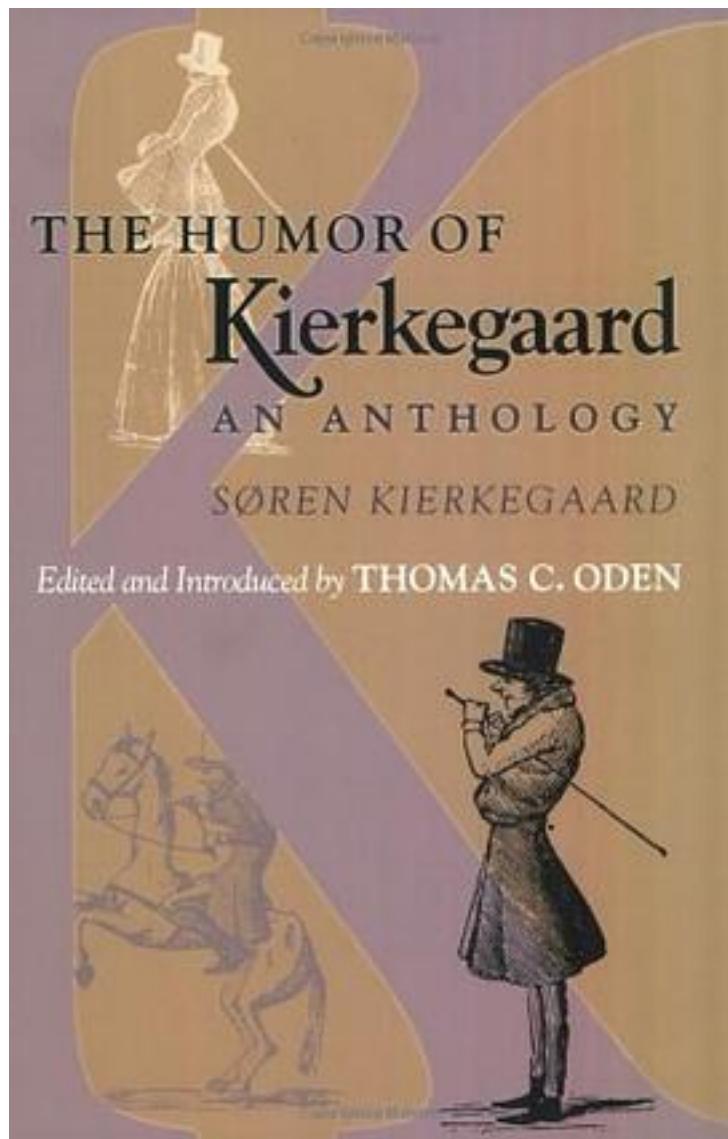


The Humor of Kierkegaard



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著者:Kierkegaard, Soren/ Oden, Thomas C.

出版者:Princeton Univ Pr

出版时间:2004-7

装帧:Pap

isbn:9780691020853

Who might reasonably be nominated as the funniest philosopher of all time? With this anthology, Thomas Oden provisionally declares Sren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855)--despite his enduring stereotype as the melancholy, despairing Dane--as, among philosophers, the most amusing. Kierkegaard not only explored comic perception to its depths but also practiced the art of comedy as astutely as any writer of his time. This collection shows how his theory of comedy is integrated into his practice of comic perception, and how both are integral to his entire authorship. Kierkegaard's humor ranges from the droll to the rollicking; from farce to intricate, subtle analysis; from nimble stories to amusing aphorisms. In these pages you are invited to meet the wife of an author who burned her husband's manuscript and a businessman who, even with an abundance of calling cards, forgot his own name. You will hear of an interminable vacillator whom archeologists found still pacing thousands of years later, trying to come to a decision. Then there is the emperor who became a barkeeper in order to stay in the know. The Humor of Kierkegaard is for anyone ready to be amused by human follies. Those new to Kierkegaard will discover a dazzling mind worth meeting. Those already familiar with his theory of comedy will be delighted to see it concisely set forth and exemplified. Others may have read Kierkegaard intensively without having ever really noticed his comic side. Here they will find what they have been missing.

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目录:

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