Utilitarianism Is," in *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, ed. Mary Warnock (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 185–202.
- U. Müller and B. Perry, "Adopted Persons' Search for and Contact With Their Birth Parents I: Who Searches and Why?," *Adoption Quarterly* 4 (2001): 8.
- Robert Nozick, "Love's Bond," in *The Examined Life: Philosophical Meditations* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1989), 68–86.
- Oliver O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in Saint Augustine* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981).
- Oliver O'Donovan, "Usus and Fruitio in Augustine De Doctrina Christiana I," *Journal of Theological Studies* 33, no. 2 (October 1982): 361–97.
- Plato, "Symposium," in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997), 457–505.
- Plato, *Republic*, trans. C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2004).
- John Rawls, "Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics," *The Philosophical Review* 60, no. 2 (April 1951): 177–97.
- Saint Augustine, *The Retractions*, trans. Sister Mary Inez Bogan, vol. 60, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1968), 56.
- Saint Augustine, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, trans. David L. Mosher, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982).

- Saint Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, trans. R.P.H. Green, 3rd ed., Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Sancti Aurelii Augustini, *De Ciuitate Dei, Libri XXII*, ed. Emanuel Hoffman, vol. 40, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: Academiae Litterarum Caesariae Vindobonensis, 1899).
- Sancti Aurelii Augustini, *De Trinitate, Libri XV*, ed. W.J. Mountain, vol. 50, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968).
- Sancti Aurelii Augustini, *De Diversis Quaestionibus Octoginta Tribus, De Octo Dulcissimi Quaestionibus*, ed. Almut Mutzenbecher, vol. 44A, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975).
- T.M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
- T.M. Scanlon, "Rawls on Justification," in *The Cambridge Companion to Rawls*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 139–67.
- Samuel Scheffler, "Valuing," in *Equality and Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 15–40.
- William Shakespeare, "Pericles," in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, The Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1994), 1035–61.
- William Shakespeare, "Romeo and Juliet," in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, The Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1994), 245–78.
- Michael S. Sherwin, *By Knowledge & By Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005).
- Irving Singer, *The Nature of Love, Vol. 1: Plato to Luther*, Irving Singer Library (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).
- Irving Singer, *Philosophy of Love: A Partial Summing Up* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).
- Alan Soble, *The Structure of Love* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).
- Graham B. Spanier, "Measuring Dyadic Adjustment: New Scales for Assessing the Quality of a Marriage and Similar Dyads," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 38, no. 1 (February 1976): 15–28.
- Eleonore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Julie Tannenbaum, "Categorizing Goods," in *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*, ed. Russ Shafer-Landau, vol. 5 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

- C. Trevarthen, "Intrinsic Motives for Companionship in Understanding: Their Origin, Development, and Significance for Infant Mental Health," *Infant Mental Health Journal* 22, no. 1–2 (2001): 95–131.
- David Velleman, "Love as a Moral Emotion," *Ethics*, no. 109 (January 1999): 338–74.
- J. David Velleman, "Family History," *Philosophical Papers* 34, no. 3 (2005): note 1.
- Katja Maria Vogt, "The Good of Others: A Stoic Reading of Plato," accessed October 7, 2013, http://www.katjavogt.com/pdf/katja_vogt_cosmopolitanism.pdf.
- Jennifer Whiting, "Impersonal Friends," *Monist* 74, no. 1 (January 1991): 3–27.
- Bernard Williams, "Persons, Character, and Morality," in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1–19.
- D.W. Winnicott, *Mother and Child: A Primer of First Relationships* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1957).
- Peter H. Wolff, "The Causes, Controls, and Organization of Behavior in the Neonate," *Psychological Issues* V, no. 1 (Monograph 17) (1966): 1–106.
- W.B. Yeats, *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats* (New York: Macmillan, 1956).
- Linda J. Zervas and Martin F. Sherman, "The Relationship Between Perceived Parental Favoritism and Self-Esteem," *The Journal of Genetic Psychology* 155, no. 1 (1994): 25–33.