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# Sartre for Beginners

By Donald Palmer

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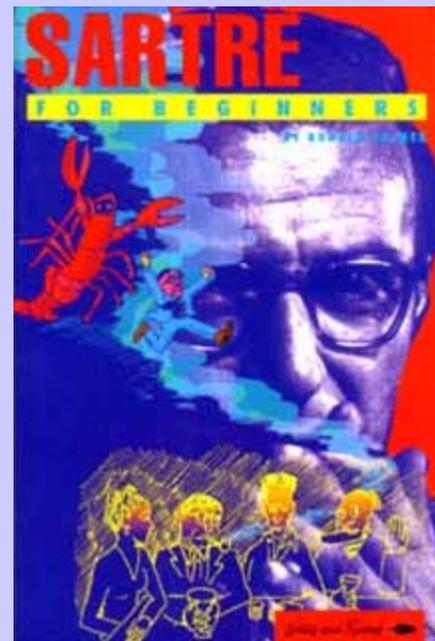
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## Our Review

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This is a "documentary comic book" using cartoons and clear explanations to introduce Jean-Paul Sartre and existentialism. It was Sartre who first coined the term for this philosophy, and he was its primary spokesman until he abandoned the field in later life. It was Sartre's contention that life has no meaning apart from what we choose to make of it. We are "condemned to freedom," he says, and we cannot take any choice for granted. Our existence carries an enormous burden of responsibility that we are always

trying to escape through religion, social roles and private ritual. Sartre himself escaped into Marxism and should have predicted his own eventual disillusionment. This book explains the simple concepts underlying existentialism more clearly than Sartre himself ever could. -- *Glenn Campbell*

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### References/Reviews

[Sample Page](#) including illustrations

Illustration: [Sartre writing](#) (24k)

### From the Book Cover

Sartre For Beginners is an accessible yet sophisticated introduction to the life and works of the famous French philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre. Sartre was a member of the French underground during World War II, a novelist, a playwright, and a major influence in French political and intellectual life.

The book opens with a biographical section, introducing the significant events in the life of the man who coined the term "existentialism."

Then it examines Sartre's early philosophical works. Ideas from Sartre's other fictional and dramatic works are discussed, but the greatest part of the book is the presentation of the main concepts from *Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (1943). These ideas include the topics of consciousness, freedom, responsibility, absurdity, "bad faith," authenticity, and the hellish confrontation with other people.

Finally, the book deals with Sartre's modification of his earlier existentialism to complement his conversion to a kind of "existential" Marxism.

*Sartre For Beginners* summarizes the work of the most renown philosopher of the 20th century.

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