Friendship and the Political: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schmitt


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Abstract

Friendship and the Political: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schmitt This book reappraises the idea of friendship in contemporary political thought. Understood as a way of locating and theorising the bonds between person and person, friendship is shown to be a vital analytical, descriptive, and normative idea. After revisiting the role that friendship played in the thought of Plato and Aristotle, the book explores the possibilities for theorising friendship in modern times through an examination of three seminal thinkers: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Schmitt. Each of these thinkers entertains the potential of friendship but their thought is also illustrative of some of the dangers and limitations of theorising friendship in modernity. The book concludes by arguing that friendship and the political are aspects of the same concern. This suggests a plural politics based around a recognition of a shared world of order and value.

Item Type: Book/Report/Proceedings

Additional Information: Graham M. Smith teaches political theory in the Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Religion at Lancaster University. He has an ongoing research project which focuses on friendship. Friendship was prized by the Greco-Roman thinkers as an idea and ideal to rank alongside justice. This raises the question: What has happened to friendship in Modernity? Moreover, what role can and should friendship play in contemporary political thought? This project refocuses on the affective and moral ties that bind person to person and make politics possible. In this way friendship locates and highlights the bonds which are often distorted or neglected by an analysis of politics through vertical relations of individuality, sovereignty, and power.

Uncontrolled Keywords: Friendship; Political; Nietzsche; Kierkegaard; Schmitt; Order; Values; Pluralism

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