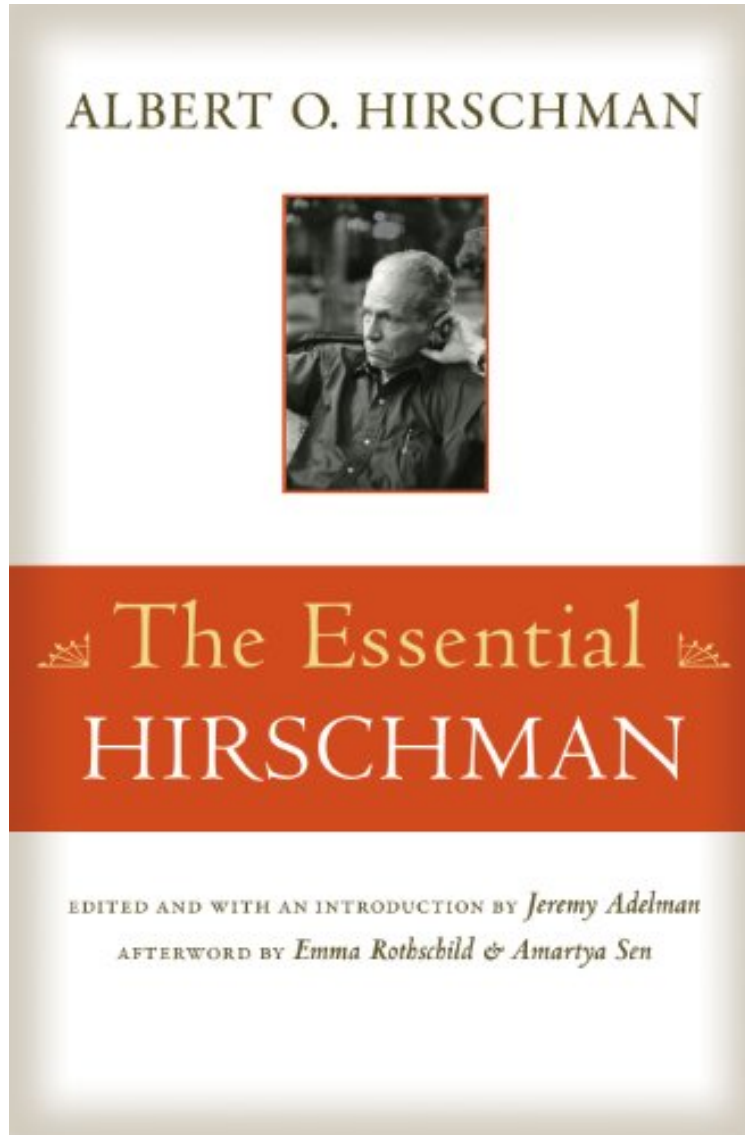


## The Essential Hirschman

*Albert O. Hirschman*

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**Albert O. Hirschman : The Essential Hirschman** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Essential Hirschman:

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. InterestingBy R. AlbinAlbert Hirschman is making an impressive posthumous comeback. This interesting book follows the publication of a very sympathetic biography by the editor of this volume, historian Jeremy Adelman. Hirschman was an economist who became well known as a penetrating critic of conventional economic analysis, political thought, and as something of an intellectual historian. He is best known now as the author of several longer critical essays, including *The Rhetoric of Reaction*, a powerful analysis of

conservative rhetorical devices. Hirschman established himself originally as a leading expert on development economics. His later work as a more general critic appears to have followed the eclipse of development economics as a cohesive sub-field of economics. Hirschman's essays are celebrated justly for his concise and elegant style, impressive erudition, and unexpected insights. The essays included in this book amply demonstrate these features. The book is largely divided into 2 sections. About the initial 40% of the book is devoted to essays about development economics, including some very thoughtful retrospective dissections of the field as a discipline. The later essays are a mixture of topics including some very sharp essays on economic and political thought. Several of the essays are either precursors or followups of Hirschman's famous longer essays like *The Passions and the Interests*, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, and *The Rhetoric of Reaction*. I suspect these latter essays will be of most interest to general readers. The earlier essays on development economics certainly display Hirschman's qualities as an essayist but perhaps will be of greatest interest to economists and others with some interests in this aspect of intellectual history. This is a good book but for most readers, his longer essays, published separately, will be of the most interest.

.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Worldly Philosopher By Edgar Papke This is an excellent compilation of one of the greatest minds of our time. I would recommend this to anyone interested in better understanding how our global capitalist system and business society works. As well, to gain deeper insight into ourselves, Hirschman's work offers a remarkable lens.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I first read Hirschman's biography (Excellent), then the *Passions ...* By Jay I first read Hirschman's biography (Excellent), then the *Passions and the Interest* for a source on economic thought and its evolution and now the *Essentials* for his original essays. I read constantly and he makes it more enjoyable and enlightening.

*The Essential Hirschman* brings together some of the finest essays in the social sciences, written by one of the twentieth century's most influential and provocative thinkers. Albert O. Hirschman was a master essayist, one who possessed the rare ability to blend the precision of economics with the elegance of literary imagination. In an age in which our academic disciplines require ever-greater specialization and narrowness, it is rare to encounter an intellectual who can transform how we think about inequality by writing about traffic, or who can slip in a quote from Flaubert to reveal something surprising about taxes. The essays gathered here span an astonishing range of topics and perspectives, including industrialization in Latin America, imagining reform as more than repair, the relationship between imagination and leadership, routine thinking and the marketplace, and the ways our arguments affect democratic life. Throughout, we find humor, unforgettable metaphors, brilliant analysis, and elegance of style that give Hirschman such a singular voice. Featuring an introduction by Jeremy Adelman that places each of these essays in context as well as an insightful afterword by Emma Rothschild and Amartya Sen, *The Essential Hirschman* is the ideal introduction to Hirschman for a new generation of readers and a must-have collection for anyone seeking his most important writings in one book.

"Adelman . . . has done an excellent job of bringing together articles that express Hirschman's skepticism, as well as brilliant observation, often consisting of brilliant juxtapositions of unlikely sources. . . . [T]hose who do sink their teeth into this work will be highly rewarded."--Choice

From the Back Cover "A survivor of Nazi Germany, Albert Hirschman was an essential thinker--one of the very few best of the twentieth century. Wise, delightful, and full of life, he was incapable of writing a dull page. He knew what made people tick, and he knew what made societies work. This book glistens with insights, surprises, and paradoxes. Each chapter is a gem."--Cass R. Sunstein, coauthor of *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*

"Albert O. Hirschman's work should be rediscovered and studied by every new generation of social scientists for a long time to come."--Claus Offe, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin

"An excellent selection of essays including all of Hirschman's finest pieces."--Dani Rodrik, author of *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*

About the Author Albert O. Hirschman (1915-2012) was one of the leading intellectuals of the twentieth century, renowned for his contributions to economics, the social sciences, and the history of ideas. Jeremy Adelman is the Henry Charles Lea Professor of History at Princeton University. His books include *Worldly Philosopher: The Odyssey of Albert O. Hirschman* (Princeton).