

Aristotle for *justice*. Strangely, however, in English translations of the New Testament, the word is usually translated as “right” or “righteousness” instead of “just” or “justice,” resulting in some conceptual confusion for English readers. Wolterstorff goes on, in his New Testament analysis, to demonstrate the ways that Jesus’ teaching and ministry were narratives about justice, from the announcement of his ministry, to his parables, to his identification with those unjustly accused and condemned. The point, for Wolterstorff, is that the New Testament clearly has a strong justice narrative not only in the Pauline writings (especially Romans) but in the Gospels as well.

The second part of the book, *Fusion of Narrative with Theory*, follows Augustine in breaking with classical right-order theory by introducing the love of God into our understanding of morality and justice. Wolterstorff describes how Augustine’s concept of God’s love for humanity as “attachment” is key for our understanding the natural moral order and the inherent worth of human beings.

The third part, *Theory: Having a Right to a Good*, considers contemporary accounts of rights, such as Kant’s argument that the human capacity for rationality is a sufficient criterion for recognizing human dignity or Ronald Dworkin’s idea that humanity inherently recognizes the sacredness of life. In the end, Wolterstorff goes beyond even the historical Christian idea that humanity’s creation in the image of God (*imago dei*) provides a rationale for rights, instead concluding, “If God loves, in the mode of [Augustinian] attachment, each and every human being equally and permanently, then natural human rights inhere in the worth bestowed on human beings by that love. Natural human rights are what respect for that worth requires” (360).

In the end, I have two recommendations. Philosophers should read this important and erudite book that will generate considerable debate; I think it a must-read for Christian philosophers. My second recommendation is for the author and/or publisher. The fundamental conclusions, which are reached in the final chapters after an exhausting 330 pages, need much wider distribution in the form of an article targeting a wide audience of both scholars and interested laity.

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A Shared Morality: A Narrative Defense of Natural-Law Ethics

Craig A. Boyd

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos, 2007 (272 pages)

This book represents another contribution to the ever-increasing literature on natural law. Craig Boyd has offered a thoughtful, engaging, and interdisciplinary study that should prove to be a stimulus to further scholarly reflection on this topic. Boyd’s broad purpose is to defend a particular version of natural law in the face of several contemporary objec-

tions to natural-law ethics. At the same time, Boyd intently incorporates elements of truth that he finds in the theories of the objectors into his revised view of natural law, and it is this approach that gives his work its particular interest.

Following an introductory chapter, chapter 2 presents what Boyd refers to as a narrative of natural morality—basically a summary of natural-law thinking from antiquity to the present. Though it is necessarily selective, the chapter does offer a helpful overview of many important, general issues. In the next four chapters, Boyd deals individually with four challenges to natural-law ethics: sociobiology and evolutionary psychology, divine command ethics, postmodern relativism, and analytic philosophy.

The investigation of sociobiology in chapter 3 is arguably the most important for Boyd's larger case. Boyd is convinced of the need for an understanding of nature and particularly human nature for a sound ethical theory. In light of this need, Boyd turns to evolutionary theory, which he finds to be the overwhelming consensus of modern science in one form or another. He argues that sociobiology and evolutionary psychology help to explain why many moral norms—regarding things such as sex, murder, and honesty—are indeed rooted in human nature. Nevertheless, he also argues that biology is not a sufficient explanation for human morality. Knowing the truth, pursuing virtue, and living peacefully in society transcend mere biological goods. The human ability to reason permits us to recognize and pursue higher goods, such as celibacy and martyrdom.

Chapter 4 then considers divine command ethics, which poses a challenge to natural law in the way that it posits God's will as the source of moral obligation. Boyd believes that divine command ethics accurately objects to the tendency of some natural-law theories to leave God out of the picture, but he also sees it as deficient in failing to give an account of the good. Accordingly, he attempts to integrate natural law with a theology of creation and with biblical commands.

Chapter 5 turns to postmodernism, which challenges the idea of objective and transcendent truth upon which natural-law ethics rests. Boyd acknowledges that postmodernism has raised several fair objections against certain naïve presentations of natural law, but, in contrast to it, he defends a realist epistemology and the existence of "natural kinds" that the human intellect can discover. He distances himself, however, from a static Aristotelian metaphysics and asserts, with a nod to modern science, that essences are in process. This, in turn, underlies an unfolding, developing view of natural law.

Chapter 6 treats the challenges to natural law from analytic philosophy. In contrast to Hume's is-ought objection and Moore's naturalistic fallacy and even to the new natural-law theory represented by Germaine Grisez and John Finnis, Boyd argues against any fact-value dichotomy. He asserts that facts and values are bound together in a world made by God and that God has instilled certain desires and purposes in us upon which he expects us to act.

Finally, chapter 7 brings together several important themes. Boyd argues that virtue alone is insufficient for ethics, concluding both that virtue ethics requires natural law and that natural-law ethics requires a concept of virtue. He further expounds his open or developmental view of natural law, which affirms that natural law is open to fulfillment

by the virtues, is open to revision in light of progress in the natural sciences, and is open to theological completion in the pursuit of a good that transcends mere earthly goods.

One of the great strengths of this volume is the author's serious interaction—both critical and appreciative—with a number of intellectual trends in science, theology, and philosophy. This respectful and interdisciplinary approach lends a sense of broad-mindedness and moderation that should prevent this work from being dismissed as idiosyncratic. By embracing aspects of various trends that seem at first blush to oppose traditional ideas about natural law, Boyd should gain a more sympathetic audience than he otherwise might and foster conversation among natural-law traditionalists and various contemporary critics.

Boyd's theory is basically Thomistic in its perspective (and practically by his own admission). He argues that natural law is rooted in an ontology and anthropology, that it provides a basic moral orientation, that sin is a reality to be accounted for without having an overly dire effect on human moral reasoning, that virtue is a necessary complement to natural law, and that grace and Christian truth complete or perfect natural law. The major modification that he makes to Aquinas's natural law is his shift from an Aristotelian metaphysics to modern evolutionary theory to provide an account of natural kinds and of human nature especially. Readers already sympathetic to a Thomistic perspective are probably most likely to find this book immediately attractive.

Because Boyd addresses various theological themes and the relationship of natural-law ethics to Christian ethics, his lack of sustained interaction with the biblical texts and with many serious theological objections to natural-law ethics should be noted as a weakness. Readers who share Boyd's enthusiasm for narrative but look to the *biblical* narrative as the one that most defines their beliefs and way of life will likely not have their chief concerns about natural law sufficiently answered. For example, how does Boyd account for Scripture's description of the special creation of human beings in God's image in Genesis 2 in light of his use of modern evolutionary theory? What exactly happens to nature, a concept that Boyd so emphasizes, in the fall into sin narrated in Genesis 3? Does Boyd affirm a historical fall? If all obligatory divine commands must be within the parameters of natural law, as Boyd claims, then how does one deal with biblical commands, given at crucial points in the narrative of redemptive history, that seem to contradict natural law directly, such as the command to Israel to slaughter the Canaanites and to Jesus' disciples to turn the other cheek rather than to seek talionic justice? Finally, how can Boyd's natural-law ethics account for the eschatology of the biblical narrative, which drives not toward a supernatural perfecting of the natural but toward a cataclysmic consummation in which Christ issues in a *new* heavens and earth? Boyd has very helpfully begun a number of important conversations about natural law, and this reviewer hopes that concerns from the biblical narrative such as those mentioned above will also find a place in these future conversations.

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