



Iris Murdoch and the Search for Human Goodness

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A noted philosopher and one of the most gifted and prolific novelists of the twentieth century, Iris Murdoch has anticipated and shaped many of the issues central to current ethics. These include the relation between human identity and ideas of the good, the effect of the modern critique of religion on moral thought, the relation between ethics and literature, and the contemporary debate about liberalism. In the most comprehensive engagement with Murdoch's work to date, this volume gathers contributions from philosophers, theologians, and a literary critic to explore the significance of her ideas for contemporary thought.

Inspired by Murdoch's tenacious wrestling with basic questions of human existence, these essays not only clarify her thoughts on human goodness, but also move beyond the academy to reflect on how we can and ought to undertake the human adventure in our daily lives.

Contributors are Charles Taylor, Martha Nussbaum, David Tracy, Cora Diamond, Maria Antonaccio, Elizabeth Dipple, Franklin I. Gamwell, Stanley Hauerwas, and William Schweiker. This volume also includes "Metaphysics and Ethics," a classic essay by Iris Murdoch.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Philosopher and novelist Murdoch, who has staunchly cried from the wilderness throughout the reign of antimetaphysics that there cannot be moral value without metaphysics, provides the substance for nine essays by first-rate contributors. Powerful antimetaphysical arguments since the end of the 19th century have deeply questioned the whole project of ethics by questioning the idea of a human nature?the traditional foundation of ethics. Here at the end of the 20th century there is a profound need for ethics to rethink its relation to metaphysics and the concept of human nature, in hopes that they will again give substance to ethics. Essays by such notables as Nussbaum, Hauerwas, and Diamond take on such issues as eros, the fact/value distinction, the relations between ethics and religion, and the ego and action. Murdoch's important essay, "Metaphysics and Ethics," is also included. This work presumes a strong background in philosophy; therefore, the text is suitable for graduate work and advanced scholarship. ?Lee Horvitz, Miami Univ., Oxford, Ohio

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