

Spinoza A Very Short Introduction Roger Scruton

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~~Modern Philosophy~~

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Thus, the skeptic is a kind of bogeyman in contemporary thought, and it is very rare to see skepticism as a live option. It is ironic, then, that skepticism has its roots in an historical movement, ...

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Benedict de Spinoza (1632-77) was at once the father of the Enlightenment and the last sad guardian of the medieval world. In his brilliant synthesis of geometrical method, religious sentiment, and secular science, he attempted to reconcile the conflicting moral and intellectual demands of his epoch, and to present a vision of humanity as simultaneously bound by necessity and eternally free. Roger Scruton presents a clear and systematic analysis of Spinoza's thought, and shows its relevance to today's intellectual preoccupations.

Ostracized by the Jewish community in Amsterdam into which he was born, Spinoza developed a political philosophy that set out to justify the secular State, ruled by a liberal constitution, and a metaphysics, according to which everything exists in God as a 'mode' of the divine substance, that sought to reconcile human freedom with a belief in scientific explanation. In this book Roger Scruton presents a clear and systematic analysis of Spinoza's thought, and shows its relevance to today's intellectual preoccupations.

Kant is arguably the most influential modern philosopher, but also one of the most difficult. Roger Scruton tackles his exceptionally complex subject with a strong hand, exploring the background to Kant's work and showing why the Critique of Pure Reason has proved so enduring. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

"First published in hardback as *Beauty*, 2009"--T.p. verso.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) was a man of extraordinary intellectual creativity who lived an exceptionally rich and varied intellectual life in troubled times. More than anything else, he was a man who wanted to improve the life of his fellow human beings through the advancement of all the sciences and the establishment of a stable and just political order. In this Very Short Introduction Maria Rosa Antognazza outlines the central features of Leibniz's philosophy in the context of his overarching intellectual vision and aspirations. Against the backdrop of Leibniz's encompassing scientific ambitions, she introduces the fundamental principles of Leibniz's thought, as well as his theory of truth and theory of knowledge. Exploring Leibniz's contributions to logic, mathematics, physics, and metaphysics, she considers how his theories sat alongside his concerns with politics, diplomacy, and a broad range of practical reforms: juridical, economic, administrative, technological, medical, and ecclesiastical. Discussing Leibniz's theories of possible worlds, she concludes by looking at what is ultimately real in this actual world that we experience, the good and evil there is in it, and Leibniz's response to the problem of evil through his theodicy. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

When it appeared in 1670, Baruch Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise was denounced as the most dangerous book ever published. Religious and secular authorities saw it as a threat to faith, social and political harmony, and everyday morality, and its author was almost universally regarded as a religious subversive and political radical who sought to spread atheism throughout Europe. Steven Nadler tells the story of this book: its radical claims and their background in the philosophical, religious, and political tensions of the Dutch Golden Age, as well as the vitriolic reaction these ideas inspired. A vivid story of incendiary ideas and vicious backlash, *A Book Forged in Hell* will interest anyone who is curious about the origin of some of our most cherished modern beliefs--Jacket p. [2].

Among the great thinkers of modern times, only Spinoza (1632-77) created a complete system of philosophy that rivals Plato's. Few other thinkers have felt so strongly 'the desire to have a unitary view of the world and of man's place within it' - a desire that led Spinoza to make crucial contributions to every major philosophical topic: the nature of knowledge and freedom, the existence of God, ethics and politics, mind and matter, pleasure and perception. In this new edition of his classic *Spinoza* (1951), with substantial new material added, the late Sir Stuart Hampshire offers a masterly introduction to a supreme thinker, and to his enormous influence on philosophy as it has been practised since.

A foundational moment in the history of modern European thought, the Enlightenment continues to be a reference point for philosophers, scholars and opinion-formers. To many it remains the inspiration of our commitments to the betterment of the human condition. To others, it represents the elevation of one set of European values to the world, many of whose peoples have quite different values. But what is the relationship between the historical Enlightenment and the idea of 'Enlightenment', and can these two understandings be reconciled? In this Very Short Introduction, John Robertson offers a concise historical introduction to the Enlightenment as an intellectual movement of eighteenth-century Europe. Discussing its intellectual achievements, he also explores how its supporters exploited new ways of communicating their ideas to a wider public, creating a new 'public sphere' for critical discussion of the moral, economic and political issues facing their societies. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Immanuel Kant is one of the most influential-and most complex-modern philosophers. His ideas on the subjective nature of reality challenged contemporary beliefs about God, morality, and free will. Roger Scruton, a well-known and controversial philosopher in his own right, tackles his exceptionally complex subject with a strong hand, providing an accessible introduction to Kant's work and his pivotal Critique of Pure Reason.