prefigured by the British Enlighteners is evident today in the clash between anthropologists Clifford Geertz and Tzvetan Todorov. Geertz "asserted that the vocation of anthropology is not to seek out a specious *consensus omnium* but rather to locate the truly salient differences marked by culture" (p. 12). Geertz is a contemporary version of Locke. "An alternative approach that attempts to define some common resources in human nature, even if they are not fully moral, appears especially in the *philosophical* anthropology of Tzvetan Todorov" (p. 12, my emphasis). Todorov is a contemporary version of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. Todorov accomplishes this, we are told, by "emphasizing 'sociality' as a unifying force, although he defines it in ways that avoid the pitfall of normative or teleological reasoning" (p. 13). A final accommodation among the various positions old and new seems to rest with Chandra Kakathas's *The Liberal Archipelago: A Theory of Diversity and Freedom* (2003). The virtue of Kathakas's work is that it attempts "to recover a unifying concept of human nature . . . although [Kakathas] *wisely* avoids determining, prescriptively, the 'content' of conscience or the moral sense" (p. 30, my emphasis).

As an attempt to recover the differences among Locke, Shaftsbury, and Hutcheson and to consider the prospects for accommodation, Carey's book succeeds. He provides a lucid reading of the Enlighteners and, in so doing, reminds us that the Enlightenment did not usher in a totalitarian project. By harking back to Greeks and Stoics, Carey shows that our perennially vexed ruminations about the relationship between difference and sameness were not recently discovered by postmoderns. Common sense alone speaks to a ubiquitous human diversity as well as to shared thoughts, feelings, and experiences that seem to indicate that we are encased in something like an ongoing human condition. That Carey reads forward and backward testifies to his own belief in the dictates of common sense. Here lies the rub.

As an attempt to come to terms with the tension between sameness and difference, Carey is less successful. His work is stamped firmly with the imprint of Quentin Skinner's volatile and wavering assertion that ideas are the product of time and circumstance. Is this an untenable position? If each thinker is confined to context, is this not true of Carey himself? Also of every author he reads, ancient and contemporary? Do we contextualize Carey and every author he reads in infinite regress? How is the infinite regress intelligible if we are insulated by "history"? What does Carey mean by saying that his argument about old and new historicizes the present? If historicizing is the product of the historicist who claims that we can only understand "ideas in context," has not the historicity of the present ruled out access to the past? If historicizing the present means that we situate present disputes about sameness and difference in the context of an historical argument that is not confined to any particular time and place, has Carey escaped the historicist premise?

That Carey ignores arguments of nonhistoricist political philosophers in favor of anthropology is revealing. Carey wants to preserve the notion that we are malleable historical beings but in ways that do not commit him to a fixed, permanent, and ubiquitous human nature. Carey's language and sources are telling. Todorov unlike Geertz is supposedly a proponent and adherent of a "*philosophical* anthropology." In what way, to what end, in what character has philosophy emerged in the historical anthropology? Carey immediately shies away from pursuing the difficult question of what the new anthropology is willing to say about the enduring features of our nature by complementing Kathakas's wisdom in avoiding the "content" of conscience or moral sense. He heaps equal praise on Todorov's nonteleological (though somehow philosophical) anthropology. Shying away from content saves Carey from having to specify what features of human nature persist through history. In so doing, does Carey call into question the very thing he seeks? The overarching appeal to human "sociability" may not save the day. Thomas Hobbes reminds us of why humans are driven into society: We love contemplating and exercising our own relative power; we seek honor; we relish conquest; we love to tame the superior beasts and issue preemptive strikes because we cannot judge the "wit of another." Sociability cuts a number of ways. Nor would we know in the absence of a penetrating philosophical argument why the sociability referred to here is as present in the past as it is in the present. Do we mean what Shaftsbury and Hutcheson mean by sociability? As long as the ideas remain in context, the answer to the question is most likely no. So once again, the content of our socializing nature needs to come to the fore. In this enterprise, philosophical anthropology is no substitute for philosophy itself.

Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship. By Susan D. Collins. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 206p. $70.00.

Plato and the Virtue of Courage. By Linda R. Rabieh. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 224p. $45.00.

DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707070880

— Frederick Vaughan, *University of Guelph*

Why do we need books about courage and civic virtue, written by ancient philosophers in an idiom so difficult for moderns such as ourselves to understand? How could such books be relevant in post–9/11 days? The whole world *saw* civic courage right before their eyes in the aftermath of the Twin Towers' attack. The last thing one would think Americans needed today is instruction in what constitutes courage or civic virtue more generally. Yet Americans would be decidedly wrong in thinking so skeptically. The books under review demonstrate why.

As Linda Rabieh shows in the opening chapters of her splendid book, it is precisely because of events such as

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9/11 that we need a greater clarity as to what constitutes courage. For shortly after the dust had settled, both domestic and foreign commentators began to cast doubt on the courage of the men involved in the rescue and recovery. Susan Sontag, feminist theorist, and Bill Maher, late-night talk show host, both attributed courage to the terrorists who flew the airplanes into the towers. Rather than simply take them to task for their comments, the author shows how they brought out the ambiguous complexity that is attached to the concept of courage. What we all saw was not the whole of it. How can courage be attributed to something so manifestly evil: the willful killing of innocent women and men? It is precisely because Plato is so remote from us in time that his thoughts on this matter are exactly relevant to the proper understanding of courage. Rabieh does an outstanding job in this scholarly book.

It is difficult to summarize a book that is itself a *kind* of summary that traces the many rhetorical feints, retreats, and subtle advances between mature men deeply concerned about teaching the young. The author proceeds through two Platonic dialogues as if she is untangling a knotted ball composed of twisted multicolored cords. Laches and Nicias, at times impatiently, hang tight on one or two of the colored cords and try to argue that the ball gets its strength from one or both of those cords to the exclusion of the others. However, Socrates resists and shows how all the colored cords derive their strength from the unseen unity of the ball. If courage is a virtue, it must somehow be a part of prudence and wisdom, and it must participate in the noble, the just, and the good. Rabieh shows lucidly that "despite the differences in their treatment of courage, the *Laches* and the *Republic* together yield a single teaching about courage: courage properly understood is both the cause and the consequence of wisdom" (p. 161). At the end of the *Laches,* the reader ascends continually to the conclusion that the proper understanding of courage implies an important element of nobility.

From here, the author leads the reader through Plato's *Republic,* where the virtue of courage is explored in the full light of justice and wisdom and its place in the life of the philosopher. From the peak discussion of courage in the *Republic,* Rabieh begins her descent in the final chapter to confront the question: What can our students, today, learn from these two Platonic dialogues? The answer: a great deal more than they could learn from any other source. Her account of the dangers and promises attendant upon the rise of spiritedness is especially instructive. She shows graphically how spiritedness must be tamed and shaped by the character of the regime.

The great strength of this book is that it is a work of first rate classical and philosophical scholarship; the author knows the language of the Greek text and is sensitive to its philosophical content. Rabieh provides students with a thoroughly lucid guide through the labyrinth of two Platonic dialogues on an issue of enduring human interest. She brings to the discussion of this rough manly virtue a gentility that both charms and tames the reader, just as prudence tames spiritedness without destroying courage.

Rabieh's conclusion comes as a disappointment only because, having provided so much illuminating commentary, she appears to suggest that her work has just begun. For she seems to suggest that we must find a mediator between the wisdom of ancient philosophic understandings of courage and the contemporary exhortations to courage such as those found in John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage* (1956) and John McCain's *Why Courage Matters* (1999). There is no question that she is right. However, we are left with the hope that Rabieh will now turn her attention to just such a project. I can think of few people more gifted in writing and reasoning than she for such an important task. This splendid book is a good place to begin.

Susan Collins's challenging book is premised in the proposition that "citizenship" somehow or other got lost and is in need of rediscovery. She does a masterful job of rediscovery. *Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship* is a work of reflective scholarship and ought to be read by every student of democracy, especially by those who profess to have solved the problems associated with citizenship. Collins's book is a careful and reflective dialogue with the leading participants in the great debate over democratic citizenship. John Rawls, Richard Rorty, Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, Michael Sandel, and lesser figures, are called before the court of Aristotle, where the ancient master subjects each in turn to a hard-hitting engagement. It is not at any time a contest between equals. Reading this book is like watching Tiny Tim being punched up by Mohammed Ali in his prime. There is no contest, and Collins has done future generations a great service by showing how to read Aristotle and how relevant he is today in the ongoing debate over citizenship and the demands of justice. She shows that by taking our bearings from the proponents of modern liberalism, we are barred from "exploring, if not experiencing, the possibility that the best life consists in noble and just action on behalf of fellow citizens and friends" (p. 173). For modern generations, "the question at the heart of Aristotle's political philosophy—the question of the best life—necessarily disappears, as does the answer that the morally serious life is the end of the political community and the highest human good" (p. 173). Even those who allegedly embrace Aristotle, Collins shows, merely flirt with the shell, leaving the kernel or the substance of the virtues and citizenship unacknowledged and unappreciated. For Aristotle, the just regime is one in which "the best life" has a hard core of moral virtue. She also reveals that modern liberalism's replacement of "way of life" with "lifestyle" is not one of mere semantics: The best life rests on permanence in nature, whereas lifestyles change with the latest fad. In this respect, I think Collins should have exposed the hedonistic core of

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modern liberalism, having exposed in a lucid manner how moral virtue resides at the core of the Aristotelian regime.

Taking these two books together, Collins has set for herself the more difficult task. By setting out to recover citizenship, she necessarily undertook a comprehensive account of Aristotle on citizenship that entails, as she shows lucidly, an account of justice, wisdom, and the good. This is no small ambition. However, she succeeds with an uncommon gentility. No question about it, however, where Plato feints, Aristotle punches. No wonder modern liberals avoid the contest with Aristotle. Many years ago, Douglas Bush claimed that a scholar is like a siren that draws attention to the fog without doing anything to dispel it. He was wrong. True scholars, like Rabieh and Collins, do much to dispel the fog. Their scholarship is impeccable and will endure as an example of how to read and profit from the peerless writings of Plato and Aristotle. Both books demonstrate admirably how ancient political philosophy can shed light on contemporary problems in a manner far removed from the prejudices of our own times. These two women scholars have much to teach us about courage and citizenship. However, *caveat lector,* there is an important subtext working here: Both Rabieh and Collins are challenging (Rabieh explicitly and Collins implicitly) a dominant feminist position on courage and citizenship that tends to scorn the need for courage as an extension of the misplaced masculine quest for transcendence. The feminist chant is that men misguidedly seek "honor" and "glory," which frequently lead to war. Unfortunately, Collins fails to show how women can contribute to the manly function of courageous guardians without which male citizens become effeminate, which is exactly what modern feminists would wish.

Reconstructing the Commercial Republic: Constitutional Design after Madison. By Stephen L. Elkin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. 416p. $35.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707070892

— Andrew Rehfeld, *Washington University in St. Louis*

In this engaging book, Stephen L. Elkin offers an account of the politics necessary to realize the nation's aspirations for an American commercial republic, in which economic inequality is dramatically reduced, citizens engage in meaningful (and surprisingly powerful) local government, and both they and their representatives deliberate to promote the good of all. The starting point for Elkin's analysis is a familiar list of what ails America: growing economic inequality, declining "civic and political involvement," economic insecurity particularly among the middle class, as well as weakening family structure. He argues that we will never resolve these problems until we first have a "compelling and comprehensive theory of republican political constitution" (p. 2). Although no clear explanation is given for what it means to have such a theory, Elkin implies that such a theory would be based on the interrelation of the economic and political order.

Elkin begins by discussing what our aspirations are, making the noncontroversial claim that who we are is in part a product of where we have been, and that the founders were our starting point. It follows that our aspirations are toward liberal justice: an endorsement of limited but active popular self-rule in which free market economics is put in service to the political order, rather than the other way around (pp. 14–16).

This aspirational view is troublesome. Though it may be "likely" that our aspirations stem from the founders, it would seem more pertinent to ask Americans what they aspire to, or infer it from their political behavior, or perhaps interpret the intellectual history of American aspirations as Rogers Smith does through his work on citizenship. Worse still, given the problems that Elkin lists, there is every reason to believe Americans have given up on these founding aspirations, if indeed they ever had them to begin with. Nor is any critical defense offered that these aspirations are ones we ought to have; instead, Elkin argues that we should endorse institutions and practices that have been bequeathed to us and that have won out in the test of public reasoning. More charitably, the argument of the book might be thought of as a companion to the recent work of Cass Sunstein and Phillip Pettit, though Elkin would probably reject the comparison of his work with that of such normative theorists.

In Chapter 2, Elkin turns to the writings of James Madison, for he "is the one we most commonly turn to when seeking guidance about how the American regime is to work" (pp. 19–20). Elkin here presents the best recent summary of Madison's political thinking in *The Federalist* by an American political scientist. On the matter of factions, Elkin argues that Madison's goal was to create incentives for representatives to *transcend* their local constituencies rather than serve as efficient delegates for them (p. 25). "Such [representatives] would thus be relatively insulated from the passions that inevitably roil the citizenry from time to time and would be in a position to consider the public interest" (p. 26). The problem, Elkin argues, was not that Madison was wrong but that property and government have both changed. Where property ownership has shifted and narrowed from land to the means of capital production, government has expanded dramatically to allow these nonlanded interests to control the whole without requiring them to broaden their pitch. Today all sorts of narrow property interests can be pursued without even so much as an attempt at reframing and casting them in the broad public good. As a result, deliberation and debate continue to narrow and focus on a set of private interests.

The virtue of this account is to capture the power, promise, and moderation of Madisonian political theory by noting where and how it has gone wrong. Elkin has put

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