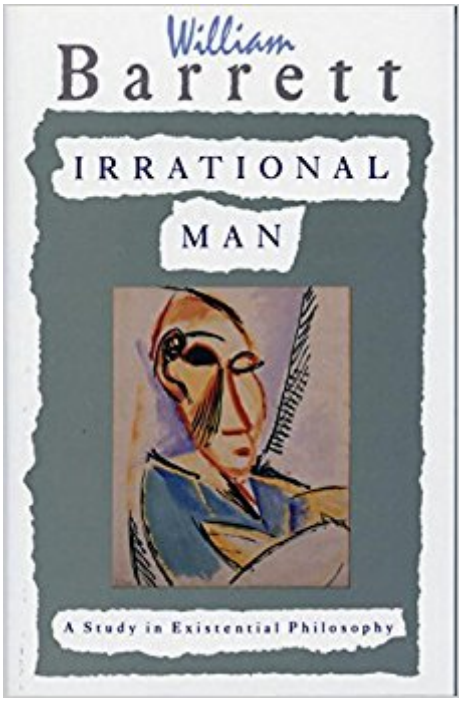
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Irrational Man: A Study In Existential Philosophy



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Synopsis

Widely recognized as the finest definition of existentialist philosophy ever written, this book introduced existentialism to America in 1958. Barrett speaks eloquently and directly to concerns of the 1990s: a period when the irrational and the absurd are no better integrated than before and when humankind is in even greater danger of destroying its existence without ever understanding the meaning of its existence. Irrational ManÃ Â begins by discussing the roots of existentialism in the art and thinking of Augustine, Aquinas, Pascal, Baudelaire, Blake, Dostoevski, Tolstoy, Hemingway, Picasso, Joyce, and Beckett. The heart of the book explains the views of the foremost existentialistsÃ¢â ¬â •Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre. The result is a marvelously lucid definition of existentialism and a brilliant interpretation of its impact.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Widely recognized as the finest definition of existentialist Philosophy, this book introduced existentialism to America in 1958. Barrett discusses the views of 19th and 20th century existentialists Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre and interprets the impact of their thinking on literature, art, and philosophy.

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thinking on literature, art, and philosophy.

I purchased this for a college class on Existentialism. It isn't the most awful book I've ever had to read for a class, that's for sure. I find the book very interesting, but slightly difficult to read. I find that I must stop every now and then to look up definitions for words, which in and of itself isn't a bad thing - it's always good to increase your vocabulary - but the constant interruptions and having to stop to define words is tedious and breaks you out of the text. Some chapters are better about this than others. Overall, the book is worth reading. It gives you a lot of food for thought. There is something in here for everyone, I think. I knew nothing about Existential philosophy before I began reading this book, and just about zero interest as well, but that has very much changed. One thing to note: this isn't for light reading. The book and its subject require intense concentration and actual thought and consideration if you are to get anything out of it.

Irrational Man by William Barrett is a classic book on Existentialism. It served us well when my generation was in college. I highly recommend it now as historically accurate and still a delightful read.

One of the best, and most important books that I have ever read. I highly recommend this book to every intelligent person who is trying to understand life, and ways of life.

I read this book as a junior in high school 46 years ago. I just reread it and rediscovered the train of thought that lead me to major in Philosophy. Be careful, if you choose to engage in this discourse, you may find yourself challenged and possibly changed. Good luck!

Pretty good book about existentialism, but really good on the proto-existentials and how their thought focused and influenced Husserl, thus phenomenology, thus existentialism.

Like all concepts of life and reality one can't easily define existentialism. William Barrett helps one to understand the concept, through describing how it was arrived at in the course of the history of human thinking, in this respect its a very useful book for people willing to concentrate and patiently absorb this history.

This is definitely a book worth reading.

Interesting book on the existential philosophy inspiring the movie "Irrational Man" by Woody Allen

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