# PHILOSOPHY SPEAKER SERIES



## EMPTINESS, LUMINOSITY, AND RADICAL FREEDOM: AN OPINIONATED OVERVIEW OF SARTRE'S *BEING AND NOTHINGNESS*


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This talk offers an overview of Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness, perhaps the most popular of the three original magna opera of Existential Phenomenology. The overview will be centered around the three fundamental characteristics of consciousness or being-for-itself, according to Sartre: its insubstantiality or "emptiness" (manifest in its basic intentionality and parasitic relation to being-in-itself); its reflexivity or "luminosity" (its pre-reflective acquaintance with itself); and its spontaneity (or self-determining "Cartesian freedom") in virtue of which it is not trapped by the causal order and establishes its own system of norms effectively ex nihilo. From this vantage point we'll cast a glance at all the usual Sartrean themes: Personhood, Temporality, Embodiment, Intersubjectivity, Bad Faith, and Projects (derived and "original"). I'll highlight some insights and limitations of Sartre's Existential Phenomenology and close by drawing some lessons for contemporary approaches to consciousness.


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3:30PM-5:00PM

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