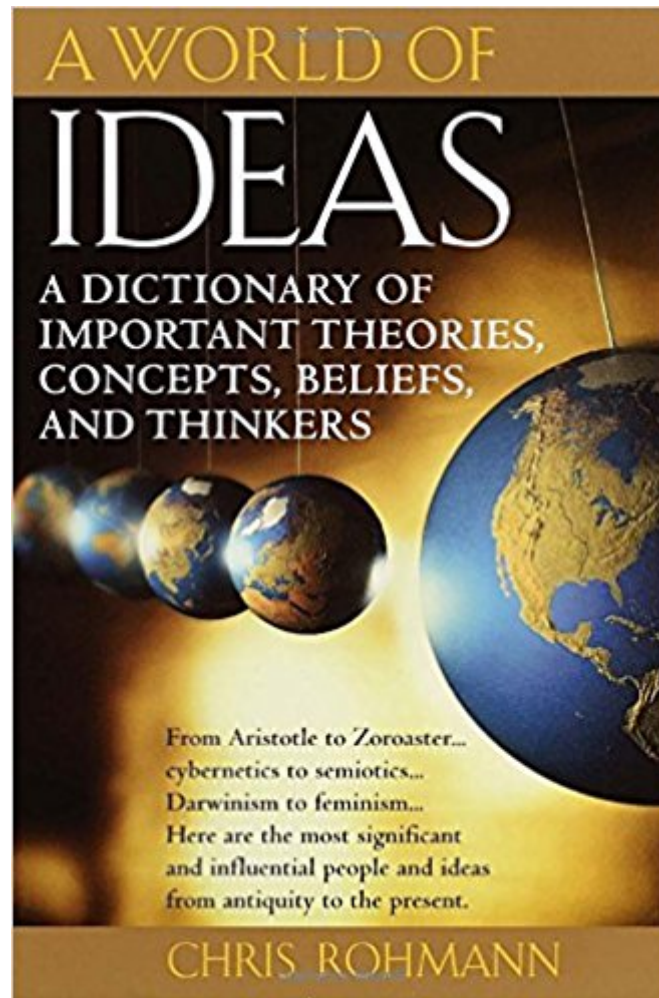




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# A World Of Ideas : The Dictionary Of Important Ideas And Thinkers



## Synopsis

THE THINKERS, THE THOUGHTS, AND THE THEORIES YOU NEED TO KNOW TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN. With *A World of Ideas*, you can get to the bottom of the big bang theory; find out where Freud's ideas were coming from, and where Einstein's might take us; demystify surrealism and structuralism, communism and capitalism. Prepared with the assistance of an academic board of leading scholars, this invaluable reference includes- Hundreds of entries, alphabetically arranged, with key words and concepts highlighted and cross-referenced--more than two thousand in all- A special emphasis on multicultural influences and contemporary thought - A comprehensive index giving easy access to all essential terms and names *A World of Ideas* is an indispensable resource for the curious reader.

## Book Information

Paperback: 496 pages

Publisher: Ballantine Books (October 31, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0345437063

ISBN-13: 978-0345437068

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #667,785 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in [Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Publishing & Books > Bibliographies & Indexes > Science](#) #236 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Reference & Collections](#) #295 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Reference](#)

## Customer Reviews

Sure, you can throw around words like deconstruction and solipsism in conversation, and pick up what you need to know about them from context, but wouldn't it be great if there were a dictionary of concepts important to thinkers? That's what writer Chris Rohmann thought, so he researched and put together *A World of Ideas*, with 444 entries covering 333 ideas and 111 individuals who influenced the history of thought. You'll find everything from the ancients to the present day, with a deliberate widening of the scope to include women and non-Western thinkers, though, as Rohmann says, "the ideas that are our cultural currency are still predominantly those of 'western civilization'." Covering science, politics, and philosophy, *A World of Ideas* has "relativism" next to "relativity," with

concise definitions and explorations of their histories and effects on modern thought. It's great to find a volume that acknowledges and even embraces the cross-currents between science and the humanities, and while there's no room for exhaustive detail--only 111 thinkers from all of history!--the superior quality of the entries and the extensive cross-indexing still make this both useful and unique. Whether you're pursuing graduate studies or just want to get the skinny on the "mind/body problem," you'll find your answer somewhere in *A World of Ideas*. --Rob Lightner --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This handy guide covers more than 400 theories, philosophies, ideologies, beliefs, and thinkers in the sciences, arts, and social sciences. In his preface, Rohmann, the former editor of *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts*, defines an idea as "a theoretical construct, a belief or guiding tenet, an essential concept in a field of study, an ideological proposition, an influential thought or opinion." Rohmann developed this resource after finding inadequate dictionary and encyclopedia definitions for dialectical materialism. Alphabetically arranged by idea or thinker, it is cross-referenced within the text and the index. Typical entries include the history, meaning, and context of ideas as varied as aesthetics, chaos theory, federalism, and Rastafarianism. More than 100 intellectual figures such as Aquinas, Sartre, Piaget, and Machiavelli are described insightfully and succinctly. Unfortunately, the scant three-page bibliography does not adequately reference the breadth and scope of the material presented here. For smaller collections without major philosophical or religious reference works. AElizabeth Connor, Medical Univ. of South Carolina, Charleston Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

If you're an avid reader of philosophy, history, psychology, science, or even just the New York Times, you're likely to find *"A World of Ideas"* to be quite helpful. Often I find that I come across a word that I feel I should know, but can't quite remember the gist of it (e.g., "What does 'hermeneutics' mean again?"). This book provides very clear, concise, and helpful summaries (generally ranging from 1/2 to 2 pages long) for all the various "isms" (and other general topics) as well as the people who helped define them. It's organized like a compact encyclopedia, alphabetized by entry name, with copious cross-references to topics by using LARGE TYPE to refer to alternate encyclopedia entries. Entries on people focus on their ideas more than on biographical details. I've found the book to be an invaluable resource in my own informal studies of philosophy, where you come across familiar names but may not be familiar with the details of those thinkers'

ideas. The author has done a fine job of distilling the entries down to their essential points, so that you really feel that you've learned the key ideas. The book is useful both as a reference as well as for casual reading (often I find myself looking up one entry and then going off on tangents to follow fascinating threads of cross-references that catch my eye).

Useful, insightful, helps me get an overview of the way the world works.

This is a neatly organized dictionary that defines many of the most popular and even some obscure words or phrases or ideas relating to politics, philosophy, science, political science, anthropology, sociology, etc. Its definitions are clear and concise and by just skimming through it you can see the ideas and concepts contained therein range from ancient, to Classical and modern though the relevance of many are applicable today and will certainly be so in the future.

Very helpful!

Under the heading for Roman Catholicism it states that Catholics do not approach God directly, but only through the sacraments. This is proposterous! This has never been official church teaching. I agree with the reviewer that wanted some source notes or a better Bibliograpy or footnotes. Unfortunately it seems some of these summaries are from very old or discredited sources such as the above. It is almost a great book, much better than Will Durant's "Story of Philosophy" which did not even try to be objective or compreshensive.

Its pacted with info easy to follow great for those who love to learn and want to know more about the world.

I NEEDED THIS BOOK FOR AN ASSIGNMENT QUICKLY AND IT WAS HEAR BEFORE THE EXPECTED DATE AND GREAT CONDITION. I WILL LOOK FOR THE BUYER AGAIN.

This book vs Wikipedia. That's what you're thinking. You're not wrong to do so but here's what you need to know. Yes, this is surprisingly a work of a single author-- but this is its strength. As noted in other reviews, the writing is concise and accessible. Wikipedia can be too, but not always. In addition, I give much credit to Rohmann's voice here. It's encyclopedic but generous and astute. And It's very logical. I often find the natural flow of my own inquisitions on an entry or passage to be

generally answered or addressed in the proceeding text. In general, I find this to be a unique and invaluable reference. In terms of style, rather than reducing these topics to dry academic jargon, Rohmann gives us some life here. Not distracting personality but character and intelligence. It really makes a difference. An additional benefit is the book format itself. Like a physical newspaper or magazine, it allows us to bump into ideas we weren't even looking for. More so than a traditional encyclopedia. Or Wikipedia.. With respect to Wikipedia, (or however one tends to get initial reference on intellectual topics)--just use both. Because yes, this volume is missing many things which leads me to my main critique, if you can call it that. This work is a work in progress and deserves to be ongoing. Not sure if the author moved on, but this is a work more than worthy of continuation (maybe online? but I would absolutely prefer and would buy the updated volumes; I've had this one for 10 years). The author himself alludes to updated editions. Indeed, because in so many ways the author's original impulse to write this book (as noted in the preface) over a decade later is as meaningful and necessary as ever.

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