THE POINT
OF VIEW

Søren Kierkegaard

Edited and Translated by
Howard V. Hong and
Edna H. Hong

with Introduction and Notes

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Ben says

From childhood on I have been in the grip of an enormous depression, the depth of which finds its only true manifestation in the equally enormous proficiency granted me to hide it under a seeming cheerfulness and zest for life. My only joy from almost as far back as I can remember was that no one could discover how unhappy I felt; this circumstance (the equally great magnitude of my depression and of my dissimulative art) does indeed signify that I was assigned to myself and the God-relationship. -- As a child, I was rigorously and earnestly brought up in Christianity, insanely brought up, humanly speaking -- already in earliest childhood I had overstrained myself under the impression that the depressed old man, who had laid it upon me, was himself sinking under -- a child attired, how insane, as a depressed old man. Frightful!

No wonder, then, that there were times when Christianity seemed to me the most inhuman cruelty....

Travis says

This edition of "The Point of View (of My Work as an Author)" includes an updated translation by the Hongs, a short historical introduction, the title essay and its supplement "The Single Individual"(published posthumously in 1859), "Armed Neutrality" (published posthumously in 1880), together with a lengthy supplement and appendix containing relevant entries from Kierkegaard's journals and papers.

I do not read Danish, so I cannot comment on the accuracy of the translation; one hopes the stilted syntax is the price of greater accuracy, since the old Walter Lowrie translation remains much more readable (and includes the 1851 essay "On My Work as an Author"). To my mind, the advantage of owning this edition is the wealth of additional material the Hongs collected in the supplement and appendix.

For readers interested in Kierkegaard this book provides an insightful window into his thought--and to the degree that it can be trusted, into his motives. Although I've studied and taught Kierkegaard throughout my academic career, I remain conflicted about him. And this book only deepens the paradox of a man who devoted his life to writing about authenticity, Christianity, and the self-deception, but who seems strangely powerless to see through his own delusions. Perhaps what I find most disturbing about this book is the naked arrogance its author often demonstrates in defending his pseudonymous authorship, dialectical tactics, and self-proclaimed genius. But virtues and faults aside, "The Point of View for my Work as an Author" is a required read for anyone who wants to understand Kierkegaard's work in its entirety and from a philosophical perspective.

Megan Fritts says

A fantastic, autobiographical take on the methodology of Kierkegaard's writings. This work shows the reader Soren's plan to draw his audience into the realm of the the (truly) religious by first masqerading his message in his aesthetic writings.

Matko says

If someone asked me for an advice where one should begin reading Kierkegaard, I would recommend him *The Point of View. Kierkegaard gives a short summation of his project right here.*

Mayowa Adebiyi says

A lot of pain and misunderstanding would have been avoided if I had started with this. So, don't be like me, start with this one.