

MORAL PASSION AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

In this book, Robin Gill argues that moral passion and rational ethical deliberation are not enemies; moral passion often lurks behind many apparently rational ethical commitments; and though it is a key component of truly selfless moral action, without rational ethical deliberation it can also be extremely dangerous. Gill maintains that a reanalysis of moral passion is overdue. He inspects the gap between the ‘purely rational’ accounts of ethics provided by some moral philosophers and the normative positions that they espouse and/or the moral actions that they pursue. He also contends that Christian ethicists have not been adept at identifying their own implicit moral passion or at explaining why it is that doctrinal positions generate passionately held moral conclusions. Using a range of disciplines, including cognitive science and moral psychology, alongside the more usual disciplines of moral philosophy and religious ethics, Gill also makes links with moral passion in other world faith traditions.

Robin Gill is Emeritus Professor of Applied Theology at the University of Kent. He is the editor of the journal *Theology* and of the New Studies in Christian Ethics monograph series. He has authored and edited more than forty books, including *Health Care and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), *Theology in a Social Context: Sociological Theology*, Vol. 1, *Theology Shaped by Society: Sociological Theology*, Vol. 2, and *Society Shaped by Theology: Sociological Theology*, Vol. 3 (2012–2013), as well as *A Textbook of Christian Ethics* (4th edition, 2014).

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Christian ethics has increasingly assumed a central place within academic theology. At the same time, the growing power and ambiguity of modern science and the rising dissatisfaction within the social sciences about claims to value neutrality have prompted renewed interest in ethics within the secular academic world. There is, therefore, a need for studies in Christian ethics which, as well as being concerned with the relevance of Christian ethics to the present-day secular debate, are well informed about parallel discussions in recent philosophy, science, or social science. *New Studies in Christian Ethics* aims to provide books that do this at the highest intellectual level and demonstrate that Christian ethics can make a distinctive contribution to this debate – either in moral substance or in terms of underlying moral justifications

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(continued after the index)

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Acknowledgements

I had thought that, on retiring from teaching and taking on instead the role of editing a journal, I would not submit myself again to the rigours of writing another monograph for Cambridge University Press. However, moral passion got the better of me. More specifically, as editor of *Theology* I found that I was bombarded with new books and, for once, had the time to read them all. They raised important new questions across many, sometimes novel, disciplines that were simply impossible to resist. I am most grateful for that stimulus, for being able to test out some of my ideas on the readers of *Theology* (in particular, parts of Chapters 2–4) and especially to Philip Law at Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge with his immense knowledge of theologians across the world.

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