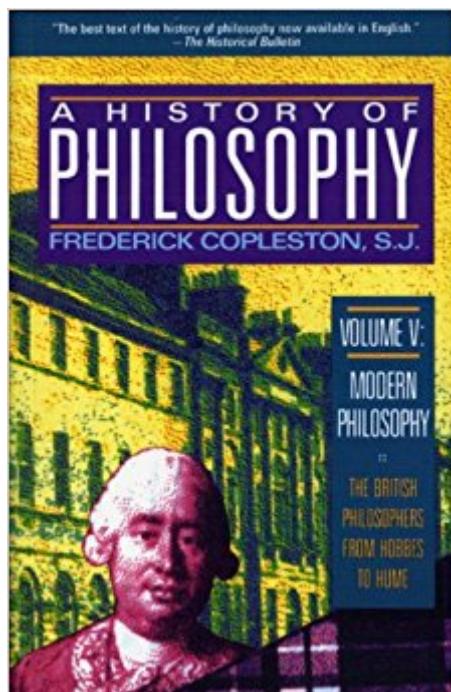


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# A History Of Philosophy, Vol. 5: Modern Philosophy - The British Philosophers From Hobbes To Hume



## Synopsis

Conceived originally as a serious presentation of the development of philosophy for Catholic seminary students, Frederick Copleston's nine-volume *A History Of Philosophy* has journeyed far beyond the modest purpose of its author to universal acclaim as the best history of philosophy in English. Copleston, an Oxford Jesuit of immense erudition who once tangled with A.J. Ayer in a fabled debate about the existence of God and the possibility of metaphysics, knew that seminary students were fed a woefully inadequate diet of theses and proofs, and that their familiarity with most of history's great thinkers was reduced to simplistic caricatures. Copleston set out to redress the wrong by writing a complete history of Western Philosophy, one crackling with incident an intellectual excitement - and one that gives full place to each thinker, presenting his thought in a beautifully rounded manner and showing his links to those who went before and to those who came after him.

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## Customer Reviews

Conceived originally as a serious presentation of the development of philosophy for Catholic seminary students, Frederick Copleston's nine-volume *A History Of Philosophy* has journeyed far beyond the modest purpose of its author to universal acclaim as the best history of philosophy in English. Copleston, an Oxford Jesuit of immense erudition who once tangled with A.J. Ayer in a fabled debate about the existence of God and the possibility of metaphysics, knew that seminary students were fed a woefully inadequate diet of theses and proofs, and that their familiarity with

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Conceived originally as a serious presentation of the development of philosophy for Catholic seminary students, Frederick Copleston's nine-volume "A History Of Philosophy" has journeyed far beyond the modest purpose of its author to universal acclaim as the best history of philosophy in English. Copleston, an Oxford Jesuit of immense erudition who once tangled with A.J. Ayer in a fabled debate about the existence of God and the possibility of metaphysics, knew that seminary students were fed a woefully inadequate diet of theses and proofs, and that their familiarity with most of history's great thinkers was reduced to simplistic caricatures. Copleston set out to redress the wrong by writing a complete history of Western Philosophy, one crackling with incident an intellectual excitement - and one that gives full place to each thinker, presenting his thought in a beautifully rounded manner and showing his links to those who went before and to those who came after him.

Copleston's "A History of Philosophy" is a major classic in the field. Even though it is in ten volumes it is very readable. This particular volume was on Modern Philosophy. His treatment and analysis of the various philosophers throughout the ages is in depth and excellent. I was aware that he was a Jesuit, but he is clear about his positions and I did not find that it distorted any historical facts or known views of the various thinkers. For any serious student of philosophy it is well worth the effort to study the entire series.

These books were used in our seminary 1958-1960 and are excellent expositions of philosophers some of whom were very weird.

great

Received the book in good condition

love it

who doesn't love insanely detailed academically infused expositions about dead British philosophers who weren't even convinced that knowledge has any precise, accurate, and meaningful definition. fast shipping, low cost, great condition....gotta be happy!

This book is a fantastic compilation of philosophical writings covering many areas of specialty within philosophy as a whole. A must have for any student of philosophy and all lovers of wisdom.

I purchased the available volumes of "A History of Philosophy" by Frederick Copleston when I was a college student more than 45 years ago. (At that time just the first eight volumes were available. I got Volume 9 when it came out not long thereafter.) Over the past four decades, during which time I have taught college-level philosophy courses either fulltime or part time, I have referred to it more than to any other survey of the history of philosophy. It is simply the most complete and well-balanced of any history of philosophy text. Well-written, lucid, and on the whole readily understandable, it has become a classic in the field. What is true of the other volumes is true of Volume 5, which covers the British philosophers from Hobbes to Hume. This volume is particularly important because to adequately understand contemporary Anglo-American analytic philosophy one must be familiar with its background. And that background, of course, is squarely in the British empiricist tradition. Copleston covers all the major British philosophers of the period in detail, devoting multiple chapters to the thought of Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. But he also discusses fairly extensively the thought of some of the "lesser lights" of the period, such as Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Samuel Clarke, Bishop Butler, Wm. Paley, Newton, and others. Because of its detail, this is far more than an overview. And although lucid and well-written, it is not always easy going. If one is going to read Copleston, one is going to have to make an extensive time commitment. However, the end result will be rewarding, since one will leave with a far greater understanding of the period than he or she had before making this endeavor. Ultimately, of course, the purpose of a history such as Copleston's is to whet the student's appetite for a study of the philosophers themselves. To truly understand the work of a great thinker, one must examine the primary-source material. However, Copleston's survey provides an excellent overview so that one can more readily navigate the primary-source material when the time comes.

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