

Existentialism

Assignment #4

Sartre

(Due Monday November 29)

Write a 3-4 page (double-spaced) response to one of the following:

The Humanism of Existentialism

What does Sartre mean in “The Humanism of Existentialism” by the phrase “existence precedes essence” and why is this so, for Sartre, for human beings only? What does Sartre mean in this essay when he emphasizes that there are no excuses and that “we are condemned to be free”? How do these statements provide a summation of Existentialism for Sartre?

Being and Nothingness

What is the distinction for Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* between being-in-itself and being-for-itself? Why is there always a gap, or “nothingness” between my being as an in-itself and my being as for-itself? What does Sartre mean when he describes consciousness as a meaning-giving activity? What does Sartre mean by “bad faith” and why is it so difficult to avoid? Given this conception of human existence, in what sense can one live an authentic existence?