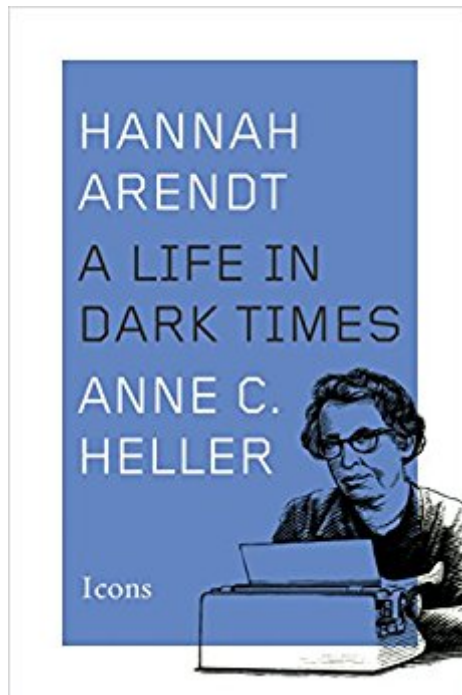


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Hannah Arendt: A Life In Dark Times (Icons)



Synopsis

Hannah Arendt, one of the most gifted and provocative voices of her era, was a polarizing cultural theorist—extolled by her peers as a visionary and berated by her critics as a poseur and a fraud. Born in Prussia to assimilated Jewish parents, she escaped from Hitler's Germany in 1933 and is now best remembered for the storm of controversy that arose after the publication of her 1963 New Yorker series on the trial of the kidnapped Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann. Arendt was a woman of many contradictions. She was brilliant, beautiful when young, and irresistible to gifted men, even in her chain-smoking, intellectually provocative middle age. She learned to write in English only at the age of thirty-six, and yet her first book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, single-handedly altered the way generations of Americans and Europeans viewed fascism and genocide. Her most famous—and most divisive—work, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, created fierce controversy that continues to this day, exacerbated by the posthumous discovery that she had been the lover of the great romantic philosopher and Nazi sympathizer Martin Heidegger. In this fast-paced, comprehensive biography, Anne C. Heller tracks the source of Arendt's apparent contradictions and her greatest achievements to her sense of being what she called a “conscious pariah”—one of those few people in every time and place who doesn't lose confidence in ourselves if society does not approve us—and will not “pay any price” to gain the acceptance of others.

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Customer Reviews

The life and the work of Hannah Arendt appears interwoven in this short book. Anne Heller refers the main events of Arendt's life and discuss some of her most important books. Giving context to "Eichmann in Jerusalem" and "The Origins of Totalitarianism", the author provides useful tools to comprehend it. Arendt's ideas, in many aspects beyond the time in which they were exposed, emerge in a comprehensive way in this introductory work.

A commendable, easy read introducing Arendt's life, including the explosive Eichmann controversy, her difficult-to-grasp long-term relationship with Heidegger and more. But of course, there are many more insights and rewards waiting for those willing and able to dive deeper into the large and rewarding body of her trailblazing writings.

Really good book, specially if accompanies Eichmann in Jerusalem. It shows the whole brilliant, proud, rebel person. And gives her context.

Wonderful, concise review of Hannah Arendt's life. The work does a great job summarizing and presenting the issues that Arendt faced in her life and provided some great context for those issues. Enjoyed reading it and it made me want to read more about Arendt.

Good introduction; necessarily leaves things out due to the format, but also makes the intersection of her life and thought accessible and engaging. Some of the most important elements of her thinking and witness come through. Well written.

Reading about the life of Hannah Arendt provided new insight into the establishment of the State of Israel after the persecution of the Jews in Germany before and during WWII.

She wrote about Arendt and what her life was like before WWII. We got to see the personal Arendt and her trials before, during and after the war. Then why she was not liked later. Her idea of Eichmann just doing the work and not knowing what it was turned out to be wrong. The Final Solution of the Nazis was a well laid out plan. But that was found out later. I liked the book because I saw what Arendt went through the and this was an attempt to bring her life to us and see her mind work.

fascinating study of controversial life

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