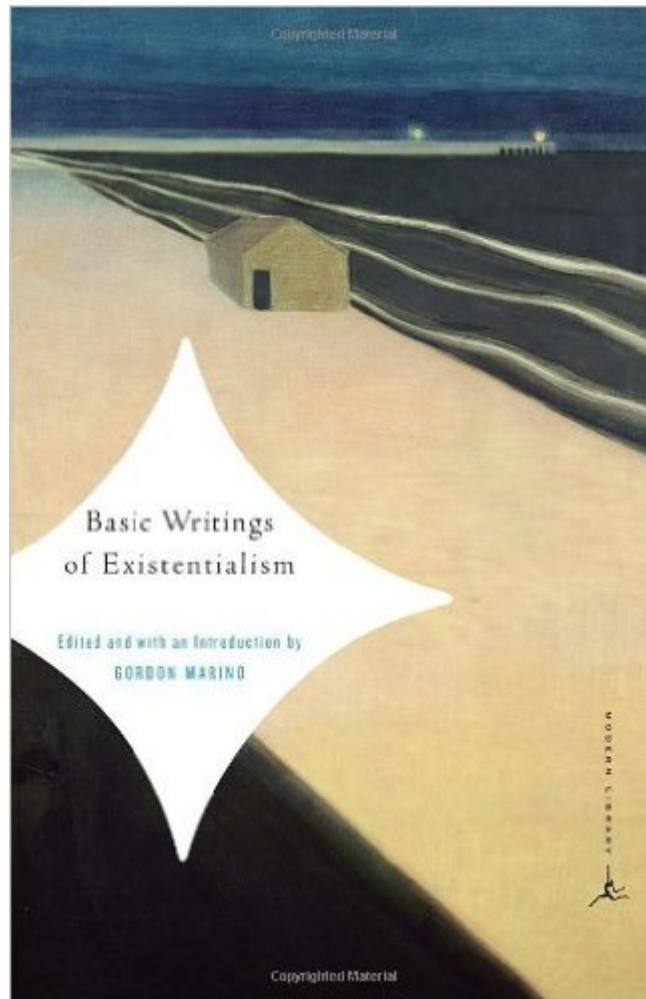


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# Basic Writings Of Existentialism (Modern Library Classics)



## Synopsis

Edited and with an Introduction by Gordon Marino *Basic Writings of Existentialism*, unique to the Modern Library, presents the writings of key nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers broadly united by their belief that because life has no inherent meaning humans can discover, we must determine meaning for ourselves. This anthology brings together into one volume the most influential and commonly taught works of existentialism. Contributors include Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Ralph Ellison, Martin Heidegger, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I read a good chunk of this text for my German Existentialism class and will absolutely be reading the rest of it on my own. Marino does an excellent job compiling a wide range of existentialist thought and adding short, concise introductions to each philosopher. Even more difficult philosophers like Heidegger and Kierkegaard are made approachable by careful selection from their major works. For people approaching existentialism for the first time I would suggest this book in addition to William Barrett's *The Irrational Man*, the latter giving a better groundwork for the entire philosophy and Marino's text providing some of the best and most vivid examples of existentialist philosophy. Existentialism is not for the meek. The texts are difficult and many of the questions they raise may result in life altering answers. For those willing to take the plunge this should not be a deterrent, but merely a bump in the road. Marino has selected pieces that can at first seem utterly baffling, but with careful readings (Yes, readings. Things get easier the second time!) all of them are

accessible and the benefits and real world applications (Existentialism pops up everywhere--movies, tv, music, art, politics, religion, etc. It is, after all, about existence!) of existentialism are impossible to measure.

If you have ever wondered about the universal need for us to find meaning in being, this book is a fine start to launching a personal journey. It is a remarkable piece of scholarship wherein Professor Marino superbly accomplishes the three tasks of a master teacher: relevance, erudition, and invitation. Since nothing can be more relevant than the meaning of life, and existentialism posits that such meanings are feats of human alchemy (creating something from nothing), the ideas under review are nothing short of an amazing intellectual adventure into the worlds of erudition (key passages from existential writers), biography (thumbnail descriptions of the writers' lives) and an invitation to explore a stream of philosophical thought which includes Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, de Unamundo y Juego, Heidegger, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Camus and Ellison. Students and members of the educated public may recognize some of these names, but many may have never engaged these thinkers in a sustained manner. Here is your chance to discover what is happening in philosophy departments. If your field is one of the social sciences, the work serves as a vital reference book--a source of insight and an effective way to reflect on one's previous learning experiences. Professor Marino's Introduction, alone, is worth the price of the book because he, like most of us, initially turned to philosophy to seek "answers", but discovered that ideas are powerful and are themselves a way of life. It is a sheer joy to follow his journey in this domain because he implicitly shows his enthusiasm for this material through his careful selections. For sociologists, there is a beautiful gem in the unexpected field of research methodology: the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, which is based on the study of experience itself, permits ethnography (the direct observation of, and participation in, different life-worlds) to be seen as an existential project. That never occurred to me, but it certainly explains why those of us who conduct such research often leave our studied scenes with a fantastic store of experiences and insights that can persist for decades--long after one's fieldnotes have turned yellow. The reason is that when you participate in a life-world that is initially alien to you, one learns to see even the commonplace in ways that are neither expected, nor anticipated: a form of discovery that forever changes and enriches one's life. As such, meanings are imparted that would be otherwise absent, or unknowable. Many cannot, due to lack of training or opportunity, or due to the inherent risks and time involved, actually conduct ethnographic research. But any reader with the inclination and the curiosity can explore Professor Marino's journey into a world that they would likely otherwise never know. That is

both time well spent, and a risk worth taking, in my view. It may even prove to be meaningful, something that would doubtless delight many of the thinkers whose works are presented in this fine volume.

This is a great book but the ebook version is missing page numbers so it makes it impossible for me to follow along in class. I ended up having to buy the physical copy of the book after all and it was cheaper by a dollar or two.

There is not much to say here except, download and read this book. The only advice I would suggest is to read a bit and then try and absorb what you just read, because it's easy to read and get completely overwhelmed.

So, maybe through no fault of its own, I find this book EXTREMELY difficult to read. I tried on several occasions to engage in what was being said, but found myself glazing over and losing interest entirely. I had much better luck reading Existentialism For Dummies. I don't consider myself extremely intelligent, but I do think I have a better-than-average ability to understand most new things and possess a great deal of common sense. Having said this, I found this book to be so... I can't even put it into words. In other words, if you are looking for an introduction to existentialism, this isn't your book!! Seriously...try Existentialism For Dummies (also sold on ) and you'll actually walk away feeling like you've learned something.

This is a smart, insightful collection for the purpose.

This book is great! Marino chooses key passages written by what can be regarded at the founders of existentialistic thought. A very good introduction into existentialism and just a nice book to read in general. Very highly recommend.

Great book. I used this for my existentialism class! Only one reading was outside this book. Other than that, this book covers everything!

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