

Dictionary of Symbols (Norton Paperback)

By Carl G. Liungman

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From early cave drawings to modern corporate logos, graphic symbols have been used to convey meanings both tangible and abstract. In this unique dictionary, Carl G. Liungman puts approximately 2,500 Western graphic symbols at your fingertips. Each entry includes the sign's history, its meanings, and the systems in which it is used. Symbols are cross-referenced to other signs with the same meanings and to structurally similar signs with different meanings. Locating an entry is as easy as looking up a word in a dictionary, due to a system that classifies each sign on the basis of three of its structural features.

Enhancing the dictionary is a series of fascinating discussions of various aspects of ideograms. These include a discussion of signs and meanings, an overview of the historical development of signs, as well as sections on ancient American ideograms, the astrological system of symbols, the mystical pentagram, and the signs of the alchemists. Two indexes aid the reader. The Word Index specifies signs with a given name or meaning, along with subject headings. The Graphic Index displays symbols based on their structural features.

Dictionary of Symbols serves both as a valuable reference on Western cultural history and as a professional tool for those working in design and the arts.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal
Never before published in the United States, this authoritative four-part history, dictionary, and index of non-iconic symbols is a revision of the author's Symboler , published in Sweden in 1974. Part 1 concisely traces the historical development of symbols since their first appearance about 20,000 years ago, then develops several topical themes: astrological, hobo, and Nazi symbols, as well as modern business logotypes. Classification by form is difficult due to the diversity of symbols, yet about 1500 are painstakingly classified into 54 groups in Part 2 where the history, derivation, and meanings are described for each. In Part 3, verbal descriptions, e.g., "peace symbol," comprise the easily used word index. There are some oversights in the index (e.g., astrological signs, which are treated in some detail elsewhere, only appear sporadically), but this is not a major criticism. Part 4, a graphic index, references information in Part 2 by shape and form. All historical periods and geographical areas are treated. Engineering symbols are deliberately excluded. There is nothing else quite like this well-researched work; other titles are older or specialized. Although useful for scholars and specialists, this is excellent for general reference. Highly recommended for medium to large reference collections.
- *Stanley P. Hodge, Ball State Univ. Lib., Muncie, Ind.*
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Review
“This book will certainly become one of the key sources for tracing symbols and their meanings.” (American Libraries)

About the Author
Carl G. Liungman is a Swedish scholar and author.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Gannaway:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each book has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that book has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They are reading whatever they take because their hobby is reading a book. Think about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book if they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you will need this Dictionary of Symbols (Norton Paperback).

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Annie Adcock:

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