

What exactly is existentialism?

The general definition of the word existentialism is the philosophy that emphasizes the uniqueness and isolation of the individual experience in a hostile or indifferent universe, regards to human existence as unexplainable, and stresses freedom of choice and responsibility for the consequences of one's acts.

The 7 principles of Existentialism

Principle 1-reality defies ultimate comprehension, no timeless truths exist independently.

Principle 2- reason alone is an inadequate guide to living.

Principle 3-thought must not just be speculation but it must have a bearing on life.

Principle 4- human nature is paradoxical and problematic.

Principle 5- we are alone. Death is stalking us. The universe is indifferent.

Awareness of this causes anxiety and depression

Principle 6-existence is essentially absurd.

Principle 7- we are free. Free from purpose, nature, and end.

What Authors Were Considered to be “Existentialist” ?

Jean-Paul Sartre- Sartre's career focused on the philosophy of existence called Existentialism. His area of focus was around the area of a person's actual existence. He helped create the philosophy phenomenology , which is the property they take if and only if it is something it is like to be for them. This can be seen as a person's emotional states. Such as everyone knows the capital of the United States is Washington D.C., but not everyone feels sadness the same way. His view of existentialism help account for the human existence and what it means to be human. His viewed contrasted heavily with the unproblematic being of the world of things. His overall view of existentialism helped existentialist gain an opinion on why there is human life, why there are emotions to go with it.

Simone de Beauvoir- Beauvoir was the first female to write about the women's role within life and the philosophy. Her research was the foundation of many modern concepts such as feminism and women's studies. Her belief was that human life is ambiguous interplay between transcendence and immanence. She also saw that men have been privileged with expressing transcendence through projects, whereas women have been forced into repetitive and in creative life of immanence. Her philosophy was the first to really show that there was/is a divide between the the sexes and the opportunities they get along with their place in existence.

Franz Kafka

Franz Kafka was a dark existentialist and absurdist writer who wrote about isolation, authoritarian oppression, and alienation. His most well-known story is “The Metamorphosis”. In his story, his main character turns into a beetle (cockroach). This happens in many other stories too. When Kafka was on his deathbed he asked Max Brod, a close friend, to burn his writing. Brod did not burn them, he published them. Many of Kafka’s journals, including “A Letter To His Father”, became known. “A Letter To His Father” was a way that Kafka tried to explain emotional peculiarities and the relationship between him and his father.



Absurdism, what's that?

Absurdism is “the conflict between (1) the human tendency to seek inherent value and meaning in life and (2) the human inability to find any. Absurdism affects mankind by causing humans to second guess our existence and to search for a meaning to our life.

Metamorphosis, by Franz Kafka

In the book, "*Metamorphosis*", by Franz Kafka, the main character is, overnight, turned into a cockroach. Instead of being confused as to how he became a roach, he wonders how is he going to get to work. This is used to show how caught up humans get in their life and they stop worrying about themselves and their own needs. It's a good existentialism novel because it touches on all the key ideas of existentialism.

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