



Immanuel Kant: The Very Idea of a Critique of Pure Reason

By J. Colin McQuillan

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Immanuel Kant: The Very Idea of a Critique of Pure Reason is a study of the background, development, exposition, and justification of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Instead of examining Kant's arguments for the transcendental ideality of space and time, his deduction of the pure concepts of the understanding, or his account of the dialectic of human reason, J. Colin McQuillan focuses on Kant's conception of critique. By surveying the different ways the concept of critique was used during the eighteenth century, the relationship between Kant's critique and his pre-critical experiments with different approaches to metaphysics, the varying definitions of a critique of pure reason Kant offers in the prefaces and introductions to the first Critique, and the way Kant responds to objections, McQuillan is able to highlight an aspect of Kant's critical philosophy that is too often overlooked—the reason that philosophy is critical.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This book makes a timely and original contribution to Kant studies and fills a large lacuna in the literature. With exhaustive research, McQuillan demonstrates real mastery not only over Kant’s own project and texts, but also over the milieu to which he belonged.” —Kristi Sweet, author of *Kant on Practical Life: From Duty to History*

“This erudite and seminal work of meticulous scholarship adds something new to our understanding of Kant’s conception of critique.” —*Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*

“Exceptionally well reasoned, written, organized and presented, *Immanuel Kant: The Very Idea of a Critique of Pure Reason* is an erudite and seminal work of meticulous scholarship... unreservedly recommended for college and university Philosophy collections in general.” —*Midwest Book Review*

“McQuillan’s book makes an important contribution to the scholarship, not only by correcting for common accounts of Kant’s rejection of metaphysics in favor of ‘epistemology’, but also by opening up the question of the nature and meaning of critique, as such. McQuillan deserves special praise for his lucid prose, for his attention to historical context, and especially for the grace and patience he exhibits as he guides readers through the dense arguments of Kant’s pre-critical writings. I recommend the book to all students of the history of philosophy, Kant scholars and generalists alike.” —*Philosophy in Review*

“The exceptionally clear exposition of Kant’s understanding of the aims, methods and utility of critique... makes a valuable and accessible contribution to efforts to come to grips with the Kantian articulation of one of the central concepts of modern philosophy. Indeed, future research into how Kant’s conception of critique shifts and creaks during the nearly two decades of work following the first publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* will benefit from McQuillan’s foundational analysis.” —*Critique*

About the Author

J. COLIN McQUILLAN is an assistant professor of philosophy at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, Texas.

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