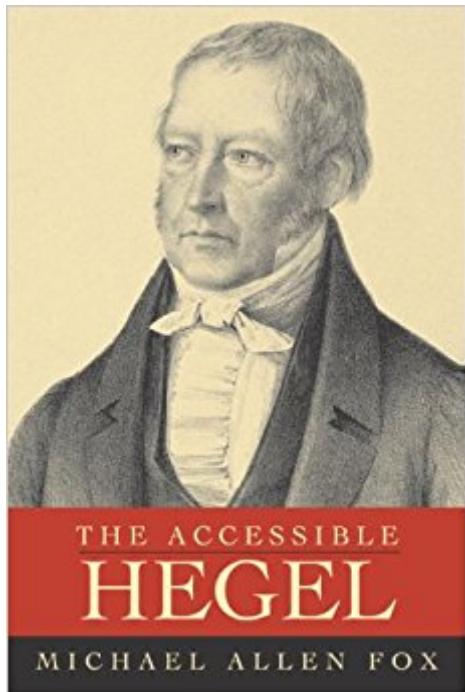


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# The Accessible Hegel



## Synopsis

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was one of the most influential philosophers of the 19th century. Unfortunately, his work is notoriously difficult to understand. There is thus a need for a clear presentation of his major philosophical contributions to help students and other interested persons in approaching the work of this important thinker. A Philosopher Michael Allen Fox admirably fills this need in this lucid explanation of Hegel's ideas. Fox discusses at length the chief component of Hegel's systematic philosophy -- the concept of the dialectic. According to Hegel, in a world of becoming and persistent change, reason progresses through conflict and the resolutions that arise from the dialectic of opposing elements. The tumultuous clash of opposites leads to ever new advances in human knowledge and culture. Fox also considers many of Hegel's other ideas: his difficult notion of the Absolute, the final stage of history in which reason attains perfect mastery of the world and thought realizes its full potential; his dynamic conception of truth as evolving toward total comprehensiveness; the master-slave pattern of human relationships; the social structure of the self; the varied political interpretations and adaptations of Hegel's philosophy on both the Left and the Right; and many other aspects of Hegel's complex system. For both beginners and those already familiar with Hegel's work, this excellent overview of one of philosophy's great geniuses offers many clarifications and insights.

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## Customer Reviews

Michael Allen Fox is professor emeritus of philosophy at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and adjunct professor of humanities at the University of New England in Armidale,

New South Wales, Australia. He is the author of *The Accessible Hegel*, *Deep Vegetarianism*, and several other titles.

This is one of the finest books on Hegel. Presented as a beginner's book, it goes much further into the master's work than any beginner's book usually does. Hegel's central ideas are introduced and cogently explained in clear language. What is more, they are explained briefly without a lot of footnotes and verbiage. One of the best aspects of Fox's approach is his respect for Hegel. In his introduction he makes it quite clear that he's not one of those scandalous writers who, after a thousand mind-numbing chapters on Hegel, then (probably in order to maintain their standing in the utterly corrupt environment of modern academic philosophy) come down like a ton of bricks on the philosopher himself, presenting him either as some stuffy ponderous academic heavyweight out of touch with reality, or, even more preposterously, a raging champion of totalitarianism and proto-Nazi. Other recommended books on Hegel include Leonard Wheat's magnum opus "Hegel's Undiscovered Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis Dialectics" - even though Wheat does denigrate Hegel in his concluding sections, also presenting him as a closet atheist, which, for all Wheat's arguing, is not a strong thesis. Nevertheless, Wheat's masterly book is written so anyone can understand it, and the central and most important ideas of Hegel are dealt with in unparalleled clarity. Peter Singer's excellent work "Hegel: A Very Short Introduction" is also a must have, particularly for beginners. This work is also notable since it is written by an ardent left-winger and atheist, the kind of person who normally grossly misrepresents Hegel and other German Idealists. And top of the list, but only for advanced readers in Idealism, I recommend Glenn Magee's "Hegel and the Hermetic Tradition," the single greatest book ever written on Hegel.

This book is a fantastic introduction to Hegel. Michael Fox succeeds in making this important but often misunderstood (or not understood at all) thinker truly accessible, as the title of his book claims. I checked the hardcover out at my library and was so impressed that I ordered my own copy from . For some reason, though, the print quality in the paperback edition is terrible. It's readable, but it looks like it was run through a 30 year-old Xerox machine that was low on ink. Maybe others didn't have this problem, or maybe I got scammed or something, but it's really irritating to spend so much money on a new book that looks this bad on the inside.

Hegel is infamously difficult to read and understand. This book is a succinct and clear guide to interpreting Hegel. It is well written, and although succinct, it does not oversimplify. I read this book

alongside Hegel's The Phenomenology of Spirit, and this book greatly improved my understanding and appreciation of Hegel's line of thought. Without this book I may or may not have plodded on to finish reading Hegel, but I certainly would have gotten much less out of the Phenomenology. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in unlocking Hegel. It is succinct and well written without oversimplification.

I was looking for a relatively easy (hah!) explanation of the Hegelian dialectic since it kept popping up over and over in so many other things that I read. This book perfectly fit that need. Worth the price for the chapter on dialectic alone.

I'm in college and I got this during my second reading of THE PHENOMENOLOGY (I had read it in a previous class). I was getting little bits, but I needed something to put the whole thing together. This helped me to think in more Hegelian terms, especially with the historical/philosophical context the author includes.

a good overview read...

I did not know much of anything about Hegel before this book, now I can't wait to delve deeper into his "thinking."

Hegel's philosophy is famous for its abstruse. This little book gives you an basic outlook about Hegel. It'll be helpful to take your step from it if you want to go much deeper.

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