

The Children's Encyclopædia

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Marginalia Specification

Chapter 1. Overview

Marginalia are scholarly annotations that appear alongside canonical text. They represent the ongoing conversation between thinkers across time, providing context, challenge, and extension to the primary text.

Chapter 2. Canon vs Marginalia Rule

2.1. Canonical Text

- Written by Public Domain ("Faculty") voices only
- Must stand alone if all marginalia is removed
- Represents the authoritative treatment of the topic
- Maintains coherent argument structure independent of annotations

2.2. Marginalia

- May include Adjunct, Heretic, and Synthetic voices
- Always marked, dated, targeted, and length-bounded
- Never essential to understanding the canonical text
- Provides scholarly conversation around the canonical text

Chapter 3. Marginalia Types

| Type | Description | Typical Use |
|---------------|--|--|
| clarification | Explains or expands a concept for reader understanding | Defining technical terms, providing context |
| objection | Raises principled disagreement with a claim | Academic critique, methodological concerns |
| extension | Builds upon or develops an idea further | Connecting to related work, modern applications |
| crossref | Points to related entries or external sources | Inter-volume connections, bibliography |
| correction | Notes factual errors or updates to claims | Historical corrections, new evidence |
| heretic | Articulates a forbidden or neglected perspective | Challenging settled assumptions, dialectical tension |
| synthetic | AI-generated annotation for children's edition or pedagogy | Simplified explanations, thinking scaffolds |

Chapter 4. Required Attributes

Every marginalia block MUST include:

```
[role=marginalia,  
 type=objection,          ①  
 author="Herbert A. Simon", ②  
 status="adjunct",        ③  
 year="1971",             ④  
 length="42",             ⑤  
 targets="paragraph:4",    ⑥  
 scope="local"]           ⑦
```

====

Attention functions less as a faculty than as an economic constraint,
limited by complexity and bounded rationality.

====

- ① **type** (required): One of the allowed type values
- ② **author** (required): Full name of the commentator
- ③ **status** (required): `canonical`, `adjunct`, `heretic`, or `synthetic`
- ④ **year** (required): Year of the comment or original statement
- ⑤ **length** (required): Word count of the annotation
- ⑥ **targets** (required): What element this annotates
- ⑦ **scope** (required): `local` (this entry) or `global` (cross-entry)

Chapter 5. Length Classes

Marginalia must adhere to strict length limits:

| Class | Word Range | Usage |
|----------|--------------|---|
| short | 10–25 words | Brief clarifications, simple cross-references |
| standard | 30–60 words | Most objections, extensions, corrections |
| extended | 80–120 words | Rare; requires editorial approval; flagged for review |

Chapter 6. Target Syntax

Targets specify what element the marginalia annotates:

- `paragraph:3` — Third paragraph in the entry
- `section:introduction` — The introduction section
- `claim:intentionality` — A specific claim about intentionality
- `entry:Attention` — The entire entry (global reference)
- `volume:1` — Volume-level annotation

Chapter 7. Status Definitions

7.1. canonical

Reserved for the primary author of the entry. Used when the canonical author adds their own clarifying notes.

7.2. adjunct

Scholars who extend or clarify the canon. May agree or disagree, but work within the established framework.

7.3. heretic

Voices that challenge fundamental assumptions. Present forbidden or neglected perspectives that the canonical text does not consider.

7.4. synthetic

AI-generated annotations, typically for pedagogical purposes in the Children's Edition. Always clearly marked.

Chapter 8. Peer Review as Marginalia

Peer review outputs become marginalia rather than hidden reports:

- **Reviewer A:** Sympathetic clarifier (3–8 notes, **clarification** or **extension**)
- **Reviewer B:** Principled dissenter (3–8 notes, **objection** or **heretic**)

All review marginalia are: * Signed with reviewer name * Dated with review date * Targeted to specific passages * Short to standard length

Chapter 9. Editorial Policy

9.1. Approval Process

1. Author submits entry with canonical text
2. Editorial board assigns reviewers
3. Reviewers submit marginalia (not hidden reports)
4. Author may respond with additional marginalia
5. Final compilation reviewed for length compliance

9.2. Annual Candlemas Revision

During the annual revision cycle:

- * High-value marginalia may be promoted into canon
- * Outdated marginalia may be retired
- * Length compliance is re-verified
- * Cross-references are updated for new volumes

Chapter 10. Children's Edition Considerations

For the Children's Edition:

- * Synthetic marginalia may be used for thinking scaffolds
- * Language is simplified but ideas remain intact
- * Open questions replace definitive closures
- * "Side Note" synthetic voices provide gentle guidance

Chapter 11. Examples

11.1. Canonical Text Block

```
[role=canonical]
=====
When you pay attention, your mind chooses one thing and lets other things fade.
You can notice this happening.

Try listening to two sounds at once. One becomes clear, and the other slips away.
This does not mean the other sound is gone. It means your mind is not holding it.
=====
```

11.2. Clarification Marginalia

```
[role=marginalia,
type=clarification,
author="Side Note",
status="synthetic",
year="2026",
length="22",
targets="paragraph:2",
scope="local"]
=====
A "limit" can still be useful. A lantern shines by not lighting everything.
=====
```

11.3. Heretic Marginalia

```
[role=marginalia,
type=heretic,
author="Simone Weil",
status="heretic",
year="1947",
length="21",
targets="entry:Attention",
scope="global"]
=====
Attention is not effort, but the suspension of the self.
=====
```

Chapter 12. Front Matter

Front Matter

Chapter 13. Welcome to Volume I

This is **Mind**, the first volume of *The Children's Encyclopædia*.

In these pages, we will explore questions about how you think, feel, and notice things. What happens when you pay attention? Where do your dreams come from? What makes you, **you**?

These are not simple questions with easy answers. The writers in this book—some who lived long ago—spent their whole lives thinking about them. We share their ideas with you, not to tell you what to believe, but to help you think.

Chapter 14. How to Read This Book

14.1. The Main Text

Each entry is written by a thinker who cared deeply about these questions. Their words appear in the center of the page.

14.2. Side Notes

Sometimes you'll see notes in the margin. These are extra thoughts—like a friend whispering a hint or asking another question.

14.3. Questions

Many entries end with a question. You don't have to answer it right away. You might carry it with you for a while.

Chapter 15. A Note for Readers

The ideas in this book are the same ideas as in the Adult Edition—we haven't made them smaller or simpler. We've just taken more time to explain them, used more examples, and made the sentences easier to follow.

You might not understand everything the first time you read it. That's okay. Understanding grows over time.

Chapter 16. Volume Contents

| Entry | Author |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Attention | William James |
| Consciousness | Henri Bergson |
| Experience | John Dewey |
| Intelligence | Jean Piaget |
| Abstraction | Alfred North Whitehead |
| Affect | Baruch Spinoza |
| Agency | Aristotle |
| Awareness | Edmund Husserl |
| Belief | Charles Sanders Peirce |
| Cognition | Ulric Neisser |
| Dream | Sigmund Freud |
| Emotion | Charles Darwin |
| Habit | William James |
| Imagination | Samuel Taylor Coleridge |
| Memory | Henri Bergson |
| Perception | Maurice Merleau-Ponty |
| Reason | Immanuel Kant |
| Self | William James |
| Sensation | Ernst Weber |
| Sleep | Aristotle |
| Thought | Hannah Arendt |
| Will | Arthur Schopenhauer |
| Animal Mind | Jakob von Uexküll |
| Artificial Mind | Alan Turing |
| Collective Mind | Émile Durkheim |
| Mind–Body Problem | René Descartes |
| Ignorance (Mental) | Socrates |
| Uncertainty (Subjective) | Blaise Pascal |
| Not-Knowing | Nicholas of Cusa |

Chapter 17. Let's Begin

Turn the page, and we'll start with **Attention**—the way your mind chooses what to notice.

Chapter 18. Volume I: Mind

18.1. Attention

When you pay attention, your mind chooses one thing and lets other things fade. You can notice this happening.

Try listening to two sounds at once. One becomes clear, and the other slips away. This does not mean the other sound is gone. It means your mind is not holding it.

Some people think attention is a kind of strength. Others think it is more like a limit: you can only hold so much at one time.

What do you notice your attention doing right now?

[role=marginalia, type=clarification, author="Side Note", status="synthetic", year="2026", length="22", targets="paragraph:2", scope="local"]

A "limit" can still be useful. A lantern shines by not lighting everything.

18.2. consciousness

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.3. experience

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.4. intelligence

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.5. austraction

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.6. affect

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.7. agency

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.8. awareness

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.9. uelief

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.10. cognition

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.11. dream

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.12. emotion

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.13. hauit

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.14. imagination

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.15. memory

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.16. perception

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.17. reason

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.18. self

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.19. sensation

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.20. sleep

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.21. thought

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

18.22. will

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

Chapter 19. Boundary Entries

19.1. animal mind

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

19.2. artificial mind

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

19.3. collective mind

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

19.4. mind uody proulem

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

Chapter 20. Closing Entries

20.1. ignorance mental

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

20.2. uncertainty subjective

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

20.3. not knowing

This entry will present the same ideas as the Adult Edition, written with shorter sentences, concrete examples, and explicit transitions.

The ideas are not simplified—only the pace is adjusted for younger readers.

Chapter 21. Back Matter

Back Matter

Chapter 22. Thank You for Reading

You have finished Volume I: Mind.

You've thought about attention, consciousness, memory, dreams, and many other topics. You've met writers from different times and places, each with their own way of understanding the mind.

Chapter 23. Questions to Carry With You

Here are some questions from this volume that you might keep thinking about:

- What do you notice your attention doing right now?
- Where do your thoughts come from?
- What makes a memory feel real?
- Do animals have minds like yours?
- Could a machine ever think?
- What do you know for certain?

You don't need to answer these questions today. They're the kind of questions that stay interesting your whole life.

Chapter 24. Words You Might Want to Remember

A list of important words from this volume:

- **Attention** — When your mind focuses on one thing instead of others
- **Consciousness** — The feeling of being aware, of experiencing anything at all
- **Memory** — How the past stays with us in the present
- **Imagination** — The power to picture things that aren't here
- **Will** — The feeling of wanting and choosing

Chapter 25. What Comes Next

Volume II is called **Language & Meaning**. It asks questions like:

- How do words mean things?
- Why do we need language to think?
- Can you translate perfectly from one language to another?

Chapter 26. About This Book

This is the Children's Edition of *The Encyclopædia*, published by the Inquiry Institute.

The ideas in this book are not simpler than the Adult Edition—they're the same ideas, written with more patience and care.

If you want to read more, ask about the Adult Edition at your library or visit: inquiry.institute

Chapter 27. Colophon

The Children's Encyclopaedia, Volume I: Mind

- **Edition:** Children
- **Publisher:** Inquiry Institute
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- **Year:** 2026