



The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy

By Norman Melchert

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Now in its fifth edition, this historically organized introductory text treats philosophy as a dramatic and continuous story--a conversation about humankind's deepest and most persistent concerns. Tracing the exchange of ideas between history's key philosophers, *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, Fifth Edition, demonstrates that while constructing an argument or making a claim, one philosopher almost always has others in mind. The book addresses the fundamental questions of human life: Who are we? What can we know? How should we live? and What sort of reality do we inhabit?

The fifth edition retains the distinctive feature of previous editions: author Norman Melchert provides a generous selection of excerpts from major philosophical works and makes them more easily understandable to students with his lucid and engaging explanations. Ranging from the Pre-Socratics to Derrida and Quine, the selections are organized historically and include four complete works: Plato's *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, and *Crito*, and Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*. The author's commentary offers a rich intellectual and cultural context for the philosophical ideas conveyed in the excerpts. Extensive cross-referencing shows students how philosophers respond appreciatively or critically to the thoughts of other philosophers. The text is enhanced by two types of exercises--"Basic Questions" and "For Further Thought"--and more than sixty illustrations.

New to the Fifth Edition:

- * A new chapter (25) on Simone de Beauvoir and her contributions to philosophy
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- * Review questions that are now dispersed throughout the chapters (instead of at chapter ends) to follow relevant passages and facilitate classroom discussion

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- * A revised Instructor's Manual and Test Bank--available both on CD and in a printed version--containing essential points, teaching suggestions, and multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay exam questions

The Great Conversation, Fifth Edition, is also available in two paperback volumes to suit your course needs. *Volume I: Pre-Socratics through Descartes* includes chapters 1-13 of the combined volume, while *Volume II: Descartes through Derrida and Quine* includes chapters 12-26.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*The Great Conversation*, Fifth Edition, is unquestionably the best philosophy textbook I have ever read. My students love the book. Melchert writes with utter clarity and his examples are superb. His careful choice of primary sources and brilliant use of them in his prose is nothing short of genius. I generally cringe at the wooden writing style of textbooks, and find some philosophy texts particularly deadly. Melchert's text shatters all of my textbook nightmares."--Thomas Bell, *Brevard College*

About the Author

Norman Melchert is at Lehigh University (Emeritus).

Users Review

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