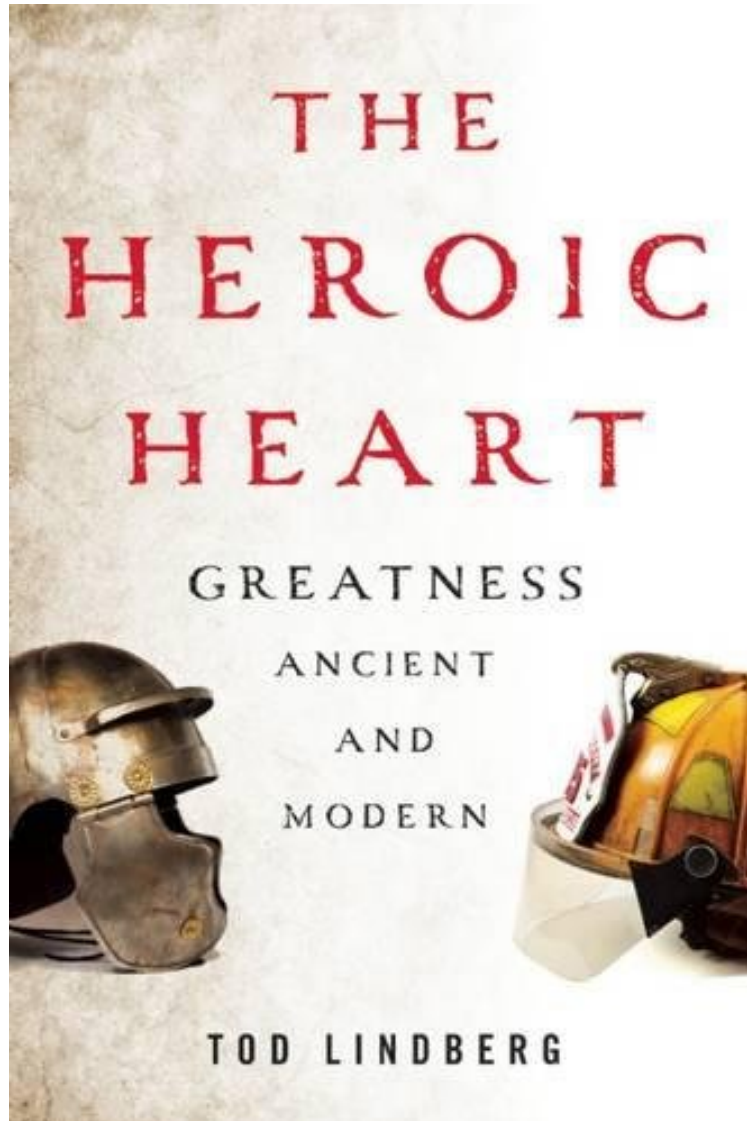


The Heroic Heart: Greatness Ancient and Modern

Tod Lindberg

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Tod Lindberg : The Heroic Heart: Greatness Ancient and Modern before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Heroic Heart: Greatness Ancient and Modern:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. The modern face of heroism consists of those willing to make a personal sacrifice for others.By Michael J. KerriganI first read an article by Todd Lindberg in the Weekly Standard titled: From Hero-Worship to Celebrity-Adulation, in this piece Lindberg addressed the problem of greatness in an age of equality. I already shared Lindbergs concern that excessive egalitarianism is today leveling out heroism and that we have lost our regard for achievement and individual greatness. Worrying that no deed can be heroic and no

achievement truly great, I was excited to see what Lindberg had to say in his newly published *The Heroic Heart*. Todd Lindberg's *Heroic Heart* is a literary tour de force, grounding his study of heroes with Achilles, the ancient Greek, then the less known heroine Lucretia, through the well known Roman statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero, all of whose deeds are dealing with their mortality. That is a willingness to risk one's life not as a demonstration of personal glory or seeking honor bestowed by others but of their inner greatness. The heroic type is willing to risk and even accept death as a consequence of action in accordance with an inner sense of greatness or exceptional virtue. This accomplished author tastefully genuflects at the altar of Plutarch, naturally gives proper credit to Thomas Carlyle's six classes of heroes *On Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History* while sprinkling in a bit of Shakespeare's version of *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar*, up to and including covering Sidney Hook's more contemporary study of *The Hero in History*. From these philosophical sources Lindberg nicely narrates the broadening of the qualifications for heroic greatness. The next several chapters delve into Lindberg's different types of heroes (e.g. hero-king, hero-victim, the saving-hero, the slaying hero, the conquering-hero, anti-heroes, virtual heroes, pseudo-hero, etc.) as well as the dangerous consequences of heroic deeds on the political order. Machiavelli, Hobbes, Nietzsche, and Burke are pointedly referenced to illustrate Lindberg's explanation of the evolution of the classical hero type to the more modern heroic type. Lindberg touches all the bases with shout outs to modern day heroes like Sully Sullenberger, Lenny Shuttick, 9-11 fire fighters and policemen, Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, today's war fighters, etc. The author in my opinion offered a superb explanation of military literature, especially contrasting virtually all the books on Viet Nam versus the unique account of *Black Hawk Down*, where author Mark Bowden had no agenda but let the events and characters speak for themselves. For me Lindberg's greatest service were his insights into people who are willing to put their lives on the line for others, in service to a purpose higher than themselves. This modern face of heroism consists of those willing to make a personal sacrifice for others. It is in chapter (nine) on *Sacrifice and Generosity*, where Lindberg's prose intersecting with my own current research. That is, we share the modern meaning of heroism or greatness is in service to others. I am in the process of asking respondents who their personal heroes are. My inquiries are less about life saving or life risking heroes but about those who go above and beyond the call of their duty. I am in the process of identifying those who rise above the circumstances of adversity and offer a generosity of spirit. I am interesting in telling tales of local heroes who are making a difference and whose heroism takes the form sacrifice of self and generosity toward others. In my opinion, *The Heroic Heart* would otherwise merit five stars but for an unnecessary and misguided inference to Abraham Lincoln, America's greatest hero. Why this otherwise serious study would state that Abraham Lincoln may have been confused as to his sexual identity taints an otherwise excellent and important book. Sadly, his editors should have deleted repeatedly referring to Congressional Medal of Honor recipients as winners. Notwithstanding these two shortcomings I wish to thank Todd Lindberg for helping me better understand heroism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly thought provoking By Bill Lindberg gives us a new way of looking at heroism, both historically and in fiction. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Customer Great Book!

What does it mean to be a hero? In *The Heroic Heart*, Todd Lindberg traces the quality of heroic greatness from its most distant origin in human prehistory to the present day. The designation of hero once conjured mainly the prowess of conquerors and kings slaying their enemies on the battlefield. Heroes in the modern world come in many varieties, from teachers and mentors making a lasting impression on others by giving of themselves, to firefighters no less willing than their ancient counterparts to risk life and limb. They don't do so to assert a claim of superiority over others, however. Rather, the modern heroic heart acts to serve others and save others. The spirit of modern heroism is generosity, what Lindberg calls the caring will, a primal human trait that has flourished alongside the spread of freedom and equality. Through its intimate portraits of historical and literary figures and its subtle depiction of the most difficult problems of politics, *The Heroic Heart* offers a startlingly original account of the passage from the ancient to the modern world and the part the heroic type has played in it. Lindberg deftly combines social criticism and moral philosophy in a work that ranks with such classics as Thomas Carlyle's nineteenth-century *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* and Joseph Campbell's twentieth-century *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

The classical hero who kills and often dies for a larger cause of freedom and liberty may have become passé in the postmodern egalitarian West. But in this learned survey of slaying and saving heroes, from the Greeks to 9/11, Todd Lindberg reminds us why we moderns would be doomed without such brave hearts to keep evil outside the gates and remind the complacent within that there is no end to history. An absorbing paean that weaves together exacting scholarship and the personal voice, in a style that is both engaging and accessible. Victor Davis Hanson, senior fellow in classics and military history at The Hoover Institution, Stanford University I know few thinkers as simultaneously erudite and engaging as Todd Lindberg. *The Heroic Heart* takes us from Achilles to Afghanistan, from the fact of death to what makes some of us larger than life. How we define and choose our heroes offers a penetrating glimpse into the heart of the modern human condition. Marie Slaughter, president of the New America Foundation and author of *Unfinished Business: Women Men Work Family* In an age when virtue and heroism are often seen as relics of a

bygone era, *The Heroic Heart* brings to bear a historically informed challenge, one relevant to our times. With a refreshing voice, Tod Lindberg gives enlightened heroism its due, while highlighting the purpose for strength of character in an often malevolent world awash in change. This book is a moral tonic in the face of today's dilemmas and a reminder of the timeless value of strong, selfless character. Gen. James Mattis, USMC-ret., former commander, CENTCOM
The Heroic Heart is full of insight on the way that our heroes have changed since the time of the ancient Greeks up through the present. In the process, it raises fundamental questions about political leadership and the morality that underlies community, now and in the past. Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History and the Last Man* and *Political Order and Political Decay*
At the heart of geopolitics rests a mystery, the willingness of men to die for their country. Tod Lindberg's *The Heroic Heart* is a superb attempt to unravel this mystery with both personal insight and command of the history of philosophy. George Friedman, founder of Stratfor and author of *The Next 100 Years*