

November 2016

To: Potential Supporters

From: Stephen G. Post, PhD

Re: History and Current Goals of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love

HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON UNLIMITED LOVE:

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE EVENTS & GOALS 2001-2016

1927 In Winchester, Tennessee, people take note of a young adolescent John Marks Templeton (1912-2008) who has an unusually deep sense of spiritual gratitude toward God for the fact that we are all the beneficiaries of *agape* love. As he would write in 1999 at the age of 86, “*Agape* love means feeling and expressing pure, unlimited love for every human being without exception. Developing such a divine ability has been a goal for me almost all of my eighty-six years on earth” (*Agape Love: A Tradition Found in Eight World Religions*, 1999, p. 1). Templeton becomes a Rhodes Scholar and a great investor.

1966 In Concord, New Hampshire, a young adolescent Stephen G. Post writes an essay at St. Paul’s School citing the *Epistle 53 of St. Jerome*, “Let us learn those things on earth the knowledge of which continues in heaven,” and concluding that the thing most worth studying on earth is the spiritually transformative experience that people have of oneness with a mysterious divine love. A year later Post meets the sociologist of altruism and of the experience of a divine love that far transcends human capacity, Pitirim A. Sorokin of Harvard University, founder of the Center for the Study of Creative Altruism and author of *The Ways and Power of Love: Types, Factors, and Techniques of Moral Transformation* (1954). He writes his sixth form paper on their being two sources of love, the limited human substrate and a higher perfect love that is God.

1980 Post is briefly introduced to Sir John Templeton at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago where Sir John is attending the events around Ralph Wendell Burhoe’s receiving the Templeton Prize. Post is at the time pursuing a PhD (1983) at the University of Chicago Divinity School studying world religions, selfless love, and happiness.

1993 In the lobby of a Leesburg, Virginia conference hotel David B. Larson, MD, suggests to Post that he sit down with Sir John Templeton for a discussion. The conversation turns quickly to *agape* love. This memorable conversation begins a relationship of fifteen years.



1998 Sir John writes *Agape Love: A Tradition Found in Eight World Religions* with the assistance of Rev. Rebekah Dunlap, a minister in the Unity School of Christianity.

1998 On a trip back to New Hampshire, Post prays at Harvard Memorial Church for a program on the science and theology of God's love, a love that underlies the universe and is also present in each human being at a spiritual level.

1999 In response to a phone call from Charles L. Harper DPhil, Executive Vice President of the John Templeton Foundation, Post agrees to chair a conference convened at MIT (October 19-22) to be called *Empathy, Altruism and Agape: Perspectives on Love in Science and Religion* (see www.altruisticlove.org). Post recruits Lyn G. Underwood PhD of the Fetzer Institute in Michigan to serve as co-chair, and Jeffrey P. Schloss PhD and William B. Hurlbut MD as advisors. More than thirty pre-eminent scholars in the sciences, theology, religion and philosophy gather together to present their ideas on the big questions that can be studied focused on exemplary lives of spirituality and love. Those presenting include luminaries such as Dan Batson PhD, Don Browning PhD, Antonio R. Damasio MD, Frans de Waal PhD, William H. Durham PhD, Samuel P. Oliner PhD, Pearl Oliner PhD, V.S. Ramachandran PhD, Rev. Eugene Rivers, Elliott Sober PhD, Lawrence Sullivan PhD, Thomas R. Insel MD, Jerome Kagan PhD, David S. Wilson PhD, Edith Wyschogrod PhD, and Lynn G. Underwood PhD. Memorably, Sir John initiates a standing ovation after a dinner address by Dame Cicely Saunders, Templeton Prize laureate, who explains how she began the world's first hospice, St. Christopher's in London, in answer to a sense of spiritual calling and a pure divine love that "invaded" her life. The conference yields the book *Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue* (edited by Post, Underwood, Schloss & Hurlbut, Oxford, 2002). Post's guest from Cleveland and eventual Trustee of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, Richard T. Watson, is stimulated and begins to discuss his endowing a professorship at Harvard Divinity School on science, religion, and altruistic love.

2000 Sir John asks Post and Harper to develop a plan for a new Institute with a specific suggestion that it is arrogant to think too highly of human love, and important to focus on the divine love that precedes humans and sustains the universe. Templeton writes and publishes *Pure Unlimited Love: An Eternal Creative Force and Blessing Taught by All Religions*. He decides that *agape* is a term too exclusively associated with Christianity to allow engagement with other world religious traditions, and prefers the more inclusive language of “Pure Unlimited Love.”

2001 Post incorporates The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love in Cleveland, Ohio as a 501(c)3 public charity with an initial meeting with a banker and lawyer at the Caribou Coffee House on Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights. Sir John is clear in his faxes that it will be called The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, not The Institute for the Study of Altruistic Love, because he feels that “Unlimited Love” will connect better with the great religions, be less prone to de-spiritualization, and allow study of the experience of divine love at the interface of the material and spiritual dimensions. He emphasizes by letter that he is interested in the energy of divine love that he associates with Ultimate Reality (aka “God”). He states his concerns over intensifying world religious arrogance and conflict, and would like to see all religions live up to their distinctive ideas and practices around the spiritual reality of Pure Unlimited Love in order to insure human progress. Three months after incorporation, 9/11 occurs.

2001 Post writes an Introduction to Sorokin’s 1954 classic *The Ways and Power of Love*, and guides it to re-publication with the Templeton Press. Sir John finds in Sorokin a visionary scientist of Pure Unlimited Love, especially with Sorokin’s idea that human love is unwise, narrowly focused, unenduring, and a far cry from divine love. Sir John asserts by letter that Sorokin was an “experimental theologian,” and that *The Ways and Power of Love*, along with *Pure Unlimited Love*, should be the foundation for the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love and future spiritual progress. He also emphasizes scientific research, rather than more of the exhausted centuries-old philosophical and theological debates.

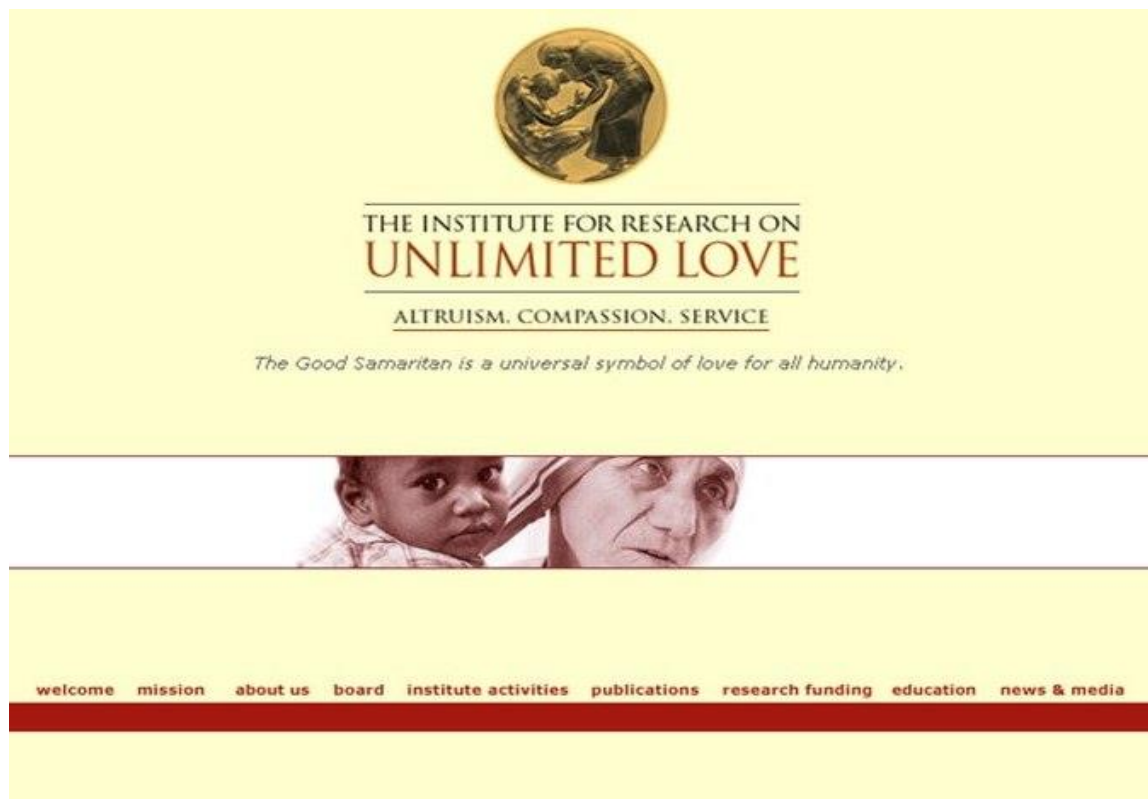
2001 Post recruits seven Research Area Consultants to the Institute:

- Gregory Fricchione MD of Harvard Medical School, Director of the Division of Psychiatry in Medicine and Director of the Mind-Body Institute at Mass General Hospital
- Byron R. Johnson, PhD, Distinguished Professor of the Social Sciences at Baylor University, Founding Director of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion (ISR), and expert on sociology of faith-based communities involved in pro-social activities
- Jeff Levin, PhD, University Professor of Religion and Population Health at Baylor University, a co-founder of the epidemiological field of spirituality and health, and world expert on the sociology, psychology and measurement of spiritual experiences of Divine Love, including the Sorokin Love Scale.
- Michael E. McCullough, PhD, Professor of Psychology at the University of Miami, where he directs the Laboratory for Social and Clinical Psychology. His

- expertise on other-regarding virtues is recognized internationally (including love, forgiveness, gratitude, and self-control).
- Thomas Jay Oord, PhD, of Northwest Nazarene University, a theologian, pastor, and philosopher who has written twenty books on love, relational theology, and science and religion.
 - Jeffrey P. Schloss, PhD, Professor of Biology at Westmont College and expert on evolutionary theory and human altruism in relation to religious faith. He has been a Danforth Fellow and an AAAS Fellow in Science Communication.
 - Esther Sternberg, MD, former Director of the Division of Psychoneuroimmunology at the National Institutes of Health, author of the best-selling book *The Balance Within*, and Professor of Medicine & Research Director of the University of Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine.

These Research Area Consultants assist in the development of the world's first Request for Proposals on the topic of Unlimited Love, assist with the assessment of proposals, and are each provided with a stipend to write a book related to Pure Unlimited Love. None are allowed to apply for grant support in order to avoid any perception of conflict of interest or "cronyism," something that Sir John feels undermines free open competition for grant support. Six of seven consultants produce well-received and important books on the topic. (see www.unlimitedloveinstitute/research-consultant/)

2001 The first Institute website goes live with a specially designed logo.



2001 Post recruits a Board of Directors for the Institute, including Catherine M. Lewis, formerly Chair of the Cleveland Foundation, John Lewis, Judith Watson and Richard T. Watson, Esq, who would go on to endow the Richard T. Watson Chair in Science and Religion at Harvard University Divinity School. (for current Board of Directors, see www.unlimitedloveinstitute.org/board/board-of-directors/). Post recruits Institute advisors (for current list, see www.unlimitedloveinstitute.org/board/advisory-board/). Initial advisors include:

Herbert Benson, M.D. ,*Harvard Medical School*
Don S. Browning, Ph.D., *The University of Chicago*
Sidney Callahan, Ph.D.
Rosalynn Carter
Rev. Dr. Robert M. Franklin, Jr., *Emory University*
Millard Fuller, *The Fuller Center for Housing*
Timothy P. Jackson, Ph.D., *Emory University*
Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., *Olivet Baptist Church & Past Board Chairman, Morehouse College*
Sayyed Hossein Nasr, Ph.D., *George Washington University*
Sam Miller, *Forest City Enterprises*
Jacob Neusner, Ph.D., *Bard College*
Samuel P. Oliner, Ph.D., *Altruistic Personality Institute*
Olayemi Omotade, M.D., *University of Ibadan, Nigeria*
Margaret Poloma, Ph.D., *University of Akron*
Edmund D. Pellegrino, M.D., *Georgetown University*
Steven C. Rockefeller, Jr., *Poverty Alleviation Collaborative*
Lynn G. Underwood, Ph.D., *Fetzer Institute*
George E. Vaillant, M.D., *Harvard Medical School*
Paul Vitz, *Institute for Psychological Science*
Susan Wentz, M.D., *Case School of Medicine*

2002 The Institute develops its second of five “Requests for Proposals” for researchers and educators (see www.unlimitedloveinstitute.org/research-results/). (A year earlier the Institute develops a collaborative RFP with the Fetzer Institute’s Lynn D. Underwood, PhD.)

- Production and Dissemination of 80,000 + copies of a Request for Proposal
- Received 322 Letters of Intent
- Invited 99 applicants to submit full proposals
- 83 full proposals submitted
- Funding of 25 projects in December 2002

2003 The Institute, working with William Grassie, PhD and the Metanexus Institute, sponsors the groundbreaking conference *Works of Love: Scientific & Religious Perspectives on Altruism – An International, Interfaith, and Interdisciplinary Conference*.

Held at Villanova University (May 31 – June 5), this weeklong conference attracted 800 participants representing 40 different countries, all major world religions and spiritualities, and a mix of theologians, scientists, and exemplary practitioners of Unlimited Love. Topics include:

□ **Faith Active in Love: Lives of Compassionate Love**

Scientific and theological interpretations of remarkable lives exemplifying love for all humanity

□ **Unlimited Love and Human Nature: The Problem of Inter-Group Conflict**

To what extent is the substrate of human nature receptive to the ideal of love for all humanity? Drawing on evolutionary biology, how does human nature resist this ideal?

□ **The Healing Power of Love: Healthful Compassion**

To what extent does the giving of compassionate love and generous service impact the agent with regard to morbidity and mortality? How does this impact the recipient health and therapeutic efficacy?

□ **The Biology of Compassionate Love: Evolutionary, Physiological, and Neurological Correlates**

How can compassionate love be understood in the light of neurology, endocrinology, genetics, and immunology?

□ **The Psychology of Compassionate Love**

What psychology models help to explain the experience of compassionate love and help to explain its key features?

□ **The Sociological Study of Faith-Based Communities and their Activities in Relation to the Spiritual Ideal of Unlimited Love**

Are volunteerism, social capital, and civility enhanced by faith in divine love? Are faith-based organizations more effective than secular ones in enhancing and sustaining “works of love”?

□ **The Emergence and Impact of Helping Behavior in Young People**

How does generosity and service emerge in the lives of young people? How does such experience shape the long-term aspects of their lives?

□ **The Science and Spirituality of Family Care-giving**

There are hundreds of millions of family caregivers across the globe, tending to loved ones with cognitive, physical, and other disabilities. How do spirituality and the ideal of love help to sustain such caregivers, and those they care for?

□ **Compassionate Love, the Analogical Imagination, and the Science of Creative Genius**

Creative geniuses have often attempted to express the ineffable reality of Unlimited Love in music, art, poetry, and prose (including theology). How can we better understand this human desire to express the ideal of pure love?

□ **Spiritual Transformation: Love and the Fruits of the Spirit**

What is the relationship between positive spiritual transformation and Unlimited Love? How is the perception of such love captured in the experience of spiritual transformation?

□ **Science, Religion, and the Metaphysics of Love**

People of all great religious tradition view Unlimited Love as a core aspect of the divine. Is there a scientific basis for this perennial assumption? Can it be clarified in the light of the sciences?

Thirty-five plenary session speakers include:

Imam Hamad Ahmad Chebli, Islamic Society of Central New Jersey

John DiIulio, PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Dan Gottlieb, Host of *Voices in the Family* - *WHYY Public Radio*

Rev. Lyndon Harris, St. Paul's Chapel at Ground Zero & General Theological Seminary

Harold Koenig, MD, Duke University Center for Religion, Spirituality and Health

Holms Rolston, PhD, Colorado State University and Templeton Prize Laureate

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, The Institute of Jewish Studies, Israel

Jim Towey, Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, White House

David Sloan Wilson, State University of New York at Binghamton

2002 Institute initiates a project on *Love and the Deeply Forgetful*, focused on spirituality and love for individuals with dementia. Our rationale is that if Pure Unlimited Love applies to all individuals without any exception, this includes those who are cognitively imperiled as perhaps the most challenging test case. Sir John provides some additional support for focus groups on the love of individuals with dementia that are co-chaired by Post and neurologist Peter J. Whitehouse, MD. A Roundtable Conference on *Love and the Deeply Forgetful* is convened with the Royal Society Psychiatrists in New Castle, England (November 1- 3) resulting in a book with Oxford University Press. Richard Neuhaus publishes Post's essay *Alzheimer's & Grace* in *First Things* (2004), which is selected for *The Best American Spiritual Writing 2005*, in *The Best American Series* (2004).

Post develops this theme through Institute co-sponsoring of international conferences in London, Tokyo, Toronto, and Sydney. Ten years later, Post gives the inaugural Evans Lecture on *Love, Hope, and the Deeply Forgetful* at the Times Center in Manhattan to an audience of 1000 (est.), sponsored by the New York Alzheimer's Association.

2004 The Institute Love sponsors a national conference on *Love and Justice* with the Ford Foundation in Cleveland at Case Western Reserve University. The Institute receives word from the Ford Foundation via Michael Edwards, Director of the Program in Civil Society, and speaker at the IRUL Villanova conference in June of 2003, that Ford will match \$50,000 of Institute funds to co-sponsor a research conference (October 14-17) on the topic of "Divine Love, Spirituality, and Social Activism." Thirty leading scientific researchers convene with an equal number of spiritual exemplars to investigate the relationship of divine love to social change agents. An edited book entitled *The Love That Does Justice: Spiritual Activism in Dialogue with Social Science* (edited by Michael A. Edwards and SG Post) is published.

2004 The Institute allies for and sponsors a Summer Institute for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College (July 5 - 25) entitled *Work of Love*, with twenty leading scholars from the US and Canada who meet in the mornings and work on their books-in-progress in the

afternoons. Post and Institute Research Area Consultant Thomas Jay Oord, PhD, MDiv, serve as co-directors.

2004 The Institute develops a conference on *Altruism in the World Religions: A Dialogue with Science* (Nov. 15-19, 2004) with Bard College, Annendale-on-Hudson, New York. Jacob Neusner PhD, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Theology at Bard College, held a three-day conference at Bard on “Unlimited Love in World Religions,” where leading scholars in all the major world faiths present papers on how unlimited love is contextualized within their narrative and theological traditions. Williams Scott Green, Dean of Arts and Science at the University of Rochester, provides an overview paper. This conference gives rise to a book with Georgetown University Press, *Altruism in World Religions* (Georgetown University Press, 2005), edited by Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton. This project began in 2002 with the invitation of a pre-eminent group of scholars, the development of an initial paper by Dr. Green (October 2003), to be followed by courses on unlimited love and religious thought taught at Bard as a curricular theme (2004) and the three-day conference of the distinguished scholars contributing to the book. Dr. Post is deeply involved in this two-year program.

2004 In a continuing collaboration with the Fetzer Institute, the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love convened a conference in Washington, DC (May 20-24) that engaged significant participation from representatives of the National Institutes of Health. The conference, *Compassionate Love Research Conference*, allowed fifty-eight researchers supported by Fetzer and/or the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love to present their findings from projects that were funded competitively off three integrated Requests for Proposals. Researchers included:

Arthur Aron, PhD, Stony Brook University
Jay Azarow, PhD, Stanford University
Peter L. Benson, PhD, The Search Institute
Jack W. Berry, Virginia Commonwealth University
Christopher Boehm, PhD, University of Southern California
Nancy Burton, PhD, Harvard University
Eleanor Brown, PhD, Pomona College
Don S. Browning, PhD, University of Chicago School of Divinity
Sue Carter, PhD, University of Illinois
Courtney Cowart, ThD, General Theological Seminary
Ilse de Koeyer, PhD, University of Utah
Frans B.M. de Waal, PhD, Emory University
Michele Dillon, PhD, University of New Hampshire
Robert A. Emmons, PhD, University of California Davis
Julie Exline, PhD, Case Western Reserve University
Beverly Fehr, PhD, University of Winnipeg
Alan Fogel, PhD, University of Utah
Bita Ghafoori, PhD, University of California San Francisco
Norman Giesbrecht, PhD, University of British Columbia
David R. Graber, PhD, Medical University of South Carolina
Robert Hierholzer, MD, University of California San Francisco

Vincent Jeffries, PhD, California State University Northridge
Byron Johnson, PhD, Baylor University
Benjamin Karney, PhD, University of Florida
Francis J. Keefe, PhD, Duke University
Cheryl Koopman, PhD, Stanford University
James Leckman, MD, Yale University Child Studies Center
Jeff Levin, PhD, Baylor University
Ellen P. Levine, PhD, California Pacific Medical Center
Michael E. McCullough, PhD, University of Miami
Mario Mikulincer, PhD, Bar-Ilan University
Maralynne D. Mitcham, PhD, University of South Carolina
Lisa Neff, PhD, University of Florida
Jack B. Nitschke, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Samuel P. Oliner, PhD, California State University, Humboldt
Doug Oman, PhD, University of California Berkeley
Allan M. Omoto, PhD, Claremont Graduate University
Thomas Jay Oord, PhD MDiv, Northwest Nazarene University
Brian Paciotti, PhD, University of California Davis
Margaret M. Poloma, PhD, University of Akron
Stephanie D. Preston, PhD, University of Michigan
Kevin Reimer, PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary
Peter J. Richerson, PhD, University of California Davis
Jeffrey P. Schloss, PhD, Westmont College
Philip R. Shaver, PhD, University of California Davis
Judith G. Smetana, PhD, University of Rochester
Sani W. Smith, PhD, Michigan State University
Tom Smith, PhD, University of Chicago National Opinion Research center
Susan Sprecher, PhD, Illinois State University
James E. Swain, MD, Yale University Child Studies Center
J. Scott Tonigan, PhD, University of New Mexico
George E. Vaillant, MD, Harvard University
Brenda Volling, PhD, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
David S. Wilson, PhD, State University of New York Binghamton
Paul Wink, PhD, Wellesley College
Stephen Wright, PhD, Simon Frase University
Robert Wuthnow, PhD, Princeton University
James Youniss, PhD, Catholic University of America
Sally Zierler, PhD, Brown University

A result of this conference is an edited book entitled *The Science of Compassionate Love: Theory, Research, and Applications* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). Productive meetings with NIH personnel facilitated increased support for research.

2005 The Institute sponsors the roundtable conference, “The Right Love of the Child” with the Emory University Center for the Study of Law and Religion in Atlanta (September 30 - October 2). This results in three edited books:

- Patrick M. Brennan, ed., *The Vocation of the Child* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008). This book examines how children can be raised to practice *agape* love. It includes all major theologians and social scientists working on the “best love of the child,” which is to nurture *agape* in that child.
- Timothy P. Jackson, ed., *The Morality of Adoption: Social-Psychological, Theological, and Legal Perspectives* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005).
- Timothy P. Jackson, ed., *The Best Love of the Child: Being Loved and Being Taught to Love as the First Human Right* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2011).

2005 The Institute convenes a second Summer Institute for Christian Scholars at Calvin College *The Experience of Godly Love*, co-directed by Margaret Poloma PhD and Matthew T. Lee PhD.

2005 Dr. Post publishes “Sorokin, Pitirim Aleksandrovich,” in Encyclopedia of Religion, 2nd edition.

2005 The Institute sponsors the conference “Altruism in Cross-Cultural Perspective” from (February 24-26, 2005, Santa Fe), a featured segment of the annual meeting of the Society for Cross-Cultural Research, convened in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in January. The Institute worked with conference organizer Doug Vakoch, who had attended the *Works of Love* seminar at Calvin College. This was the first cross-cultural conference ever convened on altruism, and featured these topics among others:

“Altruistic Behavior and Its Genetic Basis” Christopher Boehm (Professor of Anthropology and Director of Jane Goodall Research Center, University of Southern California)

“Cross-Cultural Research on Altruism: Some Suggestions” Melvin Ember (President, Human Relations Area Files, Yale University) and Carol R. Ember (Executive Director, Human Relations Area Files, Yale University)

“Heroic and Conventional Altruism in a Cross-Cultural Setting” Samuel P. Oliner (Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Humboldt State University and Founder/Director of the Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute)

“Taoist Altruism and Wateristic Personality: East and West” Yueh-Ting Lee (Professor and Chair of Ethnic Studies Department, Minnesota State University)

“Ego and Altruism in Kin-Based and Individualistic Societies: A Developmental Perspective” Alice Schlegel (Professor of Anthropology, University of Arizona)

“Group Life and Reciprocity among Three Gangs of Homeless Children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia” Paula Heinonen (Research Associate, International Gender Studies Center, Oxford University)

“Is Altruism a Common Ingredient in Healing across Cultures?” Joan Koss-Chioino (Research Professor of Psychology and Anthropology, George Washington University; Professor Emerita of Anthropology, Arizona State University)

“Altruism in Human Ritual” Garry Chick (Professor of Hotel, Restaurant and Recreation Management, The Pennsylvania State University)

“Altruism: Common Origin and Cross-Cultural Commonalities” M. Kathryn Coe (Assistant Professor of Public Health, University of Arizona; Director of Special Populations Shared Service, Arizona Cancer Center)

“An Exploration of Possible Uses of an Integrative Model for Cross-Cultural Research on Altruism” Eva-Lotta Grantén (Center for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund, Sweden)

2005 The Institute, through the use of a Request for Proposals, invites secondary school and college & university teachers to submit applications in support of courses to be offered on the theme of Pure Unlimited Love.

In the *Science, Theology and Unlimited Love Course Competition for Secondary School Faculty*, nine awards to secondary schools area made in the Fall of 2005 after careful review of applications based on a call for proposals that was nationally disseminated. The winners are:

Tom Collins, Palmer Trinity School
Eddy Hernandez and Laura Sockel, The Paideia School
Jane Rechtman, Religion Department
Scott Gartlan, Canon School
Julie R. Coolidge, Saint Ursula Academy
Julia Williams, Beleze Christian Academy
Peter Hahn, New Roads School
Patrick Tiernan, Boston College High School
Helen Wagner, Cornelia Connelly School

The Institute also initiates the *The Works of Love Course Competition and Claremont School of Theology Conference* (March 2005). The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love received 70 excellent applications for course awards by the September 1, 2004, deadline. After careful review through a four-step process, including experts external to the Institute, the following applicants have been designated as award winners for the IRUL Course Competition:

Craig A. Boyd, Greenville College
Patricia Bruininks & Jay McDaniel, Hendrix College
Andrew M. Flesher & Daniel L. Worthen, Cal State University Chico
Elisabeth Grab-Schmidt & Wolfgang Achtner, Institut fur Evangelische Theologie
Nancy Howell, Saint Paul School of Theology
Shelley Dean Kilpatrick, Southern Baptist University
Thomas E. Phillips, Colorado Christian University
Stephen J. Pope, Boston College
Kevin Reimer, Travis Research Institute, Fuller Theological Seminary
F. LeRon Shults, Bethel Seminary
James K.A. Smith, Calvin College

2005 The course award-winning faculty attend a working-group conference *The Pedagogy of Unselfish Love* (Institute for Research on Unlimited Love – Altruism, Compassion, Service, Claremont School of Theology Center for Process Studies). The conference convenes at the Haddon Conference Center of the Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California (April 14 – 17, 2005). This was a high-level event

with the goal of developing an edited text (details unspecified at this time) to which award winners will be invited to contribute. Two public sessions woven into the working conference feature Jeffrey Schloss PhD and John Cobb PhD. Students and faculty from Claremont attended these public sessions.

2005 The Institute presents at The Chautauqua Institution in upstate New York for a full week of talks before audiences of 4,000 - 5,000 for the best attended 9th week of the season on record! (August 24-30, 2005). The Chautauqua Institution, founded in 1874, is tucked away beside a beautiful clear lake filled with fish and surrounded by the mountains of western upstate New York. On any given week, an estimated 4,000 people from all over the U.S. – although mostly from the eastern seaboard – gather there to enjoy public intellectuals speak in morning and afternoon sessions. We focus on deeply unselfish love for others – the kind of love enshrined in the golden rule, encouraged by the world’s great spiritual traditions, and affirmed as the “Ground of Being” by the mystics.

Dr. John M. Templeton, Jr., M.D. delivers a clear and compelling overview of the activities of the John Templeton Foundation. Tom Becker, the new President of The Chautauqua Institution, joins Dr. Templeton and his wife Pina Templeton for lunch and dinner to discuss the synergy between Chautauqua and the Templeton Foundation on progress in science and theology.

Other Institute speakers include:

Dr. Edward Hundert MD, President of Case Western Reserve University, who addresses the idea of a leading national research university centering curriculum, research, and activities on the theme of unselfish love and a shared humanity.

Everett Worthington PhD presents on forgiveness as an expression of love, leaving the audience mesmerized. Dr. Worthington chaired the Templeton Campaign for Forgiveness Research.

Dr. Esther Sternberg MD, a premier research scientist on the brain and emotion, offers her insights into why unselfish love seems to have so many benefits, not just to the recipient, but also to the giver. Esther’s presentation is so popular that for three days she is besieged by people wherever she goes, all of them filled with questions and encouragement for her in her pioneering work.

Dr. Sherwin Nuland MD of Yale addresses the interface of science, unselfish love, and human nature with a degree of depth and seriousness that defies easy description.

Cathy Lewis, a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, speaks from her heart about how central unselfish love is to every aspect of goodness.

Dr. John Ratey, professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Gerald M. Edelman, winner of the Nobel Prize and chairman of neurobiology at the Scripps Research Institute, Rev. Otis Moss, pastor of the Olivet Institutional Baptist Church in Cleveland and Chairman of the board of trustees at Morehouse College in Atlanta, and others speak powerfully of the human capacity for love.

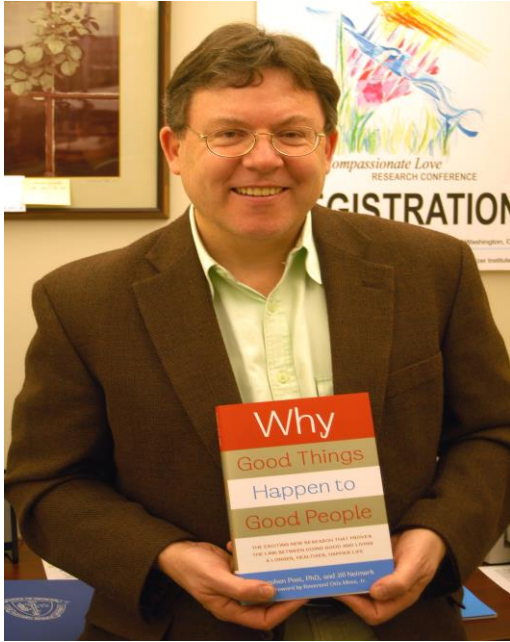
2005 A quiet high point for me came when Richard T. Watson, a member of the Institute Board of Directors of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, discussed with Dr.

Templeton how his work with the Institute from an initial meeting in 1999 led him in recent months to contribute a \$4 million endowed chair to Harvard Divinity School in science and religion – one that will directly enhance a recent Templeton Foundation project at Harvard on altruism and game theory, and the work of the Institute. Dr. Templeton is overwhelmingly gratified to see this level of philanthropic commitment emerging from Sir John Templeton’s visionary hopes for Unlimited Love.

2005 Media impact continues to blossom. The *Chautauquan Daily* ran lengthy articles on the Unlimited Love presentations all week long, and Krista Tippett, host of the NPR national show *Speaking of Faith*, was present for the week with her crew recording interviews for national airing in the months ahead. I received a call from the producers of the NPR show *What Do You Know* asking if I would be in Cleveland on September 17th for an Institute feature to be recorded with a full house at our Cleveland Playhouse Square. The total attendance for all presentations was an estimated 4,000 per day, or 20,000 total. It was amazing how many people of tremendous distinction and accomplishment were there to celebrate the theme of Unlimited Love, ask serious and demanding questions, and challenge us to move forward with depth and purpose. The combination of personal interactions and NPR outreach to many millions made this the most successful single week ever of “getting the word out” on Unlimited Love.

2007 The Institute convenes a conference on *Prospects for Our Common Humanity: Love of Neighbor in the Monotheistic Traditions* (June 2-4), at the University of Pennsylvania. Plenary speakers include Mahmoud Ayoub PhD, Bruce Chilton PhD, Jacob Neusner PhD, Martin Seligman PhD, and Stephen G. Post PhD. Over 700 people attend in Irvine Auditorium for the evening session.

2007 Stephen G. Post PhD with Jill Neimark publish *Why Good Things Happen to Good People: How to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life by the Simple Act of Giving* (Broadway Books/Random House), which goes on to be a successful best seller. Post gives over 150 public talks on the Institute theme of why it’s good to be good, including a presentation before the U.S. Congress and a plenary address at the International Happiness and Its Causes Conference in Sydney, Australia. The book is translated and published in Japan, Brazil, Russia, Portugal, India, Korea, Sweden, Indonesia and Taiwan.



2007 Annual Award in Medical Humanities by World Literacy Canada for *Why Good Things Happen to Good People*

2007/2008 Dr. Post publishes “Generosity/Selfishness” in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 2nd Edition (2008); “Altruistic Love: Science and Religion in Dialogue,” in Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions (2007).

2008 The Institute establishes itself in the Village of Stony Brook, New York as an expansion from its Cleveland base. In addition, Dr. Post accepts a position at Stony Brook University, although the Institute and the university have no connection. *Matthew T. Lee PhD*, Chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of Akron is nominated and confirmed by the Institute Board of Directors as Institute Vice President, allowing Dr. Post to develop the Institute in Greater New York and Dr. Lee in Greater Cleveland. Annual meetings of the Board of Directors are held in Chagrin Falls, Ohio in the summers.

2008 Sir John Templeton passes away in Nassau at the age of 96, but not before requesting that Dr. Post write a book for him that he would not be able to write himself. It would bear the title, *Is Ultimate Reality Unlimited Love?* Sir John this asks what was for him the most significant question imaginable in science and spirituality of Pure Unlimited Love.

2008 – 2011 The Institute co-funds (with Emory University’s Center for Law and Religion and the Templeton Foundation) a three-year projects at Emory University entitled *THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: SCIENTIFIC, THEOLOGICAL, AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY ON THE LOVE OF GOD, NEIGHBOR, AND SELF*. The project is co-directed by Emory University’s Professor John Witte (PI), Post and Philip L.

Reynolds PhD of the Candler School of Theology at Emory. Timothy P. Jackson PhD, Michael McCullough PhD, and Michael J. Perry PhD served as principal project advisors.

1. Background and Project Purpose. Academic talk about “happiness” has exploded over the last two decades, especially with the rise of the field of positive psychology. But much of the new positive psychology and other social science discourse on happiness has been largely disconnected from the millennium-long theological, philosophical, and jurisprudential inquiries into the meanings and measures of happiness, which have also experienced a resurgence in recent years. Various forms of eudaimonism or “virtue ethics” in moral philosophy, drawing on Aristotle and the Stoics, have become prominent again in philosophy. Various new forms of “agapism,” “peace studies,” and “love ethics” have emerged among Christian and Jewish theologians and ethicists, along with a keen new Western interest in Buddhist and other Asian traditions of well-being. A new interest in the historical meaning and modern application of the iconic phrase “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” in the American Declaration of Independence and early constitutional texts has emerged in legal, jurisprudential, and human rights circles. But each of these discourses has remained mostly isolated from the others and from much of the new positive psychology and social science literature on happiness.

One principal aim of this project was to bring together these various discourses on happiness to discern what each had to learn from the others and to appreciate differences and convergences. To that end, we took as our initial focus the epithet “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” enshrined in the American Declaration of Independence as an “unalienable right” – looking backward and forward at how this idea has been developed, theorized, implemented, and institutionalized. We spent the first half of the project building a common grammar and common library of key sources, consulting with experts, and identifying the lapses and lacunae in the study of happiness that required new scholarship. We spent the last half of the project developing and deliberating together over a set of freshly commissioned books and research articles that filled gaps in the literature and played to the strength of our participants.

The second principal aim of this project was to foster more holistic and realistic public, if not popular, understandings of the meanings of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” in all its varieties. We pursued this aim in part through the production of 19 new books, and more than 100 new articles and essays commissioned by the project; in part, through a series of public lectures on the pursuit of happiness in interdisciplinary perspective; in part through six new courses developed on this topic; in part through a major international conference on interreligious understandings of happiness featuring His Holiness The Dalai Lama, Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and the Venerable Matthieu Ricard.

2. Personnel. The project drew on the services of 20 Senior Fellows, 6 additional commissioned authors, 12 professional consultants, and 9 additional public conferees. The project was supported throughout by the 4 professional staff members of the Center for the Study of Law and Religion and a team of 9 graduate level research assistants.

- a. *Senior Fellows*. The driving intellectual engine of this project was a score of Senior Fellows, representing the fields of theology, law, ethics, history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, biology, and philosophy. Detailed biographies and summaries of their research for this project are provided on our Law and Religion Center website (www.cslr.law.emory.edu):
- Julia Annas (Philosophy, Classics -- Oxford/Arizona): eudaimonism in classical and modern forms
 - John Bowlin (Theology, Ethics -- Princeton Theological Seminary): the appropriation and transformation of philosophical eudaimonism by major Christian thinkers
 - Michael J. Broyde (Law, Judaism -- Emory): discipline, community, and happiness in the Jewish tradition
 - Sidney Callahan (Religion, Psychology -- freelancer in New York): the findings of positive psychology from the broader perspectives of religion, ethics, and social critique
 - Ellen Charry (Ethics, Jewish-Christian Theology -- Princeton Theology Seminary): the development of a new Christian theology of happiness called “Asherism” and its comparison to eudaimonism and love ethics
 - Edward Craighead (Psychiatry, Clinical Psychology -- Emory): experimental and educational work on the prevention of early-onset depression as a key step in the development of happiness
 - Robyn Fivush (Psychology, Family Studies -- Emory): the role of memory and narrative in family coherence and in recovery from trauma
 - Eric Gregory (Religion, Philosophy -- Princeton): Good Samaritanism writ global and its moral and institutional implications
 - Carl Holladay (New Testament Studies -- Emory): the tradition of beatitudes in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament
 - Timothy P. Jackson (Theological Ethics, Religion and Science -- Emory): suffering and happiness in Simone Weil and Etty Hillesum; political agape as a new form of Christian political theory
 - Corey Keyes (Sociology, Buddhism -- Emory): subjective well-being as a measurable and improvable factor in health practices and policies
 - Michael McCullough (Psychology, Religion -- Miami): evolutionary approaches to religion, well-being, revenge, and forgiveness
 - Carol Newsom (Hebrew Bible -- Emory): hedonic and eudaimonic approaches to happiness in the wisdom literature of the Old Testament
 - Michael J. Perry (Law, Philosophy -- Emory): the pursuit of happiness and its implications for freedom and welfare rights at domestic and international law
 - Stephen Pope (Ethics, Catholic Social Teachings -- Boston College): the relationship of science to Christian eudaimonism and virtue ethics, and on the competing models of well-being
 - Stephen Post President, The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love): doing good to/for others as a gift of/to God, neighbor, and self
 - Philip Reynolds (Historical Theology, History -- Emory): the Christian eudaimonism of Thomas Aquinas; marriage as a site of happiness

- Jeffrey Schloss (Biology, Philosophy of Science -- Westmont): construing happiness in evolutionary biology and its implications for ethics, law, and policy
- John Witte, Jr. (Law, History -- Emory): the original meaning of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” in the Declaration and its implications for religion and law, church and state
- Charlotte van Oyen Witvliet (Experimental Psychology -- Hope): physiological and psychological responses to forgiveness and empathy

These Senior Fellows met together in 7 roundtable conferences during the course of the project. Each Senior Fellow gave periodic public lectures at various universities and professional society meetings, participated in the culminating international conference, and prepared new books and articles supported by the project. Six Senior Fellows developed new courses on the project theme. Each Senior Fellow was paid a discrete stipend for each meeting attended, each public lecture delivered, and each new document written for the project -- with payments tendered only when that discrete contribution to the project was complete and accepted, or under consideration, for publication. This “work for hire” ethic, while inevitably rankling to some, has proved to be the most effective way to induce high quality and high volume participation. A few Senior Fellows ultimately could not come through with final books; we did not pay them for their writing but instead reached out to other authors to write for the project.

- b. *Consultants.*** Particularly in the early stages of the project, as we sought to map the literature in the field and the lacunae in scholarship, we drew upon various experts to apprise the group of specialized literatures on happiness. Each of these consultants made presentations at one of the roundtable conferences and often supplied a trove of research materials and research leads to the group. Some offered public lectures as well. Each of these consultants was paid a one-time stipend for their contribution. These consultants included:
- Patrick Allitt (American History and Religion – Emory)
 - Daniel S. Bowling (Well Being in the Legal Profession – Duke)
 - Don S. Browning (Theological Ethics, Religion and Psychology – Chicago)
 - Aurelian Craitu (Sociology, Religion and Communism – Indiana)
 - Frances Smith Foster (Afro-Protestant Family History – Emory)
 - Ruben Habito (Buddhism – Southern Methodist University)
 - Jonathan Haidt (Evolutionary Biology – Virginia)
 - Timothy Jackson (Demography; Urban Planning – Oxford)
 - David Myers (Positive Psychology – Hope)
 - Jean Porter (Philosophy, Ethics – Notre Dame)
 - Paul Rahe (American History, Political Theory – Tulsa)
 - Brent Strawn (Old Testament – Emory)
 - Steven Tipton (Sociology of Religion – Emory)

- c. *Additional Commissioned Authors.* As the project unfolded, the Senior Fellows and project leaders identified several clusters of happiness themes that deserved deeper exploration but proved beyond the ken of any one of them. Rather than tax the entire group of Senior Fellows with discussion of these new themes, we commissioned a new set of authors to write a volume in conversation with them.
 - One cluster of themes concerned the place of happiness in the Bible viewed comprehensively and in canonical context. We commissioned a new anthology on *The Bible and the Pursuit of Happiness*, comprised of 15 fresh essays, edited by Emory Old Testament scholar Brent Strawn. This group, which included four of the project Senior Fellows, met once to deliberate draft outlines and chapters, and the book has now gone to press. Each contributor was paid a stipend for the meeting and chapter, and the editor paid a further stipend.
 - A second cluster of themes concerned the pursuit of happiness and holiness in constitutional law, particularly under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. We decided to draw on the expertise of five constitutional law scholars – Kathleen Brady (Villanova), Richard Garnett (Notre Dame), Ira C. Lupu (George Washington University), Joel A. Nichols (St. Thomas), and Robert W. Tuttle (George Washington). We commissioned fresh new volumes or new sections in volumes in progress that took up the legal and constitutional challenges of religious liberty and the pursuit of (religious) happiness both by individuals and groups. This effort yielded five new volumes. Each author was paid a stipend for their commissioned final manuscript.
 - A final cluster of themes that deserved further exploration concerned the essential role of the family as the first school of love, happiness, and well being both for spouses and children. This is a particularly vital theme in the Christian tradition, informed as it is by both biblical and classical teachings. We decided to make this a more pronounced theme in a major work already underway on *Christian Marriage and Modern Marriage Law*, by Don Browning (Chicago) and John Witte, which is focused on the Protestant tradition. We commissioned a volume by Philip Reynolds on *How, When and Why Marriage Became a Sacrament*, which emphasized the spiritually salutary dimensions of marriage and family life for Christian believers historically and today. We also added an Orthodox Christian perspective on marriage, centered on the unique doctrine of “theosis,” in a commissioned volume, *Christian Marriage and Family at Bay: An Orthodox Assessment* by Christian ethicist Vigen Guroian (Virginia). This initiative added three more volumes to the project. Each author was paid a stipend for their commissioned final manuscript.

3. Publications. The project supported the production of 19 new books, which are currently published or in press. The list of titles and their publishers are set out below. The project also supported the production of more than 100 scholarly articles, especially by the (social) scientists in our group for whom articles in peer-reviewed journals are the principal scholarly medium; new articles supported by the project keep trickling in each month, and will continue to do so over the next year or two. Project support also included occasional op-eds and popular articles published in print and electronic newspapers, magazines, and websites. All of these titles are described in detail on our Center website:

www.cslr.law.emory.edu, which we will continue to update with the latest rounds of project publications.

Each of the new books, listed below, is the subject of a book launch – featuring new brochures, news stories, public lectures, and where apt press conferences when the books are released.

- Julia Annas, *Intelligent Practical Virtue* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming)
- April L. Bogle, ed., *The Pursuit of Happiness in Interreligious Perspective* (forthcoming)
- John Bowlin, *Counting Virtues: The Difference that Transcendence Makes* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming)
- Kathleen Ann Brady, *Religious Freedom and the Pursuit of Holiness* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)
- Don S. Browning and John Witte, Jr., *From Private Order to Public Covenant: What Place for Christian Marriage in Modern Marriage Law?* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)
- Michael J. Broyde, *Innovation in Jewish Law and Religious Life* (Urim Publishing House, 2010)
- Sidney Callahan, *Becoming Happy, Becoming Good* (Orbis Books, 2011)
- Ellen Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010)
- Richard W. Garnett, *The Jurisprudence of Religious Freedom: Religious Organizations and their Place in a Well Ordered Society* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)
- Eric Gregory, *What Do We Owe Strangers? Globalization and the Good Samaritan* (under consideration at the University of Chicago Press)
- Vigen Guroian, *Christian Marriage and Family at Bay: An Orthodox Assessment* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming)
- Timothy P. Jackson, *Political Agape: A Defense of Prophetic Liberalism* (under consideration at the University of Chicago Press)
- Ira C. Lupu and Robert W. Tuttle, *Secular Government, Religious People* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, forthcoming)
- Stephen Pope, *Fullness of Life: The Science of Well-Being and the Ethics of Virtue* (Georgetown University Press, forthcoming)
- Stephen Post, *The Hidden Gifts of Helping: How the Power of Giving, Compassion, and Hope Can Get Us Through Hard Times* (Jossey-Bass, 2011)
- Philip L. Reynolds, *Thomas Aquinas and the Ethics of Hope: A Study of Christian Eudaimonism* (forthcoming)
- Philip L. Reynolds, *How, When, and Why Marriage Became a Sacrament* (forthcoming)
- Brent Strawn, ed., *The Bible and the Pursuit of Happiness* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming)
- John Witte, Jr. and Joel A. Nichols, *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, Third Edition (Westview Press, 2011)

4. Public Events

a. *Public Lectures.* Each project Senior Fellow was paid to deliver up to three public lectures on the project theme at colleges, universities, and professional society meetings. That initiative yielded a total of 41 public lectures on the project theme throughout North America and Western Europe.

The Center for the Study of Law and Religion also sponsored a series of public lectures on the project theme at Emory. Each of these lectures -- some freestanding, some clustered with others -- was free and open to the public, widely advertised in advance, videotaped and posted on our center website and on iTunes university. Several of the larger lectures and distinguished lecturers featured brochures, news stories, and articles on our Center website. Average attendance at each lecture was 250 people drawn principally from the Emory and Atlanta communities. Public lecturers were paid a one-time stipend for their lecture and an additional stipend if their work yielded a final publication. The public lecturers supported, in whole or in part, by the project were:

- Enola Aird (Institute for American Values)
- Patrick Allitt (Emory)
- Robert Bellah (Berkeley)
- John Bowlin (Princeton Theological Seminary)
- Daniel L. Bowling (Duke)
- Michael J. Broyde (Emory)
- Stephen L. Carter (Yale)
- Ellen Charry (Princeton Theological Seminary)
- Vincent Cornell (Emory)
- Edward Craighead (Emory)
- Frans de Waal (Emory)
- Jean Bethke Elshtain (Chicago)
- Robyn Fivush (Emory)
- Frances Smith Foster (Emory)
- Eric Gregory (Princeton)
- Timothy P. Jackson (Emory)
- Corey Keyes (Emory)
- Scott Kugle (Emory)
- Deborah Lipstadt (Emory)
- Martin Marty (Chicago)
- Michael McCullough (Miami)
- Lobsang Tenzin Negi (Emory)
- Carol Newsom (Emory)
- Michael J. Perry (Emory)
- Philip L. Reynolds (Emory)
- Leah Ward Sears (Georgia Supreme Court)
- Krista Tippett (Speaking of Faith)
- Tibor Varady (Central European University/Emory)

b. *Final International Conference with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.* The culmination of the project was the “Interfaith Summit on Happiness,” held October 16-17, 2010 on

the Emory campus. The conference included a series of public presentations and conversations on happiness and well-being in comparative confessional and professional perspective.

The highlight and kickoff of the conference was a public conversation about the meanings and measures of happiness with the Dalai Lama, Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (the United Kingdom), Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori (Episcopal Church), and Professor Seyyed Nasr Hossein (George Washington University), with Kristi Tippett (Speaking of Faith/Being) as moderator. In the course of the conference, each of these participants, plus The Venerable Matthieu Ricard (Shechen Monastery, Nepal), gave a full public lecture with responses from project Senior Fellows.

More than 5,000 persons from around the world attended the conference. The conference brochures, videos, and media stories -- including a large special feature of Krista Tippett's show and website, "On Being".

Over the course of five years, the project has involved and yielded the following:

- Personnel
 - 20 senior fellows gathered in 7 roundtable conferences
 - 12 professional consultants
 - 6 commissioned authors
 - 9 graduate assistants
 - 4 professional staff
- Events
 - 29 public lectures at Emory, each averaging 250 attendees
 - 41 public lectures elsewhere by Senior Fellows
 - 1 international conference, with 5000 plus attendees
 - 6 new courses at Emory and elsewhere
- Publications
 - 19 new volumes
 - 100 plus scholarly articles
 - 100 plus news stories, op-eds, and popular essays

2008 The Institute receives the Joy of Practice Award from the Point of Life Foundation, the George Washington University Institute for Spirituality and Health, and the Global Alliance of Healthcare Professionals of Indian Origin, "for demonstrating 'greatness' through your pioneering research and education in the field of unconditional love, altruism, compassion, and service."

2008 Yuhudit Greenberg, ed., publishes the *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions*, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, Ca: ABC-CLIO Reference). Dr. Greenberg, one of the premier religious thinkers on love, came to our Villanova conference in 2002 and we discussed the need for an encyclopedia on this topic. Dr. Post assisted her with navigating the

reference publishers and Institute funding. This work is widely praised as the most significant reference in the field.

2009 *Altruism and Altruistic Love* is selected for “250 Most Significant Books in Science & Religion” by Cambridge University’s International Center for Science and Religion.

2008 – 2013 Institute researcher Margaret Poloma PhD (2002 RFP), Mathew T. Lee PhD, and Stephen G. Post PhD are awarded a grant from the Templeton Foundation through the University of Akron with collateral Institute support for **The Flame of Love Project: Scientific Research on the Experience and Expression of Godly Love in the Pentecostal Tradition**. Over four years many things are achieved.

Our driving question is: To what extent can emotionally powerful experiences of a “divine flame of love” move us beyond our ordinary self-interested concerns and help us express unlimited love for all others? In order to answer this question, which is at the heart of the Christian “Great Commandment” (love God and love neighbor as self), twenty-two scholars from a variety of theological and social scientific disciplines have explored and empirically tested the concept of Godly Love. This collaborative research project, directed by Stephen Post, president of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, and University of Akron professors Margaret Poloma and Matthew Lee, has defined the concept as *the dynamic interaction between divine and human love that enlivens and expands benevolence*. Through publications, presentations, a competitive RFP which funded five sub-projects, a website (with over 20,000 visits), public seminars, a summer institute, and biannual meetings, the project has successfully established a new field of interdisciplinary study involving a dialogue between social science and theology organized around this concept of Godly Love. The field-building exercises involved both scholarly activities as well as attempts to “mainstream” the research beyond academia, including a recently launched public relations campaign.

Eight books directly funded by the project have been published or are forthcoming at such university presses as Harvard, Oxford, New York, and Baylor; two more are currently in the advanced stages of the review process. Twenty-eight journal articles have been published or are forthcoming. Dozens of other writing projects are in progress. Presentations from our public seminar are available without cost from iTunes and other videos are in production. Our research has generated national and international media attention (e.g., NBC News, CNN TV, LA Times, Agence France-Presse, United Kingdom TransWorld Radio).

Previous studies have largely focused on the “structural shell” of religion (including denominational structure, demographics, and social networks). While such work is informative, it has neglected an important dimension of lived religion. Our findings demonstrate clearly that structural frameworks have overlooked a “loving God” who is a “significant other” for many Americans. The Flame of Love Project went beneath the surface to explore “The Heart of Religion” (to quote the title of our forthcoming book with the trade division of Oxford University Press), which in America is a dynamic loving relationship between God and humans. The interdisciplinary team provided evidence from different social contexts that supported the major hypothesis guiding the project, namely that the experience of a loving God activates religious networks and moves people to do good for others. Empirical findings from a new

national survey, several large surveys of specific religious groups in the U.S. and abroad, and hundreds of qualitative interviews to explore the loving relationship between God and Main Street USA in a way that has never been done before.

Our national survey found that eighty-one percent of the respondents claimed they “experience God’s love as the greatest power in the universe” and 83 percent said they “feel God’s love increasing their compassion for others.” Regardless of how benevolence is measured, and independent of commonly used social and demographic variables, religious experiences (particularly those associated with divine love) are an important catalyst for benevolence. These statistical findings have been expanded and developed via qualitative research. Taken as a whole, our work effectively responds to the widespread concern, perhaps best articulated by Oliver Wendell Holmes that, “Some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good.”

For many Americans, experiencing divine love and works of benevolence are inseparable. And indeed, repeated experiences of divine love can provide the energy for a “virtuous circle” in which a positive feedback loop involving a dance with the divine fosters increasingly intense or effective acts of benevolence. Through participating in a loving relationship with God people can learn how to “see beyond circumstances” in paradoxical ways that are both self-sacrificial and self-affirming. This has important implications for overcoming “compassion fatigue” and leading a life of generativity, meaning, and well-being in a suffering world that needs more benevolence.

2009-2015 The Institute worked with Maria Pagano, PhD, PI, to gain funding from the Templeton Foundation for the *Helping Others Live Sober Project*. This project focuses on imperiled and delinquent youth who are referred to a treatment center for alcohol abuse. The project carefully assesses the extent to which the 12th Step in the Alcoholics Anonymous Program (helping others) contributed to their recovery from alcoholism, depression, and criminality. This project is based at Case Western Reserve University’s Department of Adolescent Psychiatry. Drs. Lee and Post are closely involved as investigators. As seed for this important study, Dr. Pagano received a small grant from the Institute in 2006 to develop her work.

2010 The Institute convenes the *Helping Others: Spirituality, Science & Theology in Dialogue on the 12th Step and Recovery* (Stony Brook University, General Theological Seminary, Case Western Reserve University, John Templeton Foundation, the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, AA) in New York in February. This marks the formal beginning of Institute work on the topic of recovery from addiction in relation to the love of God and of neighbor as self, working closely with Maria Pagano PhD of Case Western Reserve University and Marc Galanter MD of NYU Med/Bellevue.

2012 The Institute convenes the conference *Alcoholics Anonymous: New Directions in Spirituality and Recovery* at the Empire Hotel in Manhattan, co-chaired by Marc Galanter, MD and Stephen G. Post PhD (March).

2012 Institute Board of Director Richard T. Watson dies on July 20, 2011, while on a visit to New York City. In the months before his passing he finalizes the Watson Chair in Science and Religion at Harvard Divinity School, and is pleased with the appointment of

Ahmed Ragab, PhD, MD. Dr. Post joins Judith B. Watson at Harvard on March 29, 2012, to hear Professor Ragab's inaugural lecture entitled "Disciplining and Persuading: Science, Religion and the Making of Knowledge." A small group of us moved over to a room in the Divinity School for a special dinner with Dean William Graham. Mrs. Watson delivers a dinner speech about Dick and what Chair meant to him. She also acknowledges Dick's being inspired by his work with the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love.

2012 The Institute facilitates the conference on *Spiritual Progress and Human Flourishing*, part of the John Templeton Foundation celebration of Sir John's 100th birthday, at the University of the South in Sewanee, TN.

2013 Dr. Post delivers the Inaugural Charles Evans Annual Lecture on Love and the Deeply Forgetful for the Alzheimer's Association New York Chapter, Times Center, New York to an estimated 1000.

2012 Dr. Post United States Congress Certificate of Special Recognition "In Recognition of Outstanding Achievement" (November 28)

2012 The Institute and the work of Dr. Post are recognized with the Annual Health Care Chaplaincy Award in Manhattan.



2013 Institute VP Matthew T. Lee PhD co-founds the American Sociological Association Section on Altruism, Morality, and Solidarity. Many now senior students of Sorokin support this emphatically. Dr. Lee is elected Chair of the section. The annual American Sociological Association conference convenes in Manhattan (August 10-13) for a General Session: *New Directions in Altruism, Morality, and Solidarity*: Organizer: Edward A. Tiryakian, Duke University, Durkhm@soc.duke.edu

Chair: Christian Smith, University of Notre Dame. Chris.Smith@nd.edu

2013 The Institute is featured in Tokyo at the annual caregivers conference of 35,000 individuals caring for *the deeply forgetful*. Dr. Post delivers the keynote on inclusive love that transcends hypercognitive values that limit our sense of human worth and lead to injustice. He later has dinner with the Japanese Minister of Health.



2013 Matthew T. Lee, Margaret M. Poloma & Stephen G. Post publish *The Heart of Religion: Experiencing God's Love, Spiritual Empowerment and Altruism* (New York: Oxford University Press).

2013/2014 Number of published books by Institute authors/researches 88 with the publication of:

- William C. Chittick, *Divine Love: Islamic Literature and the Path to God*. Yale University Press, 2013.
- Marc Galanter & SG Post, eds., *Alcohol Treatment Quarterly*, Vol. 13 (2-3), *Special Issue: Alcoholics Anonymous-New Directions in Research on Spirituality and Recovery*.
- Jeffrey Levin, *Upon These Three Things: Jewish Perspectives on Loving God*. Waco, TX: ISR-Baylor Books, 2014.
- Douglass Vakoch, ed., *Altruism in Cross-Cultural Perspective (Series in International and Cultural Psychology)*. Springer, 2013.
- Candy Brown, *Testing Prayer*. Harvard University Press, 2013.

2014 In response to Sir John Templeton's 2008 request several weeks before his passing, Dr. Post publishes *Is Ultimate Reality Unlimited Love?* with a "Foreword" by Drs. John M. and Josephine Templeton with the Templeton Press. The book is written at Sir John's request as a faithful presentation of his writings and thought on the most important question of them all.

2015 Accumulated media for the Institute since inception reaches 3500 newspaper and magazine articles in 39 different countries, est. 400 radio programs, and numerous appearances on major TV programs across the globe.

2014 The Institute is known worldwide for its seven key questions:

- (1) Does the unselfish love of others contribute to the happiness, health and resilience of those who give it?
- (2) How does such love prevent illness and contribute to the art of healing?
- (3) How can parents and communities raise children who flourish in such love?
- (4) Can the spirituality and practice of Unlimited Love enhance the workplace & philanthropy?
- (5) What do people mean when they self-report a spiritual experience of Unlimited Love, how common is this, and is this experience objectively associated with emotional healing and expanded benevolence?
- (6) Do physics and mathematics point to an "Ultimate Reality" or "Ground of Being" that underlies reality (the laws and constants of the universe, as well as energy and matter), and if so, might this be described in terms of creative mind and love, as mystics, philosophers, and theologians suggest, and as some leading quantum theorists and cosmologists assert is at least plausible?
- (7) How can the major spiritualities and religions of the world come to abide in their various conceptualizations of Unlimited Love, and practice love for all humanity rather than merely for those who adhere to a particular set of beliefs?

2014 The Institute web presence expands greatly with 850,000 recipients of our monthly newsletter.

2014 On November 10, 2014 the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love is hacked by *Team Dz ISIS*, the ISIS computer hacking group. The website is restored and special protections are added. Dr. Post receives information from contacts in the Middle East the message of spiritual humility and Pure Unlimited Love as the center of all meaningful spirituality and religion has spread far and wide and is viewed as antithetical to the ISIS cause. Dr. Post responds with a newsletter.

2015 The Institute begins to seek support for an international essay competition from young people (high school youth and college youth categories) of all persuasions about how they pushed back against peer pressure to hate those who believed differently than they do, and about how the major spiritualities and religions of the world can come to abide in their various conceptualizations of Unlimited Love, as well as actively practice

love for all humanity rather than merely for those who adhere to a particular set of beliefs.

2015. Dr. Post representing the Institute was invited by the United Nations via the UN Population Fund to participate with a group of 40 other individuals to draft the first ever UN Statement on Spirituality and Sustainable Development. Dr. Post served as a primary drafter and collated input from the larger working group.

2015 The Institute commits to participation in a conference (December 5 - 13) on Consciousness at the National Institute for Advanced Studies (NAIS) in Bangalore, India, focusing on the spiritual and metaphysical dimensions of Pure Unlimited Love.



2016 The www.helpingotherslivesober.org research project publishes its 40 paper in a high-level peer-reviewed journal on how helping others and spirituality contribute to youth recovery alcoholism as well as related depression (PI Maria E. Pagano PhD Case Western/University Hospitals Adolescent Psychiatry, Co-PI Matthew T. Lee PhD IRUL/University of Akron, Byron Johnson PhD Baylor University, Stephen G. Post PhD IRUL/Stony Brook).

2016. Dr. Post is acknowledged as one of three primary drafters of the United Nations UNFPA document, *Enhancing Human Flourishing Within the 2030 Development Agenda: The Spirituality of Global Transformation*. Work will continue through 2018 as the contents of this document are critiques, enhanced, and embraced by various UN organizations and constituencies.

2016: August 12 “World Youth Day” at the UN, the Institute fills up a major part of the UN Headquarters building with youth from across the globe assembling to hear our ten prize winners read and perform their essays.



On the occasion of International Youth Day 2016:

Youth essays on peace, tolerance and human rights

12 August 2016, Friday

11 AM – 1 PM

Conference Room 3

United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA



Please join us for a morning of celebration sponsored by the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love featuring young people between the ages of 11 – 22 who will recite their award winning essays on principles of human rights, religious freedom, tolerance, peace and love for all humanity

www.UnlimitedLoveInstitute.org

Welcome and Facilitation: Stephen G. Post, Director, Institute for Research on Unlimited Love

Key Note Speakers:

Reverend Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., Pastor Emeritus, Olivet Institutional Baptist Church

Aisha al-Adawiya, Founder and President, Women in Islam

Youth Presenters

<i>Drew Morgan, USA</i>	<i>Safia Gondal, Pakistan</i>
<i>Yasmeen Azam, Jordan</i>	<i>Nguyen Dinh Nguyen, Vietnam</i>
<i>Beatriz Lopes, Brazil</i>	<i>Leora Eisenberg, USA</i>
<i>Natalie Phagu, Guyana</i>	<i>Tenging Lama, Nepal</i>
<i>Maria Paula Cervera Gonzalez, Colombia</i>	<i>Sunday T. Ogbaga as Read by Ose Okojie, Nigeria</i>

Interlude by: Luis Mora, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Violin Meditation by Joanna Kaczorowska, Guest Artist

For those without UN Grounds Pass, please RSVP to Stephen Post: post@stephenpost.com by 29 July to obtain a ticket to enter the UN

Please note that seats will be made available on a first come, first served basis

2016: The research focus of the Institute shifted to (a) humility in relation to helping others and love of neighbor in recovery and in prison settings with regard to reduced recidivism (relapse into criminal behavior) and (b) healing in relation to experiences of unconditional and unlimited love, including empathy and clinical outcomes.

2016: Begin to raise support for a second round of international youth essays due to more than 500 requests and inquiries from youth and from leaders across the globe.

2017 GOALS (see development on preceding pages 26-28):

- Develop research focus of the Institute on (a) humility in relation to helping others and love of neighbor in recovery and in prison settings with regard to reduced recidivism (relapse into criminal behavior) and (b) healing in relation to experiences of unconditional and unlimited love, including empathy and clinical outcomes.
- Develop a second international youth essay competition and conference on resistance to hatred in the context of religious conflicts.

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Website “Dear Friends” Letter:

Do you recognize an immense need to thoroughly understand the very heart of positive action?

In June of 2001, I sat down with a lawyer in the old Caribou Coffee House on Coventry Road in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, to discuss founding an institute that would nurture new scientific research and spiritual-philosophical reflection on the topic of love. Not any kind of love, mind you. Not giddy romantic love or love of chocolate or designer shoes. *But the kind of love in which the security, well-being and happiness of others feels as meaningful and real to us as our own.* The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love (www.unlimitedloveinstitute.org), so named by our initial benefactor, Sir John Templeton, was incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)3 public charity several months later. It is now recognized worldwide.

The Institute’s first goal is to greatly increase awareness of the emotional and health benefits of such love, both for those who give it and receive it, through innovative scientific investigations in dialogue with the spiritual and moral traditions. At their best these traditions converge on this universal law of life -- our individual flourishing is inextricably connected with our contributing to the lives of others. This law is the focus of our first best-selling book, *Why Good Things Happen to Good People: How to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life by the Simple Act of Giving* (Random House’s Broadway Books, 2007), which brought together uplifting stories, science, perennial wisdom, and a self-assessment scale. *Why Good Things Happen* was translated into a dozen languages and is read and discussed around the world.

Our second goal is to encourage all cultures and spiritual traditions to abide in this universal law centered on our shared humanity – and *not* just on some fragment thereof. It is clear to everyone that love can help prevent or heal a great deal of the mental and physical illness across the globe, and correct so many social problems.

Our Definition of Unlimited Love

Back to a definition - *when the happiness, security, and well-being of another feels as meaningful and real to us as our own, or perhaps more so, we love that person.*

Unlimited Love includes but extends beyond our nearest and dearest to all humanity based on our shared dignity and interdependence with one another and with nature. For those of us who are secular, this ideal can be rationally defended. For those who are spiritually or religiously inclined, Unlimited Love is deemed to be a Creative Presence or Ultimate Reality underlying the universe, the participation in which leads to inner peace and expanded benevolence. Whether we define ourselves as secular, religious, or spiritual, we can generally agree that such love constitutes the greatest imaginable leap forward in human consciousness and behaviour.

Our Institute Mission

We seek to increase public awareness of the growing dialogue on Unlimited Love that is taking place at the interface of (1) new scientific investigations (e.g., in the health sciences, psychology, sociology, neuroscience, physics, and mathematics); (2) insights of the world's great philosophical, spiritual and theological traditions; and (3) inspiring works of love by exemplars across the world.

Our Guiding Questions

You have read this far because you are asking the same kinds of questions that the Institute has become known for, such as:

- (1) Does the unselfish love of others contribute to the happiness, health and resilience of those who give it?
- (2) How does such love prevent illness and contribute to the art of healing?
- (3) How can parents and communities raise children who flourish in such love?
- (4) Can the spirituality and practice of Unlimited Love enhance the workplace & philanthropy?
- (5) What do people mean when they self-report a spiritual experience of Unlimited Love, how common is this, and is this experience objectively associated with emotional healing and expanded benevolence?
- (6) Do physics and mathematics point to an “Ultimate Reality” or “Ground of Being” that underlies reality (the laws and constants of the universe, as well as energy and matter), and if so, might this be described in terms of creative mind and love, as mystics, philosophers, and theologians suggest, and as some leading quantum theorists and cosmologists assert is at least plausible?
- (7) How can the major spiritualities and religions of the world come to abide in their various conceptualizations of Unlimited Love, and practice love for all humanity rather than merely for those who adhere to a particular set of beliefs?

The Scientific Approach

Many people inaccurately think of love as something that cannot be defined, something so “soft” or personal that it defies description. Not true. The Institute studies the ways in which love shapes human health, development, motivations and actions. When we

consider the daunting challenges faced globally due to increased social fragmentation and the spread of fear-based human behaviors, there is an immense need to thoroughly understand love as the root of human flourishing. The Institute seeks this point of convergence -- where evolution, religions, neurology, social science, biomedicine, spirituality, and human development become a gateway to the moral vision of a shared humanity.

With initial funding from the John Templeton Foundation (2001-2005), the Institute moved quickly beginning in 2001 to provide support for the study of the six questions above – and ones like them – at more than 50 research universities across the United States from Stanford to Harvard, from Chicago to Princeton. Based on significant results, the dialogue on Unlimited Love at the interface of science and spiritual thought has grown dramatically and achieved recognition with significant events not just in the United States, but in England, Germany, Japan, Australia, and Canada.

High Impact Books & Articles

Institute-funded researchers have published more than 80 books with such distinguished university presses as Harvard, Princeton, Oxford, and Johns Hopkins, along with popular publishers like Random House. Some books have reached best-seller status and have been widely translated. These include *Why Good Things Happen to Good People* (www.WhyGoodThingsHappen.com), and *The Hidden Gifts of Helping* (www.stephengpost.com/the-hidden-gifts-of-helping). Institute researchers from leading universities have published more than 200 scientific articles, many in leading journals such as the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, and *Science*.

Cultural Impact

Media attention is our measure of cultural impact. The Institute has been covered in more than 600 radio shows, such as *Talk of the Nation*, *Mehmet Oz*, *the BBC*, and *the Dennis Prager Show*. Television features include the *John Stossel Show*, *20/20*, *The Daily Show*, and *Nightline*. More than 2000 print articles have appeared in venues such as *Parade*, *New York Times*, “*O*” *Magazine*, *USA Today*, and *US News & World Report*. Blog coverage exceeds 500,000 sites including *BigThink.com*, *WebMD.com*, *BigQuestionsOnLine.com*, and *Beliefnet.com*.

International Events

Institute researchers have delivered innumerable national and international presentations, including venues such as the U.S. Congress, the 4th *Annual Happiness and Its Causes Conference* in Sydney, Oxford University, The Great Hall of the University of Heidelberg in Germany, the Australian Parliament, and Westminster Cathedral. The Institute has convened a dozen major international conferences. One of these, *Works of Love*, held at the University Pennsylvania, drew 800 practitioners, scientific researchers and religion scholars from more than 40 different countries representing all major faith traditions.

Collaborations

The Institute has collaborated with dozens of universities and other organizations, including the John Templeton Foundation, the Fetzer Institute, the United Nations, the Ford Foundation, the University of Pennsylvania, and Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. In 2007 the Institute moved forward with a co-sponsored three-year project at the Center for Law and Religion at Emory University School of Law on the topic of *Love and the Pursuit of Happiness*, which regularly brought together 25 happiness researchers in the social sciences with leading philosophers and spiritual thinkers. The Institute worked closely with the *Flame of Love Project* and sociologists Margaret Poloma and Matthew T. Lee (see www.GodlyLoveProject.org) on a nationwide scientific survey of spiritual experiences of divine love and their impact on those who report them. It collaborates with researchers focused on the benefits of spirituality and helping behavior in the lives of individuals with alcoholism both at Case Western Reserve University (see www.helpingotherslivesober.org), and at Bellevue Hospital of New York University.

Our Leadership

Stephen G. Post, Ph.D., Institute President (www.stephengpost.com), is a researcher and scholar in the health and social sciences, philosophy and religion. He is a best-selling author whose work was included in *Best American Spiritual Writing* (2005). He has taught at the University of Chicago, Fordham-Marymount, Case Western Reserve University and Stony Brook University. Post is an elected member of the Philadelphia College of Physicians for “outstanding contributions to medicine,” as well as of the New York Academy of Medicine. He received the Pioneer Medal for “outstanding leadership in healthcare” from HealthCare Chaplaincy of New York in 2012.

Matthew T. Lee, PhD, Institute Vice President, is Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University of Akron. He is President-Elect of the North Central Sociological Association and Chair of the Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity Section of the American Sociological Association. His latest book (with Margaret M. Poloma and Stephen G. Post) is titled *The Heart of Religion: Spiritual Empowerment, Benevolence, and the Experience of God’s Love* (www.heartofreligion.net).

Our board of directors is highly distinguished in philanthropy and non-profit leadership.

Become Our Partner

The Institute is impacting world cultures through research, publication, media, education, and leadership. Will you consider a gift of \$1,000, \$500, \$250, \$100, or whatever your means allow to help us continue our work? The Institute is a non-profit 501(c)3 **public charity** incorporated in the State of Ohio in 2001. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. *We are required by the IRS to have support from a wide number of individuals due to our “public charity” status.* Work this vital requires a constant influx of support from an ever-growing circle of supporters — will you be one of them? Contact us for more information on how you can help chart a new course for progress, and consider mailing a check (or make an online contribution) written out to the Institute for

Research on Unlimited Love to:

Institute for Research on Unlimited Love
PO Box 1516
Stony Brook, New York 11790
Tel: 216-926-9244; **Email:** Post@StephenGPost.com

Thank you very much. It is a pleasure to have you as a supporting partner in the Institute's work.

Endorsements

You are leading one of the most significant initiatives of this generation. The connection between research and application cannot be over-emphasized. Thank you!"
--Pastor Otis Moss, Jr., Chairman Emeritus of the Board of Trustees, Morehouse College

"I am a great admirer of Stephen Post's work on the science of love, altruism, health, and longevity. This connection can touch us all. **This work is pioneering, inspiring and could change people's lives.**"
--George E. Vaillant, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

"Stephen Post has contributed more than anyone else to the dialogue concerning the scientific and health implications of altruistic and generous behavior. **His leadership has spearheaded an exciting new area of research. The field has the strong potential to change people's lives in a healthy way.**"
--Gregory L. Fricchione, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School and Director of the Benson-Henry Mind-Body Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital