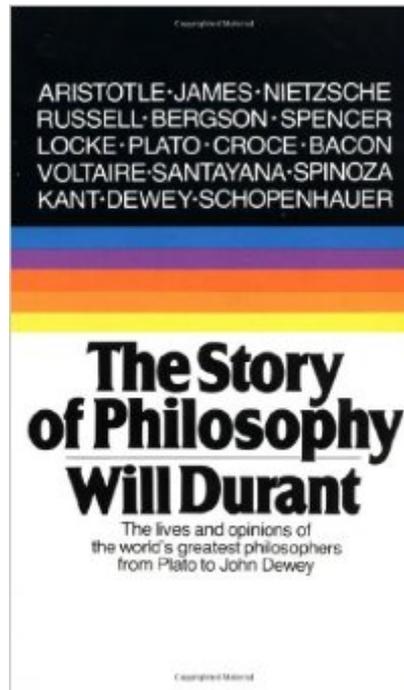


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# The Story Of Philosophy: The Lives And Opinions Of The World's Greatest Philosophers



## Synopsis

A brilliant and concise account of the lives and ideas of the great philosophers—Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Spinoza, Voltaire, Kant, Schopenhauer, Spencer, Nietzsche, Bergson, Croce, Russell, Santayana, James, and Dewey—*The Story of Philosophy* is one of the great books of our time. Few write for the non-specialist as well as Will Durant, and this book is a splendid example of his eminently readable scholarship. Durant's insight and wit never cease to dazzle; *The Story of Philosophy* is a key book for any reader who wishes to survey the history and development of philosophical ideas in the Western world.

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There is no pre-requisite to the enjoyment of philosophy, and there is no pre-requisite to the *Story of Philosophy*. Simply bring a mind that is famished for an injection of joy. "That is very good; but there is an infinitely worthier subject for philosophers than all these trees and stones, and even all those stars; there is the mind of man. What is man, and what can he become?" (Durant summarizing Socrates) Philosophy is the night that you looked up at those 100 billion stars and 100 billion galaxies and realized that you were beginning to ask the right questions. "To know what to ask is already to know half." (Durant summarizing Aristotle) Philosophy is the one great conversation in your past that echoes in every conversation since. When will that time come again? "All excellent things are as difficult as they are rare." (Durant summarizing Spinoza) That phenomenon of wonder will return when you open the "*Story of Philosophy*". A further taste of Durant's warming liquor: "Every science begins as philosophy and ends as art; it arises in hypothesis and flows into

achievement." "How many a debate would have been deflated into a paragraph if the disputants had dared to define their terms." "Political science does not make men, but must take them as they come from nature." "The chief condition of happiness, barring certain physical prerequisites, is the life of reason--the specific glory and power of man." Durant's approach is linear in time, but immense in breadth. Beginning with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, we are not only granted access to their treasure chests of wisdom, we are also given insights into the men.

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