



# A Philosophy of Fear

By Lars Svendsen

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## A Philosophy of Fear By Lars Svendsen

Surveillance cameras. Airport security lines. Barred shop windows. We see manifestations of societal fears every day, and daily news reports on the latest household danger or raised terror threat level continually stoke our sense of impending doom. In "A Philosophy of Fear", Lars Svendsen explores the underlying ideas and issues behind this powerful emotion, as he investigates how and why fear has insinuated itself into every aspect of modern life. Svendsen delves into science, politics, sociology and literature to explore the nature of fear. He discusses the biology behind the emotion, from the neuroscience underlying our fight or flight' instinct to how fear induces us to take irrational actions in our attempts to minimize risk. The book then turns to the political and social realms, investigating the role of fear in the philosophies of Machiavelli and Hobbes, the rise of the modern risk society, and how fear has eroded social trust. The political use of fear in the ongoing War on Terror also comes under Svendsen's probing gaze, as he investigates whether we can ever disentangle ourselves from the continual state of alarm that defines our age. Svendsen ultimately argues for the possibility of a brighter, less fearful future that is marked by a triumph of humanist optimism. An incisive and thought-provoking meditation, "A Philosophy of Fear" pulls back the curtain that shrouds dangers both imagined and real, forcing us to confront our fears and why we hold to them.

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## A Philosophy of Fear By Lars Svendsen Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Not so long ago people lived with the real fear that at any moment a nuclear apocalypse could end life on earth. Today we are afraid of global warming. And financial meltdown. Oh yes, and terrorism, too. Then there's the flu pandemic, not to mention cancer-causing chemicals in our food, street crime and paedophile teachers. In the UK we're so afraid of each other that we have one CCTV camera for every 14 people. But ironically, we are safer and healthier now than at any time in our history. According to Lars Svendsen, a Norwegian philosopher, "our fear is a by-product of luxury.'The mass media, pressure groups and the nanny state are all guilty of stoking the current climate of paranoia. Fear is a powerful emotion. It can save lives. But it also 'robs us of our freedom' and undermines that essential social glue: trust. Bertrand Russell once said that 'to conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom.' Svendsen agrees. In this brief yet wide-ranging and insightful book, he argues convincingly that we need to replace the risk society with a culture of hope and trust."

*(Guardian (UK))*

"An enjoyable, well-written and compelling tour of philosophical treatments of fear harnessed to an emphasis on the social consequences of living against a background state of fear. Scholarly yet accessible, this book offers subtle philosophical exploration alongside examples from novels, films and other popular media, while avoiding preachiness or doommongering."

*(Times Higher Education)*

"Svendsen encourages the reader to think more laterally about the overwhelming deluge of information that is designed to inspire fear, in the hope that humankind will become more optimistic about its future and more discerning in processing the information we receive. He has succeeded in dissembling our most confronting fears, and asks penetrating questions about why these fears exist, and why people accept and even encourage them. This is an enjoyable read for anyone who prefers to think rather than be told."

*(M/C Reviews)*

#### About the Author

**Lars Svendsen** is associate professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Bergen. He is the author of numerous books, including *Fashion: A Philosophy* and *A Philosophy of Boredom*, both published by Reaktion Books; *The Philosophy of Evil*; and *Man, Morals and Genes: A Critique of Biologism*.

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#### Larry Parrish:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be update about what going on or facts even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era that is always change and progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems

coming to an individual is you don't know what kind you should start with. This A Philosophy of Fear is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

**Christopher Henricks:**

Now a day those who Living in the era exactly where everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources inside it can be true or not call for people to be aware of each information they get. How a lot more to be smart in obtaining any information nowadays? Of course the answer is reading a book. Examining a book can help persons out of this uncertainty Information mainly this A Philosophy of Fear book as this book offers you rich details and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred per cent guarantees there is no doubt in it everbody knows.

**James Peters:**

Reading a publication tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. With book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the publications. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write to the book. One of them is this A Philosophy of Fear.

**Cheryl Kirkland:**

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