

# Camus and The Absurd

Kimberly Blessing, PhD  
Professor of Philosophy, Buffalo State

16 September 2019  
6-8 PM

Buffalo State College\*  
204 Rockwell Hall  
(building with bell tower facing Elmwood Avenue)

This will be an introductory lecture and discussion of Camus' *Myth of Sisyphus*, in preparation for the upcoming play, *La Chute*, by Albert Camus.

This discussion will presuppose no previous knowledge of, or training in, philosophy. It is open to everyone and we will proceed at a pace that the group finds comfortable.

Discussion will be in English, with references made to the English text. Please email me [blessika@buffalostate.edu](mailto:blessika@buffalostate.edu) and I can send you the English and French text.

Abstract: Camus concludes his "Myth of Sisyphus" as follows: "*Il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux.*" But how can a man, fated to roll a rock up a hill only to fall back down at his feet, be happy? For Camus, Sisyphus is the Absurd Hero. We will discuss Camus' notion of the absurd – the confrontation between man's search for meaning in an irrational or meaningless world -- and suggest ways in which it fits into the larger intellectual movement known as existentialism. Existentialists emphasize individual existence, freedom and choice. They believe that humans define or create their own meaning in life, and try to make rational and ethical decisions despite existing in an irrational universe. (Optional reading for understanding existentialism in general: Sartre's lecture, "Existentialism is a Humanism." I can email the French text and here is the English <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>)

\*Metered parking is available in Burchfield Museum Lot, or behind the Albright Knox.