I. Existentialism
    A. By the late nineteenth century the Enlightenment project was beginning to be realized
        1. Industrialization of the First world was in full swing, the marriage of science and technology with capitalism had created resource, knowledge, and technology for mass production
        2. Mass production changed the nature of labor, scientific management, deskilling, and Fordism
        3. huge bureaucracies emerged to administer the large nation states which were competing internationally for the wealth and resources of the third world
        4. a middle class had begun to emerge dominated by the work ethic, and the values of materialism and consumption, middle class norms emerged
    B. What was to become the most popular philosophy came emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century but reach its high point post WWII Europe -- existentialism
        1. It was certainly a reaction against rationalization of society, the unfreedom of work and demand for conformity
        2. a great deal of its popularity can be attributed to its presentation in popular literary and cinematic forms - short stories, plays, novels, and movies
        3. the existentialists (a difficult term to define) both were part of the Cartesian system and a rejections of it
        4. They accepted the subjectivity of Descartes and radicalized it, Kierkegaard "subjectivity is truth" and Sartre "subjectivity is absolute freedom"
        5. They rejected the Cartesian emphasis on certain and rational reconstruction of the external world through adherence to method
    C. As an introduction, existentialists emphasize the predominance of concrete lived experience, this left them in an even more "doubtful" situation than Descartes
    D. Two main themes: alienation and rebellion
        1. the protagonist, in existential art, there emerged a new type of hero, or anti-hero -- his heroic features are his alienation from a mechanistic and hypocritical society, the meaningless of the human condition, he his alienated from other people, the social world, from himself
        2. And he rebels, sometimes in the name of justice, authenticity, just because, sometimes is life is just labeled rebellion
    E. Another theme is the absurd: human condition and human subjectivity cannot be explained by science or a philosophical system, it is unique, meanings are after the fact, illusions or bad faith to make us feel better with the incomprehensibility of the universe
II. Alienation

A. The Cartesian cogito, is already alienated, alienated from the natural world and its own body, both of which are absolutely other -- alien
B. Rationalization of society is alienation, it is the reduction of society to techniques of efficiency, consistency, and regularity
C. it is alienating because it professes to value the person but really organizes itself around an ethic of material consumption
D. Alienation the anti-hero experiences is the anti-individual, anti-unique, and anti-freedom, emphasis is individuality, uniqueness, freedom, and something called authenticity

III. Existentialism? Difficulty in defining it and who are existentialists can give characteristics, but no philosopher has all of the characteristics, many considered existentialists resist the label.
A. Emphasis on subjectivity as the starting point. "Truth is subjectivity." "Subjectivity is freedom."
B. Reason, either scientific, or philosophically systems, cannot explain the unique quality of subjective experience
C. the human condition is emphasized, it is a border condition, where one is condemned to live in dread over one's freedom, or anxiety of the self-consciousness of one's death, or in the face of the absurd.
D. there is no given human nature and no rules, moral or social, that can be grounded, therefore human being is an unfinished project -- incomplete
E. The absolute freedom allows or demands that we make choices, we create ourselves, these doesn't mean that we choose between bougeois ends
F. This absolute freedom is the reason for dread and anxiety, thus escape from freedom, "bad faith," it's the way I am, it just happened
G. Living in terms of absolute freedom is authenticity, but obviously this is alienating -- separates one from the crowd, from society which are merely people following conventions
H. Social institutions and ethical ideals (norms and laws) do not deserve our absolute and unqualified allegiance
I. Rebellion is the only authentic life, in fact authenticity demands rebellion, both metaphysical and historical

IV. Soren Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, b 1813, most of the characteristics of existentialism are present in his thought
A. K is reacting against
1. bourgeois society, conformism, conventialism, philistinism, a world empty of meaning
2. institutionalized Christianity and its easy faith, objectification of faith as a social function

3. philosophical and scientific claims to be able to explain human being in the world
    a. science is ok to explain natural world, but it has emptied the world of meaning and value
    b. philosophical system do away with the flesh and blood suffering human being by subsuming him in the universal
4. Socrates is his hero, but different assumptions about the world, not a question of reason and the Good, but a question of the demands of faith
5. in several senses he is anti-Enlightenment, the limits of science and reason and the emptiness of progress as improved technique
6. K. sees society as reversing the miracle of Christianity, Jesus turning water into wine, K interprets as turning world into creation, K sees B society as turning wine into water

B. He accepts Cartesian starting point of radical subjectivity but interprets it in terms of faith
    1. the essence of subjectivity is not the universality of rationality
    2. ethical realm deduced from rationality, either self-mastery or principles of action is empty of meaning
C. Ks starting point is the single one, absolute subjectivity
    1. can't be subsumed under any rational system
    2. can't be explained scientifically or rationally
    3. stands alone before God, absolute relation to the absolute, and must make a choice, a decision, which can't be determined by reason "leap of faith"
    4. this situation is beyond society and beyond ethics, each person is alone before God
    5. This is the truth of human being in the world, the truth which gives existence meaning, however it is a wholly subjective truth
    6. it is a radicalization of Luther's idea of a calling, God addresses, asks a question, what you are, who you are is determined by your choice
    7. The authentic person stands before God in fear an trembling and experiences the dread of freedom, the titles of his books, Fear and Trembling, The Concept of Dread, and Either/Or.
    8. This radical subjectivity is beyond objective explanation, it is paradoxical
    9. truth conceived this way requires a "leap of faith", incarnation of Jesus is incomprehensible
    10. once this leap of faith is taken, alienates one from everyday experience and even social norms,
    11. he juxtaposes the category of the Single One with the category of the Crowd (the people in the Cave)
D. K explain as three stages in the person's development

1. the aesthetic man caught in the present, the immediate,
    a. this person is not a real subject, nor even a social being, no real subjectivity because he is committed to the particular, he is the bourgeois philistine
2. the ethical person, or the knight of infinite resignation
    a. he has appropriated the ethical, his decisions are mediated by universal ethical norms, Agamemnon and Socrates and Antigone
    b. his commitment to the realm of the universal, the general and has therefore lost the particular
    c. this is a necessary step, but not sufficient
3. the knight of faith
    a. this is a higher order that is absolute and gives meaning to life
    b. absolute relation to the absolute

E. K uses the Biblical story of Abraham and Issac
    1. A is asked to sacrifice is son Issac. A stands before God in faith but in fear and trembling, free to decide
    2. This is not a question directed to A not anyone else, can't turn to the counsel of others, can't resolve it by application of rational principles, and it is wrong before moral laws
    3. To K it is a question of one's relationship to one's faith, A already has faith, it is between dread, existential fear and trust in one's relationship to God
    4. A stands between "murder" and "sacrifice", obey God and murder your child, he trusts in God, affirming the absolute value of this relationship "teleological suspension of the ethical"
    5. A believes that even in sacrificing I he will get him back, this is beyond rational calculation
    6. this introduces the idea of the authentic Christian and eventually authenticity into existential thought
    7. the person acting through will and decision in this border condition of the absurd and creating himself

Jean Paul Sartre - French existentialist philosopher and writer, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature and refuser of the award

1. Sartre for many is the paradigmatic existentialist, Heidegger, Camus, Marcel, Buber, Tillich, Bultmann, Jaspers
    1. Influence- historical circumstances
        1. the rise of Nazism and other Fascist movements
        2. the failure of western society to resist totalitarianism

3. this may seem strange to us, history being written, as it is by the victors, but the history of democracies and their failure continues to be documented
    1. western powers allowed Hitler to annex Austria and take over Czech as a protectorate
    2. it was only with the invasion of Poland that Britain and France declared war
    3. the U.S. only declared war on Germany after Germany declared war on the US, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor
    4. no Western country reacted in any way against Japan's genocide in China and Manchuria
    5. West only reacted when Japan occupied French Indochina, cutting off rubber, tin, and tungsten
    6. West knew about slaughter of Jews on the Eastern Front as early as late 1941
    7. West left Russia to deal with Hitler's invasion
    8. U.S. fully industrialized and providing weapons through lend lease, however 80% of US forces saw no action until 1944, US lost 400,000 Russia lost 20,000,000
    9. U.S. corporations built communications systems, tanks, and trucks for Germany during the war
    10. okd by executive order
    11. US took fewer than 1/10th of Jewish immigrants than it could by law take, US was segregated
4. Sartre was most influenced by the collaboration of the of the French, the Vichy government, the middle class, and their cooperation and aid,
5. in jean Anouilh's Antigone, miliciens, French fascist terror squads were even more brutal than the Gestapo
6. the moral values/ideals of Enlightenment undermined by western society's inability to generate significant resistance

2. Sartre's goal
    1. develop an existential philosophy that would make absolute freedom the essence of human being in the world
    2. absolute freedom meant absolute responsibility to choose one's life
    3. a existential morality based on a concept of radical freedom
    4. this freedom was more radical than Ks because S accepted Ns thesis that God is dead,
    5. God is a possibility, like communism, but not a compelling one, one is free to choose

6. "condemned to be free" is Sartre's term, the absolutely free subject has no foothold, not even the absurdity of the relation to the absolute

3. Sartre's argument
    1. Sartre begins with radical subjectivity, the Cartesian starting point
    2. but casts this in different terms, ontological categories
    3. He takes Hegel's terms
        1. in itself - which refers to that which is determined, complete, given
        2. for itself - which is human being in the world, indeterminate, incomplete, being which is free to choose itself
    4. the for itself is living towards the future, fills the future with its choices
    5. human being in the world is a complex combination of in itself and for itself
    6. his assertion about radical freedom rests upon his phenomenological analysis of consciousness
        1. consciousness is always consciousness of things
        2. it is really "nothing" itself but this intentionality
        3. as nothing it exceeds causal explanation, free from cause and
        4. however, there is an awareness that the consciousness is not what it is conscious of, this is non-positional awareness
        5. the awareness, or negativity, creates a space, an emptiness, an awareness of what one lacks
        6. this is only possible for human being, this sense of being aware of what is not, and the possibility of being what you are
        7. this negativity of consciousness is ontologically distinct form things
        8. and realizes in its space that it is free, free to choose itself, existence is a project, no human nature
        9. just a human condition, absolute freedom
        10. There is not difference between the being of man and his being-."free
    7. If the self is absolutely free then it is absolutely responsible for itself, one can't say I did it because that's my nature, that's human nature
    8. But neither can one make a choice based on the reason or some other given outside of oneself, no criteria have a higher status, Marxims, God, Nazism
4. Bad faith
    1. absolute freedom is something from which most people continually attempt to escape
    2. This inauthenticity is what Sartre calls "bad faith"

3. a person is in bad faith when they try to deny their freedom, Sartre's plays and philosophical works include examples, the burgers in Nausea who accept the giveness of the world, the waiter and the woman in Being and Nothingness
4. Likewise in Sartre's plays
5. bad faith also involves alienation because it separates people from their freedom

5. hell is other people
    1. for a moral philosophy Sartre ends in an ironic position, next to "condemned to be free," 'bad faith" his phrase "hell is other people"
    2. His most famous play "No exit" captures these two themes "bad faith" and other people
    3. Other people trap us, in a sense that is how consciousness knows it is in the world, it is an object to another consciousness
    4. and this is how one knows there are other consciousnesses
    5. but the look of the other which entraps me as an object
    6. in the others consciousness threatens my freedom
    7. others tend to objectify us and we them, this constant tension is unresolvable
6. the problem is good faith, what is it? accepting one's freedom, the only action that would qualify would be an arbitrary, I acted this way, no reason, no because

2. Suffering and Rebellion
    1. the problem of human suffering---Greeks
        1. through suffering learn (wisdom)
        2. Nietzsche -- Greek tragic wisdom, not reason the archetype is Oedipus
        3. suffering redeems the world
    2. suffering -- Job
        1. why do the innocent suffer?
        2. Do you question my wisdom
    3. It is with the existentialists that suffering is tied to resistance -- especially Dostoyevsky and Camus
        1. "Rebellion" in the Brother's Karamazov
            1. Ivan, tell me, is this God's world, the suffering of children, the suffering of the innocent, are they guilty and in need of redemption
            2. it is not a question of God's existence, it is worse if he does exist, because his creation, his order can't be justified
            3. no future heavenly kingdom can justify the suffering of little children
            4. even if I were saved I would refuse it, I'm handing in my ticket

5. if I reject salvation, I reject the basis for any ought, after all we obey in anticipation of everlasting life
6. therefore, everything is permitted, including fratricide

2. Camus gives philosophical articulation to the concept of rebellion in his work "The Rebel" and artistically in The Stranger and The Plague
    1. reality is for Camus absurd, it is unexplainable, a dark irony, man lives only to die, it is what he calls "the order of death"
    2. In his novel The Plague, a bubonic plague, comes and goes, for which there is no cure
    3. written while he was fleeing from the Gestapo, the Plague is obviously a metaphor for Nazism
    4. Dr. Rieux contests the plague despite the seeming absurdity
    5. along with killing people, the plague kills ideals and idols, rational planning, religion - the suffering of the dying child-- the idea of community
    6. Rieux persists in this the most marginal situation that any existentialist has created, affirmation in the face of the absurd
3. For Camus rebellion is justified not only metaphysically and its inherent injustice, but also against social institutions that are unjust.