



Being and Nothingness

By Jean-Paul Sartre

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An informative introduction to Sartre and his philosophy and a key to special terminology enhance a handsome edition of Sartre's classic study of modern existentialism.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Jean-Paul Sartre, the seminal smarty-pants of mid-century thinking, launched the existentialist fleet with the publication of *Being and Nothingness* in 1943. Though the book is thick, dense, and unfriendly to careless readers, it is indispensable to those interested in the philosophy of consciousness and free will. Some of his arguments are fallacious, others are unclear, but for the most part Sartre's thoughts penetrate deeply into fundamental philosophical territory. Basing his conception of self-consciousness loosely on Heidegger's "being," Sartre proceeds to sharply delineate between conscious actions ("for themselves") and unconscious ("in themselves"). It is a conscious choice, he claims, to live one's life "authentically" and in a unified fashion, or not--this is the fundamental freedom of our lives.

Drawing on history and his own rich imagination for examples, Sartre offers compelling supplements to his more formal arguments. The waiter who detaches himself from his job-role sticks in the reader's memory with greater tenacity than the lengthy discussion of inauthentic life and serves to bring the full force of the argument to life. Even if you're not an angst-addicted poet from North Beach, *Being and Nothingness* offers you a deep conversation with a brilliant mind--unfortunately, a rare find these days. --Rob Lightner

Review

"There can be no doubt that this is a philosophy to be reckoned with, both for its own intrinsic power and as a profound symptom of our time." (*The New York Times*)

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

Users Review

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