

Loneliness ^[1]

Product Type:

[Book](#) ^[2]

Citation:

Rouner, Leroy S., ed. Loneliness. Vol. XIX, Boston University Studies in Philosophy and Religion. Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.

Abstract:

This work begins by considering what are described as “Philosophies of Loneliness.” In this section, Wesley Wildman argues that loneliness is not an alien condition thrust upon us but rather a virtue to be cultivated. The act of being lonely is one that may be aimed at self-preservation. Daniel Dalhstrom follows Wildman’s argument by acknowledging the power of loneliness in the development of our conscience. Dalhstrom determines that conscience is a private matter and “must be one of the loneliest of discourses.” William Desmond explores various types of solitude, including the erotic to the apageic. Juliet Floyd focuses an essay on Wittgenstein and the troubled sense of solipsism in his writings. She argues for a dialectical reading of Tractatus. Hilary Putnam responds by agreeing with Floyd’s call for a dialectical reading and then relates the discussion back to the concept of loneliness. Elliot Deutsch concludes Part I with a discussion of how loneliness can be seen as a condition of aloneness and belonging as a condition of togetherness. But solitude is a “spiritual-creative state which in its consummation, transforms loneliness and belonging into the liberating realm of communion.”

<p>Part II begins with an essay by Elie Wiesel on the “Loneliness of Moses.” He considers the role that loneliness played in Moses’ transformation from a “passive prince” to an “active leader.” Ruth Ann Putnam also turns to a biblical hero, Koheleth, for her exploration of loneliness. Daniel Berrigan celebrates the life of Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker, whose autobiography was entitled, *The Long Loneliness*.

<p>The final section of the book deals with a variety of experiences of cultural loneliness. Lawrence Cahoon reflects on political loneliness. Dennis O’Brien explores how sex does not necessarily provide a cure for loneliness, and two essays, one by Robert Neville and another by David Echels, consider loneliness within the contexts of Asian religious traditions. Neville is a Christian theologian who adapts a theory from Confucianism on self in relation to the environment, and Echels provides a Buddhist perspective on the theme of loneliness. Kathleen Sands, who describes herself as a wanderer, contributes an essay that covers themes of creativity and imagination, human relationships, love and justice, and the sacred as she reflects on several stories that she has encountered in her wanderings. (KH)

Authors:

[Leroy S. Rouner](#) ^[3]

Related Project:

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Grant

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