



Notebooks for an Ethics

Jean-Paul Sartre

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A major event in the history of twentieth-century thought, *Notebooks for a Ethics* is Jean-Paul Sartre's attempt to develop an ethics consistent with the profound individualism of his existential philosophy.

In the famous conclusion to *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre announced that he would devote his next philosophical work to moral problems. Although he worked on this project in the late 1940s, Sartre never completed it to his satisfaction, and it remained unpublished until after his death in 1980. Presented here for the first time in English, the *Notebooks* reveal Sartre at his most productive, crafting a masterpiece of philosophical reflection that can easily stand alongside his other great works.

Sartre grapples anew here with such central issues as "authenticity" and the relation of alienation and freedom to moral values. Exploring fundamental modes of relating to the Other--among them violence, entreaty, demand, appeal, refusal, and revolt--he articulates the necessary transition from individualism to historical consciousness. This work thus forms an important bridge between the early existentialist Sartre and the later Marxist social thinker of the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. The *Notebooks* themselves are complemented here by two additional essays, one on "the good and subjectivity," the other on the oppression of blacks in the United States.

With publication of David Pellauer's lucid translation, English-speaking readers will be able to appreciate this important contribution to moral philosophy and the history of ethics.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1906-1980) was offered, but declined, the Nobel Prize for literature in 1964. His many works of fiction, drama, and philosophy include the monumental study of Flaubert, *The Family Idiot*, and *The Freud Scenario*, both published in translation by the University of Chicago Press.

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