



Ten Great Works of Philosophy

Robert Paul Wolff (Editor / Contributor) , René Descartes (Contributor) , David Hume (Contributor) , Immanuel Kant (Contributor) , John Stuart Mill (Contributor) , William James (Contributor) , Plato (Contributor) , Aristotle (Contributor) , more... Anselm of Canterbury (Contributor) , Thomas Aquinas (Contributor) , Various ...less

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In its vast scope, this book presents the continuum of Western philosophy. Ranging from ancient Greece to nineteenth-century America, it traces the history of our civilization through the seminal works of its most influential thinkers. Each philosopher in this volume made intellectual history; each created a revolution in ideas; each reaffirmed man's view of himself as a sentient being capable of creating order out of the baffling contradictions of existence. And the most powerful reflections and speculations of each are represented here.

Plato: Apology, Crito and the Death of Socrates, from Phaedo

Aristotle: Poetics

St. Anselm: The ontological Proof of St. Anselm, from Proslogium

St. Thomas Aquinas: St. Thomas' Proofs of God's Existence, from the Summa Theologiae

René Descartes: Meditations on the First Philosophy

David Hume: An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding

Immanuel Kant: Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics

John Stuart Mill: Utilitarianism

William James: The Will to Believe

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From Reader Review Ten Great Works of Philosophy for online ebook

VC Gan says

I don't have any background knowledge about philosophy, and I picked this up to begin studying philosophy. The parts detailing the history of philosophy are great but most of the content covers modern philosophy which can be a little tedious and the fonts used are too small to my liking.

Nat says

I was reading this book while traveling in Greece, the birth place of philosophy. This book begins with the trial of Socrates. And I had the wonderful opportunity to visit Socrates' prison up on a mountain in Athens. It made it all the more interesting to read.

Despite having fun with the first few works of philosophy, I had trouble understanding Aristotle's "poetics". As I was finishing up the book mostly on the metro in my daily commute to work and back, I would often retract to earlier pages when I was reading.

I didn't read all of the passages but I was glad I knew some of the contemporary American philosophers from when I took a course on political philosophy in college.

Readfrk Axland says

Look for kindle version

Mark Congiusta says

The equivalent of an intellectual triathlon; totally sucks while in the midst of it, but once finished you feel a powerful sense of accomplishment.

Jenna says

The fifth century B.C. thinkers began to exercise their power of the mind: question were asked about the origin of reason, and our fundamental judgement of man's view of himself and world we live in. This book introduces nine great thinkers of Western philosophy from the ancient Greece until 19th century America.

It tells the history of thier famous works, and eye-opening theories reflecting upon the principle of their thought and action.

Ramona Wray says

I don't feel qualified to review this. It's a great introductory anthology, which can and should be enjoyed not only by philosophy aficionados, but by any intelligent being in the world. It's a work one can refer to over and over again, for pleasure or edification. It is worth revisiting whenever possible.

T. Renee says

Reading philosophy is like a literary mind f*ck. Despite how 'wordy' it is, it's not polite, it's undercover shady come in the guise of confusing sentences and sentiments that make you doubt your intelligence. That said, I'd still recommend everyone give it a go. The commentary from Wolff helps to give you a broad understanding of each philosopher's stance. And in this collection you have some pretty essential figures from the school of thought; Plato, Aristotle, St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, John Stuart Mill and William James. I myself appreciate but have no patience for Aristotle, St. Thomas and St. Anselm, respect their views but My God, they're the kind of writers that put me to sleep while reading. Ugh. Plato on the other hand and *Apology*, *Crito* and *Death of Socrates*... I love and I've also read before and if this title is too much I'd highly recommend reading on its own *The Trial and Death of Socrates*. In regards to the others, I love the commentators note/forewarning about Hume "Hume was a brilliant writer as well as profound philosopher. You will find him much easier to understand than Descartes or Anselm or Aquinas. Do not be deceived! Behind these facile phrases and lucid examples lies the most powerful attack ever launched on man's cherished beliefs. Be on your guard!"

I personally think philosophy is a great way for anyone to challenge themselves and really discover who they are and why they think and feel the way they do and then have the satisfaction of knowing that they can stand behind what they say to anyone because they've challenged the greatest critic anyone can have in life... themselves. Take me, I love Hume, and he was known as the greatest atheist ever, and his opinion was "Why do men believe what they cannot rationally know?" My answer, Faith, God, Hope and Prayer. Thanks Hume!

Aaron says

Massive writing (some 600 pages) for such a small, almost pocket-sized book. Wolf edits and compiles "Ten Great Works" from some of the big names in ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy. I only read the Hume section, and cannot comment on the rest of the book.

The type was small and lines were very close together, of course for maximum compactness. This made it hard to read (beyond the usual dense, technical writing you expect from works of philosophy). The selection of philosophy was decent, as much as any philosophers from the usual three major eras of Western Philosophy can be; I assume the translation is fair. My problem with this book is the central question of Western Philosophy: "Why?" All joking aside, it does not make much sense to throw together ten works, no matter how important or reputable they are, unless they are meaningfully or ideologically or otherwise related and relevant. I cannot imagine a single professor teaching *all* or even most of the texts in this book in a single class. They are mostly full (unabridged) texts, and not really of much use for an intro class (although I read the Hume for an intro class), and they're too diverse for an advanced, topic-specific course. If it were an abbreviated anthology, I could see the point: short texts, a few pages of comment each to orient the

reader, preferably with a few pictures and in an easy, readable font. What you have here is just what the title says: Ten (Random) Great Works of Philosophy.

I suspect a publisher just thought it would be a quick, easy buck to take a handful of texts in public domain, paste on a nice cover, and push the thing on universities knowing that there was some something for everyone (and the whole thing for no one). Good marketing, bad philosophy.

Mike says

This was my text in Freshman Philosophy in college. It was so good it gave me the impetus to take two more courses in Philosophy when I didn't even have to.

Goran says

Having me review this is like having a Christian review the Bible.

Courtney says

- 1) Apology; Plato
- 2) Crito; Plato
- 3) Poetics; Aristotle
- 4) Proslogium (selection); St. Anselm
- 5) The Summa Theologica (selection); Thomas Aquinas
- 6) Meditations on the First Philosophy; Descartes, Rene
- 7) An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding; Hume, David
- 8) Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics; Kant, Immanuel
- 9) Utilitarianism; Mill, John Stuart
- 10) The Will to Believe; James, William

Matthew T says

A good read to give you an introduction to some of the most important ideas in philosophy.
