

recognizes the dignity of Black families, redirection of financial resources to systems that promote and protect Black families, and the abolition of CPS (175–176). Those interested in resisting the anti-Black practices of CPS will find the appendix especially helpful. This appendix, which contains Rice’s own “Quick CPS Guide for Parents,” empowers parents with knowledge of their parental rights and practical strategies when in conversation with CPS.

Often, conversations about child welfare prioritize the wellbeing of children. In this sense, Rice’s focus on the vulnerabilities of parents may surprise readers. Yet, focusing on this perspective allows Rice to identify systemic issues that plague contemporary policies and practices of child welfare and sometimes unnecessarily disrupt family life. In this regard, *The Ethics of Protection* offers an innovative trajectory for conversations in the ethics of child welfare. This book stands alongside books like *Children of the Storm: Black Children and American Child Welfare* and authors like Dorothy Roberts in its analysis of the ethics of social work and confrontation of anti-Black racism. At the same time, it stands apart and adds something new to the conversation by its use of Catholic theology to address anti-Black racism. Scholars interested in the ethics of social work, public policy, and child welfare or in resisting anti-Black racism will benefit from this book’s unique perspective and comprehensive analysis of child welfare policies and practices.

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*Recovering Christian Character: The Psychological Wisdom of Søren Kierkegaard.* By Robert C. Roberts. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2022. xix + 379 pages. \$49.00.

Robert Roberts’s provocative thesis argues that rather than serving as forerunner of Christian existentialism, Kierkegaard is best understood within the tradition of virtue ethics, particularly the Aristotelian strain of that tradition. For Kierkegaard, the best way for Christianity to be introduced into Christendom “would be for the single individuals in Christendom to begin to exemplify the Christian virtues, that is, for those individuals to have the passions and emotions, the patterns of thought, and the dispositions of action characteristic of genuine Christians” (16). To that end, Roberts organizes the book into two principal parts. First, he provides the details of the psychological framework of classical virtue ethics themes (e.g., character, human nature, passions, virtues) as well as more classically Christian themes (e.g., sin). In the second part of the book, Roberts explicates what he

regards as the key virtues of Kierkegaard's ethics system: joy, faith, hope, love, humility, patience, gratitude, and generosity.

Roberts offers a compelling argument that Kierkegaard belongs to the classical stream of virtue ethics: "His project is like that of Socrates, whom he revered, who might be said to have been about reintroducing morality to Athens. Kierkegaard's purpose is analogous to that of the Socratic virtue ethics of ancient Greece and Rome, which was also to 'build up' the practitioner in wisdom and in the virtues that come with wisdom—to promote human maturity" (110). Like the ancients, Kierkegaard holds that human flourishing is found in the virtues, and his writings are both explorations of and ways to promote the good life for human beings, to advance human flourishing.

Like classical virtue theory, virtue includes training the emotions, and the passions are trained by learning to rightly see reality. Perhaps surprisingly for a thinker known more for his melancholy, a key virtue for Kierkegaard is joy. Joy—"gladness about this or that, for this or that reason" (197)—is not always virtuous in Kierkegaard's thought. The joy experienced when one's vanity is gratified, for example, is vicious. Yet for Kierkegaard, joy is the mark of the Christian character. Above all, for the Christian joy is found in worship, an emotion comparable to admiration: "Just as we may feel admiration for certain outstanding people, so we may feel worship for God who is above all things in excellence, beauty, and holiness" (204). Worship as a Christian practice emerges from worship as an emotion.

The root of Kierkegaard's virtue ethics are his insights on the theological virtues, particularly the virtue of love. Christian love is often held to be an emotion, but Kierkegaard firmly rejects that notion: "Christ's love was not intense feeling, a full heart, etc.; it was rather the work of love, which is his life" (259). When love of neighbor becomes a virtue, it does lead to spontaneous feelings, but that is not its root. This love will above all build up: the individual, interpersonal relationships, and the whole community. Within the sphere of the virtue of love, Roberts treats Kierkegaard's conception of conscience as "an *internalization* of the law, a way that the law resides in and gives form to the human self. . . . In conscience, the law shows up not as an external imposition but as a voice within the self. Good conscience is a meeting of minds between the human self and God" (261). For Kierkegaard, conscience leads to Christian love, friendship with God that is also a mode of relating to others. While Aristotle's views on friendship are given their due, it is surprising that Roberts did not draw out the parallels with Aquinas's thought on the virtue of charity.

According to Roberts, like Hadot, Kierkegaard sees the study of ethics as not simply an intellectual exercise but a full way of life. The Christian virtues articulated by Kierkegaard are not Socratic virtues,

but in some ways, they have a similar goal. Kierkegaard's Christian virtues "have a dialectic (or 'logic' or 'grammar' to use other terms) such that to have that dialectic elaborated, articulated, and displayed can possibly help the willing person to grow in those traits" (360).

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*Bizarre Bioethics: Ghosts, Monsters, and Pilgrims.* By Henk A. M. J. ten Have. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022. xiv + 314 pages. \$34.95.

Bioethics has spent the past sixty years trying to establish itself as a legitimate discipline and entrench itself within the power structures of medicine, biotechnology, and public policy. It has certainly succeeded in the latter. Yet Henk ten Have—physician, philosopher, long-respected scholar in the field—argues that bioethics is, in fact, *bizarre*.

Ten Have knows the field well. Capping an illustrious career, he is research professor in bioethics at Universidad Anáhuac México and professor emeritus at the Center for Healthcare Ethics at Duquesne University, which he directed for almost ten years. From 2003 to 2010, he served as Director of the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology at UNESCO.

His critique hinges on two points. First, in Chapter 1, "Questioning the Paradigm of Bioethics," he foregrounds the field's obdurate habit of focusing excessive attention on cases that, while real, do not represent everyday reality. An example is the global media storm around the 2017 case of Charlie Gard, the most recent in a long line of similar "stigmata cases" tracing back to Karen Ann Quinlan in 1975. Gard's condition, the high-tech interventions he needed, and the particular sequence of events that unfurled in his case were, as ten Have notes, extremely rare. That same year an estimated 527,000 children died from diarrhea, an easily preventable disease for which there are simple, non-technological, and effective treatments (5). Yet again and again, rare cases and hypothetical technologies dominate bioethical attention while the devastating daily realities of thousands of people are ignored.

The method bioethics uses is similarly bizarre. In Chapter 2, "The Establishment of Bioethics," ten Have unpacks how the field positions itself as a professional discipline centered on scientific evidence, rational principles, and the value-neutral application of the latter. Over and against this account, he traces how bioethics' originary disciplines—theology and philosophy—were "exorcised" and "neutralized," sidelined for a scientific-technological rationality that