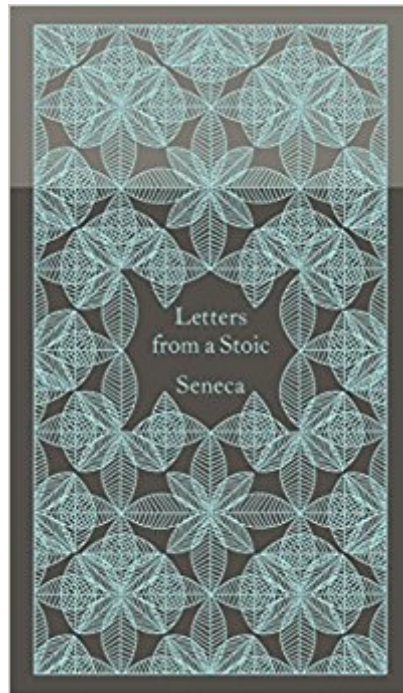




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Letters From A Stoic (A Penguin Classics Hardcover)



Synopsis

A new series of beautiful hardcover nonfiction classics, with covers designed by Coralie Bickford-Smith. World-changing ideas meet eye-catching design: the best titles of the extraordinarily successful Great Ideas series are now packaged in Coralie Bickford-Smith's distinctive, award-winning covers. Whether on a well-curated shelf or in your back pocket, these timeless works of philosophical, political, and psychological thought are absolute must-haves for book collectors as well as design enthusiasts. A philosophy that saw self-possession as the key to an existence lived "in accordance with nature," Stoicism called for the restraint of animal instincts and the severing of emotional ties. These beliefs were formulated by the Athenian followers of Zeno in the fourth century BC, but it was in Seneca that the Stoics found their most eloquent advocate. Stoicism, as expressed in the Letters, helped ease pagan Rome's transition to Christianity, for it upholds upright ethical ideals and extols virtuous living, as well as expressing disgust for the harsh treatment of slaves and the inhumane slaughter witnessed in the Roman arenas. Seneca's major contribution to a seemingly unsympathetic creed was to transform it into a powerfully moving and inspiring declaration of the dignity of the individual mind. Robin Campbell's distinguished translation captures Seneca's humour and concise, memorable aphorisms and his introduction discusses the tensions between Seneca's philosophy and his turbulent career as adviser to the tyrannical emperor Nero. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

Series: A Penguin Classics Hardcover

Hardcover: 352 pages

Publisher: Penguin Classics; Reissue edition (April 28, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0141395850

ISBN-13: 978-0141395852

Product Dimensions: 4.4 x 1.2 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 146 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #24,340 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Letters #27 in Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Rome #69 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Greek & Roman

Customer Reviews

Text: English, Latin (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca, statesman, philosopher, advocate and man of letters, was born at Cordoba in Spain around 4 BCE. He rose to prominence in Rome, pursuing a career in the courts and political life, for which he had been trained, while also acquiring celebrity as an author of tragedies and essays. Falling foul of successive emperors (Caligula in 39 CE and Claudius in 41 CE), he spent eight years in exile, allegedly for an affair with Caligula's sister. Recalled in 49 CE, he was made praetor and was appointed tutor to the boy who was to become, in 54 CE, the emperor Nero. On Nero's succession, Seneca acted for some eight years as an unofficial chief minister. The early part of this reign was remembered as a period of sound government, for which the main credit seems due to Seneca. His control over Nero declined as enemies turned the emperor against him with representations that his popularity made him a danger, or with accusations of immorality or excessive wealth. Retiring from public life he devoted his last three years to philosophy and writing, particularly the Letters to Lucilius. In 65 CE following the discovery of a plot against the emperor, in which he was thought to be implicated, he and many others were compelled by Nero to commit suicide. His fame as an essayist and dramatist lasted until two or three centuries ago, when he passed into literary oblivion, from which the twentieth century has seen a considerable and immensely valuable recovery. Robin Campbell is a well-known translator.

Generally I liked this book, because of the variety of topics, but that was also why I didn't like it so much. There are some lessons for living based on stoic beliefs, which I think still apply in our day and age. In fact I was quite amazed that the text that was written so long ago is still relevant today. Seneca writes in a very concise and lucid language, so everything is clear. He doesn't go into philosophical rants that put you to sleep. I just wish that there were more letters or a better selection of letters in the tome so that some topics wouldn't repeat so much

This book is a ripoff. The text is all there, but the cover is terribly pixelated and the text is too small.

This book was not well made, or even well ripped-off. Spend the extra few dollars to get a nicer copy.

This is homemade and trashy looking. The print is microscopic and the cover photo is an horribly pixilated enlargement of a thumbnail someone found online. THERE ARE NO PAGE NUMBERS! The chapter headings are the same size font and aren't bold or underlined or anything to make it obvious. The chapters don't even start on a new page. I bought this for a gift but I'd be embarrassed to give this to anyone.

Great except the paint on the book is slowly but consistently falling off (and gets all over my hands). I have to dock a star for that.

I actually own this in paper Back, and had been waiting for it to come into the Kindle Edition. Like Tim Ferris of *The Four Hour Work Week*, I read it in the morning first thing to influence my mind set for the day. As with life, sometimes it is burning with insights and reminders. Other times it just plods. But I find it very informative with ideas on how to be a better person and to live better. Even though this Philosopher had controversy about if he lived as he suggested one lives. This point and a brief history on him is given at the beginning of the book. My main issue with the Kindle Edition is that whoever at the Publishers converted it for Kindle Edition, didn't bother checking it out on a Kindle. Seems for some odd reason the text will inexplicably go from normal size to 1-2 sizes bigger for a few paragraphs and then go back to regular size. I compared some of the passages to the hard copy and there is no rhyme or reason for the text size change. Do get the book, the font change is a tad annoying, but nothing major and the book is still very readable.

The book is highly relateable, and you'll find yourself wondering how Seneca's observations and experiences didn't happen yesterday on the street, in your home, and at work, but rather all the way before Christianity itself. Just goes to show you that no one has a monopoly on morality and just how much moral doctrine is re-branded and made to look exclusive. Experience is experience, and wisdom wrought from it is not only the only valid wisdom but a shared human experience. This book is (largely) wisdom, sans mythology.

For those not familiar with this work, you're in for a real treat! This is gripping and timeless, a solid foundation for exploring your own world view.

everyone should have one book from any stoic on his bookshelf. and Seneca is the best choice. i just adore everything he says. i caught myself nodding while reading his words to his friend. im completely fascinated by this philosopher, and so should you.

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