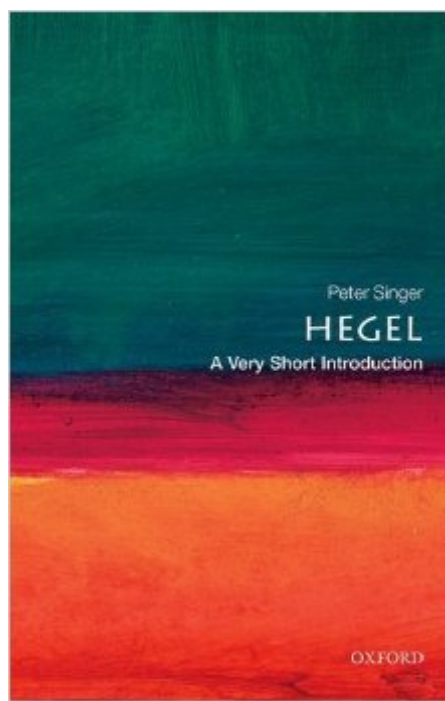


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Hegel: A Very Short Introduction



Synopsis

Hegel is regarded as one of the most influential figures on modern political and intellectual development. After painting Hegel's life and times in broad strokes, Peter Singer goes on to tackle some of the more challenging aspects of Hegel's philosophy. Offering a broad discussion of Hegel's ideas and an account of his major works, Singer explains what have often been considered abstruse and obscure ideas in a clear and inviting manner. About the Series: Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, Very Short Introductions offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam

Book Information

Paperback: 152 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; Revised ed. edition (December 6, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 019280197X

ISBN-13: 978-0192801975

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.3 x 4.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #45,262 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #78 in Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Modern #79 in Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > History & Surveys #85 in Â Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Philosophy > History & Surveys

Customer Reviews

The Australian moral philosopher, Peter Singer, does his best to make Hegel more accessible. In some ways, Singer is the obvious man for the job, a philosopher at Princeton who served as Chair of the Philosophy department at Monash University, who is obviously versed in both analytical and continental philosophy. In other ways, Singer seems the odd man out of the job, working in moral philosophy more than philosophy of history and religion, and working primarily in preference utilitarian theory, which is many metaphorical miles away from the Hegelian tradition. Furthermore, to simplify Hegel is a huge task as Hegel is not only systematically complex, but uses language idiosyncratically and often overlays meaning in his words so that they have both a possible religious and a secular interpretation. To make matters worse, Schiller, Fichte, and Kant get read "into" Hegel

as Hegel was in dialogue with all of them, but differed on key points. Then, adding even more complication, there are several traditions of interpreting Hegel which often get read back into the text: the Marxist reading, the Feuerbachian one, the analytic response, the transcendentalist reading, the British idealist reading, etc. Singer tries to do this with a bit of bait and switch. His first two chapters he focuses on Hegel's biography and philosophy of history. However, Singer does not quote Hegel very much during these chapters. Focusing on Schiller, Marx, and even F.H. Bradley to simplify the point. Furthermore, Singer allows one to think Hegel's definition of freedom were standard, and even implies that Hegel's economic values were closer to Marx's than Philosophy of Right and Science of Logic actually indicate.

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