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Abstract

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The Tension that Does not Exist Between John Paul II and Augustine in *Love and Responsibility*
and *De Doctrina Christiana*

Upon a first reading of St. John Paul II's *Love and Responsibility* and St. Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, the modern reader may be suspicious that the twentieth century pope is describing love in a new way, a way that seems almost contrary to Augustine's fourth century teaching on divine love. Afterall, John Paul II's statement that a person is not to be treated as an object for use and Augustine's teaching that humans are to be used sounds outright contradictory. It is most likely not the case that the two works are actually contradicting each other, as John Paul II makes reference to *De Doctrina Christiana* in *Love and Responsibility*, and various Augustine scholars show that Augustine does not mean "use" in a modern utilitarian sense—differing from "use" being closer to a utilitarian definition in *Love and Responsibility*. After having shown that the two works are not in fact contradictory, the question remains of what exactly John Paul II is doing by making it seem as if their teaching is contradictory. John Paul II's Kantian application of the word "use" is only possible upon the arrival of Kant's personalistic imperative later in history. Additionally, John Paul II in his pastoral theology continually returns to the idea of engaging the present culture with the Gospel. As such, John Paul II synthesizes Kant's language and Augustine's teaching to reinterpret Augustine's theology so that we in this age may better receive the Church's ever-ancient and ever-new teaching.

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