

No Excuses: Existentialism and the Meaning of Life

By *The Great Courses*




No Excuses: Existentialism and the Meaning of Life By The Great Courses

What is life? What is my place in it? What choices do these questions obligate me to make? More than a half-century after it burst upon the intellectual scene - with roots that extend to the mid-19th century - Existentialism's quest to answer these most fundamental questions of individual responsibility, morality, and personal freedom has continued to exert a profound attraction.

Now, in a series of 24 probing and thoughtful lectures, you can enrich your own understanding of this unique philosophical wave, the visionary thinkers it brought together to ponder and debate these questions, and the prominent role it still plays in contemporary thought.

"Existentialism is, in my view, the most exciting and important philosophical movement of the past century and a half," says Professor Solomon. "Fifty years after the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre gave it its identity and 150 years after the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard gave it its initial impetus, it continues to win new enthusiasts and, in keeping with its still exciting and revolutionary message, vehement critics." Plumbing both sides of the debate, these lectures examine a wide range of Existentialist thought. You'll be exposed to the religious approach of Kierkegaard; the bold fiction of Camus; the warrior rhetoric and often-shocking claims about religion and morality posed by Nietzsche; the radical and uncompromising notion of freedom championed by Sartre; and the searching analysis of human historicity and finitude offered by Martin Heidegger. And you'll encounter the reluctance - often angrily expressed - of many of Existentialism's major figures to be thought of as part of any philosophical movement or even as intellectual allies!

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