

Gratitude toward Veterans: Why Americans Should Not Be Very Grateful to Veterans

By Stephen Kershnar



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Gratitude toward Veterans: Why Americans Should Not Be Very Grateful to Veterans looks at whether veterans typically satisfy these conditions and argues that they do not. The book should be taken seriously not only by scholars in military ethics and ethics in general, but also by anyone interested in the question of how much gratitude is owed to people holding different roles.



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Editorial Review

Review

Gratitude toward Veterans is a thorough-going, tightly-argued book that not only answers the question of why gratitude to veterans is inappropriate, but breaks new ground in the philosophical analysis of gratitude and presents nuanced normative ethical arguments on the wrongness of the military draft. Though some might find the conclusions about civilian gratitude for military service disheartening, Stephen Kershnar states his arguments and answers to objections are as forcefully, as exhaustively, and as clearly as the counterarguments and objections he raises. (George Schedler, Southern Illinois University)

While many will have an immediate feeling of sharp disagreement to Stephen Kershnar's *Gratitude Toward Veterans: Why Americans Should Not Be Very Grateful to Veterans*, it proves difficult to point out just where his logic has gone awry. This is characteristic of Kershnar's usual style: lucid and creative arguments that challenge orthodox views to reconsider what should (or should not) be taken for granted. Despite the fact that I find myself unable to accept Kershnar's conclusions, I regard this as an important book. This is the book that those who think that society at-large owes a debt of gratitude to its veterans must refute. Anyone who takes seriously our relationship to those who serve in the military should read this volume. (Bradley J. Strawser, assistant professor of Philosophy, Defense Analysis Department, Naval Postgraduate School)

Steve Kershnar has a well-earned reputation for producing clever, surprisingly plausible arguments in favor of positions that most people (including most philosophers) would dismiss out of hand. This volume, replete with concise and clearly-marked positive arguments, objections, and replies, claims centrally that people should not ordinarily be grateful to veterans because their military service is no more altruistic than the work that is done by other citizens. Kershnar defends this position with sophisticated, but accessible, arguments that will leave most readers either reluctantly convinced or wondering why they are not. (Theodore Everett, SUNY Geneseo)

About the Author

Stephen Kershnar is professor of philosophy at the State University of New York at Fredonia and is also an attorney.

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