



## **The Altruism Reader: Selections from Writings on Love, Religion, and Science**

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# The Altruism Reader: Selections from Writings on Love, Religion, and Science

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This anthology brings together for the first time leading essays and book chapters from theologians, philosophers, and scientists on their research relating to ethics, altruism, and love. Because the general consensus today is that scholarship in moral theory requires empirical research, the arguments of the leading scholars presented in this book will be particularly important to those examining issues in love, ethics, religion, and science.

The first half of *The Altruism Reader* offers key selections from religious texts, leading contemporary scholars, and cutting-edge ethicists. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism are represented. Among the highly respected writers are Thomas Aquinas, the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, John Polkinghorne, Stephen Pope, Louis Fischer, Amira Shamma Abdin, Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, and Daniel Day Williams.

Primary readings on love and altruism from the sciences are featured in the second half of the book. Here the focus is on anthropology, psychology, sociology, biology, and neurology, with material written by Daniel C. Batson, David Sloan Wilson, Robert Wright, Stephen G. Post, Robert Axelrod, Richard Dawkins, Holmes Rolston III, and other renowned scientists and philosophers.

"Virtually all people act—and often talk—as if they have some inkling about love. We speak about loving food, falling in love, loving God, feeling loved, and loving a type of music. We say that love hurts, love waits, love stinks, and love means never having to say you're sorry. We use the word and its derivatives in a wide variety of ways . . . . My own definition of love is this: To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic response to others (including God), to promote well-being."—**Thomas Jay Oord**

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