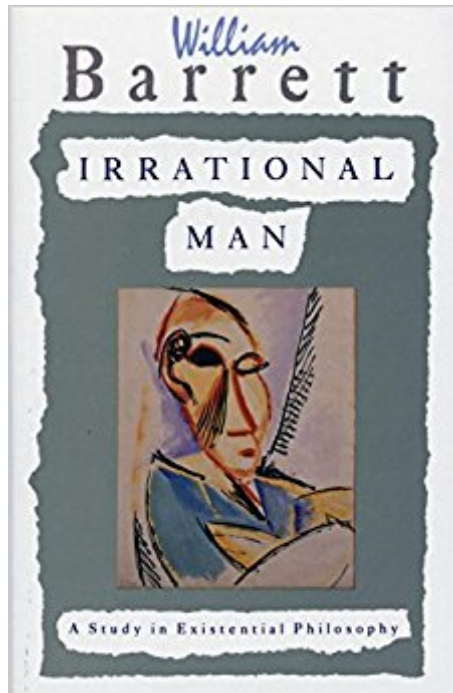


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Irrational Man: A Study In Existential Philosophy



Synopsis

Doubleday, 1962, Anchor, Good., Paperback. 314 pages. Light cover wear. [Philosophy, Existentialism] Out-of-print and antiquarian booksellers since 1933. We pack and ship with care.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nothing is more exhausting than the search for meaning. Every question has a thousand answers, each claiming to be correct. And each can be challenged by a thousand objections. Evermore we come out the same door as in we went, and return to -- ourselves. We alone are unavoidably the final arbiters of our personal beliefs and values. Occasionally we have the good fortune to find a guide through the jungle of perplexing philosophical questions who can explain issues clearly, distinctly, and quietly, without forcing his personal conclusions on us. But how do we know the guide is reliable? Before we have heard what he has to say, we don't. And if we chose to believe that he is reliable, that is our choice. I agree with the many readers of Irrational Man that Barrett is a remarkably persuasive guide. Not that I agree with him completely -- nobody's beliefs can totally correspond with those of another. No matter. Barrett has his feet on the ground, and one gets the feeling when reading him that however convoluted the explanation -- and some (but not all) explanations are necessarily convoluted -- Barrett is not playing with smoke and mirrors. My recommendation is to read a few pages of what he has to say as critically as you please, and then decide for yourself. William Barrett (1913-1992) grew up in the generation just before and after WWII. His memoir The Truants: Adventures among the Intellectuals (1982), recounts his early days at Partisan Review and his associations with such figures as Delmore Schwartz, Mary

McCarthy, Edmund Wilson, and Philip Rahv. Very interesting as biography; no philosophy. The book is out of print but can be found for a ridiculously low price.

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