

to him at all but now when he is put in the same situation, facing death, he finally realized what it must have been like for her. "I felt as I understood why at the end of her life she had taken a 'fiancé.' " (Camus, 122)

All of these examples demonstrate that *The Stranger* could be a novel with the theme of existentialism but Albert Camus was an absurdist writer and the novel's intended theme was the philosophy of the absurd. The absurd refers to the conflict between the human tendency to seek value and meaning in life and the human inability to find any, absurd does not mean "logically impossible," but rather "humanly impossible." (Kierkegaard, 19) Most of the Absurdist content of the novel comes near the end, where Meursault sits in his cell awaiting his execution, and gets in heated debate with the prison chaplain who tries to convert him to Christianity. "I explained to him that I wasn't desperate.

I was just afraid, which was only natural." (Camus, 116) Meursault rejects the chaplain's offer telling him that he has no interest in God. He wants to live with the certainties of this life, even if his only certainty is the death that awaits him "But if I don't die today, you'll die tomorrow, or the next day." (Camus, 117)

Meursault is an absurd hero figuratively and literally. Figuratively he is condemned to death and awaiting execution, is a metaphor for the human condition. On a literal level, he exemplifies the absurd characteristics of revolt, freedom, and passion outlined by Camus in "The Myth of Sisyphus." Meursault prefers to be different than the rest of the world, and demonstrates his freedom by doing what feels appropriate to him at any given moment. This includes, smoking, falling asleep during the vigil of his dead mother and going to the beach the next day.

Meursault expresses his absurd worldview in his discussion with the chaplain, he demonstrates that nothing really matters, since we all live and we all die, and what we