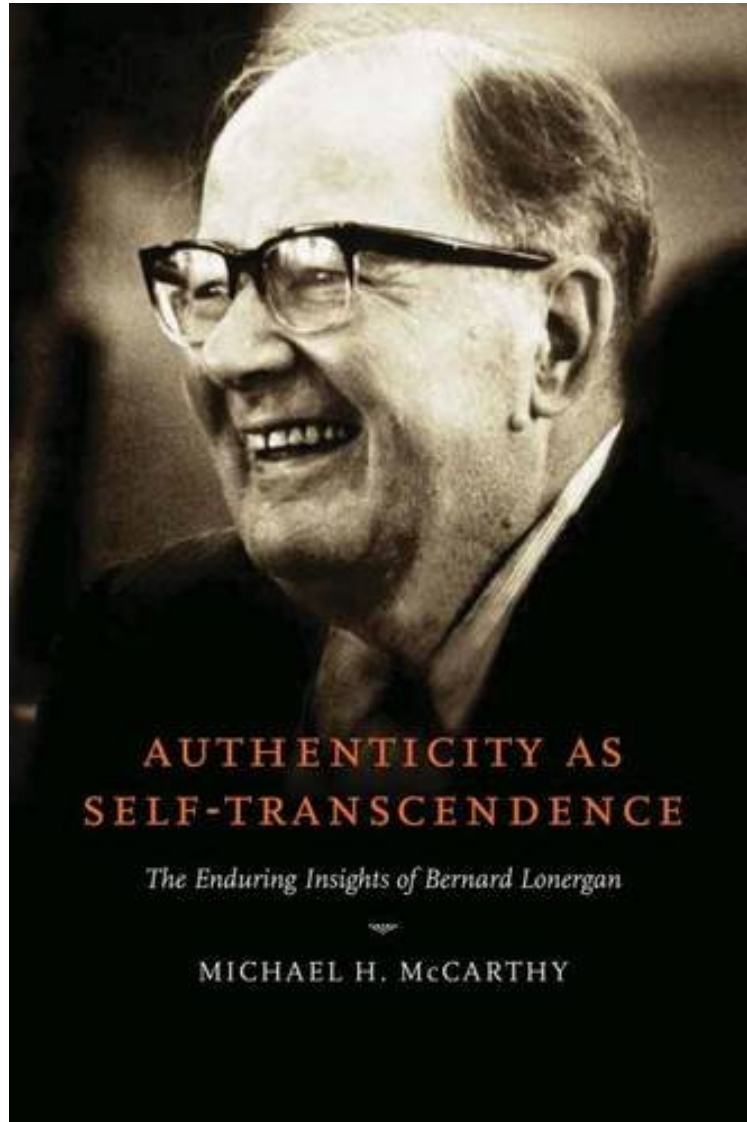


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# Authenticity as Self-Transcendence: The Enduring Insights of Bernard Lonergan

Michael H. McCarthy

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**Michael H. McCarthy : Authenticity as Self-Transcendence: The Enduring Insights of Bernard Lonergan** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Authenticity as Self-Transcendence: The Enduring Insights of Bernard Lonergan:

6 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Focus on Lonergan, rather than Authenticity By Richard W. Moodey The title is a bit misleading, because McCarthy's focus is not primarily on authenticity. "My purpose," he

writes (p. vii), "is not to gain belated recognition for the dead, but to exhibit the power and vitality of Lonergan's thought for the living." But a few pages later, he does seem to seek "belated recognition for the dead" by saying: "My governing purpose in writing this book is to show that these discoveries are so basic in nature, so fertile in their implications, and so relevant to our cultural crises that they establish Bernard Lonergan as one of the truly great minds of the twentieth century" (p. xi). I came to McCarthy's book already convinced that Lonergan was one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century. I have no quarrels with his exposition of Lonergan's thought, or with his explanations of the relations between Lonergan's philosophy and many of our current cultural crises. The book is an excellent introduction to Lonergan. I give the book four stars rather than five for two reasons. The first is that McCarthy does not develop the notion of authenticity beyond what Lonergan himself had said. This disappointed me, because I am not satisfied with what Lonergan said about the "minor authenticity" of persons and the "major authenticity" of the traditions to which persons adhere. The second is that McCarthy is insufficiently critical of Lonergan's notion of culture. Again, this is one of the aspects of Lonergan's thought with which I am not satisfied. I was also disappointed in McCarthy's failure to come to grips with the extended treatment of authenticity provided by Walter Conn in *Conscience--development and self-transcendence*. Back in 1981, Conn wrote: "in this study the meaning of 'self-transcendence,' though not univocal, is quite direct and concrete: it refers primarily to the threefold achievement of 'moving beyond one's own self' that is effected in every instance of correct understanding (cognitive), responsible decision (moral), and genuine love (affective). Each of these aspects will be examined in detail when we consider the developmental theories of Erikson, Piaget, and Kohlberg, and then the transcendental analysis of Lonergan" (p. 6).

Michael H. McCarthy has carefully studied the writings of Bernard Lonergan (Canadian philosopher-theologian, 1904-1984) for over fifty years. In his 1989 book, *The Crisis of Philosophy*, McCarthy argued for the superiority of Lonergan's distinctive philosophical project to those of his analytic and phenomenological rivals. Now in *Authenticity as Self-Transcendence: The Enduring Insights of Bernard Lonergan*, he develops and expands his earlier argument with four new essays, designed to show Lonergan's exceptional relevance to the cultural situation of late modernity.

"Michael McCarthy's book is a masterpiece of cultural synthesis and interpretation. I know of no other recent books on the same or similar topic to which *Authenticity as Self-Transcendence* can be compared. It is definitely unique. It will interest students and teachers of modern philosophy, theology, and history. It will be a fine classroom text, especially in courses on history and culture, politics, and religion, as well as specifically Catholic thought." Richard Liddy, University Professor of Catholic Thought and Culture at Seton Hall University