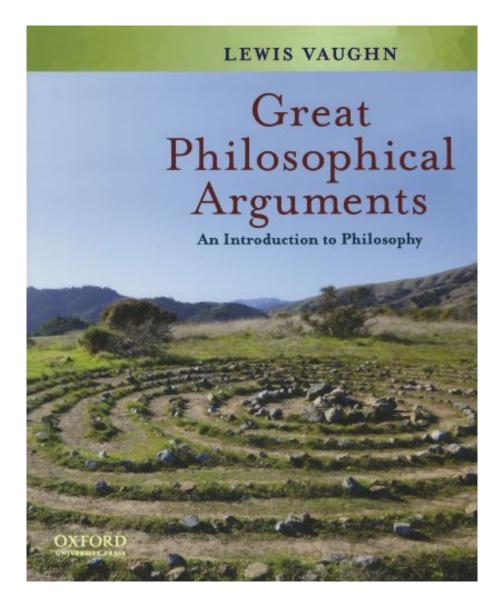


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### Review

"I very much like the general theme of this book. Organizing things around a set of philosophical arguments is a good approach, since the skills of identifying, stating, and critiquing arguments happen to be exactly the skills that ought to be a primary focus of any introductory course."--Dennis Earl, Coastal Carolina University

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"The author's style is a real strength of this book. Clear and engaging, and with a real knack for explaining clearly and quickly where the essence of a problem and the crux of an argument are."--Jozef Müller, University of Florida

### About the Author

Lewis Vaughn is the author or coauthor of numerous books, including Philosophy: The Quest for Truth, Eighth Edition (2011), Classics of Philosophy, Third Edition (2010), Contemporary Moral Arguments (2010), The Power of Critical Thinking, Third Edition (2009), Bioethics (2008), and Writing Philosophy (2005), all published by Oxford University Press.

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A great deal of the satisfaction of studying philosophy lies in exploring its landmark arguments. Working from this premise, Great Philosophical Arguments: An Introduction to Philosophy focuses on the debates that define and drive the field. Editor Lewis Vaughn presents seventy-eight readings--both classic selections and contemporary works--that are topically organized into six chapters: the existence of God, knowledge and skepticism, mind and body, free will and determinism, ethics, and contemporary ethical debates. The readings are grouped by argument into pro/con dialogues within each chapter. Each of the thirty-four arguments is introduced with a brief outline, which is followed by two to four essays presenting the classic statement of the argument, critiques and defenses of it, and discussions of related debates.

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I must say that I would not ever adopt Great Philosophical Arguments. I have taught introduction to philosophy courses for 12 years and seen a large number of textbooks. Like too many, this textbook is another mishmash of excerpts from philosophers. It rips these excerpts out of their context within the philosophers' body of work and some selections are of dubious worth in illustrating the philosophers' main ideas (for example, the Descartes and Hume selections leave out the most important ideas of their overall thought). Worse, the excerpts are ripped out of their historical context and the secondary text offers students no real help in understanding the readings.

This is the type of text that discourages students from further study of philosophy because it fails to show the critical integration of philosophical works with their historical and cultural surroundings and within the larger conversation between philosophers. This textbook does not encourage students to think critically, it gives them the mistaken impression that philosophy is just a collection of random arguments with no connection to real life.

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