

**To:** Dr. Wolfgang Schirmacher (intake editor) <contactatropos@gmail.com>

**Proposed Book Title:** *Schopenhauer für Kinder*

**By:** Joshua Schrier and Santiago Rodriguez

**Date:** 25 May 2024

**Summary:** An illustrated children's book (approximately 50 pages), loosely structured on Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. The core ideas of Schopenhauer's philosophy are conveyed through the adventures of Schopenhauer and his beloved poodle(s) Atma with vocabulary and explanations that are accessible (at least by a surface reading) for 5-10 year olds. Like the runaway hit by Adam Mansbach, *Go the F\*ck to Sleep* (2011)—which has sold over 3 million copies and been translated into 40 languages—this is notionally in the form of a children's book, but is really targeted for parents. We envision the book first published in German, followed by an English language edition.

**Why Atropos Press?** We think Atropos is ideally suited to publish and market this book. First, Atropos is the official publisher of the International Schopenhauer Association. Second, as a bilingual (English/German) publisher of philosophy texts, Atropos is ideally suited for our marketing plan. Third, while Atropos does not primarily publish children's books, they have previously published one, specifically Korahais & Lazaridis, *5 Milton Stories (for the Witty, Wise and Wordly Child)* (2012), and therefore the press does have experience with producing illustrated books.

**Marketing/Business Plan:** The commercial success of *Go the F\*ck to Sleep* is an existence proof that there is a market for "children's books which are not actually for children". We see a similar market opportunity, but also see this as a way to genuinely introduce today's little Nietzsches to some of the ideas of Schopenhauer's philosophy.

We propose that we first publish the book in German and use its commercial success in Germany/Austria to build publicity for an English version. Quite frankly, the intellectual culture in Germany—especially around books, literature, and philosophy—is superior to the United States. As an example—I am writing this on a train from Heidelberg to Berlin. The Heidelberg Hauptbahnhof's bookstore had an entire table dedicated to books about Immanuel Kant. (In fact, we just raised a toast in honor of Schoppy as we pass through Frankfurt am Main.) I simply cannot imagine Hudson News in Penn Station having an analogous collection of books by Daniel Dennett, David Chalmers, etc. in a prominent location. Germany is just a more sophisticated mass market for books with philosophical themes. Therefore, we propose reversing Leonard Cohen's formula: First we take Berlin, then we take Manhattan.

**Competition/comparables:** There are adult-oriented texts that are similar in intent to our work, such as Paul Strathern's *Schopenhauer in 90 Minutes* (1999). We are also aware of

Friedlaender's *Kant für Kinder* (1924) as a precedent, although his treatment is less irreverent than ours and intended for 12-15 year olds. We do not see any market competition here.


**Timeline:** We could deliver a completed manuscript by August 2024.

### About the Authors:

*Prof. Dr. Joshua Schrier* (author) is the Kim B. and Stephen E. Bepler Professor of Chemistry at Fordham University in New York City. He has previously contributed book reviews to *Philosophy Now*.

*Santiago Rodriguez* (illustrator) is an artist in New York City. He has previously studied at the Sorbonne, RWTH Aachen, and San Francisco State University.

**Sample Material:** Below are a selection of images and corresponding text sampled from our manuscript.

Einführung	
Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) war ein Philosoph, der in Frankfurt am Main lebte. Was ist ein Philosoph? Ein Philosoph ist ein Denker über die wichtigsten Fragen der Realität.  ...	

**Erstes Buch: Die Vorstellung unterworfen dem Satze vom Grunde: das Objekt der Erfahrung und Wissenschaft.**

Kannst du die Welt wirklich kennen?  
Leider nicht.

...

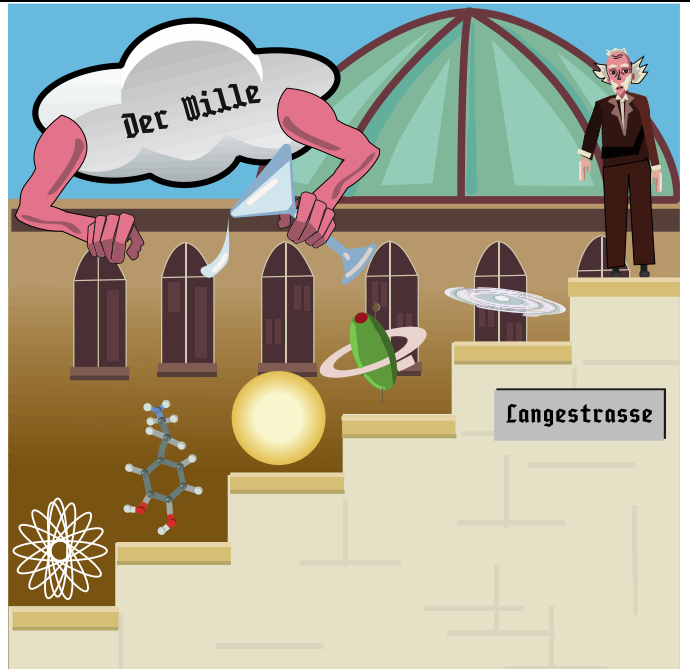


**Zweites Buch: Die Objektivation des Willens. (\*Book 2: Ontology\*)**

Was ist der Wille? Alles ist der Wille.  
Der Wille will immer mehr. Und der  
Wille liebt dich nicht.



Die Atome wollen Moleküle werden.  
Die Moleküle wollen Sterne und  
Planeten werden.



Ein Kaninchen will Karotten fressen,  
eine hübsche Kaninchenfrau lieben,  
Kaninchenkinder haben und in einem  
Kaninchenbau leben.



Ein Wolf will das Kaninchen fressen ...  
um seine eigenen Kinder zu füttern.

...



**Drittes Buch: Die Vorstellung, unabhängig vom Satze des Grundes: die Platonische Idee:  
das Objekt der Kunst.**

Kannst du wirklich glücklich sein?  
Leider nicht



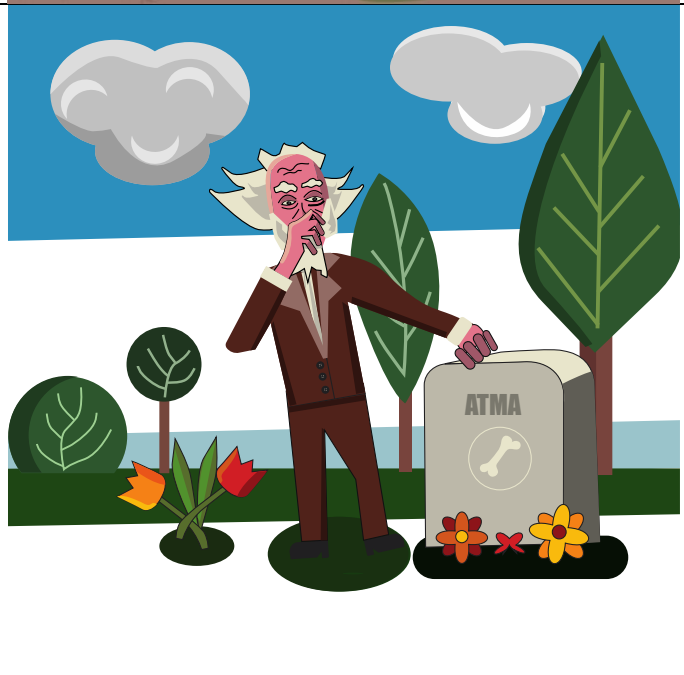
Der Wille macht dich immer unzufrieden.

...



Du wirst enttäuscht werden, krank werden, sterben. Vielleicht ist es nicht so schlecht.

...



**Viertes Buch: Bei erreichter Selbsterkenntniß Bejahung und Verneinung des Willens zum Leben.**

Du hast eine Wahl: Unterstütze den Willen oder nicht. Was willst du?



Der Wille macht das Leben voll von Wünschen. Lebe ohne Wünsche, und du wirst Freude haben.

...



„Das Schicksal mischt die Karten, wir spielen.“

