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Basic Writings Of Kant (Modern Library Classics)



Synopsis

Introduction by Allen W. Wood
With translations by F. Max Müller and Thomas K. Abbott
The writings of Immanuel Kant became the cornerstone of all subsequent philosophical inquiry. They articulate the relationship between the human mind and all that it encounters and remain the most important influence on our concept of knowledge. As renowned Kant scholar Allen W. Wood writes in his Introduction, Kant “virtually laid the foundation for the way people in the last two centuries have confronted such widely differing subjects as the experience of beauty and the meaning of human history.” Edited and compiled by Dr. Wood, *Basic Writings of Kant* stands as a comprehensive summary of Kant’s contributions to modern thought, and gathers together the most respected translations of Kant’s key moral and political writings.

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Customer Reviews

With an Introduction by renowned Kant scholar Allen W. Wood, this is the only available one-volume edition of the essential works of the Enlightenment’s greatest philosopher and one of the most influential thinkers of modern times. Containing carefully selected excerpts from his most frequently taught essays and book-length publications, including *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Judgment*, and *Eternal Peace*, the *Basic Writings of Kant* is an indispensable collection. This revised edition was edited by Carl J. Friedrich.

Allen W. Wood is a professor of philosophy at Stanford University. He is the author of *Kant's Rational Theology* and *Kant's Ethical Thought* and, with Paul Guyer, general editor of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Kant.

worth a second (and third) reading

great book!

Good price as a needed school book but Kant's understanding of Scripture is way off. But you learn where others get their worldview and can converse articulately on the subject.

Good...needed to read for college class

With a thorough reading of this text, it is entirely possible to extract, not just the gist, but a fundamental understanding of the philosophy of Kant. Although it is true that no compilation of writings, which is forced to express the ideas of a philosopher such as Kant in a manageable way, can provide an understanding required for a masters or doctoral thesis, the *Basic Writings of Kant* is translated in such a way and contains the necessary essays for higher-level undergraduate understanding. By examining the development of Kant's ideas throughout each essay, it is possible to understand the unity of metaphysical, empirical, and moral concepts in a digestible and useful way. Although one may see fault in Kant's philosophy regarding any of these facets, this text provides the means for an understanding of Kant's philosophy and solid ground by which to dispute his ideas. One distinction, which might be useful in reading this text, is to note that the essay "Critique of Practical Reason" is better understood as the "Critique of (Pure) Practical Reason". It should be understood that Kant felt that the boundaries in which both practical and theoretical reason lie are within the limits of the mind itself. Also, regarding Kant's chauvinism, a close reading of "What Is Enlightenment?", might shed some light on those who seem to have heard what they wanted to hear in his reference to the "fairer sex". Aside from that passage, I can not actually think of another example of his even mentioning gender differences. Feel free to correct me, if you can provide me with some new information, or something that I've forgotten.

This is a great book and worthy to be read by all thinkers of our age, religious and irreligious alike. Kant presents, for the better or for the worse, a view of the world in rationalistic means. This is a

book for the ages.

My review is more by accident than intentional logging on to write a review. While surfing around, I stumbled here to check out a couple of reviews and noticed some with astonishing errors; either due to a lack of writing a detailed review or just not understanding Kant's ideas. The problem may also lie in that anthologies don't carry the full selection of a person's arguments (although with one reviewer it is just an obvious case of silly ignorant ramblings) Wood's book is readable and it is true that Kant is never an easy read, but neither are most Prussian Philosophers of the same era. Whatever Kant's metaphysical faults are, he is not a relativist, but tried, although many have asserted unsuccessfully, to construct an objective moral framework on reason alone (although Kant did believe in God and asserted that the Christian religion was the closest to a true objective construct; however, that is precisely the problem of anthologies, because all they do is give one a snap shot of someone's work. Further, Kant asserted God as a practical necessity if humans were going to reach the highest good (*summum bonum*). Lastly, is trying to limit the role of reason to make room for faith. He limits knowledge by demonstrating that reason belongs in the empirical realm (phenomenal) and the things-in-itself are actually in the noumenal world beyond the reach of the senses. For someone as lengthy as Kant, short reviews cannot do justice. If one gets this book, then they should also get "The Cambridge Companion to Kant" also sold on and edited by Kant scholar Guyer.

This is an excellent survey of Kant's groundbreaking contributions to epistemology and moral philosophy. I would, however, support Karl Popper's observation that the best way to understand the transcendental idealism of Kant is to first study Schopenhauer. An ideal introduction to Schopenhauer (and Kant) is Bryan Magee's 'The Philosophy of Schopenhauer'. Then read Schopenhauer's 'On the Fourfold Root of Principle of Sufficient Reason', and then his 'The World as Will and Representation'. Schopenhauer is a peerless prose stylist and conceptual architect and he explains the philosophy of Kant (and its limitations) better than Kant does himself. Once you have familiarised yourself with Schopenhauer, Kant's comparatively opaque and desultory prose (with occasional flashes of brilliance) is readily accessible. Kant's staggering intellectual achievement in moving beyond the apparent epistemological dead end of Hume is sufficient motivation for making the effort to read the Critique of Pure Reason. In the other works in this volume Kant developed his (in my view) flawed moral philosophy, based as it is on the supposed sovereignty of reason over the will - with its famous 'categorical imperative'. While this is less impressive than his epistemology, it is

still interesting and well worth reading. The translations offered here are clear and the selections from Kant's works are judicious. Altogether a great book at a great price, which will richly reward the serious reader.

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