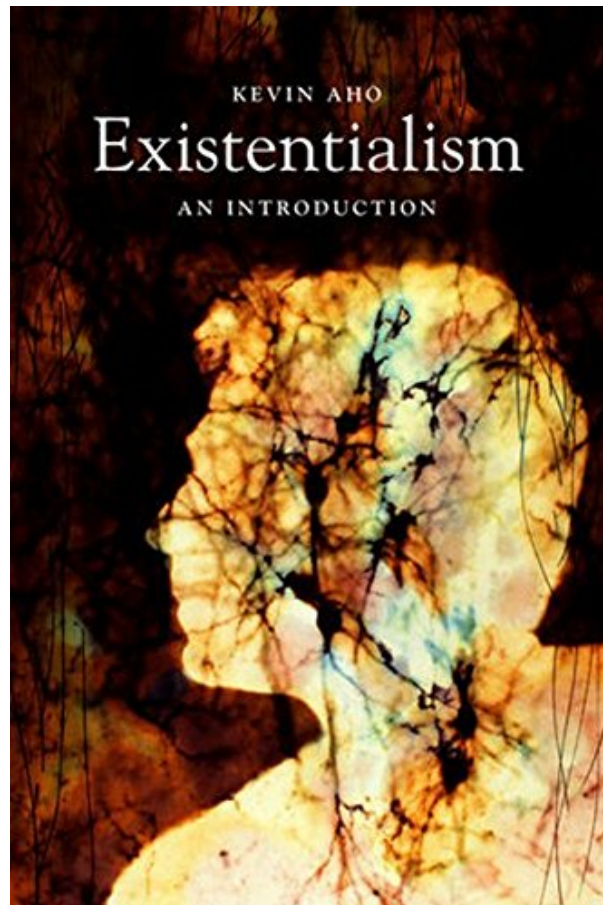
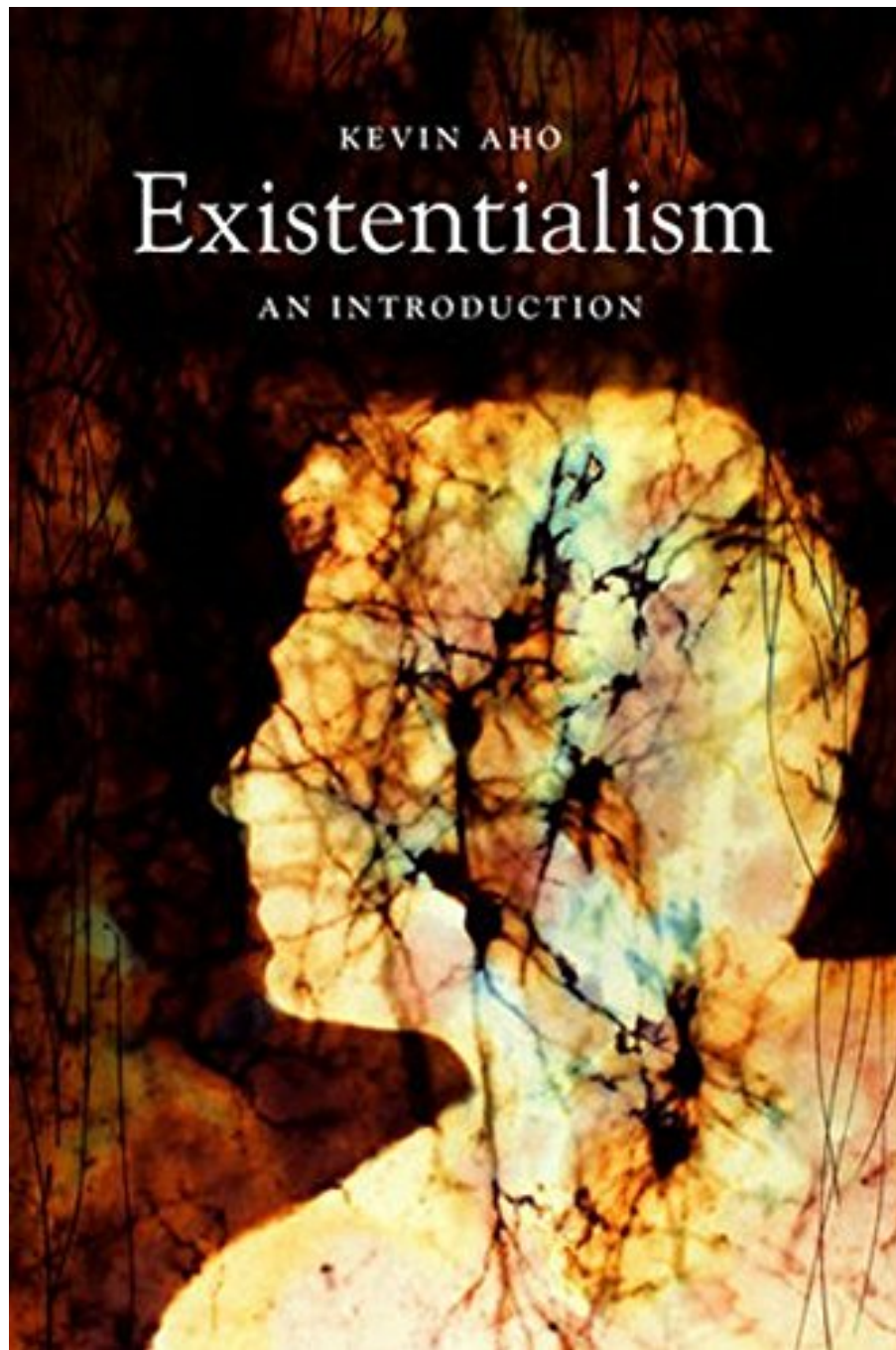


EXISTENTIALISM: AN INTRODUCTION BY KEVIN AHO



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Review

"Surely the best overview of the movement available today. Aho clarifies the place of existentialist philosophy in world thought, carefully and fairly examines all its major figures, and shows its relations to recent thought and movements. With his clear and energetic writing, Aho brings existentialism to life."

Charles Guignon, University of South Florida

"Historically comprehensive and philosophically acute, Kevin Aho's Existentialism is a wonderful introduction to the '-ism' that isn't, to 'the noth-ing' that burst forth in philosophy and literature like a series of coordinated attacks on existing reality, exposing the hollow core of modernity and thereby opening up our future."

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EXISTENTIALISM: AN INTRODUCTION BY KEVIN AHO PDF

Existentialism: An Introduction provides an accessible and scholarly introduction to the core ideas of the existentialist tradition. Kevin Aho draws on a wide range of existentialist thinkers in chapters centering on the key themes of freedom, being-in-the-world, alienation, nihilism, anxiety and authenticity. He also addresses important but often overlooked issues in the canon of existentialism, with discussions devoted to the role of embodiment, the movement's contribution to ethics, politics, and environmental and comparative philosophies, as well as its influence on contemporary psychiatry and psychotherapy. The enduring relevance of existentialism is shown by applying existentialist ideas to contemporary philosophical discussions of interest to a wide audience. The book covers secular thinkers such as Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, and Beauvoir as well as religious authors, such as Buber, Dostoevsky, Marcel, and Kierkegaard.

In this engaging and accessible text Aho shows why existentialism cannot be easily dismissed as a moribund or outdated movement. In the aftermath of 'God's death', existentialist philosophy engages questions with lasting philosophical significance, questions such as 'Who am I?' and 'How should I live?' By showing how existentialism offers insight into what it means to be human, the author illuminates existentialism's enduring value.

Existentialism: An Introduction provides the ideal introduction for upper level students and anyone interested in knowing more about one of the most vibrant and important areas of philosophy today.

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Iain Thomson, University of New Mexico

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Kevin Aho is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Most helpful customer reviews

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Great read for anyone interested in Existentialism.

By Daniel Rosario

This is a comprehensive look at Existentialism's history, major figures, and contemporary relevance. Dr. Aho makes the ideas very accessible for everyone without dumbing down the concepts. He is also very effective at clarifying jargon-filled texts, so reading this is much less intimidating than jumping right into Heidegger or Kierkegaard. It also draws beautifully from the works of Camus, Dostoevsky, Sartre, and Beauvoir (among many others). I highly recommend this for anyone interested in a subject that is (arguably) more relevant now than ever.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Yes, Probably the Best Out There

By Alexander Flynt

A recent reviewer has said that this book is the best general introduction to existentialism out there. Knowing that I had been reading widely in modern Western thought, a friend brought Aho's book to my attention. After reading it thoroughly I found that I had some criticisms---and still do. Yet, when I returned to the question of whether or not it was the best introductory study out there, I had to concede that it was probably the best. Yes, it would be very helpful for the layman; and yes, it would give freshmen a real understanding of existentialism's essential ideas in a historical and interdisciplinary context.

But, for two reasons, I could also use it to provide background starting points for discussion in a graduate seminar---even if there was only one copy kept on the table. First, Aho repeatedly offers brief quotes and their sources when he introduces new personalities and facets---so we know exactly where he is coming from and his sources---and we can decide whether we agree or not out of our own background and deeper reading. Second, and more importantly, he is always oriented---even when he is treating ambiguous subject matter. He ties everything back to existentialism's essential idea of the concepts of freedom and anxiety as these ideas are having a widespread---but often unrecognized because they are so much a part of us---continuing impact in the modern world.

There are so many places where one can jump in and move to the essence of things---even for those who wholly, but often intuitively, disagree with what existentialism has brought into modern thinking. There is enough clarification to give one's opposition a real starting point---and from more than one place too.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Accessible, excellent introductory text.

By Mon D

As a casual philosophy reader, this was an excellent introductory book. Dr. Aho does a wonderful job of explaining difficult concepts in a very accessible way, and offering multiple viewpoints on the same topics from various key existentialist thinkers. I particularly liked his frequent literary and contemporary references, from Camus to Yalom, and his efforts to connect existentialist ideas to modern day careers, such as in healthcare.

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