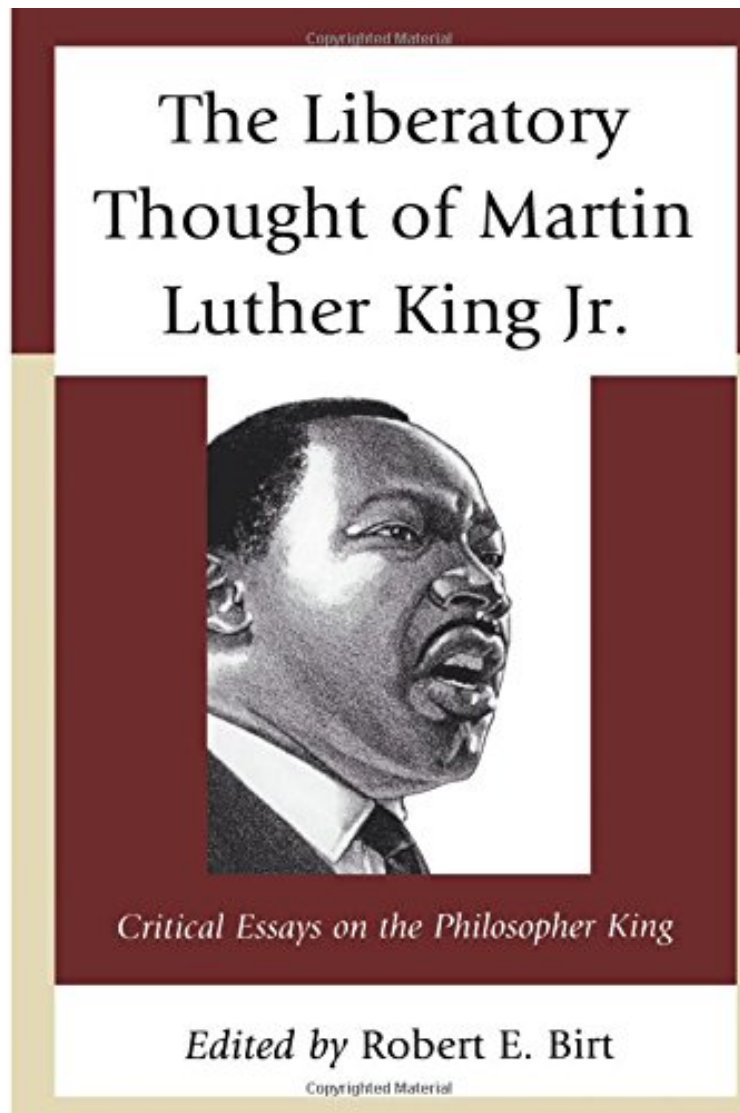


## The Liberatory Thought of Martin Luther King Jr.: Critical Essays on the Philosopher King

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**From Lexington Books : The Liberatory Thought of Martin Luther King Jr.: Critical Essays on the Philosopher King** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Liberatory Thought of Martin Luther King Jr.: Critical Essays on the Philosopher King:

The Liberatory Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. is a philosophical anthology which explores Dr. King's legacy as a philosopher and his contemporary relevance as a thinker-activist. It consists of sixteen chapters organized into four sections: Part I, King within Philosophical Traditions, Part II, King as Engaged Social and Political Philosopher, Part III, King's Ethics of Nonviolence, and Part IV, Hope Resurgent or Dream Deferred: Perplexities of King's Philosophical Optimism. Most chapters are written by philosophers, but two are by philosophically informed social scientists. The contributors examine King's relationships to canonical Western philosophical traditions, and to African-American thought. King's contribution to traditional branches of philosophy such as ethics, social philosophy and philosophy of religion is explored, as well as his relevance to contemporary movements for social justice. As is evident from the title, the book considers the importance of King's thought as liberatory discourse. Some chapters focus on "topical" issues like the relevance of King's moral critique of the Vietnam War to our present involvement in Middle Eastern wars. Others focus on more densely theoretical issues such as Personalism, existential philosophy or Hegelian dialectics in King's thought. The significance of King's reflections on racism, economic justice, democracy and the quest for community are abiding themes. But the volume closes, quite fittingly, on the importance of the theme of hope. The text is a kind of philosophical dialogue on the enduring value of the legacy of the philosopher, King.

This is a masterful philosophical portrait of Martin Luther King, Jr. The contributors to this volume demonstrate a marked capacity to communicate the essential ingredients and the profundities of King's philosophy in a strikingly lucid, comprehensive, and provocative way. What an important and stirring gift for those of us who have repeatedly called for more attention to King the intellectual! (Lewis V. Baldwin, Vanderbilt University) A strikingly original collection assembled by Robert E. Birt! Written primarily by trained and teaching philosophers, these critical essays will appeal to all who are genuinely interested in the thought, work, and witness of Martin Luther King, Jr. Here we see King as philosopher who both influenced and was influenced by Western philosophical tradition, and who was the quintessential nonviolent social activist. Depicted as a man of ideas and ideals, King's thinking about God, freedom, hope, democracy, the beloved community, nonviolence, and his optimism about the eradication of racism are examined, criticized, and re-envisioned as never before. The result is a more realistic and hopeful view of King's relevance for today. (Rufus Burrow, Jr., Author of God and Human Dignity: The Personalism, Theology, and Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr.) Measured by its ability to display the rich potential for philosophical reflection that engaging with King as a thinker offers us, ... Birt's anthology [is] a success.... Birt's anthology is a very welcome spur to the kind of philosophical work that will treat passages like these as opportunities to take someone who has so deeply shaped our world seriously, with all the sharp, progressive criticism and sympathetic reconstruction necessary to doing so. (APA Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience) This volume is an examination of the philosophical thought of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; an assessment of King's contribution to philosophy —especially ethics, social philosophy and philosophy of religion. It also explores the relevance of King's thought as "liberatory discourse", as insurgent thinking aimed at enabling contemporary human striving toward social justice. About the Author Robert E. Birt is assistant professor of philosophy at Bowie State University.