

# Soren kierkegaard: mega mind of the 19th century

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As a man whose work spans across areas such as philosophy, theology, devotional literature, and more, Soren Kierkegaard is considered one of the mega-minds of philosophy and the 19th century. He was influenced by many people throughout his life, as well as influencing many people himself. With works that ranged from religious views all the way to developing a “new” way to view our surroundings, Kierkegaard was a very well-rounded and mentally profound man.

There were few people that could influence such a profound mind at the time, but Kierkegaard found them both in church as well as in the realm of philosophy. As a whole Kierkegaard led a rather boring life and was rarely seen away from his hometown of Copenhagen, Denmark. “[Kierkegaard] was educated at a prestigious boys' school (Borgerdydskolen), then attended Copenhagen University where he studied philosophy and theology. His teachers at the university included F. C. Sibbern, Poul Martin Moller, and H. L. Martensen (McDonald, 1996).” Moller had a major negative effect on Kierkegaard’s philosophic-literary development. In H. L. Martensen, he found the perfect match, someone who taught him in school and was involved in the church as well. “...when [Martensen] became Bishop Primate of the Danish People’s Church, Kierkegaard published a vitriolic attack on Martensen’s theological views (McDonald, 1996).” Martensen was considered one of Kierkegaard’s chief intellectual rivals. Another very important figure in Kierkegaard's life was J. L. Heiberg, the doyen of Copenhagen's literati (McDonald, 1996).” Heiberg influenced Kierkegaard to write his first major publication, “...From the Papers of One Still Living, [which] is largely an attempt to articulate a Heibergian aesthetics - which is <https://assignbuster.com/soren-kierkegaard-mega-mind-of-the-19th-century/>

a modified version of Hegel's aesthetics (McDonald, 1996). " Another group of people/entities that profoundly influenced Kierkegaard were his mother, his father, and God.

His mother had no visible impact on Kierkegaard's writing, but "...for a writer who places so much emphasis on indirectcommunication, and on the semiotics of invisibility, we should regard this absence as significant (McDonald, 1996). " There was even another philosopher named Johannes Climacus that stated "... ' in Concluding Unscientific Postscript remarks, '... how deceptive then, that an omnipresent being should be recognisable precisely by being invisible' (McDonald, 1996). " His father's influence has been noted quite frequently in Kierkegaard's works.

Not only did Kierkegaard inherit his father's melancholy, his sense of guilt and anxiety, and his pietistic emphasis on the dour aspects of Christian faith, but he also inherited his talents for philosophical argument and creative imagination (McDonald, 1996). Kierkegaard was a very religious man, even though he did not attend church on a regular basis. " He perceived God and existence of life from a humanistic view emphasizing the total autonomy of man (Philosopher Kierkegaard, 2011). As almost a lone man standing, Kierkegaard was in seclusion publishing his writings for most of his adult life, due to the atheism of fellow philosophers of his time. "[Kierkegaard's] legacy was his belief that our response to God should be one of unrestrained passion toward our beloved (Philosopher Kierkegaard, 2011). " During his later years Kierkegaard felt that the Christian religion had become corrupt through secular and political involvement, so he started to attack

Christendom saying that the individual is fully responsible for their faith in God without doctrinal influence.

The Christian ideal, according to Kierkegaard, is even more exacting since the totality of an individual's existence is the artefact on the basis of which s/he is judged by God for h/er eternal validity. Of course a writer's work is an important part of h/er existence, but for the purpose of judgment we should focus on the whole life not just on one part (McDonald, 1996) Kierkegaard influenced others as well with his works that were published and unpublished throughout his lifetime.

Kierkegaard's Christian philosophy may have been rejected by clergy, but he certainly influenced individual Christians who became enamored with his theology. Most notably are American theologians Paul Tillich and Lincoln Swain, and philosophers from Europe -- Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, Miguel de Unamuno -- and from Russia Nikolai Berdyaev (Philosopher Kierkegaard, 2011) Kierkegaard is known as one of the fathers of existentialism.

Existentialists are characterized by: \* They are obsessed with how to live one's life and believe that philosophical and psychological inquiry can help.

They believe there are certain questions that everyone must deal with (if they are to take human life seriously), and that these are special -- existential -- questions. Questions such as death, the meaning of human existence, the place of God in human existence, the meaning of value, interpersonal relationship, the place of self-reflective conscious knowledge of one's self in existing. Note that the existentialists on this characterization don't pay much attention to " social" questions such as the politics of life and

what " social" responsibility the society or state has. They focus almost exclusively on the individual.

By and large Existentialists believe that life is very difficult and that it doesn't have an " objective" or universally known value, but that the individual must create value by affirming it and living it, not by talking about it. Existential choices and values are primarily demonstrated in ACT not in words. Given that one is focusing on individual existence and the " existential" struggles (that is, in making decisions that are meaningful in everyday life), they often find that literary characterizations rather than more abstract philosophical thinking, are the best ways to elucidate existential struggles.

They tend to take freedom of the will, the human power to do or not do, as absolutely obvious. Now and again there are arguments for free will in Existentialist literature, but even in these arguments, one gets the distinct sense that the arguments are not for themselves, but for " outsiders. " Inside the movement, free will is axiomatic, it is intuitively obvious, it is the backdrop of all else that goes on. There are certainly exceptions to each of these things, but this is sort of a placing of the existentialist-like positions.

Corbett, 1985) Kierkegaard contributed to this movement with his works due to the influence of his father and others that are previously mentioned, with a melancholy typed self actualization mind set. Kierkegaard did not believe that everyone on earth had the same plan for life, or that they were all here for the same reason, in fact he believed the exact opposite, all people on earth have a different life path, whether that be Christianity or atheism, " plumber or surgeon", smart or dumb, he believed that the individual has the power to fulfill whatever destiny they please. One existential quote found was <https://assignbuster.com/soren-kierkegaard-mega-mind-of-the-19th-century/>

posted by an anonymous user stated, there is no luck, no fate, no ultimate plan in life, there is just determination...100% determination to succeed and make something of yourself. As one of the founding fathers of existentialism and a great mind of his time Soren Kierkegaard is now remembered as a mega-mind of the 19th century. With influences galore and a self actualizing personality, he formed a great reputation for himself. Maybe not recognized in his time, Soren Kierkegaard is by far one of the most influential philosophers of the modern world.

References Corbett, B. (1985, March). What is Existentialism? Retrieved November 10, 2011, from Webster. edu website: <http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/philosophy/existentialism/whatis.html> McDonald, W. (1996, December 3). 1. Kierkegaard's Life. In Soren Kierkegaard. Retrieved November 10, 2011, from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy website: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kierkegaard/#Chron> Philosopher Kierkegaard. (2011). Retrieved November 10, 2011, from AllAboutPhilosophy. org website: <http://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/philosopher-kierkegaard-faq.htm>