

Existentialism in The Stranger

By Albert Camus

Existentialism is a philosophy that emphasizes a number of points, such as the freedom to choose and the choices and individual makes should be made without the consent of another person or standard. Existentialists accept the perils and consequences of their choices and actions then keep their commitment to wherever it leads. A commonly used situation that appears often in existentialist writing is death. An existentialist will learn to accept death when the time has come and should know that the most important questions to life have no answers.

Throughout The Stranger examples of existentialism can be further analyzed to expose the true self and cold nature of human beings. During the second beach fight when Meursault shoots the Arab with Raymond's gun one of the Arabs draws his knife and holds it up to Meursault, Meursault isn't bothered by the Arab's threatening action, it was the light from the sun that reflected into his eyes along with the intense heat that was bothering him "The scorching blade slashed at my eyelashes and stabbed at my stinging eyes." Meursault shot the Arab because he was uncomfortable and not because he was afraid of being attacked by the Arab.

In any case Meursault decided to shoot him. After the incident Meursault is sent to jail for murder. "Then he wanted to know if I had hired an attorney (the magistrate). I admitted I hadn't and inquired whether it was really necessary to have one."