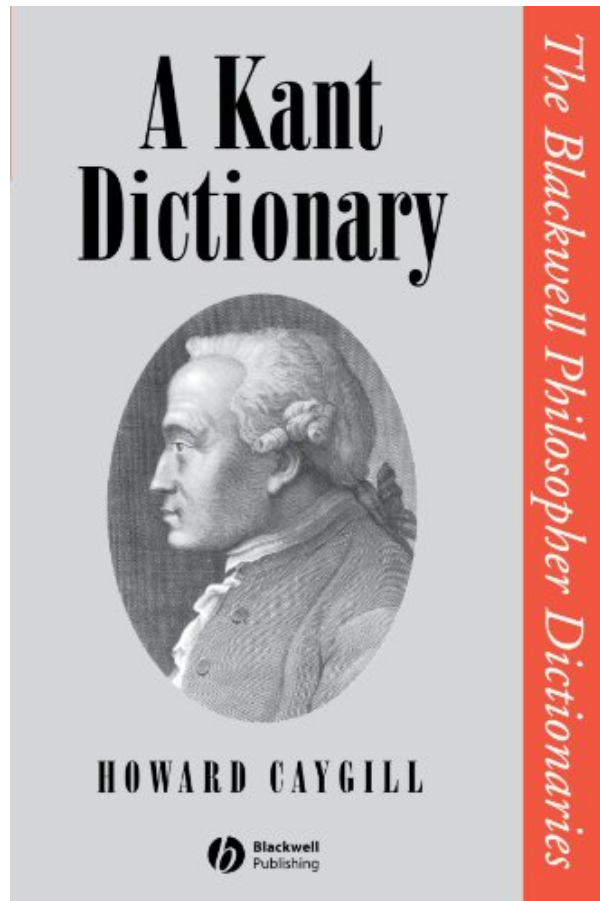


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This volume, the fifth in a series that also covers Locke, Hegel, Rousseau, and Descartes, differs somewhat from its more straightforward predecessors in content. After an introductory essay entitled "Kant and the 'Age of Criticism,'" which provides background on Kant's intellectual and writing history, Caygill (coeditor, *The Fate of the New Nietzsche*, Ashgate, 1993) launches into a dictionary proper. But this is not a dictionary of terms in the conventional sense; the entries are not simply definitions but are more like mini-encyclopedia entries in that they provide analysis and link the terms to other relevant terms in Kant's works. In preparing the dictionary entries this way, Caygill offers a far more useful tool to readers of Kant than the standard dictionary. The bibliographies provide a chronological list of Kant's published writings, a bibliography of works referred to in the dictionary itself, and a list of recommended further readings. One interesting addition is an index that ties the names of philosophers to the dictionary entries in which they appear. This volume deserves a place in all libraries with holdings on philosophy, as do the other volumes in the series. Terry Skeats, Bishop's Univ. Lib., Lennoxville, Quebec
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In this new lexical survey of Kant's works, Howard Caygill presents Kantian concepts and terminology in terms that will introduce and clarify his ideas for students and general readers alike.

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Most helpful customer reviews

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful.
The 5 stars are for usefulness

By Bethany McKinney Fox

This book would be very useful to you if you are taking an undergraduate course in Kantian philosophy. If you're having trouble remembering what Kant means when he uses the words "transcendentalism" and "ethics" and "pure reason" and stuff like that, this book will be a good resource. And the definitions aren't just a few words, many are more than a page. The only warning I would place on this book is that many of the definitions provided are interpretive of the philosophy rather than just descriptive. So that could cause a problem if you have a professor who is fully persuaded in his own interpretation. But overall this is a good and helpful book to have to quickly reacquaint yourself with most of Kant's main philosophical ideas and terms.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Solid and Quite helpful Dictionary on Kant's Philosophy

By T. B. Vick

From A to Z, here is a dictionary on Kant's philosophy which, surprisingly enough, is quite helpful. For someone who is trying to gain a better understanding of Kant's philosophy this text is an invaluable tool to have handy. It is easy to use (since it is an A to Z topical dictionary) and contains a few extra features such as an Introduction on Kant and the Language of Philosophy, an article on Kant and the 'Age of Criticism,' a very handy chronology of Kant's published writings, a section called "Works Referred to in the Text" which sites all the works used to put this dictionary together, a recommended reading list (quite nice feature), and an index of philosophers and philosophical concepts.

Thus, for a text dealing with Kant, the reader gets not only great information on Kant's philosophy, but on his actual works, his concepts, his time period, and information on those philosophers who preceded and followed him.

What is more, a student can use this text to branch out into deeper study on Kant's philosophy due to the recommended reading, but also by way of the text itself. What I mean is, the entries include cross references, text abbreviations where the information (or concept) can be found in Kant's work, and the German origin of the entry/word/concept itself.

Overall, this is a very nice edition to anyone's philosophical library. Moreover, it is one of the better reference works I have seen or used in my research of Immanuel Kant. I highly recommend this text.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

for the ordinary person

By cvairag

I forget the exact words and who said them, but a more recent philosopher once observed that Kant wrote for the 'salvation of the ordinary man, in words that the ordinary man could not possibly understand'. This problem, compounded by the even more abstruse interpretations of Kantian terminology offered by contemporary analytic philosophers, exacerbates the notorious difficulties in following the meaning of the terminology employed by Kant in his arguments in the way that: 1) Kant intended them to be understood, and 2) allows one to meaningfully participate in contemporary discourse surrounding this essential work. Kant is a thinker, like Spinoza before him, whom one must come to terms with. Yet, to understand the terms he uses, one must have a quick, dictionary reference, ready to hand - immediate access to definitions of the terms as one reads. This need is met here. While excellent works like the widely acclaimed CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO KANT are wonderful aids in helping us understand these seminal and challenging texts, they are not ordered in the reference style format which is needed when reading Kant.

Caygill's excellent ancillary work, written in clear, unencumbered prose, is worthy of the highest approbation. I ask the prospective reader: Where else are you going to find explanations of all the terminology in Kant, and all the abbreviations used in the critical literature, critically juried by some of the top Kant scholars in the world, arranged in alphabetical order, all in one well-ordered, easily accessed volume?

Ironically, as Caygill informs us, in the entry for "definition", that, decribing definition as the presentation of

the "...the complete, original concept of a thing within the limits of its concept", Kant "...goes to some length to show that, strictly speaking, there can be no philosophical definitions. Empirical concepts cannot be defined because it is impossible to know their precise limits, nor is it possible to be certain that they are original. They may be explicated by making their contents explicit, but they do not fulfill the criteria of definition. Nor do a priori concepts, since it is impossible to be certain that analysis has been completely effected: "the completeness of the analysis of my concept is always in doubt , and a multiplicity of suitable examples suffices only to make the completeness probable, never to make it apodeictically certain". (CPR A 729/ B 757)

Albeit, Caygill does well enough to warrant that there is no one approaching Kant's texts, regardless of their level of expertise (and most of us have relatively little, who would not be privileged to have this comprehensive reference ready-to-hand.

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