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The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 14 Jun 2001

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Josh Levitan — 14 Jun 2001, 16:12

I've been super-busy for a while, and by necessity lurking instead of posting. And, this is woefully off-topic. However, it angered me a tad, so I'll just butt in.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <ddanehy at siebel.com> wrote:

While I agree provisionally with you so far, I would note that one of the reasons I believe in the Gospels is that such belief, in my opinion, makes for a better and more coherent Universe -- at least, to the extent of my experiencing of it. Consider it a sort of existentialist jiu-jitsu: if I'm as radically free as all that, then I choose to live in a Universe where the Gospels are true, and I find that this converts the nausée of an inherently meaningless existence into joi. Some praise Sartre and Camus and that log for their courage in resolutely facing the absurdity of life; I sneer at them for their rank silliness in choosing to live life as if it were absurd.

That's only half of existentialism. The usually misunderstood half. It is **because** the universe is "absurd" that it is up to people to create their own meaning and their own morality. Sartre believes that we should be good people not because there is a god to tell us to do so and punish us if we stray, but because we are solely responsible for our actions. That's what's frightening about existentialism -- it's unique accountability. There is no savior to wash away your sins if you accept him.

**This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.*