



## Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings

*Various , Brad Inwood (Translator) , Lloyd P. Gerson (Translator)*

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**Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings** *Various* , *Brad Inwood (Translator)* , *Lloyd P. Gerson (Translator)*

This new edition of *Hellenistic Philosophy*--including nearly 100 pages of additional materia--offers the first English translation of the account of Stoic ethics by Arius Didymus, substantial new sources on Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Scepticism, expanded representation of Plutarch and Cicero, and a fuller presentation of papyrological evidence. Inwood and Gerson maintain the standard of consistency and accuracy that distinguished their translations in the first edition, while regrouping some material into larger, more thematically connected passages. This edition is further enhanced by a new, more spacious page design.

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### Tiffany says

snippets and longer writings about Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Scepticism (some by the actual philosophers).

The book is a good reference, but kind of boring as a read-it-all-the-way-through book. There are just SO many pieces that all say the same thing. It's like there's Philosopher 1 who says A, Philosopher 2 from the same school who says A, Philosopher 3 who was a student of Philosopher 1's and who says that Philosopher 1 and 2 said A, and Historian 1 who says that Philosophers 1, 2, and 3 (and others of that school of thought) said A. ... And then Historian 2 who says that Philosophers 1, etc., said A. I mean, really?!? Do we need 5 different people saying that one school said A? So it got really boring. But if you're just using it as a philosophy reference, or looking for a ton of examples for each of the three schools of thought, then it's a good reference book.

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### Dr. A says

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This is the standard collection of philosophy in the Hellenistic age, the historical period between Aristotle's death and the rise of Neoplatonism. The volume represents the major schools of philosophy of this time — Skepticism, Stoicism, and Epicurianism — in a new edition that has been expanded, reorganized, and made more readable.

*Pyrrhonism* was the main school of Skepticism at the time, and they taught the suspension of judgement (“*atrasia*”) in the face of the unattainability of certainty or true knowledge, laying the grounds for modern skepticism and Descartes' reduction (see Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*).

*Epicurianism* taught that the world is ruled by blind chance (as opposed to balanced by a cosmic justice or some omniscient being like God), and taught the cultivation of a simple life with the avoidance of pain as the primary goal.

Finally, the most successful school of Hellenistic Philosophy was *Stoicism*, which developed tactics for the cultivation of the self and advocated self-discipline as way to overcome destructive emotions.

Although these schools flourished as quickly as they died out, an interests in stoicism is rekindled in the 20th Century by French philosopher Michael Foucault - see *Discipline and Punish*.

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