



## Plato, Aristotle, and the Purpose of Politics

*Kevin M. Cherry*

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In this book, Kevin M. Cherry compares the views of Plato and Aristotle about the practice, study and, above all, the purpose of politics. The first scholar to place Aristotle's *Politics* in sustained dialogue with Plato's *Statesman*, Cherry argues that Aristotle rejects the view of politics advanced by Plato's Eleatic Stranger, contrasting them on topics such as the proper categorization of regimes, the usefulness and limitations of the rule of law, and the proper understanding of *phronesis*. The various differences between their respective political philosophies, however, reflect a more fundamental difference in how they view the relationship of human beings to the natural world around them. Reading the *Politics* in light of the *Statesman* sheds new light on Aristotle's political theory and provides a better understanding of Aristotle's criticism of Socrates. Most importantly, it highlights an enduring and important question: should politics have as its primary purpose the preservation of life, or should it pursue the higher good of living well?

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