

Does Santa Exist A Philosophical Investigation

The Flying Man is a must read. (?) it touches on the evolution of the soul through the human mind and explores questions around existence, reality and immortality.' J.M. Edwards, The ChroniclesLeon finds himself lying on the bathroom floor. To understand why he is unable to move (is it the drugs, is he asleep and dreaming?), his thoughts need to progress through different times, places, and events in his life. On his journey, he meets a beggar who talks about humbleness and Beatrice, who reminds him of his wife and asks him if he thinks he exists. Only when the identity of The Flying Man is revealed, is Leon allowed to accept the impact that choice and doubt have made on his life. '... this is an intriguing and thought-provoking novel, with different layers of meaning that give the story depth and richness. Ed Peters, The Reviewer'? It is a shining example of good craftsmanship...' Writer's Choice '...The Flying Man is an extraordinary book that cannot fail to leave an impression in the mind of the reader (...) it is in a different league in terms of artistic merit, combining philosophy with an almost Milton-esque sense of falling from grace (...). The Flying Man is perfectly formed...' Michael Graze, The World Beyond

A philosophical analysis of some of history's most pressing mental challenges covers a wide range of issues from the existence of God to the ethics of designer babies, illustrating each with a story and then posing arguments for both sides. 15,000 first printing. conceptual, realist) theories of predication. Chapter IV.4 centers on an important class of expressions used for predication in connection with quantities: mass expressions. This chapter reviews the most well-known approaches to mass terms and the ontological proposals related to them. In addition to quantification and predication, matters of reference have constituted the other overriding theme for semantic theories in both philosophical logic and the semantics of natural languages. Chapter IV.5 of how the semantics of proper names and descriptions have been dealt with in recent theories of reference. Chapter IV.6 is concerned with the context-dependence of reference, in particular, with the semantics of indexical expressions. The topic of Chapter IV.7 is related to predication as it surveys some of the central problems of ascribing propositional attitudes to agents. Chapter IV.8 deals with the analysis of the main temporal aspects of natural language utterances. Together these two chapters give a good indication of the intricate complexities that arise once modalities of one or the other sort enter on the semantic stage. in philosophical Chapter IV.9 deals with another well-known topic logic: presupposition, an issue on the borderline of semantics and pragmatics. The volume closes with an extensive study of the Liar paradox and its many implications for the study of language (as for example, self reference, truth concepts and truth definitions).

Introduces the provocative questions and the arguments that philosophers throughout history have offered, from Plato to the twentieth century, including such issues as reality, ethics, and the existence of God.

Philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God have been crucial to Euro-American and South Asian philosophers for over a millennium. Critical to the history of philosophy in India, were the centuries-long arguments between Buddhist and Hindu philosophers about the existence of a God-like being called Isvara and the religious epistemology used to support them. By focusing on the work of Ratnakirti, one of the last great Buddhist philosophers of India, and his arguments against his Hindu opponents, Parimal G. Patil illuminates South Asian intellectual practices and the nature of philosophy during the final phase of Buddhism in India. Based at the famous university of Vikramasila, Ratnakirti brought the full range of Buddhist philosophical resources to bear on his critique of his Hindu opponents' cosmological/design argument. At stake in his critique was nothing less than the nature of inferential reasoning, the metaphysics of epistemology, and the relevance of philosophy to the practice of religion. In developing a proper comparative approach to the philosophy of religion, Patil transcends the disciplinary boundaries of religious studies, philosophy, and South Asian studies and applies the remarkable work of philosophers like Ratnakirti to contemporary issues in philosophy and religion.

Psychology professor Cass Seltzer finds his relationship challenged by a former girlfriend's invitation to join her biochemistry experiment in immortality, an effort that is complicated by his ongoing quest to understand religion.

Philosophical theorizing about language now involves an increasing emphasis on empirical work and a renewed convergence with philosophy of mind, formal semantics and logic. This new text reflects this evolution. Philosophical Perspectives on Language is distinguished in several important respects from other introductions to the topic. Rather than looking at philosophy of language as a collection of (at best) loosely related topics—speech acts, demonstratives, sense and reference, truth and meaning, etc.—this book is organized around a unifying theme: language as a system of symbols that is known and used.

An evolutionary and cognitive account of the addictive mind candy that is humor. Some things are funny—jokes, puns, sitcoms, Charlie Chaplin, The Far Side, Malvolio with his yellow garters crossed—but why? Why does humor exist in the first place? Why do we spend so much of our time passing on amusing anecdotes, making wisecracks, watching The Simpsons? In Inside Jokes, Matthew Hurley, Daniel Dennett, and Reginald Adams offer an evolutionary and cognitive perspective. Humor, they propose, evolved out of a computational problem that arose when our long-ago ancestors were furnished with open-ended thinking. Mother Nature—aka natural selection—cannot just order the brain to find and fix all our time-pressured misleaps and near-misses. She has to bribe the brain with pleasure. So we find them funny. This wired-in source of pleasure has been tickled relentlessly by humorists over the centuries, and we have become addicted to the endogenous mind candy that is humor.

How people around the world grapple with the great questions posed by Socrates. What is virtue? What is moderation? What is justice? What is courage? What is good? What is piety? Socrates thought that understanding the perspectives of others on these six great questions would help him become a more excellent human being. Following in Socrates's footsteps, Christopher Phillips—"Johnny Appleseed with a master's degree" (Utne Reader)—investigates these same questions, beginning in the marketplace of modern-day Athens. He goes on to investigate the timely responses and outlooks of people from different cultures and backgrounds around the world: from Greece and Spain to Japan and Korea, Mexico City, and Chiapas, where the region's indigenous people struggle for fundamental human rights. Phillips also traveled throughout the United States, holding dialogues in diverse communities from New York City to the Navajo Nation. Introducing us to less familiar thinkers in non-Western traditions who were kindred spirits of Socrates, Phillips enlarges our perspectives on life's fundamental questions, creating an innovative world survey of philosophy.

Keith Yandell's Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction was one of the first textbooks to explore the philosophy of religion with reference to religions other than Christianity. This new, revised edition explores the logical validity and truth claims of several world religions—Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism—with updated, streamlined discussions on important topics in philosophy of religion such as: Religious pluralism Freedom and responsibility Evidentialist Moral Theism Reformed Epistemology Doxastic Practice Epistemology The problem of evil Ontological and cosmological arguments Other new features include updated Questions for Reflection, and new Annotated Bibliographies for each chapter, as well as an updated Glossary. This exciting new edition, much like its

classic predecessor, is sure to be a classroom staple for undergraduate students studying philosophy of religion, as well as a comprehensive introductory read for anyone interested in the subject.

Peter Ludlow presents the first book on the philosophy of generative linguistics, including both Chomsky's government and binding theory and his minimalist program. Ludlow explains the motivation of the generative framework, describes its basic mechanisms, and then addresses some of the many interesting philosophical questions and puzzles that arise once we adopt the general theoretical approach. He focuses on what he takes to be the most basic philosophical issues about the ontology of linguistics, about the nature of data, about language/world relations, and about best theory criteria. These are of broad philosophical interest, from epistemology to ethics: Ludlow hopes to bring the philosophy of linguistics to a wider philosophical audience and show that we have many shared philosophical questions. Similarly, he aims to set out the philosophical issues in such a way as to engage readers from linguistics, and to encourage interaction between the two disciplines on foundational issues.

A humorous philosophical investigation into the existence of Santa from a co-executive producer of *The Big Bang Theory*—the perfect stocking stuffer for the deep thinker on everyone's list. Emmy award-winning comedy writer and philosophy scholar Eric Kaplan brilliantly turns a search for the truth about Santa into a laugh-out-loud metaphysical romp. Surveying everything from the analytic philosophy of Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein to Buddhism, Taoism, and Kabbalah, Kaplan alights on comedy—including *The Big Bang Theory* and *Monty Python*—as the best way to resolve life's most profound paradoxes, including the existence of perfect moments, Santa, and even God.

Written in clear, non-technical language, *Nothing So Absurd* is a succinct and accessible introduction to topics in the history of Western philosophy. In seven concise chapters, the author introduces the reader to the central topics within the discipline. In some cases (such as metaphysics and epistemology) he adopts a historical approach, while in others (such as ethics and philosophy of religion) the focus is as much on contemporary issues as it is on historical developments. In each area, he presents material of great intrinsic interest in a fashion that also provides a sense of the broad sweep of the discipline. This book provides a fair-minded exposition of a wide-range of viewpoints throughout, and dwells, in its final chapter, on the virtues of philosophical realism, thus presenting the reader with the opportunity to engage with a direct philosophical argument. A guide to further reading will assist readers new to philosophy.

One day Sophie comes home from school to find two questions in her mail: "Who are you?" and "Where does the world come from?" Before she knows it she is enrolled in a correspondence course with a mysterious philosopher. Thus begins Jostein Gaarder's unique novel, which is not only a mystery, but also a complete and entertaining history of philosophy.

Charlie Rose has called Louis C.K. "the philosopher-king of comedy," and many have detected philosophical profundity in Louis's comedy, some of which has been watched tens of millions of times on YouTube and elsewhere. *Louis C.K. and Philosophy* is designed to help Louis's fans connect the dots between his pronouncements and living philosophical themes. Twenty-five philosophers examine the wisdom of Louis C.K. from a variety of philosophical perspectives. The chapters draw upon C.K.'s standup comedy, the show *Louie*, and C.K.'s other writings. There is no attempt to fit Louis into one philosophical school; instead the authors bring out the diverse aspects of the thought of Louis C.K. One writer looks at the different meanings of C.K.'s statement, "You're gonna be dead way longer than you were alive." Another explores how Louis knows when he's awake and when he's dreaming, taking a few tips from Descartes. One chapter shows the affinity of C.K.'s "sick of living this bullshit life" with Kierkegaard's "sickness unto death." Another pursues Louis's thought that we may by our lack of moral concern "live a really evil life without thinking about it." C.K.'s religion is "apathetic agnostic," conveyed in his thought experiment that God began work in 1982.

Existentialisms arise when the foundations of being, such as meaning, morals, and purpose come under assault. In the first-wave of existentialism, writings typified by Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, and Nietzsche concerned the increasingly apparent inability of religion, and religious tradition, to support a foundation of being. Second-wave existentialism, personified philosophically by Sartre, Camus, and de Beauvoir, developed in response to similar realizations about the overly optimistic Enlightenment vision of reason and the common good. The third-wave of existentialism, a new existentialism, developed in response to advances in the neurosciences that threaten the last vestiges of an immaterial soul or self. Given the increasing explanatory and therapeutic power of neuroscience, the mind no longer stands apart from the world to serve as a foundation of meaning. This produces foundational anxiety. In *Neuroexistentialism*, a group of contributors that includes some of the world's leading philosophers, neuroscientists, cognitive scientists, and legal scholars, explores the anxiety caused by third-wave existentialism and possible responses to it. Together, these essays tackle our neuroexistentialist predicament, and explore what the mind sciences can tell us about morality, love, emotion, autonomy, consciousness, selfhood, free will, moral responsibility, law, the nature of criminal punishment, meaning in life, and purpose.

The God Delusion caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types. His argument could hardly be more topical. While Europe is becoming increasingly secularized, the rise of religious fundamentalism, whether in the Middle East or Middle America, is dramatically and dangerously dividing opinion around the world. In America, and elsewhere, a vigorous dispute between 'intelligent design' and Darwinism is seriously undermining and restricting the teaching of science. In many countries religious dogma from medieval times still serves to abuse basic human rights such as women's and gay rights. And all from a belief in a God whose existence lacks evidence of any kind. Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children. *The God Delusion* is a brilliantly argued, fascinating polemic that will be required reading for anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.

#1 INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER TRANSLATED INTO 23 LANGUAGES, WITH MORE THAN ONE MILLION COPIES SOLD
What is truth? What is love? Does life have meaning? Bestselling author Richard David Precht, "the Mick Jagger of the nonfiction book" (*Tagesanzeiger Zürich*), has traveled the globe searching for answers—and his odyssey has become one of the most talked-about books around the world. Combining classic philosophy and cutting-edge neuroscience, Precht guides readers through the thickest jungles of academic discourse with the greatest of ease, taking on subjects as challenging and divisive as abortion, cloning, the eating of animals, euthanasia, the ethics of reproductive science, and the very future of humanity. Who knows? By the end of this wildly entertaining journey, you just might be able to answer, Who Am I?

Should we believe in God? In this brisk introduction to modern atheism, one of the world's greatest science writers tells us why we shouldn't. Richard Dawkins was fifteen when he stopped believing in God. Deeply impressed by the beauty and complexity of living things, he'd felt certain they must have had a designer. Learning about evolution changed his mind. Now one of the world's best and bestselling science communicators, Dawkins has given readers, young and old, the same opportunity to rethink the big questions. In twelve fiercely funny, mind-expanding chapters, Dawkins explains how the natural world arose without a designer—the improbability and beauty of the "bottom-up programming" that engineers an embryo or a flock of starlings—and challenges head-on some of the most basic assumptions made by the world's religions: Do you believe in God? Which one? Is

the Bible a “Good Book”? Is adhering to a religion necessary, or even likely, to make people good to one another? Dissecting everything from Abraham’s abuse of Isaac to the construction of a snowflake, *Outgrowing God* is a concise, provocative guide to thinking for yourself. Praise for *Outgrowing God* “My son came home from his first day in the sixth grade with arms outstretched plaintively demanding to know: ‘Have you ever heard of Jesus?’ We burst out laughing. Maybe not our finest parenting moment, given that he was genuinely distraught. He felt that he had woken up one day to a world in which his peers were expressing beliefs he found frighteningly unreasonable. He began devouring books like *The God Delusion*, books that helped him formulate his own arguments and helped him stand his ground. Dawkins’s new book is special in the terrain of atheists’ pleas for humanism and rationalism precisely since it speaks to those most vulnerable to the coercive tactics of religion. As Dawkins himself says in the dedication, this book is for ‘all young people when they’re old enough to decide for themselves.’ It is also, I must add, for their parents.”—Janna Levin, author of *Black Hole Blues* “When someone is considering atheism I tell them to read the Bible first and then Dawkins. *Outgrowing God*—second only to the Bible!”—Penn Jillette, author of *God, No!*

Offers a humorous philosophical investigation into the existence of Santa, examining the theories of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Bertrand Russell, the wisdom of the major religions, and classic bits of comedy.

This extraordinary book explains the engine that has catapulted the Internet from backwater to ubiquity—and reveals that it is sputtering precisely because of its runaway success. With the unwitting help of its users, the generative Internet is on a path to a lockdown, ending its cycle of innovation—and facilitating unsettling new kinds of control. iPods, iPhones, Xboxes, and TiVos represent the first wave of Internet-centered products that can't be easily modified by anyone except their vendors or selected partners. These “tethered appliances” have already been used in remarkable but little-known ways: car GPS systems have been reconfigured at the demand of law enforcement to eavesdrop on the occupants at all times, and digital video recorders have been ordered to self-destruct thanks to a lawsuit against the manufacturer thousands of miles away. New Web 2.0 platforms like Google mash-ups and Facebook are rightly touted—but their applications can be similarly monitored and eliminated from a central source. As tethered appliances and applications eclipse the PC, the very nature of the Internet—its “generativity,” or innovative character—is at risk. The Internet's current trajectory is one of lost opportunity. Its salvation, Zittrain argues, lies in the hands of its millions of users. Drawing on generative technologies like Wikipedia that have so far survived their own successes, this book shows how to develop new technologies and social structures that allow users to work creatively and collaboratively, participate in solutions, and become true “netizens.”

Of all Plato’s dialogues, the *Parmenides* is notoriously the most difficult to interpret. Scholars of all periods have disagreed about its aims and subject matter. The interpretations have ranged from reading the dialogue as an introduction to the whole of Platonic metaphysics to seeing it as a collection of sophisticated tricks, or even as an elaborate joke. This work presents an illuminating new translation of the dialogue together with an extensive introduction and running commentary, giving a unified explanation of the *Parmenides* and integrating it firmly within the context of Plato's metaphysics and methodology. Scolnicov shows that in the *Parmenides* Plato addresses the most serious challenge to his own philosophy: the monism of Parmenides and the Eleatics. In addition to providing a serious rebuttal to Parmenides, Plato here re-formulates his own theory of forms and participation, arguments that are central to the whole of Platonic thought, and provides these concepts with a rigorous logical and philosophical foundation. In Scolnicov's analysis, the *Parmenides* emerges as an extension of ideas from Plato's middle dialogues and as an opening to the later dialogues. Scolnicov’s analysis is crisp and lucid, offering a persuasive approach to a complicated dialogue. This translation follows the Greek closely, and the commentary affords the Greekless reader a clear understanding of how Scolnicov’s interpretation emerges from the text. This volume will provide a valuable introduction and framework for understanding a dialogue that continues to generate lively discussion today.

In *The Myths that Stole Christmas*, Johnson argues that Christmas has been hijacked by seven different myths—seven myths that control how people conceive of and celebrate the holiday. Myth #1: Jesus Is the Reason for the Season Myth #2: There Is a War on Christmas Myth #3: Our Christmas Traditions Are Old-Fashioned Myth #4: Christmas Spending Is Good for the Economy Myth #5: Santa Claus Is Saint Nicholas Myth #6: The Santa Claus Lie Is Harmless Myth #7: Christmas Can't Change Historically, holiday celebrations served useful social functions; they smoothed tension between social classes; they helped us prepare for the long hard winter; they turned the literal darkest days into the “hap-happiest season of all.” Modern Christmas celebrations, however, serve as a source of conflict—and can make us anxious, stressed, fat, poor and stupid. Christmas owns us; we do what it wants, when it wants. But, Johnson argues, taking a close look at the history of the holiday, and the social, political and economic issues that surround it, can turn the tables and allow us to own Christmas once again. Christmas is not a Christians-only holiday that can only be properly celebrated a certain way. Christmas belongs to us all and we can each simply make it what we need it to be.

A philosophical but fun look at the meanings of Christmas myths and rituals, from carving the turkey to why Santa wears red. Picture the scene: Aunt Gertrude has just given you the most appalling Christmas tie, complete with snow-flecked kittens in a bowler hat. Do you smile, nod, and confine it to the bottom drawer? Or do you tell the truth and spare yourself future ties from hell? Kant would say that we must, at all costs, tell the truth - whilst Mill would insist that we should think of the consequences. *THE XMAS FILES* is a philosophical meander through the myths and rituals of Christmas today, asking such important questions as does Santa exist? What's wrong with Christmas kitsch? Is it all just a commercial racket? What was Augustine's attitude to 'peace on earth'? And what would David Hume have to say about the virgin birth? For underneath all the festive fun, the way we celebrate Christmas does raise serious questions about the beliefs that sustain us, and the ways in which we still value ritual and tradition as a means of coming together.

Bob Odenkirk is a legend in the comedy-writing world, winning Emmys and acclaim for his work on *Saturday Night Live*, *Mr. Show with Bob and David*, and many other seminal TV shows. This book, his first, is a spleen-bruisingly funny omnibus that ranges from absurdist monologues (“Martin Luther King, Jr’s Worst Speech Ever”) to intentionally bad theater (“Hitler Dinner Party: A Play”); from avant-garde fiction (“Obituary for the Creator of Madlibs”) to free-verse poetry that's funnier and more powerful than the work of Calvin Trillin, Jewel, and Robert Louis Stevenson combined. Odenkirk's debut resembles nothing so much as a hilarious new sketch comedy show that’s exclusively available as a streaming video for your mind. As Odenkirk himself writes in “The Second Coming of Jesus and Lazarus,” it is a book “to be read aloud to yourself in the voice of Bob Newhart.”

Analytic philosophy is alive and in good health, as this collection of twenty, previously unpublished essays most ably demonstrates. The reader will find here assembled some of the finest writings of modern analytic philosophers at the top of their form. Matthews discusses Plato's attempt to deal with the problem of false belief about identities. Parson evaluates Russell's early theory of denoting phrases. Chisholm exhibits the utility of thirteen epistemic categories. Plantinga criticizes Chisholm's account of justification. Conee argues that solving the Gettier Problem is important, and Ginet proposes a solution to it. Lehrer criticizes an argument based on the simplicity of our belief in material objects and other minds. R. Feldman defends an account of having evidence. F. Feldman defends a propositional account of pleasure. Van Fraassen criticizes Garber's solution to the problem of old evidence. Castañeda investigates the nature of negation. McKay argues that *de se* analyses of belief do not account for belief *de re*. Richard argues that no Fregean semantics for belief attribution will succeed. Ryckman suggests that the Millian theory of names has little to do with the theory of belief is no threat to God's omniscience. Dunn investigates constraints imposed on non-classical modal logics by extensionality. Fitch argues that singular propositions perform important functions in modal logic. Jubien evaluates arguments for and against possible worlds. Ratzsch argues that there must be a deeper source of nomicality than ordinary subjunctives, and Stalnaker argues that there is room for determinacy of identity and indeterminacy in reference.

This volume contains new translations of two dialogues of Plato, the Protagoras and the Meno, together with explanatory notes and substantial interpretive essays. Robert C. Bartlett's translations are as literal as is compatible with sound English style and take into account important textual variations. Because the interpretive essays both sketch the general outlines of the dialogues and take up specific theoretical or philosophic difficulties, they will be of interest not only to those reading the dialogues for the first time but also to those already familiar with them. The Protagoras and the Meno are linked by the attention each pays to the idea of virtue: the latter dialogue focuses on the fundamental Socratic question "What is virtue?," the former on the specific virtue of courage, especially in its relation to wisdom. An appendix contains a short extract from Xenophon's Anabasis of Cyrus that vividly portrays the figure of Meno.

Our experience of objects (and consequently our theorizing about them) is very rich. We perceive objects as possessing individuation conditions. They appear to have boundaries in space and time, for example, and they appear to move independently of a background of other objects or a landscape. In *Ontology Without Boundaries* Jody Azzouni undertakes an analysis of our concept of object, and shows what about that notion is truly due to the world and what about it is a projection onto the world of our senses and thinking. Location and individuation conditions are our product: there is no echo of them in the world. Features, the ways that objects seem to be, aren't projections. Azzouni shows how the resulting austere metaphysics tames a host of ancient philosophical problems about constitution ("Ship of Theseus," "Sorities"), as well as contemporary puzzles about reductionism. In addition, it's shown that the same sorts of individuation conditions for properties, which philosophers use to distinguish between various kinds of odd abstracta--universals, tropes, and so on, are also projections. Accompanying our notion of an object is a background logic that makes cogent ontological debate about anything from Platonic objects to Bigfoot. Contemporary views about this background logic ("quantifier variance") make ontological debate incoherent. Azzouni shows how a neutral interpretation of quantifiers and quantifier domains makes sense of both philosophical and pre-philosophical ontological debates. Azzouni also shows how the same apparatus makes sense of our speaking about a host of items--Mickey Mouse, unicorns, Martians--that nearly all of us deny exist. It's allowed by what Azzouni shows about the background logic of our ontological debates, as well as the semantics of the language of those debates that we can disagree over the existence of things, like unicorns, without that background logic and semantics forcing ontological commitments onto speakers that they don't have.

In this innovative volume contemporary philosophers respond to classic works of Jewish philosophy. For each of twelve central topics in Jewish philosophy, Jewish philosophical readings, drawn from the medieval period through the twentieth century, appear alongside an invited contribution that engages both the readings and the contemporary philosophical literature in a constructive dialogue. The twelve topics are organized into four sections, and each section commences with an overview of the ensuing dialogue and concludes with a list of further readings. The introduction to the volume assesses the current state of Jewish philosophy and argues for a deeper engagement with analytic philosophy, exemplified by the new contributions. *Jewish Philosophy Past and Present: Contemporary Responses to Classical Sources* is a cutting edge work of Jewish philosophy, and, at the same time, an engaging introduction to the issues that animated Jewish philosophers for centuries and to the texts that they have produced. It is designed to set the agenda in Jewish philosophy for years to come.

Is it possible for the nonbeliever to lead a happy and meaningful life? This is one question George H. Smith, defender of reason and personal liberty and author of an influential contemporary classic on nonbelief, seeks to answer in *Why Atheism?* Smith reviews the historical roots of nonbelief going back to the ancient Greeks, argues that philosophy can serve as an important alternative to religion, and defends reason as the most reliable method humans have for establishing truth and conducting one's life. *Why Atheism?* tackles a wide range of subjects, some of which have never been thoroughly analyzed from an atheistic point of view. Beginning with the problem of atheism's credibility, Smith points out the various ways in which religious opponents have sought to exclude atheism from serious consideration. He also analyzes a number of classical philosophical issues, such as the nature of knowledge and belief, concluding that modern atheism is largely an unintended consequence of the religious diversity brought about by the Protestant Reformation. Two chapters are devoted to ethics, one focusing on the ethics of belief with particular attention given to the views of Thomas Aquinas and John Locke. Other chapters discuss the persecution of religious dissenters and the features of an ethical system without belief in God. Smith's characteristic lucidity, analytical rigor, and wit make *Why Atheism?* an accessible

and enjoyable guide to living a positive life without belief in a supreme being. George H. Smith is the author of the world's most popular book on nonbelief, *Atheism: The Case Against God*, and *Atheism, Ayn Rand, and Other Heresies*.

This volume collects Saul Kripke's Locke Lectures, which were delivered in Oxford in 1973.

In the hands of acclaimed comedy writer and philosophy scholar Eric Kaplan, a search for the truth about Old Saint Nick becomes a deeply insightful, laugh-out-loud discussion of the way some things exist but may not really be there - just like Santa and his reindeer.

In 1973 a workshop was held at The University of Western Ontario on topics of common interest to philosophers and linguists. This volume contains most of the papers presented at the workshop. Also included are previously unpublished essays by R. Dougherty and H. Lasnik as well as a comment on G. Lakoff's paper by B. van Fraassen. K. Donnellan's paper was presented at the workshop and subsequently appeared in *The Philosophical Review*. We thank the editors of this journal for permission to publish the paper here. The papers by D. Lewis, R. Stalnaker, G. Lakoff, B. Partee and H. Herzberger appeared earlier in *Journal of Philosophical Logic* by arrangement of the editors with B. van Fraassen and D. Reidel Publishing Company. The editors thank the officers of The University of Western Ontario for making the workshop possible and Pauline Campbell for making the workshop work. THE EDITORS DAVID LEWIS COUNTERFACTUALS AND COMPARATIVE POSSIBILITY* In the last dozen years or so, our understanding of modality has been much improved by means of possible-world semantics: the project of analyzing modal language by systematically specifying the conditions under which a modal sentence is true at a possible world. I hope to do the same for counterfactual conditionals. I write A \rightarrow C for the counterfactual conditional with antecedent A and consequent C. It may be read as 'If it were the case that A, then it would be the case that C' or some more idiomatic paraphrase thereof.

What Would Socrates Say? helps the armchair philosopher solve age-old quandaries and contemporary ethical dilemmas. - If no one ever loves me during my lifetime—if I don't have a relationship—will I have not lived a good life? - Do the advances in the field of biotechnology threaten our moral values? - Are there any reasons to have a child that aren't selfish? - Is there no such thing as bad art? - What's the difference between a terrorist and a freedom fighter? - Am I morally bound to tell my sex partner if I fantasize about someone else while making love to him or her? These are among the profound, paradoxical, playful, and classic questions asked and answered in this book drawn from AskPhilosophers.org, the popular website created by some of today's most highly esteemed philosophers. Using their knowledge of the arguments laid down by the likes of Aristotle, Camus, Locke, and Socrates, and their own insightful interpretations, they break down tough issues in a digestible, personal, and even humorous style. Included are questions on today's hot-button topics (war, euthanasia); timeless conundrums about religion and morality (how do we know God exists?); personal perplexities about adultery, child-rearing, and sex; and a few lighthearted topics like whether it's right to let your kids believe in Santa. Featuring real questions from real people around the world—doctors, lawyers, the uneducated, the elderly, and even young children (for example, "If everything has an opposite, like night and day, then what's the opposite of a banana?")—this book is for anyone seeking enlightenment on a complicated or an elusive concept relevant to the lives we lead today. Whether you agree with the answers given or not, this book reminds us of Socrates' famous words—"a life unexamined is not worth living"—and, in doing so, encourages us to think a little more deeply, a little more critically, and, well, a little more philosophically about how we make our way in the world From the Hardcover edition.

The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus is a 1902 children's book, written by L. Frank Baum and illustrated by Mary Cowles Clark Sense, Reference, and Philosophy develops the far-reaching consequences for philosophy of adopting non-Fregean intensionalism, showing that long-standing problems in the philosophy of language, and indeed other areas, that appeared intractable can now be solved. Katz proceeds to examine some of those problems in this new light, including the problem of names, natural kind terms, the Liar Paradox, the distinction between logical and extra-logical vocabulary, and the Raven paradox. In each case, a non-Fregean intensionalism provides a philosophically more satisfying solution.

This is a comprehensive history of the world's midwinter gift-givers, showcasing the extreme diversity in their depictions as well as the many traits and functions these characters share. It tracks the evolution of these figures from the tribal priests who presided over winter solstice celebrations thousands of years before the birth of Christ, to Christian notables like St. Martin and St. Nicholas, to a variety of secular figures who emerged throughout Europe following the Protestant Reformation. Finally, it explains how the popularity of a poem about a "miniature sleigh" and "eight tiny reindeer" helped consolidate the diverse European gift-givers into an enduring tradition in which American children awake early on Christmas morning to see what Santa brought. Although the names, appearance, attire and gift-giving practices of the world's winter solstice gift-givers differ greatly, they are all recognizable as Santa, the personification of the Christmas and Midwinter festivals. Despite efforts to eliminate him by groups as diverse as the Puritans of seventeenth century New England, the Communist Party of the twentieth century Soviet Union and the government of Nazi Germany, Santa has survived and prospered, becoming one of the best known and most beloved figures in the world.

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