



The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant

Volume 2: The Analytic Tradition

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

“This remarkable new collection takes student-friendly historiography of ‘Analytic philosophy’ to a whole new level. The selection is expertly made, and eruditely introduced. This is not a text-book; it is a wonderfully comprehensive book of good and great texts. It should permanently bury the fantasy that Analytic philosophy by definition has no history. The comprehensiveness of the selection, its ambition, is impressive. Rightly, such disparate voices as Murdoch, Rawls and Fodor are included; the editors escape the straitjacket of thinking of the Analytic as limited to the ‘central’ areas of philosophy, or to a narrowly programmatic version of what ‘Analytic’ means.

“The editors have accomplished an essentially impossible task—capturing Analytic philosophy’s essence and variety in one volume—exceptionally well. They’ve solved, in essence, the riddle of how to present Analytic philosophy in its own terms. Much of their framing of the Analytic tradition is sparkingly new, while remaining true to that tradition. Their suggestion that ‘Continental philosophy’ be renamed, more contentfully, as ‘the interpretive tradition,’ is one that may—one that, I hope, *will*—stick. They helpfully set up the possibility of reading Wittgenstein as the great transcender (along with some Pragmatists, again intelligently included in the volume) of the analytic vs. interpretive divide, potentially uniting once more what after Frege, Moore and Russell were put asunder: the two great recent wings of Western post-Kantian philosophy. This re-uniting could only occur, however, if the fairly-pervasive scientism in ‘English-speaking’ philosophy were itself ended or transcended; the volume and its introduction helps us to understand more than has previously been possible the nature and limits of that scientism. The editors should be commended for a tremendous achievement. This volume, and its companion on ‘the interpretive tradition’, quite simply place our assessment of the Analytic tradition at a new level of seriousness. Students of the subject and indeed many more general readers, not to mention many academics, are in the editors’ debt.”
—Rupert Read, *University of East Anglia (England)*

“This superb book is not merely an outstanding resource for instructors teaching courses in analytic philosophy, but also a much-needed contribution to the historical self-understanding of this philosophical tradition. Together with a wide selection of carefully chosen original texts, the editors supply an exemplary introductory essay that is sure to provide invaluable orientation to any serious student.”
—Adrian Haddock, *University of Stirling (England)*

“This anthology plots an exceptionally useful path through the dense and twisting historical evolution of the analytic tradition in philosophy, as well as illuminating the intellectual background from which it emerged and adumbrating some of its more thought-provoking possibilities for the future. The editors’ introduction offers a clear and sophisticated rationale for their selections, and thereby brings out the extent to which the particular vicissitudes of this tradition make the task of identifying what holds it together unusually challenging and yet a pressing contemporary concern for its participants.”

—Stephen Mulhall, *Oxford University (England)*

“*The Analytic Tradition* is a selection of seminal texts belonging to that tradition, broadly conceived, brought together in a single volume. It is supplemented with everything one might hope for to make this the ideal introductory textbook for courses in the history of analytic philosophy: in-depth introductions to each aspect of the tradition, informative headnotes on each major figure, helpful bibliographical essays on the primary and secondary literature, along with strategically placed explanatory footnotes throughout. As the heading ‘After Kant’ makes clear from the very start: this is meant to be more than just a useful collection of important texts. It is an attempt to delineate the contours of analytic philosophy as a *tradition*, starting with the seismic shift in the history of philosophy brought about by Immanuel Kant. It succeeds admirably in this aim partly by highlighting the tradition’s relation to its predecessors and its dialogue with its philosophical neighbors. It succeeds in incorporating many decisive but often neglected turning points in the latter half of the 19th century, as well as the fateful interaction with American Pragmatism that helped to shape this philosophical movement not only in its Anglo-American heyday, but well beyond. Each individual choice the editors have made, considered in its own right, manages to appear utterly natural and felicitous, while nevertheless perfectly fulfilling its larger purpose of fitting into the overall mosaic. The result is a convincing portrait of one of the most significant traditions in modern philosophy. The pedagogically perfect guide for the uninitiated reader, as well as an unprecedented resource for the informed scholar, this volume will prove an invaluable addition to the library of any serious student of philosophy.”

—Johannes Haag, *Potsdam University (Germany)*

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"If Conant and Elliott hadn't done it, I would have thought it was impossible—an anthology that does full justice to the breadth and depth of analytic philosophy, and makes available the significant insights of the philosophers who have shaped the tradition and who loom large in determining its future. Conant and Elliott have, as well, provided the historical context for understanding the tradition, and informative and helpful headnotes illuminating the individual entries. All in all, this is a remarkable achievement, indispensable for beginners and useful for advanced students or anyone wanting to think about what analytic philosophy is and how it got to where it is now."

—Cora Diamond, *University of Virginia*

"*The Analytic Tradition* is a monumental contribution, and a remarkable philosophical achievement in its own right—unimaginable, really, until its present realization. This is the book one wishes one had as a young student of philosophy; or earlier, when one felt an inkling for philosophy, and wished to get a sense of what philosophy had come to be in the academic world, and how it has come to be that way. Here is an anthology that is genuinely philosophical, carefully and thoughtfully composed with the aim of fostering an understanding of analytic philosophy that goes counter to the sorts of simplistic narratives that young students of philosophy have been likely to encounter up till now.

"The selected texts, together with the preface, a comprehensive general introduction, and shorter introductions for each of the parts of the anthology and for each of the featured philosophers, invite the reader to appreciate the complex and often ambiguous relationships that hold even just among the undisputed exemplars of the analytic tradition in philosophy, as well as between those exemplars and the philosophical history and traditions against which they have sought to define their own work. The volume thereby also encourages the young philosopher to see that there is never, nor was there ever, just one correct way of going on in philosophy—that the path of (true) philosophy is a path of *creative* self-discovery."

—Avner Baz, *Tufts University*

"This volume stands very much in the venerable tradition of Norton Anthologies. It should serve not only as an essential text for the growing number of courses on the history of analytic philosophy, but also as an important resource for those working in the history of analytic philosophy and as a reference for philosophers in other areas. Above all, it will open up broad vistas on the state of recent and current philosophy for the general reader and become a valued addition to the educated person's library. The texts selected for the volume supply, as would be expected, a representative sampling from the 'greatest hits' of analytic philosophy, including central works by the heavyweight figures with whom the tradition originates (e.g. Frege, Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein) and reaches its 'high tide' (Carnap, Ryle, Quine, Austin). The editors have, in addition, gone well beyond this basic charge. Throughout the volume, in fact, the editors have selected works that raise and address issues about the methods and goals of philosophy not primarily by making ideological pronouncements but by showing different conceptions of philosophy in action. Taken as a whole, the volume paints a picture of the vibrant, varied, and sometimes perplexing landscape that constitutes the tradition. The general introduction to the volume and the introductory essays preceding each section provide the best, most thought-provoking introduction to the history of analytic philosophy of which I know. Overall, the volume should succeed admirably in one of its main goals—that of opening up the question of what it means to be an analytic philosopher, whether in the past, present or future."

—Edward Minar, *University of Arkansas*

"Anyone seeking an introduction to the history of analytic philosophy can do no better than to begin with this anthology of primary sources. The selection of authors is comprehensive, and the addition of excerpts from the nineteenth century background helps to set the stage for the development of analytic philosophy as a distinctive tradition. The coverage of American pragmatism provides a significant, often neglected, supplement to this historical background. The inclusion of a wide variety of ethical works is a welcome change from the typical menu in the telling of this history as focused on logic, language, metaphysics, and epistemology—without slighting the coverage of all those central areas.

"The volume eschews a 'great man' approach, instead providing excerpts from the works of dozens of important thinkers. In the preface and introduction, the editors offer a superb overview, essential given the large number of philosophers whose work is excerpted here. They also provide expert guidance to readers, whatever their level of knowledge and their goals in approaching this volume. The supplemental headnotes provide detailed introductions to each of the many philosophers surveyed in this volume. This anthology can be recommended for both undergraduate and graduate teaching, and even more advanced scholars will benefit from the selection and arrangement of the primary sources and the supplemental editorial materials." —Michael Kremer, *University of Chicago*

"This Anthology is an extraordinary achievement that could not come at a more opportune moment in the history of analytic philosophy. In the last decades, analytic philosophy has undergone massive transformations and diversifications. This compelled it to reflect on its relation to its own past as well as to other traditions from which it sets itself apart, and to confront the question whether and how it can persist as a tradition. Conant's unflinching judgment in his choice of texts for this anthology as well as his thought-provoking and illuminating introductions open up a vision of an analytic tradition whose vitality lies precisely in its capacity to rethink and redefine its relation to its philosophical other. It requires an extraordinary philosopher to combine a sensitivity to detail in portraying the diverse and surprising moves that philosophers of the analytic tradition have made with a grasp of the larger principles that govern its landmark achievements. Conant displays both abilities in a superb manner. This Anthology will provide a most serviceable aid to any teacher of philosophy classes that deal with the analytic tradition. And it will be necessary reading for anybody seeking to find his or her bearing in this tradition." —Andrea Kern, *Leipzig University (Germany)*

"The editors have done a magnificent job with this volume, both in their brilliant selection of seminal texts and in their marvelously well-informed, clear, insightful, and instructive introductions. I wish I'd had this book when I was younger, but I'm nonetheless very grateful for it now. I'm sure it will be a boon to students and scholars for a long time."

—David Finkelstein, *University of Chicago*

"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 tradition. 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)*