

(though he repeats some well-aimed criticism at the over-influential Pagels, 184-5), but to concentrate on the admittedly able though scatter-shot critique of Augustine's own adversary, Julian of Eclanum. Though Lamberigts' remarks about Julian are generally well-taken, his strategy prevents him from facing various moderns good and bad. Thus he only minimally reflects on the Augustinian assumption that, given a Fall, there is no reason why sexual desire should be exempt from its effects: we all know, though we often do not want to know, that there really is a universal temptation to manipulate sexually. Modern anti-Augustinian 'heresies' about the neutral purity of the sexual drive—a revised Julianism in contemporary dress, and with more attention to women—deserve serious reconsideration as does the widespread ancient (and not merely Christian) axiom that pleasure should not be pursued for its own sake (cf. *Conf.* 10.31.44; 10.33.49; etc.).

The final essay, by Dodaro, is the most challenging. Taking his starting point from William Connolly's Feuerbachian claims that by confession Augustine projected and constructed a jealous God (whose devotees must reject the claims of all inferior versions: no pluralism here), Dodaro considers, in dialogue with Connolly, why Augustine refuses to advocate pardon without further penalty for repentant pagan rioters at Calama where he is willing to concede it to Christians. The reason is that only Christian repentance—with its essential claim that further sinfulness cannot be avoided without a recognition of one's inability to achieve a pagan self-sufficiency of virtue—is able to work genuine improvement in the body politic. If Augustine is even partly right about this - and it is hard to accept the uniqueness of Christian revelation without being forced to admit he can make a strong case (albeit perhaps not as strong as he thinks) - then the consequences for those of us willing to go along with many norms of secular ('pagan') social practice are more unnerving than we may like to recognize.

JOHN RIST

**ISSUES FOR A CATHOLIC BIOETHIC**, ed. Luke Gormally *Linacre Centre*, London, 1999. £18.95 pbk.

In the summer of 1997 the Linacre Centre, the widely-respected Catholic bioethical research institution, held a conference in Cambridge to celebrate twenty years of existence. Here its director brings together seventeen papers presented at the conference, three exchanges and the opening address by Cardinal Winning, a collection which conveys a sense of varied and interesting proceedings, though without that evenness and coherence which always beckon, yet usually elude, conference planners. Unsurprisingly, it is a homey, family affair, a discussion among soulmates. It conveys predictably that Catholic bioethics has as much concern with philosophical issues about body and soul as it has to do with medical casuistry. Less predictably it offers some welcome indications that current Catholic discussion is biblically, as well as philosophically formed: a rather good section called 'Anthropology' contains two memorable essays, one by Professor John Haldane on the philosophy of the body and one by Gregory Glazov on biblical anthropology. There are discussions of sexual ethics (with especial reference to John-Paul II's allocutions) as well as of the

vocation of health care and the vocation to suffer. But there is attention to practical questions, too. Six contributions concern themselves with the relation of Catholic medical practice to the norms of contemporary secular society, and especially the problem of cooperation in evil, an understandable preoccupation. Here Anthony Fisher contributes a fine, and by turns entertaining, discussion of the position of Catholic hospitals. Two contrasting articles by lawyers discuss the revolution in British law (John Keown), and the logic of the Catholic contribution to public debate (John Finnis). Others treat of the political fortunes of pro-life movements on either side of the Atlantic.

There is also a group of four discussions of 'Disputed Questions'—not that the other questions are undisputed!—attending to special *crucēs* of medical practice. Pride of place for potential importance here goes to D. Alan Shewmon's attack on the criteria for 'brain-stem' death; Professor Shewmon has apparently been arguing his case for fifteen years, but some of us, like myself, have not caught up with it before. It is partly philosophical, in a rather scholastic Thomist mode, and partly empirical—and it is the empirical side of it that should not be missed by those concerned with the topic. It is a point on which the Catholic ability to mount a challenge to accepted practice is seen at its strongest and most persuasive. It is a pity that the reply to Shewmon made at the conference by Professor Frackowiak was not available for the volume. On a much more limited issue, Christopher Kaczor launches a precise and well-aimed assault, which Gerald Gleeson proves unable to ward off, upon the use of methotrexate in the management of ectopic pregnancy. On the other hand, those inclined to think that Catholic bioethics betrays certain traits of obsessiveness will not be shaken from their prejudice by a curious exchange in which Mary Geach attacks the proposition that it would be praiseworthy for a woman to 'adopt' an orphan embryo into her womb, and Helen Watt replies, astonishingly enough, that it could even be morally obligatory.

What is the relation between Catholic bioethics, as it is practised and discussed in characteristic isolation, and Christian bioethics, defined both by the wider church and by the demands of theology? Professor Michael Banner, an Anglican acting as the conference's ecumenical conscience, addresses this question in typically robust style, attending to the contributions of John-Paul II, among which *Veritatis Splendor* and the CDF's *Donum Vitae* attract his admiration, while he finds *Evangelium Vitae* disappointing. (Such an assessment of the relative merits of those documents, incidentally, would certainly not be unique among Protestant moralists, nor, I think, unknown among Catholics.) It is a pity that this was the only ecumenical contribution, and even more so that its concerns plainly nettled the editor, who responds in his Introduction to Banner's emphasis on theology with an appeal to the 'Catholic interest in moral dialogue with those who do not accept revelation'. In the context of *this* book, that is bizarre. Who ever heard of a conference on *Prospects for a Baptist Bioethic*? And when was it the function of Natural Law in classical Christian thought to make discussion between believers and unbelievers *possible*?

This moment of false-consciousness notwithstanding, this is a worthy celebration of two decades for which many non-Catholic Christians engaged in bioethics are grateful.

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