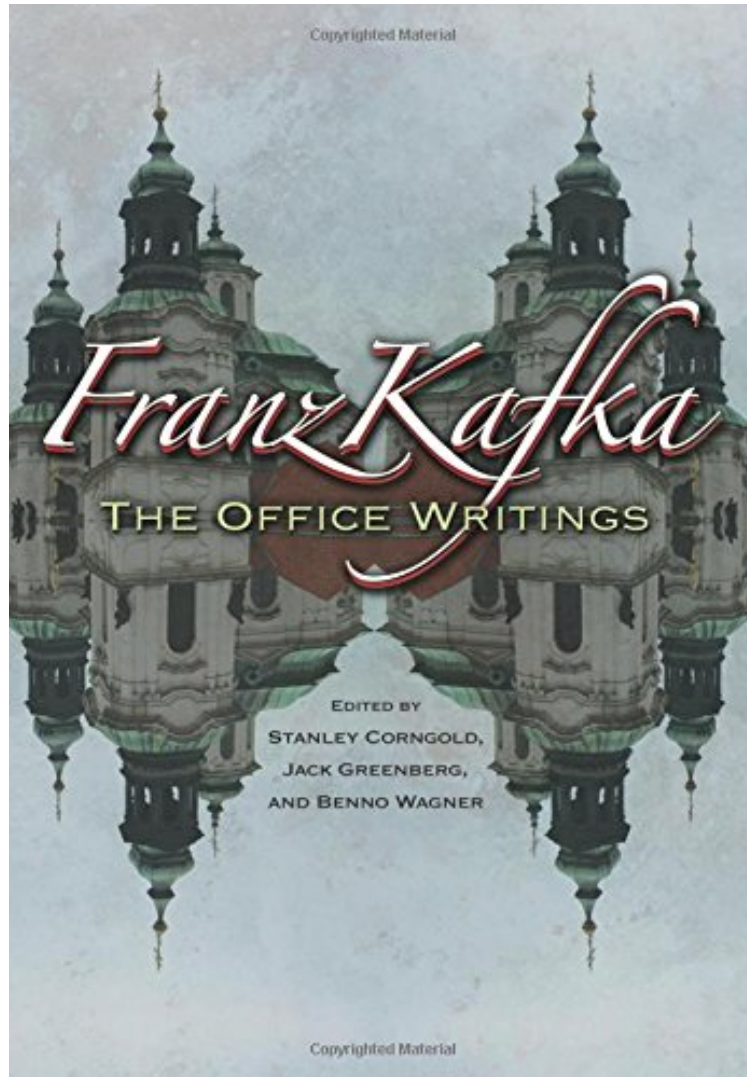


## Franz Kafka: The Office Writings

*Franz Kafka*

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#1757166 in Books Franz Kafka 2015-09-08 2015-09-08 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.43 x 1.07 x 5.851, .0 #File Name: 0691167990440 pages Franz Kafka The Office Writings | File size: 68.Mb

**Franz Kafka : Franz Kafka: The Office Writings** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Franz Kafka: The Office Writings:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well done and long needed data on Kafka By Norma Desmond2009 This collection of official texts written by the lawyer Kafka begins our re-evaluation of the life and career of the enigmatic writer Franz Kafka. He held far more important and meaningful posts in the outside world of work than decades of biographies have recorded. And because of this discrepancy and its resolution in this text, we can now tease out some trails from Kafka's legal mind at work in the day job and to his literary creations. Translator and editor Corngold's introductions that specifically point out links between fictional texts and cases Kafka worked on

are most helpful. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Thought-provoking (and entertaining)! By E. Kerby  
originally purchased *The Office Writings* a year ago, for a Kafka class I took in my final semester of college  
undergrad. Throughout the class we referenced this book extensively; our whole group was captivated and delighted  
by the text. Although the class was a year ago, I continue to think of this text fondly (and return to it regularly). I still  
giggle as I think about Kafka's second document "The Scope of Compulsory Insurance for the Building Trades"--his  
Institute wanted everyone to keep their insurance but the people were not going to be required to do so. (Of course  
they didn't want to pay more if they didn't have to!) The Institute sent a letter explaining all of the benefits and telling  
people they were going to lose their coverage (oh no!), so Institute would kindly auto-renew it unless the people opted  
out directly. Of course not many people opted out. Kafka wrote this a hundred years ago, and he was already dealing  
with auto-renewals much like what we have today. As our banks began offering "Overdraft Privilege" after they were  
not allowed automatically charging fees for overdrafts last summer, I kept thinking of Kafka's Institute, and the way  
they twisted insurance to look like a privilege! Anyhow, Kafka's office writings are wonderful! Many of his office  
writings grapple with the same issues that we find in Kafka's other writings; themes that trouble Kafka in his fiction  
continue to trouble him at work. The editors of this work provide a skillful analysis of each of Kafka's office  
documents in the volume. The commentaries are both interesting and relevant and they demonstrate a mastery of  
Kafka's works. For anyone who has developed a fascination with Kafka's writing, this book is truly indispensable  
because it adds another dimension to our understanding of Kafka. I love this book! 2 of 2 people found the following  
review helpful. Before not After By Down Pat Nobody, not even someone such as Sigmund Freud can actually know  
why anyone writes a story. What one can try to do, in the absence of true knowledge is to create a work of "educated"  
fiction themselves. Why did F.K. write what he did in the way he did? A good question without a valid answer, I feel. To  
try to pinpoint F.K. by dragging in random bits and pieces of his various written work, may shed more darkness than  
revealing light, when done at his place of employment with only his bosses, and those directly involved with the  
insurance claims and evaluations assigned as part of his work chores, as his "audience" readers. What is known is that  
F.K. never expressed feelings of regret for having been forced by failing health, to leave his employment. Looking out  
the window to the moving "specs" below, as a very young, almost isolated child, must have been very important to  
F.K. and very likely made an enormous difference in the manner he viewed himself, those close by, and the way he  
recorded his beliefs and feelings, whether in his "fictional" writings, or what he said, what he wrote, or didn't. This  
present book does raise some ideas, maybe even possibilities about F.K., but falls short of an answer. Down Pat

Franz Kafka: *The Office Writings* brings together, for the first time in English, Kafka's most interesting professional  
writings, composed during his years as a high-ranking lawyer with the largest Workmen's Accident Insurance Institute  
in the Czech Lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Franz Kafka (1883-1924) is commonly recognized as the  
greatest German prose writer of the twentieth century. It is less well known that he had an established legal career.  
Kafka's briefs reveal him to be a canny bureaucrat, sharp litigator, and innovative thinker on the social, political, and  
legal issues of his time. His official preoccupations inspired many of the themes and strategies of the novels and  
stories he wrote at night. These documents include articles on workmen's compensation and workplace safety; appeals  
for the founding of a psychiatric hospital for shell-shocked veterans; and letters arguing relentlessly for a salary  
adequate to his merit. In adjudicating disputes, promoting legislative programs, and investigating workplace sites,  
Kafka's writings teem with details about the bureaucracy and technology of his day, such as spa elevators in  
Marienbad, the challenge of the automobile, and the perils of excavating in quarries while drunk. Beautifully  
translated, with valuable commentary by two of the world's leading Kafka scholars and one of America's most eminent  
civil rights lawyers, the documents cast rich light on the man and the writer and offer new insights to lovers of Kafka's  
novels and stories.

Honorable Mention for the 2008 PROSE Award in Literature, Language, and Linguistics, Association of American  
Publishers One of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles for 2009 "The Office Writings, however, convincingly  
suggests that his job was also integral to his writing, and that his literary production was not an escape from the  
alienation of daily life to that 'dreamlike inner life' but a striving to reconcile the two."--Alexander Provan, *The  
Nation* "Kafka himself complained constantly that his day job at the Prague Workmen's Accident Insurance Institute  
oppressed his artistic calling; this volume's editors beg to differ. In the hands of Kafka scholars Stanley Corngold and  
Benno Wagner and the legal scholar Jack Greenberg, the 18 briefs collected here comprise more than a record of the  
author's years in the insurance business. By reading between his legal writings and his fiction, the editors argue that  
Kafka's dual identities are inextricable: the writer is informed by the lawyer, the lawyer by the writer. Franz Kafka is  
the Franz Kafka we know not in spite of his day job, but rather because of it."--Rachel Sugar, *The National* (Abu  
Dhabi) "[T]he texts have impressive sociological merit: They provide a compelling picture of what life was like for an  
early twentieth-century bureaucrat who took his work seriously, believed in it, and did it well. . . . But ultimately, the  
value of *The Office Writings* lies less in the potential connections to Kafka's fiction than in the fundamental  
disconnect."--Ben Kafka, *Bookforum* "Cognizant that some readers might be put off by the legal writing style,

Corngold (German comparative literature, Princeton Univ.), Jack Greenberg (law, Columbia Univ.), and Benno Wagner (literature, media, culture, Univ. of Siegen, Germany) provide ample and rich analyses that demonstrate the close link between Kafka's profession and his literary creativity and oeuvre. This scholarly book is indispensable to an understanding of Kafka. Highly recommended."--Ali Houissa, *Library Journal* (Starred )"This event--finally, the translation and publication of the last known scrap of Kafka's work left untranslated, and unpublished--brings us to the subject of this series: how Kafka's office writings influenced his fiction, and what that influence means. Kafka's office writings, as presented here, cannot be read on their own . . . but, instead, must be read as companions, to demystify the three novels and stories (which are anything but boring). Taken together, though, both workaday fact and masterwork fiction create a network of connections that exposes not just the concerns of a single writer, but also that of a singular culture--the culture of the Office, which has imposed itself on what used to be our lives."--Joshua Cohen, *Nextbook.org*"This handsome volume fills a void in Kafka studies and rectifies the unbalanced image of Kafka as a tortured genius who labored in an insurance office by day and wrote fiction by night. . . . A fascinating read for scholars of Kafka and modern Central European literature."--M. McCulloh, *Choice*"The editors--Stanley Corngold, Jack Greenberg and Benno Wagner--have done a masterful job in making the drafts of speeches, letters, internal reports and newspaper articles relevant."--Raymond Johnston, *Czech Business Weekly*"These writings reveal Kafka the man at his best. For that reason, *Franz Kafka: The Office Writings* makes a significant contribution to understanding the enigmatic Franz Kafka."--Jefferson M. Gray, *Federal Lawyer*From the Back Cover" This volume is an important addition to our understanding and appreciation of Kafka and his work."--Harold T. Shapiro, president emeritus, Princeton University" This carefully edited book is one of the best things to have happened to Kafka scholarship in decades. It debunks the nave but widely accepted myth of Kafka the poet, whose work in real life had nothing to do with his literary oeuvre. Just as importantly, the book is a valuable research tool for anyone who studies the impact of modern technology on the social, legal, and political spheres in Western Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century."--Wolf Kittler, University of California, Santa Barbara" The book adds significantly to a new image of Kafka, one that goes beyond the isolated prophet of existential despair. It reestablishes him as an important commentator on a wide range of topics, such as social institutions, political changes, and technological innovations in high industrial capitalism. It is a major contribution to cultural studies approaches to Kafka, working out the intriguing ways in which a leading modernist writer represents the spirit of his time for our own."--Rolf J. Goebel, University of Alabama, Huntsville" Kafka's office writings, appearing here together in English for the first time, constitute a fascinating discovery. Corngold and Wagner treat readers to a surprising, new Kafka: a high-ranking, confident bureaucrat, whose legal and literary labors were closely intertwined."--John Zilcosky, University of Toronto" This lucid and convincing book is a major contribution to the scholarship on Kafka, and on the relationship between literary creativity and professional life."--Russell Berman, Stanford University

About the Author Stanley Corngold is professor of German and comparative literature at Princeton University. Jack Greenberg is the Alphonse Fletcher Professor of Law at Columbia University. Benno Wagner is a professor in the Department of Literature, Media, and Culture at the University of Siegen in Germany.