



Wounded Heroes: Vulnerability as a Virtue in Ancient Greek Literature and Philosophy

Marina Berzins McCoy

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In this book, McCoy examines how Greek epic, tragedy, and philosophy have important insights to offer about the nature of human vulnerability, which is central to the human experience. While studies of Greek heroism and virtue often focus on strength of character, prowess in war, or the achievement of honour, McCoy examines another side to Greek thought that extols the recognition and proper acceptance of vulnerability, or the capacity to be wounded. Beginning with the literary works of Homer's *Iliad*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Philoctetes*, she expands her analysis to philosophical works where she analyses imagery of wounding in Plato's *Gorgias* and *Symposium*, as well as Aristotle's work on the vulnerability inherent in friendship. McCoy aims at deepening our understanding of the virtues of vulnerability for individuals and societies alike, and offers an innovative interpretation of tragic catharsis as a means for society to expand on its vision of itself and the vulnerable within in the community.



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