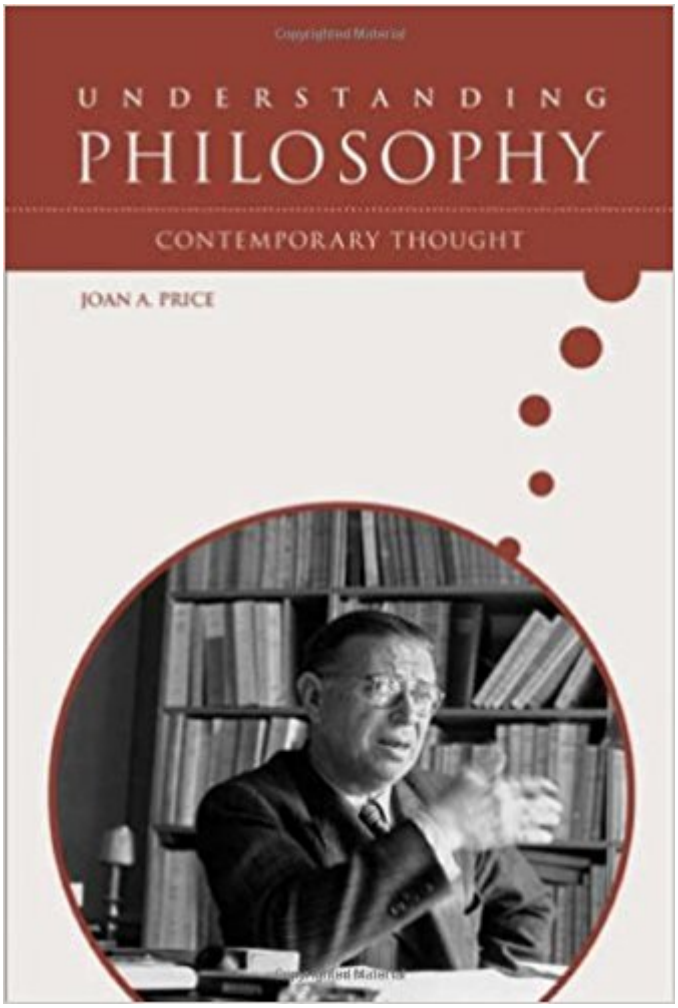
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Contemporary Thought (Understanding Philosophy)



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Synopsis

Framing the evolution of post-Enlightenment philosophy, this title features a discussion of the British Empiricists and Kant's analysis of the capacity of reason. It reveals how philosophers from each of these schools of thought sought to explain the secular and industrialized world of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 10 UpÃ¢â ¬â •This book provides a detailed but accessible discussion of various schools of thought from philosophers and philosophical movements from the 18th century on. Starting with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism, Price includes chapters on "The Individual," "Pragmatism," "Process Philosophy," "Analytic Philosophy," "Phenomenology," and "Existentialism." Thinkers such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, and de Beauvoir receive a fair amount of biographical attention, but not enough for the book to stand as a sole source of information about them. Instead, the volume's strength is Price's ability to elucidate what can be fairly heady reading material. Black-and-white photos or illustrations of the figures break up the text, and a lengthy bibliography and solid index are appended. Readers in need of an introduction to a particular philosophy or those who want an easily understood approach to a philosopher will find it here.Ã¢â ¬â •Carol Fazioli, Gwynedd-Mercy College, Gwynedd Valley, PA Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Price, a professor who has taught undergraduate philosophy for 35 years, introduces the most prominent philosophers and schools of thought that emerged after the Enlightenment and into the twentieth century. Along with biographies of specific individuals, each chapter includes lucid, clearly presented explanations of an intellectual movement, accompanied by numerous excerpts from both primary and secondary sources. Portraits of philosophers in crisply reproduced engravings and photographs appear frequently in the pages, as do charts and diagrams to help students visualize concepts, such as the differences between William JamesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ notions of Tender-Minded Rationalists and Tough-Minded Empiricists. Students will welcome the occasional, vividly described personal details (e.g., Camus grew up in a cockroach-ridden apartment) as well as the clearly presented ideas. Recommend this, also, to teachers seeking supplementary classroom sources on the subject. Chapter notes, a glossary, and suggestions for further reading close this solid title in the Understanding Philosophy series. Grades 9-12. --Gillian Engberg

Adequate for high school students with no background in the subject, though the author presents things a bit clumsily and makes inaccurate statements and generalizations at times.... In particular, the author’s treatment of Kierkegaard was substandard and even misleading. Overall, it’s a "reader’s digest" summary of the history of philosophy, suitable for a brief overview of the subject....

This book is written for young adults and covers "contemporary" philosophy from Bentham and Mill to Sartre and Camus. The author begins with Bentham and explains how the industrial revolution began turning philosophical interests away from metaphysics and epistemology to more mundane concerns such as the happiness of individuals, which was the concern of the utilitarians’ philosophical enterprise. After the utilitarians the author covers Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, specifically their intense focus on the individual; the Pragmatists James and Dewey, describing their similarities and differences; Process Philosophy, covering Bergson and Whitehead; Analytic Philosophy; Phenomenology (Husserl and Heidegger); and, finally Existentialism, including the thought of Sarte, de Beauvoir and Camus. For each philosopher author Price provides a brief biographical sketch as well as some description of the contemporary culture or pressing social issues. She does an excellent job of covering the main topics. (This is not her fault, but I have yet to find a writer who can explain Heidegger.) I am not so sure that the reading level is at times appropriate for the intended audience, perhaps only for more gifted high school upper classmen. In any event, this is a very good introduction to the most influential philosophies and philosophers of the modern period,

For high school and up. Excellent for adults as an intro to the subject. Very clear and understandable. Well-organized.

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