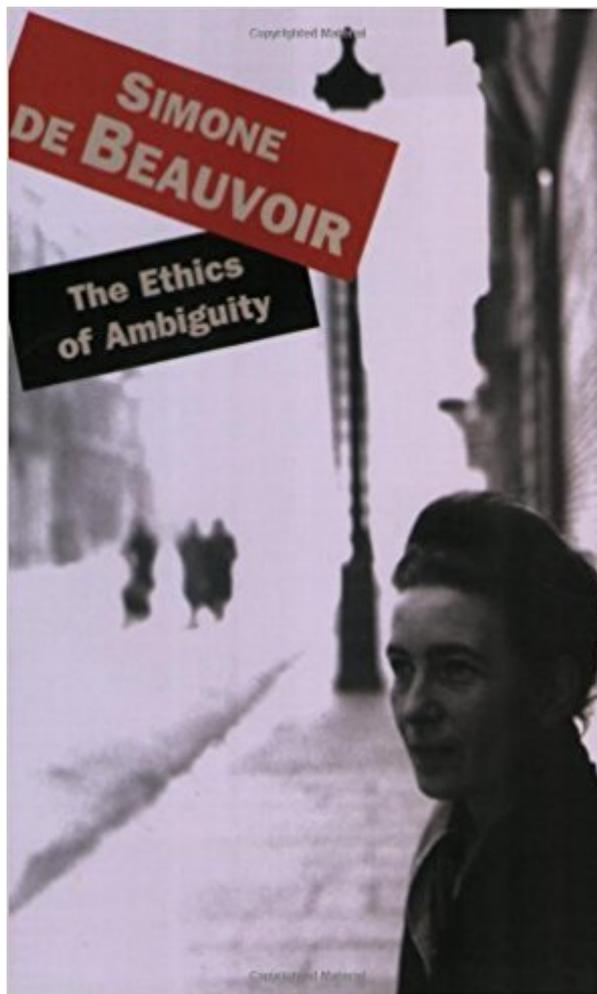


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The Ethics Of Ambiguity



Synopsis

From the groundbreaking author of *The Second Sex* comes a radical argument for ethical responsibility and freedom. In this classic introduction to existentialist thought, French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's *The Ethics of Ambiguity* simultaneously pays homage to and grapples with her French contemporaries, philosophers Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, by arguing that the freedoms in existentialism carry with them certain ethical responsibilities. De Beauvoir outlines a series of ways of being (the adventurer, the passionate person, the lover, the artist, and the intellectual), each of which overcomes the former's deficiencies, and therefore can live up to the responsibilities of freedom. Ultimately, de Beauvoir argues that in order to achieve true freedom, one must battle against the choices and activities of those who suppress it. *The Ethics of Ambiguity* is the book that launched Simone de Beauvoir's feminist and existential philosophy. It remains a concise yet thorough examination of existence and what it means to be human. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

The Ethics of Ambiguity is a first rate philosophical study, and important contribution to ethics, that demonstrates the radical freedom proclaimed by existentialists to carry with it ethical responsibilities. The insight that the essence of human being is freedom, or that we are just what we make of ourselves and there are no absolutes does not lead to nihilism, but rather to the recognition that we are answerable to the others with whom we must collaborate in the construction of human

existence. The core of the book is in the second chapter, where Beauvoir outlines a progressively more adequate series of responses to the awareness of freedom. The child can remain ignorant of the ways in which her choices reflect back upon her, and begin imperceptibly to define who she is and determine a destiny; but in adolescence we all grasp, in varying degrees, that if who we are has been shaped by the free and somewhat arbitrary choices of our parents and guardians, who we will become is up to us. It's easy, at that point, to deny or reject our freedom and fall into complacency or routine, but to do so is to be not fully human, a "sub-man" who rejects responsibility and lives just to live and according to habit. Such are easily manipulated by trends and marketing and political slogans of whatever content.

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