

Taylor Carman, 'Heidegger on the Necessity and Finality of Death'

Heidegger defines authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) as “forerunning resoluteness” (*vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*) (SZ 302), where “forerunning” means forerunning into death. Death is in turn “the possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be-there” (SZ 250), the possibility “of the utter impossibility of existence” (SZ 262). To say that death is an existential “possibility” is not to say that it might happen, but that it is something into which we (willingly or unwillingly) project. To call it the possibility of impossibility is to say that what we project into in projecting into death is precisely the closing down of possibilities. Possibilities are always closing down, or dying off, which is why Heidegger, echoing Saint Augustine, insists that “Dasein is factually dying as long as it exists” (SZ 251). Death is in this sense not an accident, but a structural necessity of being-in-the-world. But why must the closing down of possibilities be *final*? Why is death the possibility of the “utter impossibility of existence”? I argue that to vindicate the claim of finality Heidegger must take for granted something like to our commonsense notion of death, namely the final extinction of possibilities that constitutes the biographical (even if not the biological) end of a life.

Daniel Dahlstrom, 'Authenticity and the Absence of Death'

'Death is nothing to us,' Epicurus contends, and in the first part of this chapter, I discuss the pros and cons of thinking otherwise. In the second part of the chapter, against the backdrop of Epicurus' contention, I turn to the question of the ontological significance of death or, more precisely, death's absence, insofar as Heidegger makes it the centerpiece of the project of fundamental ontology in Division Two of *Being and Time*. In an attempt to clarify this singular significance, I begin by comparing and contrasting death's absence with other sorts of absences, some addressed in the first division of *Being and Time*. I then turn to the distinctive sort of possibility that death's absence represents and its relation to the prospect of being authentic. In the third and final part of the chapter I suggest how the significance of death's absence for authenticity provides a response of sorts to Epicurus' contention, but a response that succeeds – or so I argue – only by challenging at least a prima facie interpretation of some of the claims that Heidegger makes for death as radically individuating.

Denis McManus, 'Being-towards-death and One's Own Best Judgment'

This paper will explore the light that might be shed on Heidegger's concept of Being-towards-death by considering what would seem to be analogous reflections found in his early lectures on St Paul. There Heidegger examines the relationship in which the true Christian stands to the Last Judgment, identifying it as a mode of 'liv[ing] towards' that Judgment (PRL 103). Among those who Heidegger identifies as failing to attain that mode of living are those 'fallen' individuals who are 'absorbed in ... [their own] peace and security' (PRL 107). Lacking a 'fundamental comportment to God', these individuals also 'run away from themselves' (PRL 110, 107); and I will suggest that Heidegger sees the challenge of being willing to stand before God as a model for the challenge of standing before one's own best judgment. I develop this notion – a notion of self-knowledge - by drawing on Heidegger's reflections on St Augustine, and consider how these ideas relate to notions that Crowell has made central to his account of authenticity, in particular, the notion of making reasons one's own.