

Søren  
Kierkegaard  
1813-1855



Clare Carlisle  
The Restless Life of  
Søren Kierkegaard

Philosopher  
of the  
Heart



good philosopher,  
annoying man

Like most great philosophers, Søren Kierkegaard was something of a pain in the arse. Brooding, over-privileged and Danish, he sported a preposterous quiff that stood nearly six inches tall. Even Clare Carlisle's sympathetic new biography can't make him seem particularly likeable. Kierkegaard emerges as the sort of self-absorbed eternal student familiar from philosophy departments across the world. This, of course, is crucial to his appeal.

[James Marriott](#), March 20, 2019, *The Times*

Ane Sørensdatter Lund Kierkegaard &  
Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard





Søren Kierkegaard & Regine Olsen



# *On the Concept of Irony with Continual Reference to Socrates* 1841

Om  
**Begrebet Ironi**

med stadigt Hensyn til Socrates.

Udgivet for Magistergraden

af

**S. A. Kierkegaard,**  
theologisk Candidat.

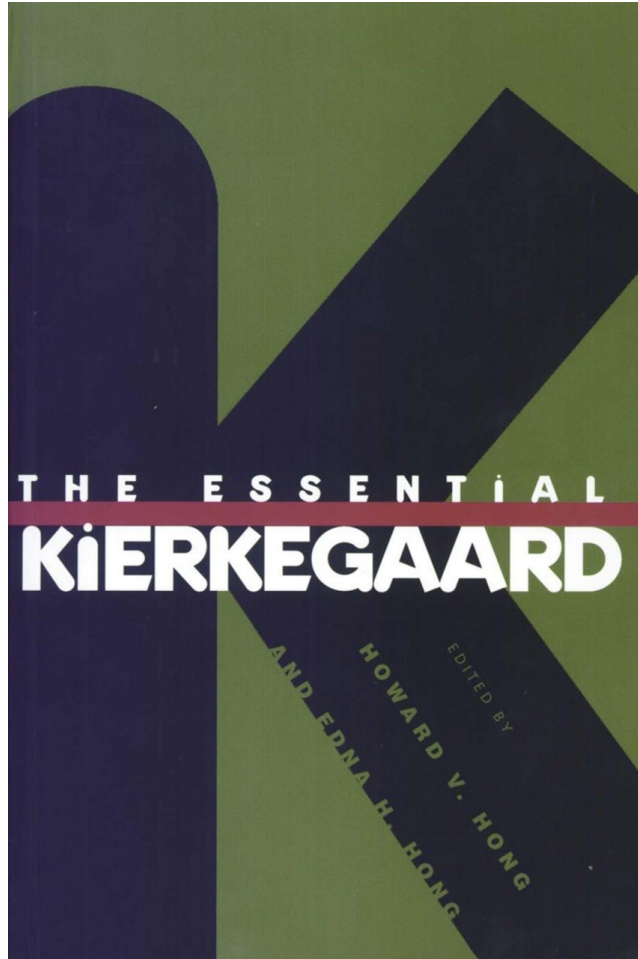
Kjøbenhavn.

Paa Boghandler P. G. Philipsens Forlag.

Trykt i Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri.

1841.





## Kierkegaard – main works

- Either/Or (1843)
- Fear and Trembling (1844)
- Philosophical Fragments (1844)
- The Concept of Anxiety (1844)
- Stages on Life's Way (1845)
- Concluding Unscientific Postscript (1846)
- Sickness unto Death (1849)
- Training in Christianity (1850)

# S. Kierkegaard: Philosopher & Theologian

## Central Ideas

- ❖ Reaction to Hegel's Philosophy of History
- ❖ The Context of Danish Society= Christendom
- ❖ Search of Genuine Religiousness
- ❖ Absurdity of Faith
- ❖ Truth as Subjectivity

- ⇒ *Existentialist "self-creation" & "self-acceptance"*
- ⇒ *Huge influence on non-Christian thinkers*
- ⇒ *Subjectivity vs. Objective Knowledge*
- ⇒ *Direct vs. Indirect Communication*
- ⇒ *Inwardness vs. Disengagement*
- ⇒ *Christian Faith vs. Danish State Church*
- ⇒ *Three "Spheres of Existence"*
  - ◇ *The Aesthetic*
  - ◇ *The Ethical*
  - ◇ *The Religious: faith, love, hope*

# Abraham and Isaac

“If it appears that one lacks the courage to think the thought all the way through and call Abraham a murderer, then it would probably be better to acquire that courage rather than waste time making speeches in undeserved praise of him. The ethical expression for what Abraham was doing is that he was about to murder Isaac; the religious, that he was preparing to sacrifice Isaac. The anguish that arises when confronted by such a dilemma would be enough to make anyone lose sleep; and yet without that anguish Abraham is not Abraham.

...If one removes the element of faith by reducing it to insignificance, what remains of the story is simply that Abraham was prepared to murder Isaac and that, for anyone without faith – that is to say the faith that would make doing such a thing so hard – copying him would be an easy enough matter.”

*(Fear and Trembling)*



Marry, you'll regret it; don't marry, you'll regret that too; marry or don't marry, you'll regret it either way; whether you marry or you don't marry, either way, you'll regret it. Laugh at the world's follies, you'll regret it; weep over them, you'll regret that too; laugh at the world's follies or weep over them, you'll regret it either way; whether you laugh at the world's follies or weep over them, either way, you'll regret it. Believe a girl, you'll regret it; don't believe her, you'll regret that too; believe a girl or don't believe her, you'll regret it either way; whether you believe a girl or don't believe her, either way, you'll regret it. Hang yourself, you'll regret it; don't hang yourself, you'll regret that too; hang yourself or don't hang yourself, you'll regret it either way; whether you hang yourself or you don't hang yourself, either way, you'll regret it. This, gentlemen, is the essence of all life's wisdom.

[*Either/Or*, 1843]



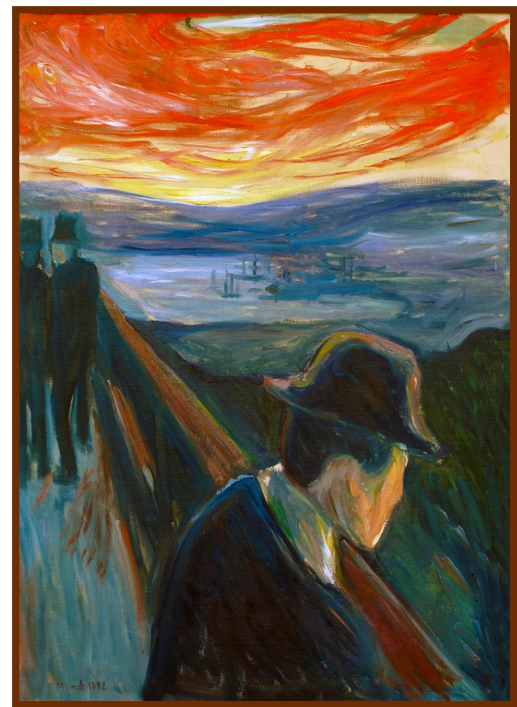
## Despair (1)

“What is to come? What will the future bring? I don’t know. Have no idea.

...No one comes back from the dead, no one has come into the world without crying. No one asks when you want to enter the world, no one asks when you want to leave...How empty and meaningless life is. We bury a person; follow him to the grave, throw three shovels of dirt over him. We drive out in a coach and drive back in a coach, and console ourselves with the thought of our long lives.

But really, how long is three score and ten? Why not just get it over with straight away? Why not stay out there, hop down into the grave ourselves and draw lots to see who has the bad luck to be the last one alive, the one to throw three shovels of dirt over the last dead person?”

*(Either/Or)*



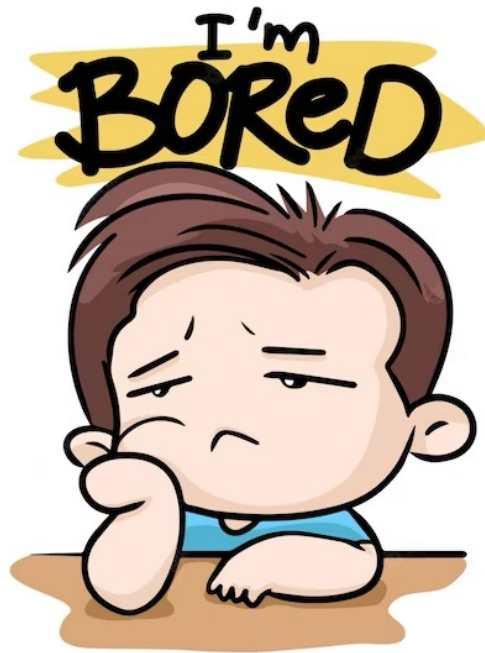
## Despair (2)

“What matters is this: that for God everything is possible. This is as true for all eternity as it is for each passing moment. It’s the sort of thing one says in everyday conversation, an everyday kind of phrase. The truth of it does not emerge until a person has been tested to the uttermost, to the point at which, humanly speaking, possibility no longer exists.

Only then does it matter, for one who truly wants to believe, that for God, everything is possible. But this is in fact the formula for losing one’s mind: to have faith is to lose your mind and to win God.”

*(The Sickness unto Death)*





“So all people are boring...The word ‘boring’ itself can easily refer to someone who bores others as to someone who bores himself.

Those who bore others are the crowd, the mass, the common run of humanity in general.

Those who bore themselves are the few, the elite; and the wonder of it is this, that those who do not bore themselves generally bore others, while those who do bore themselves amuse others.

Those who do not bore themselves are generally speaking the industrious people of the world, which is precisely why these are the most boring and the most intolerable of all.”

*(Either/Or)*