



# Descartes to Derrida: An Introduction to European Philosophy

By Peter Sedgwick

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This volume provides a critical survey of issues in European philosophy from Descartes to the present.

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## **Descartes to Derrida: An Introduction to European Philosophy By Peter Sedgwick Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #2370608 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Wiley-Blackwell
- Published on: 2001-02-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.70" h x 1.00" w x 6.80" l, 1.11 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 328 pages



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"If, like me, you find most philosophical commentaries on the work of such thinkers as Derrida, Deleuze and Levinas scarcely less obscure and jargon-saturated than the originals, then this is the book for you." *Byron Williston, Philosophy in Review*

"In general, American students find "continental" thought somewhat less accessible than its analytic counterpart. ...In light of this, such an introductory work on European thought is a welcome aid to the reading of the relevant primary sources. But the value of such a text rests on the clarity of its own presentation. Sedgwick's writing is clear, elegant, well organised and perfectly attuned to the concerns outlined above. I cannot help but mention another perfect audience for this book: faculty, such as myself. I confess to learning an enormous amount of philosophy from Sedgwick." *Patrick Mooney, John Carroll University, in the Times Higher Education Supplement*

"This book should take a place as one of the key texts in humanities programs throughout the English-speaking world." *R Shumaker, Choice, June 2002*

"With a reliable lucidity, Peter Sedgwick connects central questions in contemporary continental thought - the limits of knowledge, and the question of the subject - with the traditional history of modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant. This book demonstrates beyond doubt that no student of philosophy today can claim to be educated unless they have come to terms with the issues and figures it deals with so freshly and helpfully." *David Wood, Vanderbilt University*

"This will be the first book I recommend to students and non-philosophers looking for a guide into European philosophy, and academic philosophers - whether 'analytic' or 'continental' - will also profit from its clear and jargon-free explications of some notoriously complicated philosophical thinkers." *Alan D. Schrift, Grinnell College*

"Peter Sedgwick has produced a remarkably lucid introduction to the dominant trends in European philosophy. Even the challenging projects of contemporary, postmodern philosophy are rendered accessible to an audience of non-specialists. This is a welcome, engaging resource for both students and teachers of the history of philosophy." *Daniel W. Conway, Pennsylvania State University*

"If ... you find most philosophical commentaries on the work of such thinkers as Derrida, Deleuze and Levinas scarcely less obscure and jargon-saturated than the originals, then this is the book for you. Peter Sedgwick has given us a remarkably lucid account of the major trends in the history of European thought, from the early seventeenth century to the late twentieth." *Philosophy in Review*

#### From the Back Cover

This critical survey of issues in European philosophy offers detailed accounts of crucial texts by important thinkers. Sedgwick draws key ideas from these sources, analyzing the various relationships between them and linking them to central themes in philosophical enquiry, such as the nature of subjectivity, reason and experience, anti-humanism, and the nature of language.

Areas explored include epistemology, metaphysics and ontology, ethics and politics. Aspects of the work of a broad range of thinkers is considered in detail, including Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Adorno and Horkheimer, Heidegger, Deleuze and Guatarri, Levinas, Derrida, Althusser, Foucault and Lyotard.

This intriguing new work presents the complex ideas of European philosophy in a straightforward manner, and will be of interest to both introductory and advanced-level readers.

#### About the Author

**Peter Sedgwick** is Lecturer in Philosophy at Cardiff University. He is editor of *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader* (Blackwell, 1995) and co-editor, with Andrew Edgar, of *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory* (1999).

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