

THE INHERENT VALUE OF THE CREATED ORDER:
TOWARD A RECOVERY OF AUGUSTINE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Andrew J. Spencer

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina

aspencer@sebts.edu

Abstract: Despite the checkered perception of Augustine among environmental ethicists, this essay argues that in his discussion of ‘use’ and ‘enjoyment’ in *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine presents a system of value in the created order which can serve as a motivation for environmental ethics consistent with maximizing the glory of God. Though Augustine does not use value terms in the same way as discussions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries do, there is within his corpus evidence of a robust appreciation of the ultimate value of God the Creator with a significant but subsidiary valuation of the created order. In Augustine’s scheme, only God has intrinsic value, which is value in and of himself. Creation has inherent value, which is derived from the Creator and dependent upon the degree to which the creation is oriented toward the original design of the created order. In supporting this thesis, this essay discusses the common accusations of dualism against Augustine, seeking to demonstrate that Augustine was not a dualist. Then, this essay outlines a more contemporary understanding of value of the created order and connects it to Augustine’s arguments about value of the creation.

At the heart of every ethical system rests a *summum bonum*—the thing that is reckoned the ultimate good with supreme value. This means that the question of value rests near the center of any ethical system. Some logical questions arise from a consideration of the *summum bonum*: What is of the greatest value? How are lesser values determined and evaluated? This essay will assume the answer to the first question while arguing for a conceptual framework for the second, particularly in light of Augustine’s cosmology and the contemporary question of environmental ethics.

That God exists—the particular Christian God depicted in both the Old and New Testaments—will be assumed for the purposes of this argument. This assumption is important as it eliminates the chief question of ethics: if God exists, then his benefit is the *summum bonum*.¹ The discussion then can quickly shift to very important questions about how value is determined for things that are not God. In other words: If there is a God and his glory is the ultimate goal of the universe, then how is that lived out? In the ecological frame of reference, how should the created order be valued to maximize glory to God?

These questions have led to overbalancing on both ends of the spectrum of environmental ethics. On the one hand, there is a tendency among some to argue that since God's glory is the *summum bonum*, the created order is derivative and therefore unimportant. This is the error often described as matter-spirit dualism, often related to Platonic, Neo-Platonic, or Gnostic philosophies. In more aggravated instances of this understanding, the distantiation between God and the created order is understood to be so great that matter is merely an impediment to holiness and must be overcome. On the other hand, there is a desire to argue that since God created all things, all things maintain such a strong sense of connectedness to the divine that they should be treated with extreme reverence, even as sacred objects. On this end of the spectrum of errors reside pantheism, panentheism, and certain versions of sacramentalism that tend to confuse the natures of the divine and the created order. In the most extreme versions of this error, the God of the Bible is replaced with Gaia, and the created order becomes something that should be treasured as an end in itself—perhaps even worshipped. Between these twin poles is a system of value that seeks the created order as distinct from the Creator but still values it because of its

original and ongoing relationship with the Creator. This essay is an attempt to work toward such a system of valuation, particularly through the theology of Augustine.

Despite the checkered perception of Augustine among environmental ethicists, this essay argues that in his discussion of ‘use’ and ‘enjoyment’ in *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine presents a system of value in the created order which can serve as a motivation for environmental ethics consistent with maximizing the glory of God. Though Augustine does not use value terms in the same way as discussions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries do, there is within his corpus evidence of a robust appreciation of the ultimate value of God the Creator with a significant but subsidiary valuation of the created order. In supporting this thesis, this essay discusses the common accusations of dualism against Augustine, seeking to demonstrate that Augustine was not a dualist. Then, this essay outlines a more contemporary understanding of value of the created order and connects it to Augustine’s arguments about value of the creation.

Augustine as Dualist

Rowan Williams deals with ecofeminist² accusations against Augustine in a 1994 article in *Augustinian Studies*. In this article, Williams responds to accusations of dualism against Augustine by ecofeminists such as Sallie McFague, Anne Primavesi, Elaine Pagels, and Rosemary Radford Reuther. Williams notes that Augustine has a bad name among ecotheologians, though he comments, “It is difficult to construct any profile of what unites the anti-Augustinians of contemporary theology, but it is probably true that they hold in common a radically anti-Cartesian perspective.”³ In other words, Augustine is being accused of the dualism

that should rightly be laid at the feet of Descartes.⁴ Williams thus sets out to show that Augustine “cannot simply be charged with inventing or reinforcing a simple matter-spirit dualism.”⁵

Accusations of dualism have not originated only from ecofeminists. The late Colin Gunton has also been very critical of Augustine, attributing dualism to him. In fact, Gunton’s accusation against Augustine is so strong that he lays the charge not of mere environmental degradation,⁶ but of contemporary skepticism and unbelief at the feet of Augustine’s doctrine of the Trinity.⁷ In fact, Gunton charges Augustine with having “either a modalistic conception of God, or two competing sources of knowledge which tend to discredit each other.”⁸ Gunton is arguing that the unity in the Trinity is so over accentuated in Augustine that modalism is the result, or else there is such a divide between the Creator and creation that the Creator is fundamentally unknowable by humans.⁹ Both interpretations are significantly damaging to Augustine’s legacy and more particularly his suitability as a source for environmental ethics. They tend to paint Augustine as falling on the side of valuation that denigrates the created order to magnify the spiritual.

Such an understanding of Augustine and his later influence is not uncommon. In an overvalued but culturally significant essay, Lynn White famously accused Western Christianity of being at fault for the environmental degradation of the world. White writes,

“Especially in its western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen. . . . Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia’s religions (except, perhaps Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.”¹⁰

White does not list Augustine among the offenders against creation, naming only Tertullian and Irenaeus of Lyons. However, given Augustine's sympathy with Irenaeus' idea of creation *ex nihilo*¹¹ and his significant influence in western Christianity, the absence of Augustine's name in the list of offenders is a surprising oversight.

So seriously has Willis Jenkins taken the criticism against Christianity by White and those like him¹² that he has proposed an environmental ethics devoid of commitment to distinct Christian doctrine.¹³ Gretel Van Wieren has commended both panentheistic and pantheistic versions of Christian sacramentalism because they remove the separation between the Creator and creation.¹⁴ These are exactly the sort of doctrinal modifications and dilutions that drove the resistance to Christian approaches to environmental ethics for much of the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁵

For many environmental ethicists, dualism is not just a theological position, it is the source of improper valuation of the created order. For example, in her introductory essay for *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, Carol Adams strongly opposes any form of perceived dualism, which she finds particularly in orthodox Christianity, as well as other, mainly western, sources. She writes, "False dualisms result in several patriarchal theological tenets: transcendence and domination of the natural world, fear of the body, projection of evil upon women, world-destroying spiritual views. Moreover, the second part of the dualism is not only subordinate but *in service* to the first."¹⁶ Rosemary Radford Ruether, in an essay that follows Adams' introduction, expands Adams' attribution of hierarchical dualism to Christianity and argues that

“ecofeminist culture must reshape our basic sense of self in relation to the life cycle.”¹⁷ This leads to conversions

from alienated, hierarchical dualism to life-sustaining mutuality, [which] will radically change the patterns of patriarchal culture. Basic conceptions, such as God, soul-body, and salvation will be reconceived in ways that may bring us much closer to the ethical values of love, justice, and care for the earth. These values have been proclaimed by patriarchal religion, yet contradicted by patriarchal symbolic and social patterns of relationship.¹⁸

Given the rejection of orthodox conceptions of sin, creation, soteriology and anthropology by ecofeminists, it is little surprise that Augustine comes under attack. His writing on these key doctrines has been central in their development and codification among western Christians. Thus it is that Augustine’s doctrine of sin, with its subsequent effects on the created order, is labeled “idiosyncratic” and “heretical” by Elaine Pagels because it is oppressive and dualistic.¹⁹

In response to the “received view” of creation *ex nihilo*,²⁰ Sally McFague cites Ian Barbour as arguing “creation *ex nihilo* was first propounded in the intertestamental period and elaborated by Irenaeus and Augustine in order to counter the idea that matter was the source of evil. This worthy motive, however, does not deflect the criticism that the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* supports the separation of God and the world.”²¹ Augustine’s understanding of creation, therefore, must make way for a new interpretation to allow for a helpful environmental ethics.²² The basic argument of the ecofeminists is that differentiation leads to essential inequality, which must therefore bring about ruthless subjugation. In consequence, hierarchicalism is dualism and must be opposed on that account.

Aside from Augustine's central role in the development of western Christian theology, which the ecofeminists tend to oppose as patriarchal, Gunton's reading of Augustine as a dualist tends to support their arguments. Gunton writes, "It is well known that Augustine was suspicious of the material world. With the Platonists, he found it difficult to believe that the material and sensible realm could either be truly real or the object or the vehicle of knowledge."²³

If Augustine's critics are correct, then there is little hope for recovering Augustine as a source of environmental ethics. The sort of dualistic hierarchicalism that the ecofeminists and Gunton accuse Augustine of would tend to undermine, though not necessarily eliminate, an impetus for environmental ethics. In a dualistic system, creation care might become an emphasis if due to another external emphasis, whether divine command or practical concerns for economic gain or survival, but a true dualistic devaluation of matter points toward creation's insignificance. If Augustine's critics are right, Lynn White's accusations about Christianity being detrimental to creation care would tend to place Augustine in opposition to a robust praxis of creation care fueled by biblical Christianity. Fortunately, there is evidence in Augustine that his critics largely misread his theology.

Recovering Augustine's Legacy

Recent scholarship has tended to revise the understanding of Augustine as a strict dualist. This appears to be based on a more careful reading of Augustine's own work, as well as a more gracious allowance being given to Augustine for the possibility of conversion and theological maturation. Additionally, this has resulted from the temporal distance from Brown's

groundbreaking biography of Augustine, which seems to focus excessively on platonic influences on Augustine.²⁴

Rowan Williams argues against the notion that Augustine is a dualistic Neo-Platonist. Williams does this primarily by pointing toward Augustine's positive attitude toward creation. As Augustine writes, "A good God made [the created order] good; and that the things created, being different from God, were inferior to Him, and yet were good, being created by none other than He."²⁵ Although Augustine argues for differentiation between the nature of the Creator and the creation, his expression of that differentiation does not support the view that he reviles matter.²⁶ Augustine understands the created order to be good: he understands the ordering of the creation to reflect God's character.²⁷ Beginning at that point, it is difficult to conceive of Augustine denigrating the creation.

This differentiation and hierarchy leads Bradley Green, writing against Gunton's accusations, to state that Augustine is a limited dualist.²⁸ Green concedes Augustine understands there to be a hierarchy between God and creation, but argues that Gunton's conclusions do not follow. According to Green, "The created order is ultimately a means of revelation, and it is through the created order that we are led to a knowledge and vision of the eternal."²⁹ Creation fulfills the needs of humans instrumentally, but it also points toward the greater glory of the Creator which reflects a different sort of value altogether. Against the concerns of the ecofeminists toward Augustine's doctrine of sin with its noetic effects on creation, Green argues, "for Augustine the creation is fundamentally good, and even after the entrance of sin into the world the creation *remains* fundamentally good."³⁰ Hence the criticism that Augustine denigrates

creation, thereby fueling abuse, is unwarranted. Even given the high view of creation that characterizes Augustine's theology, there remains the question of the uniqueness of humanity within the created order.

Augustine understands humans to be superior to the balance of creation. Scott Dunham argues this is because Augustine had not been exposed to the modern scientific understanding of ecology as a web of interdependence. Augustine, therefore, should not be criticized for not interacting with scientific understandings that came after his time.³¹ Instead, Dunham attempts to redeem Augustine's theology as a source for environmental ethics by showing the relationship of the Godhead to creation through the incarnate Son of God and the economic relationships within the Trinity. There is a mediated interrelatedness that provides an analogy that can be appropriated to address modern ecological concerns.³² Thus, Dunham provides a moderate endorsement for Augustine as a source for environmental ethics. There seems to be room, however, for a more robust apprehension of Augustine's theology.

Paul Santmire provides such an approval of Augustine for environmental ethics. Though Santmire is a biblical revisionist, maintaining an appreciation of the canon but re-reading it largely through an ecological lens,³³ he does a great deal to recover Augustine's doctrine of creation from dualistic accusations. Santmire does this first by accepting Augustine's intellectual progression from Manichaeism, through Neo-Platonism, and on to a more biblically framed Christian worldview.³⁴ As Santmire notes,

Although Augustine believes that all things, all visible creatures in particular, are created as a blessing for humanity, this by no means exhausts their *raison d'être*, as far as he is concerned. . . . Rather, for Augustine, the most fundamental *telos* of

the whole creation is beauty, and the glorification of the God who wills such a magnificent community of being, every part of which has its own divinely validated integrity.³⁵

Santmire then goes on to read Augustine as supporting the view that humanity's dominion over the created order only characterizes human activity *after* the fall.³⁶ In this he oversteps Augustine's purpose, reading a contemporary environmentalist's understanding of dominion back into Augustine's depiction of sinful human domination of others after the fall. Nonetheless, Santmire's final assessment is helpful as he points to Augustine's valuation of creation beyond instrumental terms, thus finding in Augustine "the flowering of ecological promise of classical Christian theology."³⁷

Augustine and Inherent Value

Augustine's chief contribution to the contemporary debate on environmental ethics is his understanding of the *inherent* goodness of creation.³⁸ Creation is good because it obtains its goodness from the Creator.³⁹ Even despite his robust view of the fall and the effects of sin in the world, Augustine still viewed creation as being good inasmuch as it reflected the order which God designed in it.⁴⁰ Despite its goodness, creation remains distinct from the Creator and not equal in essence, purpose, or value.⁴¹ This view, however, is still unacceptable to critics who see differentiation of any sort as denigration. These critics, and environmentalists in general, tend to argue for the *intrinsic* goodness of creation.

Intrinsic goodness entails the goodness being native to an object itself for its own sake.⁴² This is the sort of goodness, the highest, immutable goodness, which Augustine explicitly attributes only to God: "The highest good, than which there is none higher, is God, and for this reason he is the immutable good and therefore truly eternal and truly immortal. All other goods

are made only *by* him but are not made *of* him.”⁴³ Therefore, if the created order has *intrinsic* goodness, it has goodness for its own sake, independent of its relation to God. Since Augustine relates *being* with *goodness*,⁴⁴ it seems that an object with *intrinsic* goodness would have being not derived from God, who created everything. Such an object would either need to be made of God or a substance of equal value with God. This is inconsistent with the derived nature of the creation.

An alternate description, more consistent with Augustine’s understanding, is *inherent* goodness, which describes the goodness of the created order based on the proper orientation to that which imparts value to it.⁴⁵ In other words, *inherent* goodness of creation is dependent upon its proper relationship to something outside of itself and is *extrinsic*. In a Christian understanding of the term, then, *inherent* value reflects proper orientation of the created order to God.⁴⁶ Things conform to God’s design for the created order according to his maintenance of them. As Augustine notes, “For were he to withdraw his efficacious power from things, they should neither be able to go on and complete the periods assigned to their measured movements, nor should they even continue in possession of that nature they were created in.”⁴⁷ *Inherent* value is assigned and sustained based on right relationship to the Creator. The terms *inherent* and *intrinsic* are subtly distinct, but the difference is important because it *can* be the difference between an orthodox, theocentric respect for creation and either pantheism or panentheism.⁴⁸

Before moving on, it must be clearly noted that *inherent* value is again different from *instrumental* value. By definition, *instrumental* value is the utility of an object to a subject.⁴⁹ An object may have both *inherent* and *instrumental* value, but the former is dependent only on the

object itself while the latter requires a subject to appreciate its usefulness. For example, a work of art can have *inherent* value at any time, in its ability to display beauty and testify to the skill of the artisan. That same work of art, however, would only have *instrumental* value if it was, for example, a bronze bust and there was a need to break a window. There are subtle but significant differences between the three types of value. Understanding creation as *inherently* valuable is helpful in recovering Augustine as a source of environmental ethics.⁵⁰

Though he does not use these value terms, Augustine seems to have three categories for the value of an object, which generally line up with the terms *intrinsic*, *inherent*, and *instrumental*. The classification of *intrinsic value* is reserved for God, who is the highest good, while creation seems to have both *inherent* and *instrumental* value, with a lesser goodness that is derived from the creator. Augustine's valuation of creation as *inherent* rather than *intrinsic* can be supported by his discussion of the use and enjoyment of things in *On Christian Doctrine*. Augustine differentiates between objects that are intended to be 'used' and those that are intended to be 'enjoyed.' He writes, "For to enjoy a thing is to rest with satisfaction in it for its own sake. To use, on the other hand, is to employ whatever means at one's disposal to obtain what one desires, if it is a proper object of desire; for an unlawful use ought rather to be called an abuse."⁵¹ Augustine argues that only God can rightly be enjoyed by humans,⁵² and that creation necessarily must be used.

¹ This is consistent with Augustine's theology. The question is not unimportant but exploration of this question would not benefit this essay. *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999), s.v. "Goodness."

² According to Rosemary Radford Ruether: "Ecofeminism represents the union of the radical ecology movement, or what has been called 'deep ecology,' and feminism." Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Ecofeminism," in *Ecofeminism and the Sacred* (ed. Carol J. Adams; New York: Continuum, 1993), 13.

³ Rowan Williams, “‘Good for Nothing’? Augustine on Creation,” *AugStud* 25, (1994): 22n4.

⁴ Alister McGrath traces some of these themes through in his book *The Reenchantment of Nature*, see particularly: Alister E. McGrath, *The Reenchantment of Nature: The Denial of Religion and the Ecological Crisis* (New York: Doubleday/Galilee, 2003), 23–99.

⁵ Williams, “‘Good for Nothing’? Augustine on Creation,” 11.

⁶ Gunton does seem to connect hierarchicalism, which he accuses Augustine of, with causing environmental degradation, though he does not do this directly. Cf. Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the Culture of Modernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2–3; *ibid.*, 60–61.

⁷ Colin E. Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43, no. 1 (1990): 33.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁹ Augustine wrote: “The whole Trinity is revealed to us in the creation.” Augustine, *The City of God* (trans., Marcus Dods; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2013), 11.24 (pg. 331). This matches Al Wolters’ understanding of creation, drawing from the Reformed tradition which has strong roots in Augustinian theology, as revealing the glory of the Creator. Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 27–41.

¹⁰ Lynn Townsend White, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” in *Ecology and Life* (ed. Vernon Grounds; Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1988). Note that White’s essay has been republished multiple times since its original publication in 1967.

¹¹ Gunton deals with Augustine’s perspective on creation *ex nihilo* in some depth in his book: Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study* (Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 73–79. Gunton’s critique continues here: “Augustine’s treatment of creation out of nothing is therefore ambivalent. Where Irenaeus and Basil [of Caesarea] had employed it to defend the goodness of the material word [sic], albeit a goodness sometimes qualified by remnants of Platonism, Augustine has taken a step back. Alongside his determined, if rather voluntarist, doctrine of creation out of nothing there is reintroduced a definite hierarchy of being. Augustine continued to be marked by the scars of the Manichaeism from which he was so desperate to be healed.” *Ibid.*, 79. Note that in his claim of Augustine’s continued dependence upon Manichaeism, Gunton is merely echoing Brown’s earlier refusal to allow Augustine to theologically mature. As Brown notes, Augustine went through a significant phase of life where he believed in the dualistic, gnostic Manichaeism. See the chapter on Manichaeism in Peter Robert Lamont Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (2nd ed.; London, U.K.: Faber, 2000), 35–50. It does not appear that Brown allows for Augustine to have progressed beyond the Manichean beliefs of his younger years. Brown writes, “Long after he had begun to appreciate the intellectual difficulties in the Manichean system, its moral attitude still attracted him.” *Ibid.*, 40 and again on 48.

¹² Willis Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 79–80.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 6. Lucas Johnston goes farther than Jenkins, starting with the generic thesis that support from any religious tradition for environmental causes is both good and necessary for climate stability. For Lucas, all religions are equally valuable inasmuch as they push people toward environmental activism. Lucas F. Johnston, *Religion and Sustainability: Social Movements and the Politics of the Environment* (Bristol, Conn.: Equinox, 2013), 2–3.

¹⁴ Gretel Van Wieren, *Restored to Earth: Christianity, Environmental Ethics, and Ecological Restoration* (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 79.

¹⁵ See, for example, Francis A. Schaeffer, "Pollution and the Death of Man," in *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*; 2nd ed. ed.; 5 vols.; vol. 5; Crossway Books: Westchester, IL, 1985), 9–19.

¹⁶ Carol J. Adams, "Introduction," in *Ecofeminism and the Sacred* (ed. Carol J. Adams; New York: Continuum, 1993), 2.

¹⁷ Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Ecofeminism," *idem.* (ed. Carol J. Adams; New York: Continuum, 1993), 22.

¹⁸ *Idem.*

¹⁹ Elaine H. Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 1988), 99. It is not surprising that Pagels recasts the soteriological debate between Pelagius and Augustine to show Pelagius, and his intellectual heir Julian of Eclanum, as the heroes. *Ibid.*, 130–50.

²⁰ Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 109.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 207n27. McFague is not quoting Barbour, but cites his essay: "Tielhard's Process Metaphysics," in Ewert H. Cousins, *Process Theology: Basic Writings* (Newman Press: New York, 1971), 339. In response to this error, McFague argues for the concept of creation being birthed by Sophia, a second persona of God, to replace the biblical conception of creation, which she argues has been irrevocably discredited by science anyway. McFague, *Models of God*, 109–16.

²² In another example, Anne Primavesi argues strongly that any form of hierarchicalism, especially the "patriarchal anthropology" she finds in Augustine, is detrimental to the environment and leads to destructive human behaviors. Anne Primavesi, *From Apocalypse to Genesis: Ecology, Feminism, and Christianity* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1991), 100–05.

²³ Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 36.

²⁴ Brown mires Augustine indefinitely in Neo-Platonism, failing to acknowledge that while Augustine did pass through a Neo-Platonist phase, that philosophy was not necessarily the driving force beyond all of his later theological understandings. In an essay appended to the reprinted 1967 text, Brown notes that his earlier arguments have been magnified by later scholars to indicate Augustine had a greater dualistic tendency than Brown originally believed. In other words, interested speculation and focus on a certain aspect of Augustine's work created an entire subculture of scholarship which has largely undermined Augustine as a source for environmental ethics. The first step in recovering Augustine's legacy is to re-evaluate Augustine in light of what he wrote, when he wrote it, and allow for legitimate changes in his understanding of doctrines. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 497.

²⁵ Augustine, *The City of God*, 11.23.

²⁶ Augustine's discussion on the nature of good, which was directed against the Manichean heresy, is invaluable in this regard. Augustine clearly outlines the place of God as the highest good, with all creation having a derived goodness from him as the Creator. Creation's goodness is less than God's and is "better to the extent that [it is] more limited, less formed, and less ordered." Augustine, "The Nature of the Good," in *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (ed. Edmund Hill and John E. Rotelle; Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1990), 1 (325). A part of the differentiation concerns the fact that God's goodness is incorruptible, whereas the derived goodness of the created order is corruptible. Therefore in its nature (not essence) there is a difference between the highest good in God and the goodness of creation. *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁷ Williams, "'Good for Nothing'? Augustine on Creation," 11–12.

²⁸ Bradley G. Green, *Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: The Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine* (Distinguished Dissertations in Christian Theology; Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 132. Cf., *ibid.*, 174.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 132. Cf. *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

³¹ Scott A. Dunham, *The Trinity and Creation in Augustine: An Ecological Analysis* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2008), 3.

³² *Ibid.*, 55.

³³ For example, H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 189–218.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 55–60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 69–70.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

³⁸ It should be noted that Augustine did not use this term, nor have scholars consistently used the term regarding Augustine. *Inherent* value, it will be argued, is a helpful way to differentiate between the highest good in God and the derived goodness which Augustine finds in the created order.

³⁹ Cf. Augustine, *The City of God*, 22.24 (pgs. 769–70); Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 1 (325).

⁴⁰ Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 3 (325); Williams, “‘Good for Nothing’? Augustine on Creation,” 13–14.

⁴¹ Augustine writes, “The creator is, of course, better than any creature he created.” Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 34.

⁴² Clarence Lewis defines intrinsic value as “that which is good in itself or good for its own sake.” Clarence Irving Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1946), 382. The following discussion of the terms *intrinsic*, *instrumental* and *inherent* value will follow the definitions offered by Lewis, who was a professor at Harvard University and whose work has been significant in the discussion of values since the 1946 publication of his book. This is not to say, however, that his work is universally agreed upon among environmental ethicists or even secular philosophers dealing with value theory. Despite being nearly 70 years old, however, his book continues to be cited, which seems to indicate its relative importance. Paul Taylor cites Lewis’ comments on *intrinsic* and *inherent* value making a similar distinction to the one being made in this essay; however, he does not seem to grasp the full meaning of *intrinsic* as Lewis uses it, as he attributes *intrinsic* value to something “when humans or other conscious beings place positive value on an event or condition in their lives which they directly experience to be enjoyable in and of itself. . .” Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Studies in Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 73. This definition seems to be of something that is by definition *extrinsic* in nature, which Lewis categorizes entirely differently. Taylor does seem to have a similar definition of *inherent* value to Lewis. It should also be noted that in this discussion the essay is not assuming that everything Lewis taught about value should be accepted without critique. Lewis was not a theist. He wrote, for example, “All value in objective existents is extrinsic; it consists in a potentiality of the thing for conducing to realization of some positive value-quality in experience.” Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, 432. This statement seems to exclude the possibility that God could exist as an “objective existent” that has intrinsic, or underived, value. It is fairly clear, however, throughout this text that Lewis does not allow for the existence of God, much less his aseity. It should be noted that Lewis, as an American pragmatist, relies on Dewey’s work on value theory and through it repudiates an understanding of original sin. Taking into account these disagreements, his definitions for various types of value are still instructive and useful. In fact, it seems consistent with Augustine’s argument about use and enjoyment to use these definitions, since the only thing that can rightly be enjoyed is that thing which is uncreated. In other words, by placing God in a separate class from the created order, we can rightly understand that only God has intrinsic value. A thorough and very helpful discussion of the different forms of *instrumental* value theory and *intrinsic* value theory can be found in Warwick Fox, *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995), 149–96. Examination of this chapter is fruitful, but goes beyond the bounds of this essay. Fox’s argument is that both methods are different, and instead he argues for a third system of ecophilosophy. Further comparison between Fox’s understanding of transpersonal ecology and the concept of *inherent* value would be a topic for further investigation.

⁴³ Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 1.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 9 (327). See also, *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999), s.v. “*Being*.”; *idem.*(Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999), s.v. “*Goodness*.”

⁴⁵ According to Lewis, inherent value is a subset of extrinsic values. Lewis defines inherent values as “those values which are resident in objects in such wise that they are realizable in experience through presentation of the object itself to which they are attributed.” Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, 391.

⁴⁶ Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 3.

⁴⁷ Augustine, *The City of God*, 22.22.

⁴⁸ Note that Augustine is careful to point to the difference between the substance of the Creator and the created order: “All other goods are made only *by* him but are not made *of* him.” Augustine, “The Nature of the Good,” 1 (325). Augustine circles back on this topic several times in *The Nature of the Good*, because the mixing of the divine nature in the created order was a key element of Manicheanism. *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁹ Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, 391.

⁵⁰ One Duke graduate student, seeking to analyze Augustine's conception of creaturely goodness, fails to differentiate between the concept of *inherent* value and *intrinsic* value. David H. Nikkel, "St Augustine on the Goodness of Creaturely Existence," *Duke Divinity School Review* 43, no. 3 (1978): 184. Most environmental ethicists think in terms of intrinsic value and instrumental value. For example, Holmes Rolston, III begins by addressing these two types of valuation. He writes, "*Instrumental value* uses something as a means to an end; *intrinsic value* is found worthwhile in itself without necessary contributory reference." Holmes Rolston III, *Environmental Ethics: Duties to and Values in the Natural World* (Ethics and Action; Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 186. Realizing something is missing, he goes on to argue that neither of these types of valuation are sufficient for a "holistic ecosystem" where interdependence is assumed. *Ibid.*, 187. Instead, Rolston argues for a third term. According to Rolston *systematic value* is "the productive process; its parts are intrinsic values woven into instrumental relationships." *Ibid.*, 188. It is clear that Rolston interacted with Lewis, as he quotes him and comments with some discouragement on his dislike of Lewis' position on the lack of intrinsic value in natural objects. Holmes Rolston III, "Are Values in Nature Subjective or Objective?," in *Environmental Philosophy: A Collection of Readings* (ed. Robert Elliot and Arran Gare; St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1983), 162. He is here reacting to a weakness in a binary organization of value, though instead of using the category of *inherent value* as Lewis does, Rolston argues for a new type of value that has both subjective and objective aspects. Rolston's value theory, with its third type of value, does not allow for supernatural elements but must find its meaning from within a closed, natural system. Thus his *systematic value* is a non-theistic version of *inherent value*. *Inherent* value is determined by the proper relationship of a thing as an object to the rest of the created order and as a subject to the Creator. Rolston's *systematic value* has no room for God and thus finds value only in the proper relationship of an object to the other objects of the created order. The resonance between these terms is remarkable and the differences explained by initial assumptions about the existence of God.

⁵¹ Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (trans., R. P. H. Green; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.4.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 5.5.