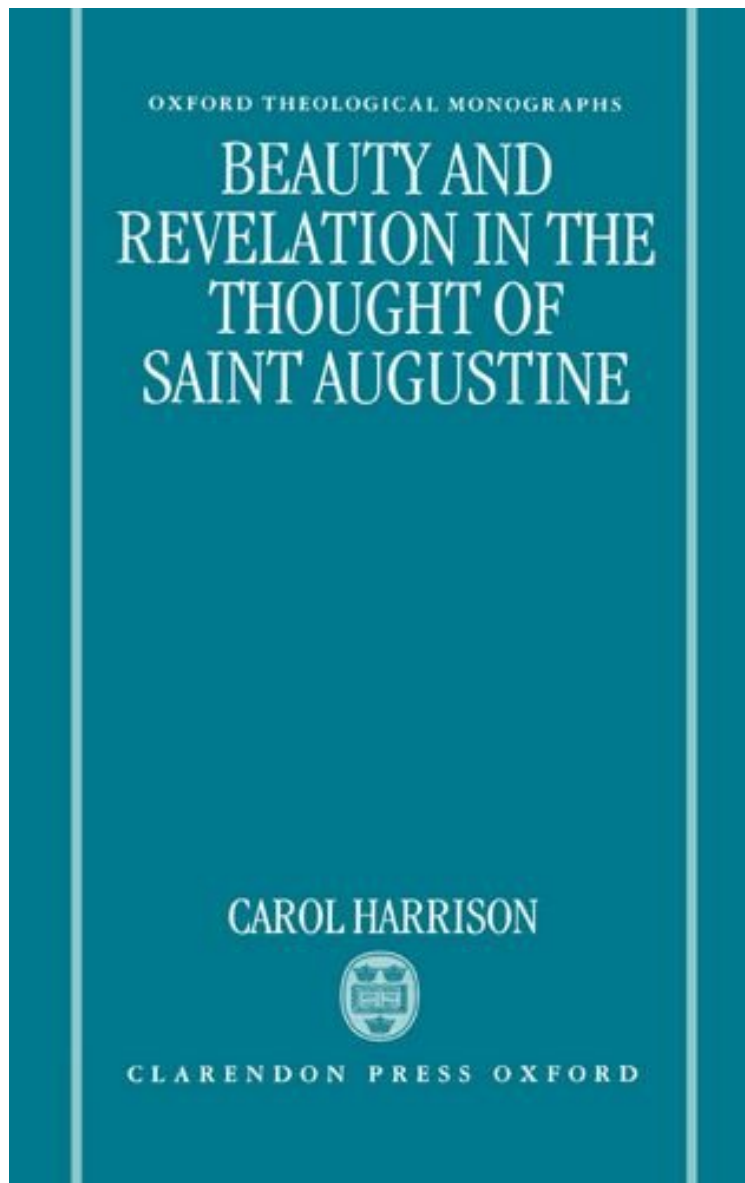


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## Beauty and Revelation in the Thought of Saint Augustine (Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs)

*Carol Harrison*

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This book places Saint Augustine's theology in a new and illuminating context by considering what he has to say about beauty. It demonstrates how a theological understanding of beauty revealed in the created, temporal realm enabled Augustine to form a positive appreciation of this realm and the healing power within it. It therefore reintroduces aesthetics alongside philosophy and ethics in Augustine's treatment of God. Unlike previous works, it shifts the emphasis away from Augustine's early and most theoretical treatises to his mature reflection as a bishop and pastor on how God communicates with fallen man. Using his theory of language as a paradigm, it shows how divine beauty, revealed in creation and history, serves to inspire fallen man's faith, hope, and most especially his love--thereby reforming him and restoring the form or beauty he had lost.

`a book packed with close reasoning based on wide knowledge of Augustine and his interpreters. The reader will find it hard work, but rewarding. As exegesis it is splendid, correcting previous studies in important ways'*Expository Times*`This is a handsome study of a fundamental theme ... an engaging and attractive study.'*David Foster, The Downside*, January 1993'*Augustine's theological understanding of inwardness and his portrayal of the persuasive and educative power of true doctrine are themes that also have important aesthetic content. Following this important treatment it should no longer be possible to simply reiterate the established presentation of Augustinian aesthetics.*'*Lewis Ayres, Scottish Journal of Theology*, 1993'*Chapter 5, devoted to the Incarnation, is a most welcome addition to the classical studies of Augustine's Christology. The material covered is now new, but it is the masterly way in which the familiar is reorganised around the theme of beauty which makes this chapter so successful in illustrating Augustine's incarnate aesthetic. The author must be congratulated on her thorough knowledge of Augustine's works and secondary sources. This is no mean achievement. This finely researched and well written book will be a welcome volume on the shelves of the Augustinian scholar ... Dr Harrison shows how the familiar terrain can often reveal new beauty when approached from a fresh perspective.*'*Finbarr G. Clancy, The Month*, May 1993`*Carol Harrison has done us a great service by drawing together the aesthetic strands of Augustine's thought in a stimulating examination of original sources ... will provide a benchmark for scholars seeking to trace the role of aesthetics in the Patristic era.*'*British Journal of Aesthetics*'*Harrison explores the rich material perceptively, and argues persuasively that Augustine gives full weight to the experience of beauty ... This sane and balanced book brings a breath of fresh air to a subject which has too often been obscured by the prejudices or self-imposed methodological limitations of previous studies.*'*R.A. Markus, Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 2, Oct '93'*The author skillfully takes the reader through the evolution in Augustine's thinking ... a comprehensive study on the nature of beauty as theorized by a Christian theologian who did not compartmentalize his thought and action ... This book is eminently fair to Augustine because it analyses his attitude towards beauty within the framework of his central teachings and deepest convictions. Both scholars and general readers can be enriched by it.*'*Mary T. Clark, RSCJ, New Blackfriars*'*Harrison has made a significant contribution here, due especially to her refusal to separate Augustine's philosophy from his theology.*'*Robert B Eno, The Catholic Historical*, October 1993  
About the Author  
Carol Harrison, Lecturer in the History and Theology of the Latin West, Durham University.