

# Humor and the Good Life in Modern Philosophy: Shaftesbury, Hamann, Kierkegaard

Lydia B. Amir



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### Humor and the Good Life in Modern Philosophy: Shaftesbury, Hamann, Kierkegaard

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**Humor and the Good Life in Modern Philosophy: Shaftesbury, Hamann, Kierkegaard** Lydia B. Amir *An exploration of philosophical and religious ideas about humor in modern philosophy and their secular implications.* 

By exploring the works of both Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, and Søren Kierkegaard, Lydia B. Amir finds a rich tapestry of ideas about the comic, the tragic, humor, and related concepts such as irony, ridicule, and wit. Amir focuses chiefly on these two thinkers, but she also includes Johann Georg Hamann, an influence of Kierkegaard's who was himself influenced by Shaftesbury. All three thinkers were devout Christians but were intensely critical of the organized Christianity of their milieux, and humor played an important role in their responses. The author examines the epistemological, ethical, and religious roles of humor in their philosophies and proposes a secular philosophy of humor in which humor helps attain the philosophic ideals of self-knowledge, truth, rationality, virtue, and wisdom, as well as the more ambitious goals of liberation, joy, and wisdom.

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