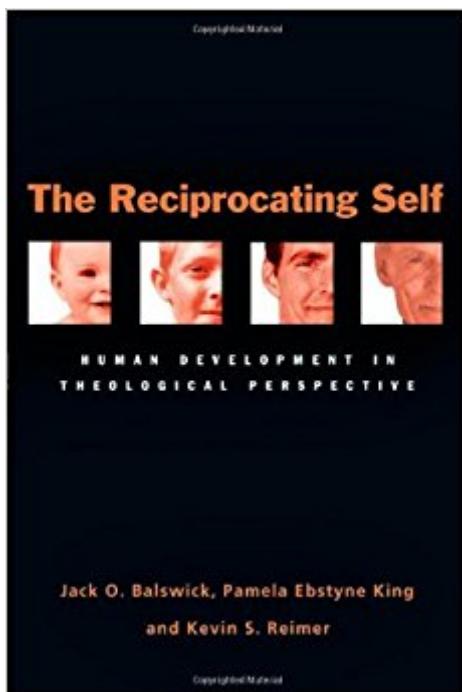


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The Reciprocating Self: Human Development In Theological Perspective



Synopsis

On the basis of a theologically grounded understanding of the nature of persons and the self, Jack O. Balswick, Pamela Ebstyne King and Kevin S. Reimer present a model of human development that ranges across all of life's stages: infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood, elder adulthood. They do this by drawing on a biblical model of relationality, where the created goal or purpose of human development is to become a reciprocating self--fully and securely related to others and to God. Along the way, they provide a context for understanding individual development issues--concerns, tensions, worries or crises encountered by the self in the context of change. Awareness of these issues is most pronounced at developmental transitional points: learning to talk and walk, beginning to eat unassisted, going to school, developing secondary sexual physical features, leaving home, obtaining full-time employment, becoming engaged and then married, having a child for the first time, parenting an adolescent, watching children move away from home, retiring, experiencing decline in physical and mental health, and, finally, facing imminent death. Throughout, Balswick, King and Reimer contend that, since God has created human beings for relationship, to be a self in reciprocating relationships is of major importance in negotiating these developmental issues. Critically engaging social science research and theory, *The Reciprocating Self* offers an integrated approach that provides insight helpful to college and seminary students as well as those serving in the helping professions. Those preparing for or currently engaged in Christian ministry will be especially rewarded by the in-depth discussion of the implications for moral and faith development nurtured in the context of the life of the church.

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Customer Reviews

This interdisciplinary attempt to understand the unfolding mystery of human development is worth careful study. (William J. Sneck, S.J., *Theological Studies* 68/1, March 2007) This book is an excellent resource for anyone interested in human development from a Christian perspective. . . . This book has much to offer and I recommend this book as supplemental reading for the graduate courses I teach. (David P. Mann, *Ashland Theological Journal* 2006) "The Reciprocating Self offers an outstanding integration of theological anthropology and social scientific theories of human development. The authors demonstrate a hermeneutical sensitivity to the philosophical turn to 'relationality' that has so deeply impacted contemporary discourse, as well as a passionate concern for facilitating transformation in religious communities. Both theologians and psychologists will benefit from this interdisciplinary exploration of the dynamics of reciprocity that shape the relations of human persons to each other in fellowship with the trinitarian God." (F. LeRon Shults, Ph.D., Professor of Theology, Bethel Theological Seminary) "It would be difficult to imagine a book that does a better job of weaving together the very best science on human development over the life course with a reliable Christian theology of the Trinity. This deep integrative writing at the interface of lifespan psychology and theology is extraordinary. Throughout, the book has a wonderful practical emphasis that makes it a remarkable resource for pastoral counseling and for the Christian psychologist. The authors deserve immense credit for creating an integrative vision that will be of great use to the competent psychologist who is also the committed Christian." (Stephen G. Post, Ph.D., Professor, School of Medicine, Case Western Reserve University, and President, Institute for Research on Unlimited Love--Altruism, Compassion, Service) "Combining years of experience, breadth of scholarship and theological insight, the authors present a coherent and cohesive new paradigm for understanding the process of human development as simultaneously including social, spiritual and psychological reciprocity of personal being. Drawing upon the relevant theories of human development as well as of current theological reflection on the nature of human personhood as a dynamic 'imaging' of a trinitarian Creator God, this book sets a new base line for the next generation of students and scholars who wish to study, practice and write as Christians who are also caregivers. This book ought to be required reading for those preparing to be Christian-oriented counselors and therapists and must reading for those who already are." (Ray S. Anderson, Senior Professor of Theology and Ministry, Fuller Theological Seminary) "For the student, layperson, or professional, this book reframes human development and serves as a tool for both instruction and transformation in strengthening one's soul, increasing self-clarity, and bolstering one's sense of personal worth, while motivating a passion for the meaning of life in relationship. The authors'

expertise in the social sciences, anthropology, theology, and family studies provides a strong platform for this extraordinary and long overdue integration of lifespan psychology and theology."
(Ava Oleson, Encounter: Journal for Pentecostal Ministry, Fall 2014, Vol. 11)

Jack O. Balswick (Ph.D., University of Iowa) is senior professor of sociology and family development at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He has twice received an American Senior Fulbright Scholar Fellowship. He has been associate editor of the Journal of Marriage and Family, Family Relations, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion and Review of Religious Research. He has authored or coauthored articles in over seventy professional publications and has presented papers at conferences around the world. He is author or coauthor of seventeen books, including Men at the Crossroads, The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home, The Gift of Gender, Social Problems: A Christian Understanding and Response, Relationship-Empowerment Parenting, Authentic Human Sexuality, The Reciprocating Self: Human Development in Theological Perspective and A Model for Marriage: Covenant, Grace, Empowerment and Intimacy.Â

This is a great book that covers the development of adolescents both male and female and how their physical developments relate to the emotional and spiritual developments. This is a great book if you are a parent, a youth leader, or any one who wants to understand how relationships develop with pre-pubescent through late adolescent individuals. This book also covers how to transform/develop healthy relationships that will reciprocate.

Was able to bring Human Development and Spiritual Development together as a whole.-This read is at college level.-This is not a fast read.

very helpful for me counseling class

A

The book did not really engage me until the final chapter. That chapter is worth the entire book.

I highly recommend this book. This is a keeper worth buying.

Great read!!!! starts out very confusing but then gets into the real interesting part.

This book gives a great understand of human development as it reflects upon God's design for interaction. If you are a student, parent, teacher, pastor, this is a great book to get!

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