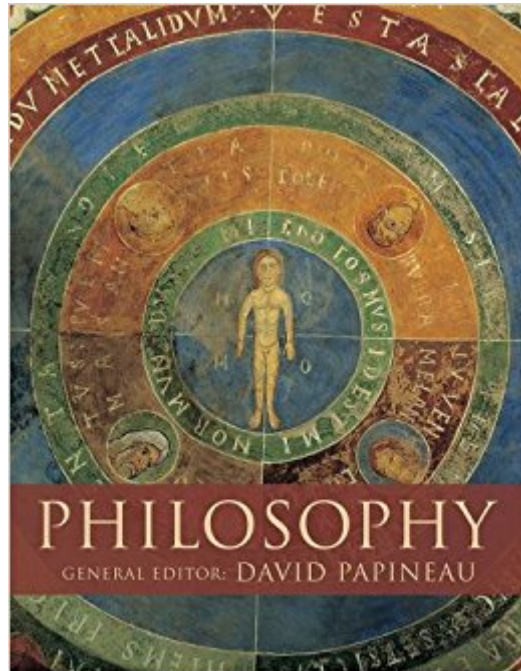




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Philosophy



Synopsis

What is reality? Is there free will? Is war ever justified? These are questions that philosophers have spent centuries contemplating. In *Philosophy*, an international team of scholars offer intriguing answers to these and many other key issues that have long puzzled humanity. Vividly written and beautifully designed, this stimulating volume takes readers on an informative, thoughtful tour of philosophy. The book examines six major topics--The World, Mind and Body, Knowledge, Faith, Ethics and Aesthetics, and Society--and under these headings, it considers such subjects as Time and Space, Feelings and Emotions, Induction and Deduction, the Afterlife, Love and Friendship, and Crime and Punishment. Indeed, the contributors discuss all of the most important issues in the history of philosophy, shedding light on what the great thinkers have written about them. There are special sections on some of the most important philosophers who ever lived--Aristotle and Descartes, Locke and Hume, Spinoza and Pascal, Schopenhauer and Sartre, Foucault and Rawls--along with portraits or photographs of each. In addition, the book includes special features on major philosophical works, such as Descartes' *Meditations* or Plato's *Symposium*, and on interesting philosophical concepts, such as "the Gambler's Fallacy" or Sartre's example of the waiter and the loss of individuality. A perfect starting point for the exploration of philosophical thought, *Philosophy* offers life-changing perspectives on some of the great questions, from the nature of the mind to the morality of cloning and stem-cell research.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book, edited by David Papineau with individual chapters written by Papineau and other top

scholars, is a very good introduction to Western philosophy for beginners -- first-year college students, high school students, and general readers alike. I have used this book for several years in my introduction to philosophy courses, which I teach at the community college level. I supplement Papineau with short paperbacks (Descartes, Plato, and Nietzsche from the canon, or contemporary philosophers such as John Searle, Peter Singer, or Daniel Dennett). This book also works very well with an anthology of readings. I stumbled upon Papineau's book after becoming frustrated with large, expensive textbooks that students did not buy or read, or which overwhelmed the beginning student with too much material. This book is much less expensive than a traditional textbook, which typically weighs in at hundreds of pages, costs over \$100, and tries to be all things to all people. Philosophy should not be taught from a textbook; it's a subject that's best explored by reading original philosophers. Papineau's book is a fine supplement to such an approach. I encourage students to read this book at home to get the big picture; we then go in depth in class on various topics and various readings. Unlike a traditional textbook, Papineau's book is what I call "modular" (it's like a well-crafted Web site, or a special edition from U.S. News and World Report) in that each chapter has several short sections, which are then supplemented by numerous short (1 or 2-page) pieces on individual topics or philosophers. And it has lots of sidebars. It's well-designed and very browsable. It doesn't have the depth of a lengthy textbook, but that's not what it pretends to be.

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