



Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles

Lisa Tessman

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Lisa Tessman's *Burdened Virtues* is a deeply original and provocative work that engages questions central to feminist theory and practice, from the perspective of Aristotelian ethics. Focused primarily on selves who endure and resist oppression, she addresses the ways in which devastating conditions confronted by these selves both limit and burden their moral goodness, and affect their possibilities of flourishing. She describes two different forms of "moral trouble" prevalent under oppression. The first is that the oppressed self may be morally damaged, prevented from developing or exercising some of the virtues; the second is that the very conditions of oppression require the oppressed to develop a set of virtues that carry a moral cost to those who practice them--traits that Tessman refers to as "burdened virtues." These virtues have the unusual feature of being disjoined from their bearer's own well being.

Tessman's work focuses on issues that have been missed by many feminist moral theories, and her use of the virtue ethics framework brings feminist concerns more closely into contact with mainstream ethical theory. This book will appeal to feminist theorists in philosophy and women's studies, but also more broadly, ethicists and social theorists.



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