



# The Philosophy of Manners: A Study of the 'Little Virtues'

*Peter Johnson*

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## **The Philosophy of Manners: A Study of the 'Little Virtues'** Peter Johnson

In *The Philosophy of Manners* Peter Johnson makes a compelling case for manners as a subject for investigation by modern moral philosophy. He examines manners as 'little virtues', explaining their distinctive conceptual characteristics and charting their intricate detail and relationships with each other. In demonstrating why manners are important to our mutual expectations, Johnson reveals a terrain which modern moral philosophy has left largely unmapped. Through a critical examination of the ethics of John Rawls and Alasdair MacIntyre, Johnson shows how the nature of manners constitutes a philosophical problem both for liberalism and its critics. Taking the recent revival of virtue ethics as its broad starting point, *The Philosophy of Manners* discusses the 'little virtues' as they are treated in the Aristotelian and Kantian traditions of writing on ethics. Original features of the book include discussions of nameless virtues, the logical intricacy of the 'little virtues' which compose manners, and the nature of their orchestration by the more substantial virtues and moral concerns. The aim throughout is to give manners a philosophically defensible place in the moral life - a place which neither inflates nor understates their importance.

- an examination of why manners are essential to moral literacy and an ethical society
- the first work of its kind - no other ethical investigation concentrates on manners
- relevant to the recent revival of interest in virtue ethics and any course in contemporary ethics
- will provoke argument and disagreement

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