



The Great Philosophers (From Socrates to Foucault)

Jeremy Stangroom (Editor) , James Garvey (Editor)

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The Great Philosophers is a lavishly illustrated collection of essays, each devoted to one of history's greatest philosophers.

From the Greek triumvirate of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, whose light shines down the centuries to reach us even now, to the social theorist Michel Foucault, the greatest names of philosophy are represented here. Each essay gives a biographical background for its subject and a description of the main strands of their thought, together with summaries of their major works.

The thirty-four chronologically-organized essays are a comprehensive introduction to Western philosophy's major figures.

Dr Jeremy Stangroom is a founding editor of *The Philosophers' Magazine*, one of the world's most popular philosophy publications. He has written and/or edited numerous books, including: *New British Philosophy*, *What Philosophers Think* and *Great Thinkers A-Z* (all with Julian Baggini); *The Dictionary of Fashionable Nonsense* and *Why Truth Matters* (with Ophelia Benson); and *What Scientists Think*. He is a frequent contributor to *New Humanist* magazine, and he is also the editor of the Royal Institute of Philosophy web site.

James Garvey teaches philosophy at the University of Nottingham and is Secretary of the Royal Institute of Philosophy.

The Great Philosophers (From Socrates to Foucault) Details

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Kimberly says

This was a very challenging read. I'm relieved to be moving on to Great Mathematicians.

Dan DalMonte says

This book gives clear if brief descriptions of the lives and thoughts of many of the great philosophers throughout history. It is geared towards the beginner in philosophy and helps to whet the appetite to pursue the discipline in greater depth.

Pam Holzner says

good introduction. very quick overview of a small collection of important thinkers

Biff says

Good armchair overview of the heavy hitters of philosophy. Also includes some biographical info that helps explain each philosophers historical context. Good way to get back up to speed on the basics. Easy read. The authors don't refrain from commenting on the inherent problems and contradictions that each philosopher faced in developing their theories.

em says

grazed through it, will be useful for my philosophy class next year! ehehehe

Dale Muckerman says

Good review of the major philosophers. I am sure other people might have picked a few different philosophers, but it was fun to see which ones he picked. Stangroom gives nice brief biographical backgrounds for each philosopher and also indicates how the chosen philosophers were influential.

Suzanne says

The book does what it sets out to do, which is to give a brief introduction to important philosophers. A potted

biography is followed by an exposition of main themes in the philosopher's work and a reading list of key works. It is not an easy task to summarize key ideas of western philosophy in a few pages but Stangroom makes a valiant attempt to do so and, in some cases, stimulates the appetite for more, which is presumably the intention. I found the occasional flippancy, presumably interjected to provide a lightness of tone, irritating, but it may be more acceptable to others. Rather than the photos, one for each philosopher, I would have appreciated more analysis in many cases, but again, that is a personal preference. Overall this works as a first stepping stone in the path towards an understanding of western philosophy.

Upom says

A concise and well written primer of the major philosophers in the Western Canon. It covers biographical information as well as basic tenets of the 37 philosophers profiled. Of particular interest were the profiles of 19th century and 20th century thinkers, the philosophers who I'm least familiar with. Also includes a list of the major works of each philosopher. This book is a quick read, and a good introduction to Western philosophy.

Gibb says

Same old stuff, in fact a bit of a disappointment. And it's a very NARROW - is it english?- view of philosophy, not really opening your mind so much as training in being a dinner party bore! But great pictures! Cheap too.

Priscilla says

amazon.com

Troy Parfitt says

I really enjoyed this book. It'd been a while since I'd read anything about that nebulous area called philosophy and this is a nice little compendium. From Socrates to Foucault, you get a bit about the lives of some of the world's most renowned thinkers in addition to their key philosophical ideas and greatest works. Indeed, the recommendations for further reading came in handy, and I went on to get books by John Stuart Mill, Nicolai Machiavelli, and David Hume. The writing is engaging and the criticisms balanced, e.g. the authors note what critics say about certain philosophers and then what adherent say. My only complaints are that the book has too many typos and in one section the text just ends. Also, a good rule of thumb in writing is to speak in the affirmative as opposed to the negative. I felt the authors were over reliant on the sentence stems, "(Philosopher) was nothing if not (adjective)" and "(Philosopher) not only (A), but also (B)." If this were my book, I would have limited those structures to one or two apiece. Besides that, The Great Philosophers by Jeremy Stangroom and James Garvey is a great introduction or refresher.

Troy Parfitt is the author of Why China Will Never Rule the World as well as War Torn: Adventures in the Brave New Canada.

Colette says

Yummy. Really enjoyed the condensed, concise, cohesive, chronological description of western philosophy from 'beginning' to near present. It's great read whether or not you have interest in philosophy. Reader friendly. Good for perspective on 'western' humans and we relate the present to the past...some pretty incredible ties we have with the past though we may not realize it.

Josh says

I just bought the hardcover/coffee table edition of this book and I'm in love with it. It offers very thorough summaries and biographies of all the major philosophers. I highly recommend it.
