

The View From Nowhere Thomas Nagel

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What Does It All Mean?:A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy - Thomas Nagel 1987-10-15

Should the hard questions of philosophy matter to ordinary people? In this down-to-earth, nonhistorical guide, Thomas Nagel, the distinguished author of *Mortal Questions* and *The View From Nowhere*, brings philosophical problems to life, revealing in vivid, accessible prose why they have continued to fascinate and baffle thinkers across the centuries. Arguing that the best way to learn about philosophy is to tackle its problems head-on, Nagel turns to some of the most important questions we can ask about ourselves. Do we really have free will? Why should we be moral? What is the relation between our minds and our brains? Is there life after death? How should we feel about death? In a universe so vast, billions of light years across, can anything we do with our lives really matter? And does it matter if it doesn't matter? These are perennial questions we ask about the human condition, and Nagel probes them, and others like them, thoughtfully, clearly, and with humor. He states his own opinions freely but with refreshing modesty, always leaving it open to readers to entertain other solutions, encouraging them to think for themselves. Nagel is eminently qualified to introduce the uninitiated to the world of philosophical inquiry. Singled out by the *Chicago Literary Review* as "one of the sharpest analytic philosophers in America today," he has been praised in the *New York Times Book Review* for writing "sensitively and elegantly" and in the *Times Literary Supplement* for his ability, rare among philosophers, to combine "profundity with clarity and simplicity of expression." *Never rarefied*, *What Does It All Mean?* opens our eyes to a side of the world we rarely consider, demonstrating that philosophy is no empty study but an indispensable key to understanding our lives. It challenges us to think hard and clearly, to ask questions, to try out ideas and raise possible objections to them--in short, to become philosophers ourselves.

Mortal Questions (Canto Classics) - Thomas Nagel 2012-03-26

Preface Sources 1 Death 2 The absurd 3 Moral luck 4 Sexual perversion 5 War and massacre 6 Ruthlessness in public life 7 The policy of preference 8 Equality 9 The fragmentation of value 10 Ethics without biology 11 Brain bisection and the unity of consciousness 12 What is it like to be a bat? 13 Panpsychism 14 Subjective and objective Index.

Time's Arrow and Archimedes' Point - Huw Price 1997-12-04

Why is the future so different from the past? Why does the past affect the future and not the other way around? What does quantum mechanics really tell us about the world? In this important and accessible book, Huw Price throws fascinating new light on some of the great mysteries of modern physics, and connects them in a wholly original way. Price begins with the mystery of the arrow of time. Why, for example, does disorder always increase, as required by the second law of thermodynamics? Price shows that, for over a century, most physicists have thought about these problems the wrong way. Misled by the human perspective from within time, which distorts and exaggerates the differences between past and future, they have fallen victim to what Price calls the "double standard fallacy": proposed explanations of the difference between the past and the future turn out to rely on a difference which has been slipped in at the beginning, when the physicists themselves treat the past and future in different ways. To avoid this fallacy, Price argues, we need to overcome our natural tendency to think about the past and the future differently. We need to imagine a point outside time -- an Archimedean "view from nowhen" -- from which to

observe time in an unbiased way. Offering a lively criticism of many major modern physicists, including Richard Feynman and Stephen Hawking, Price shows that this fallacy remains common in physics today -- for example, when contemporary cosmologists theorize about the eventual fate of the universe. The "big bang" theory normally assumes that the beginning and end of the universe will be very different. But if we are to avoid the double standard fallacy, we need to consider time symmetrically, and take seriously the possibility that the arrow of time may reverse when the universe recollapses into a "big crunch." Price then turns to the greatest mystery of modern physics, the meaning of quantum theory. He argues that in missing the Archimedean viewpoint, modern physics has missed a radical and attractive solution to many of the apparent paradoxes of quantum physics. Many consequences of quantum theory appear counterintuitive, such as Schrodinger's Cat, whose condition seems undetermined until observed, and Bell's Theorem, which suggests a spooky "nonlocality," where events happening simultaneously in different places seem to affect each other directly. Price shows that these paradoxes can be avoided by allowing that at the quantum level the future does, indeed, affect the past. This demystifies nonlocality, and supports Einstein's unpopular intuition that quantum theory describes an objective world, existing independently of human observers: the Cat is alive or dead, even when nobody looks. So interpreted, Price argues, quantum mechanics is simply the kind of theory we ought to have expected in microphysics -- from the symmetric standpoint. *Time's Arrow and Archimedes' Point* presents an innovative and controversial view of time and contemporary physics. In this exciting book, Price urges physicists, philosophers, and anyone who has ever pondered the mysteries of time to look at the world from the fresh perspective of Archimedes' Point and gain a deeper understanding of ourselves, the universe around us, and our own place in time.

Skepticism - Keith DeRose 1999

Skepticism: Contemporary Reader brings together the most important recent contributions to the discussion of skepticism. Covering major approaches to the skeptical problem, it features essays by Anthony Brueckner, Keith DeRose, Fred Dretske, Graeme Forbes, Christopher Hill, David Lewis, Thomas Nagel, Robert Nozick, Hilary Putnam, Ernest Sosa, Gail Stine, Barry Stroud, Peter Unger, and Ted Warfield.

What We Owe to Each Other - T. M. Scanlon 2000-11-15

How do we judge whether an action is morally right or wrong? If an action is wrong, what reason does that give us not to do it? Why should we give such reasons priority over our other concerns and values? In this book, T. M. Scanlon offers new answers to these questions, as they apply to the central part of morality that concerns what we owe to each other. According to his contractualist view, thinking about right and wrong is thinking about what we do in terms that could be justified to others and that they could not reasonably reject. He shows how the special authority of conclusions about right and wrong arises from the value of being related to others in this way, and he shows how familiar moral ideas such as fairness and responsibility can be understood through their role in this process of mutual justification and criticism. Scanlon bases his contractualism on a broader account of reasons, value, and individual well-being that challenges standard views about these crucial notions. He argues that desires do not provide us with reasons, that states of affairs are not the primary bearers of value, and that well-being is not as important for rational decision-making as it is commonly held to be. Scanlon is a pluralist about both moral and non-

moral values. He argues that, taking this plurality of values into account, contractualism allows for most of the variability in moral requirements that relativists have claimed, while still accounting for the full force of our judgments of right and wrong.

Mind and Cosmos - Thomas Nagel 2012-11-22

The modern materialist approach to life has conspicuously failed to explain such central mind-related features of our world as consciousness, intentionality, meaning, and value. This failure to account for something so integral to nature as mind, argues philosopher Thomas Nagel, is a major problem, threatening to unravel the entire naturalistic world picture, extending to biology, evolutionary theory, and cosmology. Since minds are features of biological systems that have developed through evolution, the standard materialist version of evolutionary biology is fundamentally incomplete. And the cosmological history that led to the origin of life and the coming into existence of the conditions for evolution cannot be a merely materialist history, either. An adequate conception of nature would have to explain the appearance in the universe of materially irreducible conscious minds, as such. Nagel's skepticism is not based on religious belief or on a belief in any definite alternative. In *Mind and Cosmos*, he does suggest that if the materialist account is wrong, then principles of a different kind may also be at work in the history of nature, principles of the growth of order that are in their logical form teleological rather than mechanistic. In spite of the great achievements of the physical sciences, reductive materialism is a world view ripe for displacement. Nagel shows that to recognize its limits is the first step in looking for alternatives, or at least in being open to their possibility.

Current Controversies in Philosophy of Perception - Bence Nanay 2017-05-08

This book provides an up-to-date and accessible overview of the hottest and most influential contemporary debates in philosophy of perception, written especially for this volume by many of the most important philosophers of the field. The book addresses the following key questions: Can perception be unconscious? What is the relation between perception and attention? What properties can we perceive? Are perceptual states representations? How is vision different from the other sense modalities (like hearing or smell)? How do these sense modalities interact with one another? Contributors are Ned Block, Berit Brogaard, Alex Byrne, Robert Kentridge, John Kulvicki, Heather Logue, Mohan Matthen, Bence Nanay, Matt Nudds, Casey O'Callaghan, Adam Pautz, Ian Phillips, Susanna Siegel and Wayne Wu.

Rethinking the Good - Larry S. Temkin 2014-12-04

In choosing between moral alternatives -- choosing between various forms of ethical action -- we typically make calculations of the following kind: A is better than B; B is better than C; therefore A is better than C. These inferences use the principle of transitivity and are fundamental to many forms of practical and theoretical theorizing, not just in moral and ethical theory but in economics. Indeed they are so common as to be almost invisible. What Larry Temkin's book shows is that, shockingly, if we want to continue making plausible judgments, we cannot continue to make these assumptions. Temkin shows that we are committed to various moral ideals that are, surprisingly, fundamentally incompatible with the idea that "better than" can be transitive. His book develops many examples where value judgments that we accept and find attractive, are incompatible with transitivity. While this might seem to leave two options -- reject transitivity, or reject some of our normative commitments in order to keep it -- Temkin is neutral on which path to follow, only making the case that a choice is necessary, and that the cost either way will be high. Temkin's book is a very original and deeply unsettling work of skeptical philosophy that mounts an important new challenge to contemporary ethics.

Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy - Christopher Janaway 1989-03-09

Arthur Schopenhauer's central philosophical achievement was his account of the self and its relation to the world of objects. Embracing epistemological, metaphysical, psychological, and physiological concerns, his dynamic system of thought reveals in a unique way the serious philosophical conflicts that can arise when we think about the self. This book is the first full-length study of this theme, and Christopher Janaway's approach to it is historical, yet at the same time has a clear philosophical emphasis. He explores in unusual depth Schopenhauer's often ambivalent relation to Kant, seeing him as a pertinent critic, especially on the issues of idealism and free will. He shows that, while accepting transcendental idealism and the notion of a pure knowing 'I', Schopenhauer was always concerned to establish a rival view of the self as willing:

primarily active, embodied, organic, and manifesting pre-rational ends and drives. In the final part of the book Janaway highlights the influence of Schop

The False Prison - David Pears 1987-09-03

This is the first of two volumes which describe the development of Wittgenstein's philosophy from the *Tractatus* to his later writings. Part I of this volume is a survey of the whole of his work; Part II is a detailed examination of the central ideas for his early system. The second volume will cover later philosophy. The book fills a gap in the literature on Wittgenstein between brief introductions and detailed commentaries. Although necessarily selective, the doctrines and ideas chosen for detailed discussion are those which reveal the general structure of Wittgenstein's work. David Pears has taken full account of the origins of Wittgenstein's philosophy and its relation to the philosophies of his predecessors and contemporaries. But the author's main emphasis is on the internal organization of Wittgenstein's thought. Philosophy students concentrate on the details of his work but often find it difficult to see their place in the general pattern. This book presents the general and the particular within a relatively constant framework, thereby making Wittgenstein's thought more accessible to students of philosophy and to non-specialists.

Other Minds - Thomas Nagel 1995-07-27

Over the past twenty-five years, Thomas Nagel has played a major role in the philosophico-biological debate on subjectivity and consciousness. This extensive collection of published essays and reviews offers Nagel's opinionated views on the philosophy of mind, epistemology, and political philosophy, as well as on fellow philosophers like Freud, Wittgenstein, Rawls, Dennett, Chomsky, Searle, Nozick, Dworkin, and MacIntyre.

Equality and Partiality - Thomas Nagel 1995-05-11

Derived from Thomas Nagel's *Locke Lectures*, *Equality and Partiality* proposes a nonutopian account of political legitimacy, based on the need to accommodate both personal and impersonal motives in any credible moral theory, and therefore in any political theory with a moral foundation. Within each individual, Nagel believes, there is a division between two standpoints, the personal and the impersonal. Without the impersonal standpoint, there would be no morality, only the clash, compromise, and occasional convergence of individual perspectives. It is because a human being does not occupy only his own point of view that each of us is susceptible to the claims of others through private and public morality. Political systems, to be legitimate, must achieve an integration of these two standpoints within the individual. These ideas are applied to specific problems such as social and economic inequality, toleration, international justice, and the public support of culture. Nagel points to the problem of balancing equality and partiality as the most important issue with which political theorists are now faced.

There's Something About Mary - Peter Ludlow 2004-11-19

In Frank Jackson's famous thought experiment, Mary is confined to a black-and-white room and educated through black-and-white books and lectures on a black-and-white television. In this way, she learns everything there is to know about the physical world. If physicalism—the doctrine that everything is physical—is true, then Mary seems to know all there is to know. What happens, then, when she emerges from her black-and-white room and sees the color red for the first time? Jackson's knowledge argument says that Mary comes to know a new fact about color, and that, therefore, physicalism is false. The knowledge argument remains one of the most controversial and important arguments in contemporary philosophy. *There's Something About Mary*—the first book devoted solely to the argument—collects the main essays in which Jackson presents (and later rejects) his argument along with key responses by other philosophers. These responses are organized around a series of questions: Does Mary learn anything new? Does she gain only know-how (the ability hypothesis), or merely get acquainted with something she knew previously (the acquaintance hypothesis)? Does she learn a genuinely new fact or an old fact in disguise? And finally, does she really know all the physical facts before her release, or is this a "misdescription"? The arguments presented in this comprehensive collection have important implications for the philosophy of mind and the study of consciousness.

The View From Nowhere - Thomas Nagel 1989-02-09

Discusses the mind-body problem, knowledge, personal identity, free will, ethics, death, reality, values, and the meaning of life.

The View From Nowhere - Thomas Nagel 1986-01-23

Human beings have the unique ability to view the world in a detached way: We can think about the world in terms that transcend our own experience or interest, and consider the world from a vantage point that is, in Nagel's words, "nowhere in particular." At the same time, each of us is a particular person in a particular place, each with his own "personal" view of the world, a view that we can recognize as just one aspect of the whole. How do we reconcile these two standpoints--intellectually, morally, and practically? To what extent are they irreconcilable and to what extent can they be integrated? Thomas Nagel's ambitious and lively book tackles this fundamental issue, arguing that our divided nature is the root of a whole range of philosophical problems, touching, as it does, every aspect of human life. He deals with its manifestations in such fields of philosophy as: the mind-body problem, personal identity, knowledge and skepticism, thought and reality, free will, ethics, the relation between moral and other values, the meaning of life, and death. Excessive objectification has been a malady of recent analytic philosophy, claims Nagel, it has led to implausible forms of reductionism in the philosophy of mind and elsewhere. The solution is not to inhibit the objectifying impulse, but to insist that it learn to live alongside the internal perspectives that cannot be either discarded or objectified. Reconciliation between the two standpoints, in the end, is not always possible.

Central Works of Philosophy, Volume 5 - John Shand 2006-06-12

Ranging over 2,500 years of philosophical writing, this five-volume collection of essays is an unrivalled companion to the study and reading of philosophy. Central Works of Philosophy provides both an overview of particular works and clear and authoritative expositions of their central ideas, giving readers the resources and confidence to read the works themselves. These books offer remarkable insights into the ideas out of which our present ways of thinking emerged and without which they cannot fully be understood.

Thomas Nagel - Alan Thomas 2015-01-28

In the first systematic study of the philosophy of Thomas Nagel, Alan Thomas discusses Nagel's contrast between the "subjective" and the "objective" points of view throughout the various areas of his wide-ranging philosophy. Nagel's original and distinctive contrast between the subjective view and our aspiration to a "view from nowhere" within metaphysics structures the chapters of the book. A "new Humean" in epistemology, Nagel takes philosophical scepticism to be both irrefutable and yet to indicate a profound truth about our capacity for self-transcendence. The contrast between subjective and objective views is then considered in the case of the mind, where consciousness proves to be the central aspect of mind that contemporary theorising fails to acknowledge adequately. The second half of the book analyses Nagel's work on moral and political philosophy where he has been most deeply influential. Topics covered include the contrast between agent-relative and agent-neutral reasons and values, Nagel's distinctive version of a hybrid ethical theory, his discussion of life's meaningfulness and finally his sceptical arguments about whether a liberal society can reconcile the conflicting moral demands of self and other.

Being No One - Thomas Metzinger 2004-08-20

According to Thomas Metzinger, no such things as selves exist in the world: nobody ever had or was a self. All that exists are phenomenal selves, as they appear in conscious experience. The phenomenal self, however, is not a thing but an ongoing process; it is the content of a "transparent self-model." In *Being No One*, Metzinger, a German philosopher, draws strongly on neuroscientific research to present a representationalist and functional analysis of what a consciously experienced first-person perspective actually is. Building a bridge between the humanities and the empirical sciences of the mind, he develops new conceptual toolkits and metaphors; uses case studies of unusual states of mind such as agnosia, neglect, blindsight, and hallucinations; and offers new sets of multilevel constraints for the concept of consciousness. Metzinger's central question is: How exactly does strong, consciously experienced subjectivity emerge out of objective events in the natural world? His epistemic goal is to determine whether conscious experience, in particular the experience of being someone that results from the emergence of a phenomenal self, can be analyzed on subpersonal levels of description. He also asks if and how our Cartesian intuitions that subjective experiences as such can never be reductively explained are themselves ultimately rooted in the deeper representational structure of our conscious minds.

Selves - Galen Strawson 2009-07-30

Is there such a thing as the self? If so, what is it? We all have experience of having or being a self, a hidden inner mental presence. Galen Strawson argues that if we look closely at what experience of a self is like, we may be able to work out what a self must be, if it exists. He concludes that selves do exist, but they are not what we think.

The Sense of the Past - Bernard Williams 2009-02-09

Before his death in 2003, Bernard Williams planned to publish a collection of historical essays, focusing primarily on the ancient world. This posthumous volume brings together a much wider selection, written over some forty years. His legacy lives on in this masterful work, the first collection ever published of Williams's essays on the history of philosophy. The subjects range from the sixth century B.C. to the twentieth A.D., from Homer to Wittgenstein by way of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, Sidgwick, Collingwood, and Nietzsche. Often one would be hard put to say which part is history, which philosophy. Both are involved throughout, because this is the history of philosophy written philosophically. Historical exposition goes hand in hand with philosophical scrutiny. Insights into the past counteract blind acceptance of present assumptions. In his touching and illuminating introduction, Myles Burnyeat writes of these essays: "They show a depth of commitment to the history of philosophy seldom to be found nowadays in a thinker so prominent on the contemporary philosophical scene." The result celebrates the interest and importance to philosophy today of its near and distant past. *The Sense of the Past* is one of three collections of essays by Bernard Williams published by Princeton University Press since his death. In *The Beginning Was the Deed: Realism and Moralism in Political Argument*, selected, edited, and with an introduction by Geoffrey Hawthorn, and *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline*, selected, edited, and with an introduction by A. W. Moore, make up the trio.

The Last Word - Thomas Nagel 2001-11-01

If there is such a thing as reason, it has to be universal. Reason must reflect objective principles whose validity is independent of our point of view--principles that anyone with enough intelligence ought to be able to recognize as correct. But this generality of reason is what relativists and subjectivists deny in ever-increasing numbers. And such subjectivism is not just an inconsequential intellectual flourish or badge of theoretical chic. It is exploited to deflect argument and to belittle the pretensions of the arguments of others. The continuing spread of this relativistic way of thinking threatens to make public discourse increasingly difficult and to exacerbate the deep divisions of our society. In *The Last Word*, Thomas Nagel, one of the most influential philosophers writing in English, presents a sustained defense of reason against the attacks of subjectivism, delivering systematic rebuttals of relativistic claims with respect to language, logic, science, and ethics. He shows that the last word in disputes about the objective validity of any form of thought must lie in some unqualified thoughts about how things are--thoughts that we cannot regard from outside as mere psychological dispositions.

Sir Vidia's Shadow - Paul Theroux 2014-02-11

The acclaimed writer shares an intimate portrait of his former mentor V.S. Naipaul in this memoir of their thirty-year friendship and sudden falling out. Paul Theroux was a young aspiring writer when he met the legendary V.S. Naipaul in Uganda in 1966. There began a friendship that would span continents as both men ascended the ranks of literary stardom. Naipaul's early encouragement of Theroux's talent had a profound impact on him--yet the apprenticeship was not always easy. This heartfelt and revealing account of Theroux's thirty-year friendship with Naipaul explores the unique effect each writer had on the other. Built around exotic landscapes, anecdotes that are revealing, humorous, and melancholy, and three decades of mutual history, this is a personal account of how one develops as a writer and how a friendship waxes and wanes between two men who have set themselves on the perilous journey of a writing life. A New York Times Notable Book

Our Stories - John Martin Fischer 2009

In this collection of essays on the metaphysical issues pertaining to death, the meaning of life, and freedom of the will, John Martin Fischer argues (against the Epicureans) that death can be a bad thing for the individual who dies. He defends the claim that something can be a bad thing--a misfortune--for an individual, even if he never experiences it as bad (and even if he does not any longer exist). Fischer also defends the commonsense asymmetry in our attitudes toward death and prenatal nonexistence: we are

indifferent to the time before we are born, but we regret that we do not live longer. Further, Fischer argues (against the immortality curmudgeons, such as Heidegger and Bernard Williams), that immortal life could be desirable, and shows how the defense of the (possible) badness of death and the (possible) goodness of immortality exhibit a similar structure; on Fischer's view, the badness of death and the goodness of life can be represented on spectra that display certain continuities. Building on Fischer's previous book, *My Way* a major aim of this volume is to show important connections between issues relating to life and death and issues relating to free will. More specifically, Fischer argues that we endow our lives with a certain distinctive kind of meaning--an irreducible narrative dimension of value--by exhibiting free will. Thus, in acting freely, we transform our lives so that our stories matter.

Where the Conflict Really Lies - Alvin Plantinga 2011-08-01

In this long-awaited book, pre-eminent analytical philosopher Alvin Plantinga argues that the conflict between science and theistic religion is actually superficial, and that at a deeper level they are in concord.

Concealment and Exposure - Thomas Nagel 2004-10-14

Thomas Nagel is widely recognized as one of the top American philosophers working today. Reflecting the diversity of his many philosophical preoccupations, this volume is a collection of his most recent critical essays and reviews. The first section, *Public and Private*, focuses on the notion of privacy in the context of social and political issues, such as the impeachment of President Clinton. The second section, *Right and Wrong*, discusses moral, political and legal theory, and includes pieces on John Rawls, G.A. Cohen, and T.M. Scanlon, among others. The final section, *Mind and Reality*, features discussions of Richard Rorty, Donald Davidson, and the Sokal hoax, and closes with a substantial new essay on the mind-body problem. Written with characteristic rigor, these pieces reveal the intellectual passion underlying the incisive analysis for which Nagel is known.

The View From Nowhere - Thomas Nagel 1986-01-23

Human beings have the unique ability to view the world in a detached way: We can think about the world in terms that transcend our own experience or interest, and consider the world from a vantage point that is, in Nagel's words, "nowhere in particular." At the same time, each of us is a particular person in a particular place, each with his own "personal" view of the world, a view that we can recognize as just one aspect of the whole. How do we reconcile these two standpoints--intellectually, morally, and practically? To what extent are they irreconcilable and to what extent can they be integrated? Thomas Nagel's ambitious and lively book tackles this fundamental issue, arguing that our divided nature is the root of a whole range of philosophical problems, touching, as it does, every aspect of human life. He deals with its manifestations in such fields of philosophy as: the mind-body problem, personal identity, knowledge and skepticism, thought and reality, free will, ethics, the relation between moral and other values, the meaning of life, and death. Excessive objectification has been a malady of recent analytic philosophy, claims Nagel, it has led to implausible forms of reductionism in the philosophy of mind and elsewhere. The solution is not to inhibit the objectifying impulse, but to insist that it learn to live alongside the internal perspectives that cannot be either discarded or objectified. Reconciliation between the two standpoints, in the end, is not always possible.

The Quest for Reality - Barry Stroud 2002-03-14

We say "the grass is green" or "lemons are yellow" to state what everyone knows. But are the things we see around us really colored, or do they only look that way because of the effects of light rays on our eyes and brains? Is color somehow "unreal" or "subjective" and dependent on our human perceptions and the conditions under which we see things? Distinguished scholar Barry Stroud investigates these and related questions in *The Quest for Reality*. In this long-awaited book, he examines what a person would have to do and believe in order to reach the conclusion that everyone's perceptions and beliefs about the color of things are "illusions" and do not accurately represent the way things are in the world as it is independently of us. Arguing that no such conclusion could be consistently reached, Stroud finds that the conditions of a successful unmasking of color cannot all be fulfilled. The discussion extends beyond color to present a serious challenge to many other philosophical attempts to discover the way things really are. A model of subtle, elegant, and rigorous philosophical writing, this study will attract a wide audience from all areas of philosophy.

Reading Freud - Peter Gay 1990-01-01

Essays discuss Freud's interest in Shakespeare, his choices for the names of his six children, his love of science, and his ambivalent feelings toward his father.

Minds and Bodies - Colin McGinn 1997-08-28

In *Minds and Bodies*, Colin McGinn offers proof that contemporary philosophy, in the hands of a consummate reviewer, can be the occasion not only sharp critical assessment, but also writing so clear and engaging that readers with no special background in the subject but simply a taste for challenging idea can feel welcome. Gathering nearly forty review-essays printed mainly in nonspecialist publications over the past twenty years, McGinn, a distinguished philosopher and teacher, measures the best of recent Anglo-American philosophical writing, considering books by Thomas Nagel, John Searle, and Daniel Dennett, among others, and navigating with energy and wit important new work in ethics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. Opening with a section on philosophical lives--books written on or by Ludwig Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell, Charles Peirce, and A. J. Ayer-- McGinn moves to the question of consciousness, offering readers two dozen crisp and provocative pieces on work seeking to define and illuminate the mind, its activity, and its relation to the world of physical objects. Closing with a section on ethics, McGinn brings a bold and sharply original perspective to argument in such controversial areas as animal rights and feminist moral theory. A bracing collection of masterfully written reviews that together form an accessible picture of philosophy as it is practiced today, *Minds and Bodies* makes permanent the critical reflections of a gifted philosopher and writer and is destined to find an appreciative audience both within the philosophical community and in the wider culture of intellectually curious readers.

Self-Consciousness and Objectivity - Sebastian Rödl 2018-01-08

Sebastian Rödl undermines a foundational dogma of contemporary philosophy: that knowledge, in order to be objective, must be knowledge of something that is as it is, independent of being known to be so. This profound work revives the thought that knowledge, precisely on account of being objective, is self-knowledge: knowledge knowing itself.

What Does It All Mean? - Thomas Nagel 1987-10-15

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.

The View from Nowhere - Professor of Philosophy and Fiorello Laguardia Professor of Law Thomas Nagel 1986

Discusses the mind-body problem, knowledge, personal identity, free will, ethics, death, reality, values, and the meaning of life.

Fellow Creatures - Christine Marion Korsgaard 2018

Presents a compelling new view of our moral relationships to the other animals

The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty - Eric Matthews 2014-12-18

In this introduction to the life and thought of one of the most important French thinkers of the twentieth-century Eric Matthews shows how Merleau-Ponty has contributed to current debates in philosophy, such as the nature of consciousness, the relation between biology and personality, the historical understanding of human thought and society, and many others. Surveying the whole range of Merleau-Ponty's thinking, the author examines his views about the nature of phenomenology and the primacy of perception; his account of human embodiment, being-in-the-world, and his understanding of human behaviour; his conception of the self and its relation to other selves; and, his views on society, politics, and the arts. A final chapter considers his later thought, published posthumously. The ideas of Merleau-Ponty are shown to be of immense importance to the development of French philosophy and the author evaluates his distinctive contributions and relates his thought to that of his predecessors, contemporaries and successors, both in

France and elsewhere. This unrivalled introduction will be welcomed by philosophers and cognitive scientists as well as students taking courses in contemporary continental philosophy.

Points of View - A. W. Moore 2000

In this unusual and ambitious study, A.W. Moore argues that it is possible to think about the world with no point of view. The result of Moore's thinking leads to a powerful critique of our own finitude.

Reasons and the Good - Roger Crisp 2006-08-24

In *Reasons and the Good* Roger Crisp answers some of the oldest questions in moral philosophy. Claiming that a fundamental issue in normative ethics is what ultimate reasons for action we might have, he argues that the best statements of such reasons will not employ moral concepts. He investigates and explains the nature of reasons themselves; his account of how we come to know them combines an intuitionist epistemology with elements of Pyrrhonist scepticism. He defends a hedonistic theory of well-being and an account of practical reason according to which we can give some, though not overriding, priority to our own good over that of others. The book develops original lines of argument within a framework of some traditional but currently less popular views.

Mind, Value, and Reality - John McDowell 2001-12-21

This volume collects some of John McDowell's influential papers, written at various times over the last two

decades. One group of essays deals mainly with issues in the interpretation of the ethical writings of Aristotle and Plato. A second group of papers contains more direct treatments of questions in moral philosophy that arise naturally out of reflection on the Greek tradition. Some of the essays in the second group exploit Wittgensteinian ideas about reason in action, and they open into the third group of papers, which contains readings of central elements in Wittgenstein's difficult later work. A fourth group deals with issues in the philosophy of mind and with questions about personal identity and the special character of first-personal thought and speech.

Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament - Thomas Nagel 2010

This volume collects essays and reviews by Thomas Nagel in three controversial subject areas: first, religious belief and its relation to science and philosophy; second, the interpretation of liberal political theory, especially in an international context; third, the question of what it is to be human--the form of human consciousness and the source of human values.

Ways a World Might Be - Robert C. Stalnaker 2003-08-07

Robert Stalnaker draws together in this volume the extent of his work in metaphysics. The central theme is the role of possible worlds in articulating our various metaphysical commitments. The essays presented reflect on the nature of metaphysics, with two of the essays featured being published for the first time.

Central Works of Philosophy: The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - John Shand 2005