DEATH, LOVE, AND THE VALUE OF TRUTH
REFLECTIONS FROM PLATO’S PHAEDO

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Nicholas Baima is a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis; he will defend his dissertation, *Truth, Knowledge, and the Value of False Belief in Plato*, in April. Nicholas Baima specializes in Ancient Philosophy and Ethics and has published his work in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice; Neuroethics; Classical Philology; and Apeiron: A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science*. He received an MA in Philosophy at the University of Missouri in St. Louis and a BA in Philosophy and Humanities at the University of Northern Iowa.
What is the value of truth? Should we always pursue the truth, or are there some circumstances in which the value of truth is overridden by other considerations? Plato’s Phaedo explores Socrates’ last discussion before death. During this time, Socrates tells his friends that they should relentlessly pursue the truth and strive to become philosophers, while Socrates, himself, acts uncharacteristically unphilosophical and tries to convince himself that the soul is immortal irrespective of the truth of this claim. This suggests that Plato thinks that the value of truth is limited in scope, such that in some circumstances, we should not pursue the truth. Using the Phaedo as a model, I argue that love is another circumstance in which the value of truth is outweighed by practical considerations. More precisely, I argue that it is a constitutive feature of love that we believe positive things about our romantic partners whether or not these things are true.