

Philosophy A Very Short Introduction Edward Craig

In the history of philosophy, few topics are so relevant to today's cultural and political landscape as philosophy in the Islamic world. Yet, this remains one of the lesser-known philosophical traditions. In this Very Short Introduction, Peter Adamson explores the history of philosophy among Muslims, Jews, and Christians living in Islamic lands, from its historical background to thinkers in the twentieth century. Introducing the main philosophical themes of the Islamic world, Adamson integrates ideas from the Islamic and Abrahamic faiths to consider the broad philosophical questions that continue to invite debate: What is the relationship between reason and religious belief? What is the possibility of proving God's existence? What is the nature of knowledge? Drawing on the most recent research in the field, this book challenges the assumption of the cultural decline of philosophy and science in the Islamic world by demonstrating its rich heritage and overlap with other faiths and philosophies.

Logic is often perceived as having little to do with the rest of philosophy, and even less to do with real life. Graham Priest explores the philosophical roots of the subject, explaining how modern formal logic addresses many issues.

French culture is unique in that philosophy has played a significant role from the early-modern period onwards, intimately associated with political, religious, and literary debates, as well as with epistemological and scientific ones. While Latin was the language of learning there was a universal philosophical literature, but with the rise of vernacular literatures things changed and a distinctive national form of philosophy arose in France. This Very Short Introduction covers French philosophy from its origins in the sixteenth century up to the present, analysing it within its social, political, and cultural context. Beginning with psychology and epistemology, Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden then move onto the emergence of radical philosophy in the eighteenth century, before considering post-revolutionary philosophy in the nineteenth century, philosophy in the world wars, the radical thought of the 1960s, and finally French philosophy today. Throughout, they explore the dilemma sustained by the markedly national conception of French philosophy, and its history of speaking out on matters of universal concern. 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.

The influence of Aristotle, the prince of philosophers, on the intellectual history of the West is second to none. In this book Jonathan Barnes examines Aristotle's scientific researches, his discoveries in logic and his metaphysical theories, his work in psychology and in ethics and politics, and his ideas about art and poetry, placing his teachings in their historical context. 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.

In this Very Short Introduction, Peter Adamson sheds light on the philosophical ideas that emerged in the Islamic world. From the beginnings of the tradition to the twenty first

century, he traces the history of philosophy among those living in Islamic lands, highlighting its key themes and ongoing relevance to contemporary concerns. What is knowledge? How does it differ from mere belief? Do you need to be able to justify a claim in order to count as knowing it? How can we know that the outer world is real and not a dream? Questions like these are ancient ones, and the branch of philosophy dedicated to answering them - epistemology - has been active for thousands of years. In this thought-provoking Very Short Introduction, Jennifer Nagel considers these classic questions alongside new puzzles arising from recent discoveries about humanity, language, and the mind. Nagel explains the formation of major historical theories of knowledge, and shows how contemporary philosophers have developed new ways of understanding knowledge, using ideas from logic, linguistics, and psychology. Covering topics ranging from relativism and the problem of scepticism to the trustworthiness of internet sources, Nagel examines how progress has been made in understanding knowledge, using everyday examples to explain the key issues and debates

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India has a long, rich, and diverse tradition of philosophical thought, spanning some two and a half millennia and encompassing several major religious traditions. This Very Short Introduction emphasizes the diversity of Indian thought, and is structured around six schools which have achieved classic status. Sue Hamilton explores how the traditions have attempted to understand the nature of reality in terms of an inner or spiritual quest, and introduces distinctively Indian concepts such as karma and rebirth. She also shows how Indian thinkers have understood issues of reality and knowledge — issues which are also an important part of the Western philosophical tradition.

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Raymond Wacks reveals the intriguing and challenging nature of legal philosophy, exploring the notion of law and its role in our lives. He refers to key thinkers from Aristotle to Rawls, from Bentham to Derrida and looks at the central questions behind legal theory, and law's relation to justice, morality, and democracy.

Logic is often perceived as having little to do with the rest of philosophy, and even less to do with real life. In this lively and accessible introduction, Graham Priest shows how wrong this conception is. He explores the philosophical roots of the subject, explaining how modern formal logic deals with issues ranging from the existence of God and the reality of time to paradoxes of probability and decision theory. Along the way, the basics of formal logic are explained in simple, non-technical terms, showing that logic is a powerful and exciting part of modern philosophy. In this new edition Graham Priest expands his discussion to cover the subjects of algorithms and axioms, and proofs in mathematics.

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In this cogent and accessible introduction to philosophy, the distinguished author of *Mortal Questions* and *The View From Nowhere* sets forth the central problems of philosophical inquiry for the beginning student. Arguing that the best way to learn about philosophy is to think about its questions directly, Thomas Nagel considers possible solutions to nine problems--knowledge of the world beyond our minds, knowledge of other minds, the mind-body problem, free will, the basis of morality, right and wrong, the nature of death, the meaning of life, and the meaning of words. Although he states his own opinions clearly, Nagel leaves these fundamental questions open, allowing students to entertain other solutions and encouraging them to think for themselves.

How much faith should we place in what scientists tell us? Is it possible for scientific knowledge to be fully "objective?" What, really, can be defined as science? In the second edition of this Very Short Introduction, Samir Okasha explores the main themes and theories of contemporary philosophy of science, and investigates fascinating, challenging questions such as these. Starting at the very beginning, with a concise overview of the history of science, Okasha examines the nature of fundamental practices such as reasoning, causation, and explanation. Looking at scientific revolutions and the issue of scientific change, he asks whether there is a discernible pattern to the way scientific ideas change over time, and discusses realist versus anti-realist attitudes towards science. He finishes by considering science today, and the social and ethical philosophical questions surrounding modern science. 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.

'What is real?' has been one of the key questions of philosophy since its beginning in antiquity. But it is not just a question that philosophers ask. This Very Short Introduction discusses what reality is by looking at a variety of arguments, theories, and thought-experiments from philosophy, physics, and cognitive science.

Introduction; 1 The information revolution; 2 The language of information; 3 Mathematical information; 4 Semantic information; 5 Physical information; 6 Biological information; 7 Economic information; 8 The ethics of information; Conclusion; References.

This book introduces readers to the concepts of political philosophy. It starts by explaining why the subject is important and how it tackles basic ethical questions

such as 'how should we live together in society?' It looks at political authority, the reasons why we need politics at all, the limitations of politics, and whether there are areas of life that shouldn't be governed by politics. It explores the connections between political authority and justice, a constant theme in political philosophy, and the ways in which social justice can be used to regulate rather than destroy a market economy. David Miller discusses why nations are the natural units of government and whether the rise of multiculturalism and transnational co-operation will change this: will we ever see the formation of a world government? 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.

Is the neurophysiology of pain all there is to pain? How do words and mental pictures come to represent things in the world? Do computers think, and if so, are their thought processes significantly similar to our thought processes? Or is there something distinctive about human thought that precludes replication in a computer? These are some of the puzzles that motivate the philosophical discipline called "philosophy of mind," a central area of philosophy. This Very Short Introduction introduces the philosophy of mind, and looks at some of the most interesting and important topics in this fascinating field, including the mind-body problem and dualism. Barbara Montero also discusses minds other than our own, and the problems associated with defining consciousness in animals, aliens and machines. Considering these and other such thorny issues such as physicalism and intentionality, she demonstrates how questions of the philosophy of mind also infiltrate disciplines outside of philosophy, including psychology, neuroscience, economics, evolutionary biology, and linguistics. As she observes, most everyone, at some time or another, has ruminated over the relation between mind and matter. 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.

Over the last forty years the philosophy of biology has emerged as an important sub-discipline of the philosophy of science. Covering some of science's most divisive topics, such as philosophical issues in genetics, it also encompasses areas where modern biology has increasingly impinged on traditional philosophical questions, such as free will, essentialism, and nature vs nurture. In this Very Short Introduction Samir Okasha outlines the core issues with which contemporary philosophy of biology is engaged. Offering a whistle-stop tour of the history of biology, he explores key ideas and paradigm shifts throughout the

centuries, including areas such as the theory of evolution by natural selection; the concepts of function and design; biological individuality; and the debate over adaptationism. Throughout Okasha makes clear the relevance of biology for understanding human beings, human society, and our place in the natural world, and the importance of engaging with these issues. 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.

This is a book about the invention of Western philosophy, and the first thinkers to explore ideas about the nature of reality, time, and the origin of the universe. It begins with the finding of the new papyrus fragment of Empedocles' poem, and uses the story of its discovery and interpretation to highlight the way our understanding of early philosophers is marked by their presentation in later sources. Generations of philosophers, both ancient and modern, have traced their inspiration back to the presocratics, even though we have very few of their writings left. In this book, Catherine Osborne invites her readers to dip their toes into the fragmentary remains of thinkers from Thales to Pythagoras, Heraclitus to Protagoras, to try to fill in the bits of a jigsaw that has been rejigged many times and in many different ways. 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.

Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring Philosophy of physics is concerned with the deepest theories of modern physics - notably quantum theory, our theories of space, time and symmetry, and thermal physics - and their strange, even bizarre conceptual implications. A deeper understanding of these theories helps both physics, through pointing the way to new theories and new applications, and philosophy, through seeing how our worldview has to change in the light of what we learn from physics. This Very Short Introduction explores the core topics in philosophy of physics through three key themes. The first - the nature of space, time, and motion - begins by considering the philosophical puzzles that led Isaac Newton to propose the existence of absolute space, and then discusses how those puzzles change - but do not disappear - in the context of the revolutions in our understanding of space and time that came first from special, and then from general, relativity. The second - the emergence of irreversible behavior in statistical mechanics - considers how the microscopic laws of physics, which know of no distinction between past and future, can be compatible with the melting of ice, the cooling of coffee, the passing of youth, and all the other ways in which the large-scale world distinguishes past from future. The last section discusses quantum theory - the foundation of most of modern physics, yet mysterious to this day. It explains just why quantum theory is so difficult to make sense of, how we might nonetheless attempt to do it, and why the question has been highly relevant to the development of physics, and continues to be so. 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.

How ought we to live? What really exists? How do we know? Edward Craig discusses some of the key questions philosophy engages with. He explores important themes in ethics,

knowledge, and the self, alongside a new chapter for this edition on free will, discussing determinism and indeterminism in the context of Descartes and Hegel's work.

Examines how philosophers including Plato, Descartes, Hobbes, Darwin, and de Beauvoir responded to real life situations, and how their responses continue to influence people today. Simon Critchley's Very Short Introduction shows that Continental philosophy encompasses a distinct set of philosophical traditions and practices, with a compelling range of problems all too often ignored by the analytic tradition. He discusses the ideas and approaches of philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Habermas, Foucault, and Derrida, and introduces key concepts such as existentialism, nihilism, and phenomenology by explaining their place in the Continental tradition. 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.

Jacques Derrida, the French philosopher, developed his critical technique known as 'deconstruction'. His work is associated with ideas surrounding both post-structuralism and post-modern philosophy, and he was known to have challenged some of the unquestioned assumptions of our philosophical tradition. In this Very Short Introduction, Simon Glendinning explores both the difficulty and significance of the work of Derrida. He presents Derrida's challenging ideas as making a significant contribution to, and providing a powerful reading of, our philosophical heritage. Defending Derrida against many of the charges that were placed against him, he attempts to show why Derrida's work causes such extreme reactions.

Glendinning explains Derrida's distinctive mode of engagement with our philosophical tradition, and shows that this is not a merely negative thing. By exploring his most famous and influential texts, Glendinning shows how and why Derrida's work of deconstruction is inspired not by a 'critical frenzy', but by a loving respect for philosophy. 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.

What is the philosophy of religion? How can we distinguish it from theology on the one hand and the psychology/sociology of religious belief on the other? What does it mean to describe God as "eternal"? And should religious people want there to be good arguments for the existence of God, or is religious belief only authentic in the absence of these good arguments? In this Very Short Introduction Tim Bayne introduces the field of philosophy of religion, and engages with some of the most burning questions that philosophers discuss. Considering how "religion" should be defined, and whether we even need to be able to define it in order to engage in the philosophy of religion, he goes on to discuss whether the existence of God matters. Exploring the problem of evil, Bayne also debates the connection between faith and reason, and the related question of what role reason should play in religious contexts.

Shedding light on the relationship between science and religion, Bayne finishes by considering the topics of reincarnation and the afterlife. 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.

Originating in the pioneering work of Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, and Ludwig Wittgenstein in the four decades around the turn of the twentieth century, analytic philosophy established itself in various forms in the 1930s. After the Second World War, it developed further in North America, in the rest of Europe, and is now growing in influence as the dominant

philosophical tradition right across the world, from Latin America to East Asia. In this Very Short Introduction Michael Beaney introduces some of the key ideas of the founders of analytic philosophy by exploring certain fundamental philosophical questions and showing how those ideas can be used in offering answers. Considering the work of Susan Stebbing, he also explores the application of analytic philosophy to critical thinking, and emphasizes the conceptual creativity that lies at the heart of fruitful analysis. Throughout, Beaney illustrates why clarity of thinking, precision of expression, and rigour of argumentation are rightly seen as virtues of analytic philosophy. 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.

Presents fundamental philosophical questions as posed by ancient philosophers, comparing and contrasting modern differences in approach and perspective. Our self-image as moral, well-behaved creatures is dogged by scepticism, relativism, hypocrisy, and nihilism, by the fear that in a Godless world science has unmasked us as creatures fated by our genes to be selfish and tribalistic, or competitive and aggressive. In this 'sparklingly clear' (Guardian) introduction to ethics Simon Blackburn tackles the major moral questions surrounding birth, death, happiness, desire and freedom, showing us how we should think about the meaning of life, and how we should mistrust the soundbite-sized absolutes that often dominate moral debates. 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.

On the schools of Indian philosophy

This Very Short Introduction provides a concise overview of the main themes of contemporary philosophy of science. After a short history, the author goes on to investigate the nature of scientific reasoning, scientific explanation and more. Every day we seem to make and act upon all kinds of free choices - but are these choices really free? Or are we compelled to act the way we do by factors beyond our control? This book looks at free will.

How ought we to live? What really exists? How do we know? This book introduces important themes in ethics, knowledge, and the self, via readings from Plato, Hume, Descartes, Hegel, Darwin, and Buddhist writers. It emphasizes throughout the point of doing philosophy, explains how different areas of philosophy are related, and explores the contexts in which philosophy was and is done. 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.

"Julia Annas provides an incisive exploration of the many-sided and elusive genius whose wide-ranging, bold, and influential ideas continue to challenge, provoke, and inspire us today"--Page 4 of cover.

In this book John Marenbon discusses the extraordinary breadth of medieval philosophy as written by Christians in Greek and Latin, Muslims in Arabic and by Jews in Hebrew, from c. 500 to c. 1550. He considers important factors such as where and when it took place, its social setting and its links with religion.

The concept of law lies at the heart of our social and political life. Legal philosophy, or jurisprudence, explores the notion of law and its role in society, illuminating its meaning and its relation to the universal questions of justice, rights, and morality. In this Very Short Introduction Raymond Wacks analyses the nature and purpose of the legal system, and the practice by courts, lawyers, and judges. Wacks reveals the intriguing and challenging nature of legal philosophy with clarity and enthusiasm, providing an enlightening guide to the central questions of legal theory. In this revised edition Wacks makes a number of updates including new material on legal realism, changes to the approach to the analysis of law and legal theory, and updates to historical and anthropological jurisprudence. 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.

What are philosophers trying to achieve? How can they succeed? Does philosophy make progress? Is it in competition with science, or doing something completely different, or neither? Timothy Williamson tackles some of the key questions surrounding philosophy in new and provocative ways, showing how philosophy begins in common sense curiosity, and develops through our capacity to dispute rationally with each other. Discussing philosophy's ability to clarify our thoughts, he explains why such clarification depends on the development of philosophical theories, and how those theories can be tested by imaginative thought experiments, and compared against each other by standards similar to those used in the natural and social sciences. He also shows how logical rigour can be understood as a way of enhancing the explanatory power of philosophical theories. Drawing on the history of philosophy to provide a track record of philosophical thinking's successes and failures, Williams overturns widely held dogmas about the distinctive nature of philosophy in comparison to the sciences, demystifies its methods, and considers the future of the discipline. From thought experiments, to deduction, to theories, this Very Short Introduction will cause you to totally rethink what philosophy is. 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. Previously published in hardback as *Doing Philosophy*. This volume shows the influence of the Sage's teachings over the course of Chinese history--on state ideology, the civil service examination system, imperial government, the family, and social relations--and the fate of Confucianism in China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as China developed alongside a modernizing West and Japan. Some Chinese intellectuals attempted to reform the Confucian tradition to address new needs; others argued for jettisoning it altogether in favor of Western ideas and technology; still others condemned it angrily, arguing that Confucius and his legacy were responsible for China's feudal, "backward" conditions in the twentieth century and launching campaigns to eradicate its influences. Yet Chinese continue to turn to the teachings of Confucianism for guidance in their daily lives.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) was an extraordinarily original philosopher, whose influence on twentieth-century thinking goes well beyond philosophy itself. In this book, which aims to make Wittgenstein's thought accessible to the general non-specialist reader, A. C. Grayling explains the nature and impact of Wittgenstein's views. He describes both his early and later philosophy, the differences and connections between them, and gives a fresh assessment of Wittgenstein's continuing influence on contemporary thought. 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.

Metaphysics is one of the traditional four main branches of philosophy, alongside ethics, logic and epistemology. It is also an area that continues to attract and hold a fascination for many people yet it is associated with being complex and abstract. For some it is associated with the mystical or religious. For others it is known through the metaphysical poets who talk of love and spirituality. This Very Short Introduction goes right to the heart of the matter, getting to the basic and most important questions of metaphysical thought in order to understand the theory: What are objects? Do colours and shapes have some form of existence? What is it for one thing to cause another rather than just being associated with it? What is possible? Does time pass? By using these questions to initiate thought about the basic issues around substance, properties, changes, causes, possibilities, time, personal identity, nothingness and emergentism, Stephen Mumford provides a clear and simple path through this analytical tradition at the core of philosophical thought. 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.

`A very good idea, these Very Short Introductions, a new concept from OUP'
Nicholas Lezard, Guardian --Book Jacket.

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