



The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant

Volume 1: The Interpretive Tradition

Edited by Richard Schacht, *University of Illinois*

978-0-393-97468-3 • 1,925 pages • Paperback • June 2017

Experts comment on *The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant* • *The Interpretive Tradition*

“After Kant’s great synthesis of the rationalist and empiricist traditions toward the end of the 18th century, the subsequent development of western philosophy was characterized—and somewhat scarred—by a radical and divisive bifurcation into two quite divergent traditions: the so-called ‘analytic’ tradition, whose center of gravity was in the English speaking world, and a ‘Continental’ tradition, whose homeland was on the continent of Europe, particularly in France and Germany. It is a singular virtue of *The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant* to acknowledge this schism by producing two large volumes of readings, one on each of the traditions, as the two halves of a single story, which it encompasses. In some contexts it makes good sense to follow the precept of Yogi Berra: ‘When you come to a fork in the road, take it!’

“Richard Schacht’s volume on the philosophic tradition that developed after Kant on the continent of Europe, which he prefers to call ‘the interpretive tradition,’ is remarkable in its comprehensiveness. It includes substantial and carefully selected readings from pretty much all of the strands of thought that make up this tradition. I believe it is destined to become a standard source book for all of those who want to become acquainted with this rich and varied body of philosophic thought.”

— Ivan Soll, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

“*The Interpretive Tradition* is an essential collection. It gathers together, for the first time to my knowledge, a selection of indispensable texts in modern Western Philosophy during the period from Kant to the present that approach philosophy from an interpretive, rather than an analytic, perspective. The task of choosing and introducing these texts is nothing less than heroic, and Richard Schacht has performed it admirably. He includes representative texts from the great traditions including the work of Kant and the Idealists, the 19th century Naturalists such as Marx, Wollstonecraft and Nietzsche, and the 20th century Phenomenologists from Husserl and Heidegger to Simone Weil, Emmanuel Lévinas and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. He concludes the anthology with a fascinating and eclectic collection of more contemporary texts on human reality from figures like W.E.B. Du Bois, Simone de Beauvoir, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Jürgen Habermas, and Charles Taylor. This anthology will be the go-to text for any introductory class in what used to be called ‘Continental Philosophy,’ as well as a crucial addition to the book-shelf of any person interested in this tradition. Bravo, Richard Schacht!”

— Sean D. Kelly, *Harvard University*

“In recent decades, the history of ‘late modern’ philosophy—roughly, philosophical activity in the two centuries since Kant—has truly come into its own. The field has seen an explosion of scholarly advances and strong, steady student interest. The arrival of the substantial, two volume *Norton Anthology* covering this period is therefore most welcome, and this is particularly so for the volume covering the interpretive tradition, edited by Richard Schacht. The volume’s unification of the tradition around a contest of interpretations of human reality affords students and readers a clear avenue of approach, and the volume provides an unusually comprehensive selection of philosophers and texts for study. Many philosophers in this tradition are notoriously difficult, and Schacht’s selections are carefully designed to afford students effective entry into the work. The focus of Hegel selections on Hegel’s own introductions to his works is especially helpful. The editorial apparatus is unfailingly useful, and (as befits the focus on an essentially interpretive project) Schacht pays careful attention to the nuances of important terms in their original languages, making those nuances available to the Anglophone reader. While no anthology can be entirely comprehensive in scope, this volume offers an array of riches, and should become a ‘go-to’ text for courses in nineteenth and twentieth century European philosophy.”

— R. Lanier Anderson, *Stanford University*

“*The Interpretive Tradition* gives a synoptic picture of two centuries of philosophical thought on reality, life, humanity, society, knowledge, morality, and individuality—and much else besides. Its contents, along with the editor’s introductions, allow the reader to follow different paths through its extraordinarily rich material and makes every path taken a dazzling intellectual adventure. It is a book that one will take up again and again and always leave it more knowledgeable—and perhaps a little more wise.”

— Alexander Nehamas, *Princeton University*

“This volume will without question become a very valuable, useful resource. The sections are quite representative, intelligently chosen, wisely edited, and coherently presented. This will not only be a staple of philosophy courses for many years to come—it is in itself a valuable resource for any reader. I can’t think how such a volume could have been better done.”

— Robert B. Pippin, *University of Chicago*

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. • Independent and Employee-owned

WWNORTON.COM • Contact your local Norton representative at WWNORTON.COM/COLLEGE/CONTACT • PAGE 1

"*The Interpretive Tradition* is a much-needed anthology of primary sources spanning the 19th and 20th century post-Kantian 'interpretive' tradition, as distinct from the 'analytic' tradition, and without being unduly locked into the geographical category of 'continental' thinkers. The four parts cover idealism, naturalist humanism, phenomenology, and an eclectic range of 20th century writers. The collection surpasses all other attempts to provide readings covering this extensive and multifaceted historical period. Any number of course designs can profitably select from the wide assortment of texts. Helpful introductions and copious bibliographical material round out the anthology's value. Instructors will long be grateful to Richard Schacht for addressing a significant pedagogical need. Highly recommended."

—Lawrence J. Hatab, *Old Dominion University*

"Richard Schacht's *The Interpretive Tradition* is a remarkable volume. It could only have been produced by someone who has spent a long career thinking deeply about how to present fascinating but very difficult material to students at every level. The strategy of identifying this strand of post-Kantian thought as the 'Interpretive' tradition, rather than using the geographical term 'Continental,' is brilliant. First, it tells us something about what unites that tradition philosophically, and second, it allows for expanding the canon in a way that reveals generally overlooked but important connections.

"The volume's four-part structure provides an historically informed way of bringing well-known 'Continental' philosophers (e.g., Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Derrida) together with less studied, but very significant, figures such as Schopenhauer, Emerson, Feuerbach, Cassirer, Scheler, and Jaspers. In addition, there is a fine selection of writings from women philosophers from the period—including Wollstonecraft, Weil, Beauvoir, Arendt, and Butler—and from Black philosophers such as Du Bois and Fanon. The selections are judicious: each has been chosen for its ability to introduce students to the author's main ideas and to connect with other selections found in the volume. The result is an extraordinarily useful and flexible classroom tool which allows the instructor maximal freedom to compose different courses at different levels. Having taught this material for over thirty years, and having struggled to find a way to present the full scope of the post-Kantian tradition, I have often wished that a volume like this existed. I plan to use it in the future, and I expect that a great many others will find it essential as well."

—Steven Crowell, *Rice University*

"This excellent volume fills a longstanding need. It contrives to include a remarkable number of authors by a judicious selection of their writings, informed by the editor's long experience teaching the material. Some authors (such as Schopenhauer) are represented by extensive excerpts from single main works, others (such as Hegel and Nietzsche) by selections from a variety of works, ensuring that the full range of their contributions is covered. By understanding its scope not as 'Continental philosophy' but 'the interpretive tradition,' the volume is able to include American and English writers who engage similar topics with a similar method, which is a great advantage. The introductions to the selections are very helpfully clear and clarifying, and will guide students and general readers alike to the philosophical importance of the material. The volume will be a great source-book in courses covering this philosophical tradition, as well as an accessible guide for the independent reader exploring it on his or her own."

—John Richardson, *New York University*

"In this volume Richard Schacht collects together key figures and texts of what he calls the post-Kantian 'interpretive tradition.' This is the tradition not just of philosophers commonly designated as 'continental' (such as Sartre, Foucault and Derrida); it is more widely the tradition of non-analytic philosophy, and it includes, for example, writings by Emerson, Mill, Du Bois and Arendt. The volume is a highly useful resource both for students and instructors looking for guidance in designing courses. Schacht provides an extensive bibliography, as well as a lucid Introduction, which sketches the Kantian background and the kinds of philosophical problems it stimulated."

—Sally Sedgwick, *University of Illinois-Chicago*

"Norton's two *After Kant* volumes offer tremendous resources for both teaching and research. The volume on the interpretive tradition provides resources for almost any kind of course one would want to teach on 19th or 20th century Continental philosophy. And conceptualizing these texts as belonging to the interpretive (in contrast to the analytic) tradition is a stroke of brilliance that should inspire new lines of research in the history of 19th and 20th century philosophy."

—Maudemarie Clark, *University of California-Riverside*

"Professor Richard Schacht is well known for his many published insightful reflections on various figures in what he calls the 'interpretive tradition' in Western philosophy from Hegel and Nietzsche to twentieth-century figures. In *The Interpretive Tradition* he has offered judicious selections from their works (including such recent philosophers as Judith Butler and Martha Nussbaum) and has indicated, in a way that is as straightforward as it is learned, the overall cultural context within which those philosophers' writings are to be understood. This anthology should prove to be invaluable for instructors in courses on aspects of that tradition, and indeed for anyone seriously interested in learning about its key figures and why they matter."

—Paul Eisenberg, *Indiana University*

"Richard Schacht's *After Kant: The Interpretive Tradition* brings together some of the most influential and fascinating writings in recent Western philosophy. In the wake of modern assaults on the authority of reason, religion, and moral traditions, the thinkers whose writings are gathered here offer innovative and often provocative perspectives on the human being's place in the world and the relative value of our various pursuits. Compact but broadly inclusive, this volume testifies to a rich diversity of philosophical approaches to the challenges of recent times, and it decisively demonstrates that philosophers are still addressing the big questions that are so central to human life."

—Kathleen M. Higgins, *University of Texas-Austin*

"The two volumes of *The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant* combine the two central virtues for such a major project: they are edited by leading specialists in their fields and, accordingly, they contain the most important and pathbreaking texts from both the analytic and the interpretive traditions. What is more, their General Introductions shed substantial philosophical light on the distinctions at play when looking at the two major traditions of philosophy after Kant. The approach laid out in them is highly innovative and absolutely corresponds to the state of the art. The two volumes are indispensable for any student and professor of philosophy."

—Markus Gabriel, *Bonn University (Germany)*