

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

A Novel About
the History of
Philosophy

SOPHIE'S WORLD

Jostein Gaarder

AUTHOR OF THE SOLITAIRE MYSTERY

Readers Guide
Inside

B
BRISLEY

Mother's Day gopal

More praise for the international bestseller
that has become
"Europe's oddball literary sensation of the decade"
(New York Newsday) . . .

Sophie's World

"A page-turner." — *Entertainment Weekly*

"Compelling." — *Los Angeles Times*

"Involving and often humorous." — *USA Today*

"In the adroit hands of Jostein Gaarder, the whole sweep
of three millennia of Western philosophy is rendered as
lively as a gossip column."
— *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*

"Gaarder takes the dustiest of disciplines and gives it
immediate relevance. . . Surprisingly, for a book
crowded with postmodern literary maneuvers and epis-
temological thought, innocence reigns. In the end, we're
led to a conclusion both radical and reassuring: at its
core, philosophy is kid stuff."
— *Boston Phoenix Literary Supplement*

"A marvelously rich book." — *The Guardian*

(continued on next page)

To

Dearest Dad,

A Book, I know you'll enjoy!

With all my love

Chitra

5-12-22

Sophie's World

*A Novel About the
History of Philosophy*

JOSTEIN GAARDER

Translated by Paulette Møller



BERKLEY BOOKS, NEW YORK

Contents

THE GARDEN OF EDEN <i>... at some point something must have come from nothing ...</i>	1
THE TOP HAT <i>... the only thing we require to be good philosophers is the faculty of wonder ...</i>	10
THE MYTHS <i>... a precarious balance between the forces of good and evil ...</i>	21
THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS <i>... nothing can come from nothing ...</i>	28
DEMOCRITUS <i>... the most ingenious toy in the world ...</i>	41
FATE <i>... the "fortune-teller" is trying to foresee something that is really quite unforeseeable ...</i>	47
SOCRATES <i>... wisest is she who knows she does not know ...</i>	56
ATHENS <i>... several tall buildings had risen from the ruins ...</i>	72

PLATO	
<i>... a longing to return to the realm of the soul ...</i>	78
THE MAJOR'S CABIN	
<i>... the girl in the mirror winked with both eyes ...</i>	94
ARISTOTLE	
<i>... a meticulous organizer who wanted to clarify our concepts ...</i>	104
HELLENISM	
<i>... a spark from the fire ...</i>	121
THE POSTCARDS	
<i>... I'm imposing a severe censorship on myself ...</i>	140
TWO CULTURES	
<i>... the only way to avoid floating in a vacuum ...</i>	149
THE MIDDLE AGES	
<i>... going only part of the way is not the same as going the wrong way ...</i>	165
THE RENAISSANCE	
<i>... O divine lineage in mortal guise ...</i>	188
THE BAROQUE	
<i>... such stuff as dreams are made on ...</i>	216
DESCARTES	
<i>... he wanted to clear all the rubble off the site ...</i>	233
SPINOZA	
<i>... God is not a puppeteer ...</i>	247
LOCKE	
<i>... as bare and empty as a blackboard before the teacher arrives ...</i>	257
HUME	
<i>... commit it then to the flames ...</i>	267

BERKELEY	
<i>... like a giddy planet round a burning sun ...</i>	282
BJERKELY	
<i>... an old magic mirror Great-grandmother had bought from a Gypsy woman ...</i>	287
THE ENLIGHTENMENT	
<i>... from the way needles are made to the way cannons are founded ...</i>	303
KANT	
<i>... the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me ...</i>	322
ROMANTICISM	
<i>... the path of mystery leads inwards ...</i>	342
HEGEL	
<i>... the reasonable is that which is viable ...</i>	360
KIERKEGAARD	
<i>... Europe is on the road to bankruptcy ...</i>	372
MARX	
<i>... a spectre is haunting Europe ...</i>	385
DARWIN	
<i>... a ship sailing through life with a cargo of genes ...</i>	404
FREUD	
<i>... the odious egoistic impulse that had emerged in her ...</i>	429
OUR OWN TIME	
<i>... man is condemned to be free ...</i>	447
THE GARDEN PARTY	
<i>... a white crow ...</i>	471
COUNTERPOINT	
<i>... two or more melodies sounding together ...</i>	485

CONTENTS

THE BIG BANG

... we too are stardust ...

504

INDEX

515

FICTION

SOPHIE'S WORLD



Sophie's World is unlike any book you have ever read. At once a highly original novel of suspense, a spiritual search for self-knowledge, and a probing philosophical inquiry, it recounts the unusual story of Sophie, a young woman whose life is utterly changed by two simple questions she receives in her mail: *Who are you?* and *Where does the world come from?* Thus begins a mysterious correspondence that takes Sophie on a philosophical voyage from Socrates to Sartre, and beyond... Enthusiastically praised by critics, *Sophie's*



World is a wondrous journey of intellect and imagination that will make you look at life through the eyes of a child again.

"Remarkable...a whimsical and ingenious mystery novel that also happens to be a history of philosophy...What is admirable in the novel is the utter unpretentiousness of the philosophical lessons, the plain and workmanlike prose which manages to deliver Western philosophy in accounts that are crystal clear."—*The Washington Post Book World*

"Brilliant...Its depth of learning, its intelligence and its totally original conception give it enormous magnetic appeal...To be fully human, and to feel our continuity with 3,000 years of philosophical inquiry, we need to put ourselves in Sophie's world."—*The Boston Sunday Globe*

"First, think of a beginner's guide to philosophy, written by a schoolteacher...Next, imagine a fantasy novel—something like a modern-day version of *Through the Looking Glass*. Meld these disparate genres, and what do you get? Well, what you get is an improbable international bestseller...a runaway hit...[a] tour de force."—*Time*

"Extraordinary...read it for yourself."—*Newsweek*



51495>



ISBN 0-425-15684-2

\$14.95 U.S.
\$20.95 CAN

Jostein Gaarder