Sartre's Existentialism

Team 2

02 Three Key Quotes

Human Nature: "Existence precedes essence"

Abandonment: "Man is condemned to be free"

Anguish: "In choosing myself, I choose man."

03 Abandonment & Freedom

- ○ God does not exist, and we have to face all the consequences
- ○ We abandon the idea of innate human nature
- ○ In this sense we are all responsible for our own actions irrespective of anything.

04 Anguish & Responsibility

- ○ Consequences for the actions you make
  - ■ You're the one making the decision
- ○ There is no external justification for your actions
  - ■ No higher power to guide you
- ○ Responsible for shaping your existence
  - ■ Determine what humans ought to be and do
  - ■ Authentic Self

05 Bad Faith

Bad Faith is denying our freedom and responsibility by pretending we have no choice

Common ways people can exhibit bad faith:
1. Taking on roles and identifying with them so they claim they are just "doing their job"
2. Believing external norms or systems dictate their behavior completely

"Fleeing from freedom" - lying to yourself to escape the burden of choice

Ex: Sarah is a mid level manager - she has the job of laying people off. One day she has to fire someone she thinks is a fantastic employee. Instead of questioning the ethics of her role, she just tells herself that its not her decision, she's just doing her job, and that she has no choice.

06 Anguish and Snowden

Background: In 2013, Edward Snowden, an NSA contractor, discovered the U.S. government was spying on the American people through mass surveillance technology. He revealed his findings to the general public, sacrificing his career and safety, escaping into exile.

Question: Do you think Snowden made the right call? How might Sartre's existentialist concepts relate to this?

Snowden had:
- **No higher authority** to guide his decision – government, God,
- **Anguish** from having to prioritize a value: citizens' privacy vs government control
- Acted **authentically** by addressing the problem without hiding behind his job, boss, or laws