

Spinoza's Ethics: A Reader's Guide (Reader's Guides)

By J. Thomas Cook



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The Ethics is one of the undisputed masterworks of early modern philosophy. In this single volume Spinoza offers the reader an unorthodox account of God, a novel version of the mind-body relation, a systematic theory of the emotions and a detailed prescription for human virtue and blessedness. Too controversial to be published during his lifetime, it was surreptitiously printed by Spinoza's friends after his death. Nowadays the Ethics is studied in university classes as an exemplary work of early modern rationalism.

In Spinoza's 'Ethics': A Reader's Guide, J. Thomas Cook explains the philosophical background against which the book was written and the key themes inherent in the text. The book then guides the reader to a clear understanding of the text as a whole, before exploring the reception and influence of this classic philosophical work. This is the ideal companion to study of this most influential and challenging of texts.



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Spinoza's Ethics: A Reader's Guide (Reader's Guides) By J. Thomas Cook Bibliography

• Sales Rank: #2175550 in Books

Brand: Brand: Continuum
Published on: 2008-01-15
Released on: 2008-01-15
Original language: English

• Number of items: 1

• Dimensions: 8.50" h x .40" w x 5.50" l, .53 pounds

• Binding: Paperback

• 184 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"J. Thomas Cook has penned a readable and detailed introduction to one of the most difficult works of the western philosophical tradition... Cook provides a section by section commentary on the *Ethics*, with helpful questions for student readers at the end of each discussion. Throughout the work, and particularly in the last chapter, the author provides an understanding of the controversy surrounding Spinoza and his philosophy." *Grant Havers, Trinity Western University, Canada*, 2009.

"Cook's guide is readable and precise. His style compares favourably in clarity to many other such guides...Importantly, Cook's is one of few recent guidebooks to make a concentrated effort to place Spinoza's philosophy in its historical context and appraise its legacy...Cook has provided a clear and thorough introduction to this well-established reading of Spinoza."

British Journal for the History of Philosophy, 2009

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About the Author

J. Thomas Cook is Professor of Philosophy at Rollins College, Florida, USA. He has taught on the *Ethics* for many years and published numerous articles and chapters on Spinoza. He serves on the Executive Board of the North American Spinoza Society.

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