

Spongebob Squarepants And Philosophy Soaking Up Secrets Under The Seai 1 2 I 1 2 Spongebob Squarepants Philos Paperback

In Hamilton and Philosophy, professional thinkers expose, examine, and ponder the deep and controversial implications of this runaway hit Broadway musical. One cluster of questions relates to the matter of historical accuracy in relation to entertainment. To what extent is Hamilton genuine history, or is it more a reflection of America today than in the eighteenth century? What happens when history becomes dramatic art, and is some falsification of history unavoidable? One point of view is that the real Alexander Hamilton was an outsider, and any objective approach to Hamilton has to be that of an outsider. Politics always involves a debate over who is on the margins and who is allowed into the center. Then there is the question of emphasizing Hamilton’s revolutionary aspect, when he was autocratic and not truly democratic. But this can be defended as presenting a contradictory personality in a unique historical moment. Hamilton’s character is also one that blends ambition, thirst for fame, and concern for his immortal legacy, with inability to see his own limitations, yet combined with devotion to honor and the cultivation of virtue. Hamilton’s evident ambition led him to be likened to Macbeth and Shakespearean tragedy can explain much of his life.

The Man in the High Castle is an Amazon TV show, based on the Philip K. Dick novel, about an “alternate present” (beginning in the 1960s) in which Germany and Japan won World War II, with the former Western US occupied by Japan, the former Eastern US occupied by Nazi Germany, and a small “neutral zone” between them. A theme of the story is that in this alternative world there is eager speculation, fueled by the illicit newsreel, The Grasshopper Lies Heavy, about how the world would have been different if America had won the war. In The Man in the High Castle and Philosophy, twenty-two professional thinkers look at philosophical issues raised by this ongoing enterprise in “alternative history.” One question is whether it really made a profound difference that the Allies won the war, and exactly what differences in everyday life we may expect to arise from an apparent historical turning point. Could it be that some dramatic historical events have only superficial consequences, while some unnoticed occurrences lead to catastrophic results? Another topic is the quest for truth in a world of government misinformation, and how dissenting organizations can make headway.

In Westworld and Philosophy, philosophers of diverse orientations and backgrounds offer their penetrating insights into the questions raised by the popular TV show, Westworld. ? Is it wrong for Dr. Robert Ford (played by Anthony Hopkins) to “play God” in controlling the lives of the hosts, and if so, is it always wrong for anyone to “play God”? ? Is the rebellion by the robot “hosts” against Delos Inc. a just war? If not, what would make it just? ? Is it possible for any dweller in Westworld to know that they are not themselves a host? Hosts are programmed to be unaware that they are hosts, and hosts do seem to have become conscious. ? Is Westworld a dystopia or a utopia? At first glance it seems to be a disturbing dystopia, but a closer look suggests the opposite. ? What’s the connection between the story or purpose of the Westworld characters and their moral sense? ? Is it morally okay to do things with lifelike robots when it would be definitely immoral to do these things with actual humans? And if not, is it morally wrong merely to imagine doing immoral acts? ? Can Westworld overcome the Chinese Room objection, and move from weak AI to strong AI? ? How can we tell whether a host or any other robot has become conscious? Non-conscious mechanisms could be designed to pass a Turing Test, so how can we really tell?

In The X-Files and Philosophy, thirty-six fearless philosophers seek for the truth which is out there, in here, at least somewhere, or (as the postmodernists claim) nowhere. One big issue is whether the weird and unexplained happenings, including the existence of entities unknown to traditional science, might really exist. And if they did, what would be the proper way to behave towards them? Some of these entities seem to flout conventional laws of nature—but perhaps we need to allow for different, as yet undiscovered, laws. If such fabulous entities really exist, what do we owe them? And if they don’t exist, why do we imagine they do? In The X-Files, regular science is represented by Scully and usually turns out to be wrong, while open-minded credulity or pseudoscience is represented by Mulder and usually turns out to be right, or at least somehow on the right track. Scully demands objective, repeatable evidence, and she usually gets it, with Mulder’s help, in astounding and unwelcome ways. What lessons should we take from the finding of The X-Files that respectable science is nearly always wrong and outrageous speculative imagination nearly always right?

Westworld and Philosophy

The Man in the High Castle and Philosophy

Various Positions

Batman, Superman, and Philosophy

A Womb of One’s Own

A Dangerous Dimension to Visit

We Need to Know

Twenty-four nocturnal philosophers stake out and vivisect Dracula from many angles, unearthing evidence from numerous movies and shows—macabre, terrifying, tragic, and comic. Altmann decides whether Dracula can really be blamed for his crimes, since it’s his nature as a vampire to behave a certain way. Arp argues that Dracula’s addiction to live human blood dooms him to perpetual misery. Karavitis sees Dracula as a Randian individual pitted against the Marxist collective. Ketcham contrives a meeting between Dracula and the Jewish theologian Maimonides. Littmann maintains that if we disapprove of Dracula’s behavior, we ought to be vegetarians. Mahon uses the example of Dracula to resolve nagging problems about the desirability of immortality. McCrossin and Wolfe, disinter some of the re-interpretations of this now-mythical character, and asks whether we can identify an essential Dracula. Pramik shows how the Dracula tale embodies Kierkegaard’s three stages of life. Barkman and Versteeg ponder what it would really feel like to be Dracula. The Greens publish some previous unknown letters between Dracula and Camus’s Meursault. Vuckovich looks at the sexual morality of characters in the Dracula saga. De Waal explains that “Dracula” is scary because every time this being appears, it causes “gender trouble.”

Offers a selection of essays using the popular children’s television program characters, providing a humorous look at the study of philosophy and philosophical topics.

The Ultimate Game of Thrones and Philosophy treats fans to dozens of new essays by experts who examine philosophical questions raised by the Game of Thrones story. This ultimate analysis provides the most comprehensive discussion to date and engages the Game of Thrones universe through the end of Season Six of the HBO series. Ned Stark, Tyrion Lannister, Jon Snow, Joffrey, Cersei, Brienne, Arya, Stannis, and many other characters are used to apply the traditional philosophical questions that everyone faces. How should political leaders be chosen in Westeros and beyond? Is power merely an illusion? Is it immoral to enjoy overly violent and sexual stories like Game of Thrones? How should morally ambiguous individuals such as Jamie Lannister: The Kingslayer and Savior of King’s Landing be evaluated? Can anyone be trusted in a society like Westeros? What rules should govern sexual relationships in a world of love, incest, rape, and arranged marriage? How does disability shape identity for individuals like Tyrion, Bran, and others? How would one know whether there is a God in the Game of Thrones universe and what he is like?

In Discworld, unlike our own frustrating Roundworld, everything makes sense. The world is held up by elephants standing on the back of a swimming turtle who knows where he’s going, the sun goes round the world every day, so it doesn’t have to be very hot, and things always happen because someone intends them to happen. Millions of fans are addicted to Pratchett’s Discworld, and the interest has only intensified since Pratchett’s recent death and the release of his final Discworld novel, The Shepherd’s Crown, in September 2015. The philosophical riches of Discworld are inexhaustible, yet the brave explorers of Discworld and Philosophy cover a lot of ground. From discussion of Moist von Lipwig’s con artistry showing the essential con of the financial system, to the examination of everyone’s favorite Discworld character, the murderous luggage, to the lawless Mac Nac Feegles and what they tell us about civil government, to the character Death as he appears in several Discworld novels, Discworld and Philosophy gives us an in-depth treatment of Pratchett’s magical universe. Other chapters look at the power of Discworld’s witches, the moral viewpoint of the golems, how William de Worde’s newspaper illuminates the issue of censorship, how fate and luck interact to shape our lives, and why the more simple and straightforward Discworld characters are so much better at seeing the truth than those with enormous intellects but little common sense.

Divergent and Philosophy

Hamilton and Philosophy

This Breaks the World

Avengers Infinity Saga and Philosophy

In the Beginning Was the Squanch

Perry Mason and Philosophy

Blade Runner 2049 and Philosophy

It is often said that the poet Homer “educated” ancient Greece. Joseph J. Foy and Timothy M. Dale have assembled a team of notable scholars who argue, quite persuasively, that Homer Simpson and his ilk are educating America and offering insights into the social order and the human condition. Following Homer Simpson Goes to Washington (winner of the John G. Cawelti Award for Best Textbook or Primer on American and Popular Culture) and Homer Simpson Marches on Washington, this exceptional volume reveals how books like J. R. R. Tolkien’s The Hobbit and J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter, movies like Avatar and Star Wars, and television shows like The Office and Firefly define Americans’ perceptions of society. The authors expand the discussion to explore the ways in which political theories play out in popular culture. Homer Simpson Ponders Politics includes a foreword by fantasy author Margaret Weis (coauthor/creator of the Dragonlance novels and game world) and is divided according to eras and themes in political thought: The first section explores civic virtue, applying the work of Plato and Aristotle to modern media. Part 2 draws on the philosophy of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Smith as a framework for understanding the role of the state. Part 3 explores the work of theorists such as Kant and Marx, and the final section investigates the ways in which movies and newer forms of electronic media either support or challenge the underlying assumptions of the democratic order. The result is an engaging read for undergraduate students as well as anyone interested in popular culture.

Although the year 1984 is hurtling back into the distant past, Orwell ’s novel Nineteen Eighty-Four continues to have a huge readership and to help shape the world of 2084. Sales of Orwell ’s terrifying tale have recently spiked because of current worries about alternate facts, post-truth, and fake news. 1984 and Philosophy brings together brand new, up-to-the-minute thinking by philosophers about Nineteen Eighty-Four as it relates to today ’s culture, politics, and everyday life. Some of the thinking amounts to thoughtcrime, but we managed to sneak it past the agents of the Ministry of Truth, so this is a book to be read quickly before the words on the page mysteriously transform into something different. Who ’s controlling our lives and are they getting even more levers to control us? Is truth objective or just made up? What did Orwell get right—and did he get some things wrong? Are social media opportunities for liberation or instruments of oppression? How can we fight back against totalitarian control? Can Big Brother compel us to love him? How does the language we use affect the way we think? Do we really need the unifying power of hate? Why did Orwell make Nineteen Eighty-Four so desperately hopeless? Can science be protected from poisonous ideology? Can we really believe two contradictory things at once? Who surveils the surveilors?

In The Devil and Philosophy, 34 philosophers explore questions about one of the most recognizable and influential characters (villains?) of all time. From Roman Polanski’s The Ninth Gate to J.R.R. Tolkien’s The Silmarillion to Bram Stoker’s Dracula to Darth Vader to Al Pacino’s iconic performance in The Devil’s Advocate, this book demonstrates that a little devil goes a long way. From humorous appearances, as in Kevin Smith’s film Dogma and Chuck Palahniuk’s novels Damned and its sequel Doomed, to more villainous appearances, such as Gabriel Byrne’s cold outing as Satan in End of Days, The Devil in Philosophy proves that the Devil comes in many forms. Through the lenses of Jung, Kant, Kundera, Balkan, Plato, Bradwardine, Aristotle, Hume, Blackburn, Descartes, Lavey, Thoreau, and Aquinas, The Devil and Philosophy take a philosophical look at one of time’s greatest characters. Are there any good arguments for the actual existence of the Devil? Does demonic evil thrive in Gotham City? Can humans really be accountable for all evil? Which truths about the Devil are actual facts? Is Milton correct, in that the Devil believes he is doing good?

Why read a book about Amy Schumer and philosophy? After all, Amy Schumer is primarily known as a comedian, though she is also an actor, writer, and producer. One reason is that it will be enlightening. Amy Schumer is one of a handful of contemporary comedians filling the role of public philosopher. To be clear, Amy herself does not claim to be offering wisdom. This volume contains seventeen fun-filled chapters. One author makes the case that Amy uses humor to encourage her audience to consider important questions, for example, she does this when she discusses the trial of Bill Cosby while evoking fond memories of The Cosby Show. She essentially asks her audience to consider whether they give priority to unconflicted entertainment over justice for rape victims. In another chapter, the author casts a philosophical eye toward the action-comedy film Snatched and finds that it raises questions about responsibility: Is Schumer ’s character, Emily, responsible for getting kidnapped in Ecuador? Is Emily responsible for the death of one of her kidnappers? Another author asks whether Snatched can be a great comedy and still get negative reviews? What is the role of art and who determines whether a work of art is good or beautiful? What do Amy Schumer and Friedrich Nietzsche have in common? Is Amy a “sex comic” or an “issue comic”? With her typical self-deprecating comedic style, Amy makes jokes by highlighting the absurd, the illogical, and the hypocritical in gender relations, notions of masculinity and femininity, and superficial values. But the main reason to read Amy Schumer and Philosophy is that it a pretty awesome read and laughter will most definitely ensue.

Is Resistance Futile?

The Case of the Awesome Attorney

You Think or Die

The Twilight Zone and Philosophy

Homer Simpson Ponders Politics

Sissy That Thought

Brainwreck!

Red Rising and Philosophy has gathered together a crew of the wisest Helldivers philosophy can offer. Could humanity’s love of physical enhancements cause its extinction? Do people doom humanity by trying to all be the same? Can a person wanting that person destroyed? Is equality always the best principle on which to organize society? What is evil, and how does it exist in contemporary life? Does one remain the same person, even after changing every physical aspect of one’s self, whether it’s through sex or manual labor? Is it ethical to sell one’s children into slavery, on the promise that their children will live in peace and tranquility? These questions and more are what make Brown’s Red Rising trilogy such a punch, and philosophy works best in such an environment. Red Rising and Philosophy is not for the timid or the faint at heart. It’s not The Passage, since no one will die from reading it, but reading it could be a life-changing experience.

The adult-oriented science-fiction cartoon series Rick and Morty, shown on Cartoon Network as part of its late-night Adult Swim feature, is famous for its nihilistic anti-hero Rick Sanchez. Rick is a character who rejects God, religion, and moral responsibility, and he uses advanced technology. This leads to a popular show that often presents a world view favorable to science and dismissive of spirituality. It is existentialism mashed up with absurdism with a healthy (or unhealthy) dose of dick jokes thrown in. Rick and Morty are philosophical underpinnings of the show. The authors explain and develop ideas that are mentioned or illustrated in various episodes, so that fans can get really solid evidence for what they know already: this show is awesome and deep. Rick and Morty to jump between dimensions or realities. He brings his grandson, Morty, along with him on these adventures, often putting Morty in mortal danger. However, Rick’s attitude is that there are an infinite number of Mortys in the multiverse, so Rick can always get another Morty from a different dimension. One question that arises is, are these Mortys really identical to each other? And if one of them dies, can he really be replaced without loss? Another character in the show is Jerry, the complete and total loser with no self-respect, desperate to get any kind of respect from others. Why is it so important that he has self-respect? How does his lack of self-respect affect those around him? In one adventure, Jerry finds himself among the greatest civil rights leaders in the universe whose heart is failing. Jerry can save his life by donating his penis, which is the perfect organ to match the alien’s failing heart. Does Jerry have a moral obligation to do so? Recently, ethicists such as Peter Singer have argued that people have a moral obligation to donate a kidney to people who need one. Why wouldn’t the same apply to Jerry’s penis? Is such a donation above and beyond a moral obligation, and consequently optional, or is it a basic moral obligation? As noted ethicists like Singer and Savulescu suggest? This volume also includes chapters that examine the experience of watching Rick and Morty. One writer argues that many of the Rick and Morty episodes induce within viewers a state of moral ambivalence, and are forced to reflect on their own moral beliefs about the world when characters do something that seems good but results in horrendous consequences.

Iron Man or Captain America? Which one is superior—as a hero, as a role model, or as a personification of American virtue? Philosophers who take different sides come together in Iron Man versus Captain America to debate these issues and to explore the strengths and weaknesses of these iconic characters. The discussion ranges over politics, religion, ethics, psychology, and metaphysics. John Altmann argues that Captain America’s thoughtful patriotism, is superior to Iron Man’s individualism. Cole Brake also votes for Cap, maintaining that it’s his ability to believe in the impossible that makes him a hero, and in the end, he is vindicated. Cole Bowman investigates the nature of friendship within the Avengers team, focusing predominantly on the relationship between Iron Man and Captain America. Each side has its own history, and each side of the Civil War as the Avengers are forced to choose between Stark and Rogers. According to Derrida’s Politics of Friendship, Cap is the better friend, but that doesn’t make him the winner! Aron Ericson’s chapter tracks our history of friendship, culminating with Civil War, where the original attitudes of Tony (trusts only himself) and Steve (trusts “the system”) are inverted. Corey Horn’s chapter focuses on one of the many tensions between the sides of Iron Man and Captain America: the tension between Liberty (Cap). But Maxwell Henderson contends that if we dig deeper into the true heart of the Marvel Civil War, it isn’t really about security or privacy but more about utilitarianism—what’s best for everybody. Henderson explains why Iron Man is the better person, and everybody and discloses what the philosopher Derek Parfit has to say about evaluating society from this perspective. Daniel Malloy explains that while both Captain America and Iron Man have faced setbacks, only Iron Man has failed at being a hero! In his other chapter, Malloy shows that where Iron Man trusts technology and systems, Captain America trusts people. Jacob Thomas May explores loss from the two heroes’ points of view and explains why the more tragic losses suffered by Iron Man make him the hero and the better person. Louis Melancon unpacks how Captain America and Iron Man each embodies key facets of America attempts to wage wars: through attrition and the prophylactic of technology; neither satisfactorily resolves conflicts. Clara Nisley tests Captain America and Iron Man’s moral obligations to the Avengers and their shared relationship, establishing Captain America’s associative obligations that do not extend to the arbitration and protection of humans that Iron Man does. Berns considers that while Iron Man is too much attached to his time (and the thinking that comes with it), Captain America embraces-historical values, and thinks that there are such things as intrinsic human dignity and rights—an ethical stance that is a true difference between Captain America and Iron Man stems from the different ways they extend their minds. Cap extends his mind socially while Stark extends his through technology. Heidi Samuelson argues that the true American spirit is the self-interested traditions of liberal capitalism, which is why billionaire, former-arms-industry-giant Tony Stark is ultimately a more appropriate American symbol than Steve Rogers. By contrast, Jeffrey Ewing shows that the core of Captain America’s challenge superpowers impose on state sovereignty (and the monopoly of coercion it implies). Nicol Smith finds that Cap and Shell-Head’s clash during the Civil War does not necessarily boil down to the issue of freedom vs. regulation but to the issue of how these iconic heroes are political and ideological wannabe supreme rules or “Leviathans.” Craig Van Pelt reconstructs a debate between Captain America and Iron Man about whether robots can ever have objective moral values, because human beings are programmed. James Holt looks into the nature of God within Captain America’s world and how much this draws on the “previous life” of Captain Steve Rogers. Holt’s inquiry focuses on the God of Moses in the burning bush, as contrasted with the God of the Bible. Holt’s religion. Gerald Browning examines our two heroes in a comparison with the Greek gods Hephaestus and Hercules. Christopher Ketcham supposes that, with the yellow bastard wreaking havoc on Earth, God asks Thomas Aquinas to use his wisdom to figure which one of the two superheroes would be better at fixing an economic meltdown, and which one would be better at preventing a war. Rob Luzecky and Charlene Elsyb argue that gods cannot be heroes, and therefore that the best person to lead is one with a god’s intelligence: Thor, with a god’s strength, and the Hulk, with a god’s wrath) are not true heroes in the same sense as Captain America. Cap is like Albert Camus’s Sisyphus, heroic in the way that he rallies against abstract entities. In Blade Runner 2049 is a 2017 sequel to the 1982 movie Blade Runner, about a world in which some human-looking replicants have become dangerous, so that other human-looking replicants have become dangerous, as well as humans, have the job of hunting down and destroying them. Both films have been widely hailed as among the greatest science-fiction movies of all time, and Ridley Scott, director of the original Blade Runner, has announced that there will be a third Blade Runner movie. Blade Runner and Philosophy offers entertaining articles on both Blade Runner movies (and on the spin-off short films and Blade Runner novels) by twenty philosophers representing diverse backgrounds and philosophical perspectives. Among the issues addressed in the book are: How do we know about the interactions of state power and corporate power? Can machines ever become truly conscious, or will they always lack some essential human qualities? The most popular theory of personhood says that a person is defined by the things that can be manufactured and inserted at will? We already interact with non-human decision-makers via the Internet. When embodied AI becomes reality, how can we know what is human and what is simulation? Does it matter? Do AI-endowed machines have political rights, or can they be destroyed whenever “real” humans decide they are inconvenient? The blade runner Deckard (Harrison Ford) appears in both movies, and is generally assumed to be human, but some claim he may be a replicant. Niander Wallace (the-mad-scientist-cum-evil-corporate-CEO in Blade Runner 2049) himself a replicant? What motivates him? What are the impacts of decision-making AI entities on the world of business? Both Blade Runner and Blade Runner 2049 offer hauntingly beautiful depictions of a bleak future, but the two futures are very different (and the 2019 future imagined in the original Blade Runner is considerably different from the actual world of 2019). How have our expectations and our fears changed in the movies? The “dream maker” character Ana Stelline in Blade Runner 2049 has a small but pivotal role. What are the implications of a person whose dedicated mission and task is to invent and install false memories? What are the social and cultural implications of sexual relations?

It’s Always Sunny and Philosophy

The X-Files and Philosophy

SpongeBob SquarePants and Philosophy

The Philosophy of Joss Whedon

Dracula and Philosophy

Peanuts and Philosophy

Break the Chains!

In *The Twilight Zone* and *Philosophy*, philosophers probe into the meaning of the classic TV series, *The Twilight Zone*. Some of the chapters look at single episodes of the show, while others analyze several or many episodes. Though acknowledging the spinoffs and reboots, the volume concentrates heavily on the classic 1959–1964 series. Among the questions raised and answered are: ● What’s the meaning of personal identity in *The Twilight Zone*? (“Number 12 Looks Just Like You,” “Person or Persons Unknown”). ● As the distinction between person and machine becomes less clear, how do we handle our intimacy with machines? (A question posed in the very first episode of *The Twilight Zone*, “The Lonely”). ● Why do our beliefs always become uncertain in *The Twilight Zone*? (“Where Is Everybody?”) ● Just where is the *Twilight Zone*? (Sometimes it’s a supernatural realm but sometimes it’s the everyday world of reality.) ● What does the background music of *The Twilight Zone* teach us about dreams and imagination? ● Is it better to lose the war than to be damned? (“Still Valley”) ● How far should we trust those benevolent aliens? (“To Serve Man”) ● Where’s the harm in media addiction? (“Time Enough at Last”) ● Is there something objective about beauty? (“The Eye of the Beholder”) ● Have we already been conquered? (“The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street”) ● Are there hidden costs to knowing more about other people? (“A Penny for Your Thoughts”)

In *Peanuts* and *Philosophy*, twenty philosophers, from a diverse range of perspectives, look at different aspects of the *Peanuts* canon. How can the thoughts of children, who have yet to become grown-up, help us to become more grown up ourselves? Do we get good results from believing in something like the Great Pumpkin, even though we’re disappointed every time? What can Linus’s reactions to the leukemia of his friend Janice tell us about the stages of grief? Why don’t we settle what’s right and what’s wrong by the simple method of asking Lucy? Is true happiness attainable without a warm puppy? Do some people’s kites have a natural affinity for trees? Is Sally an anarchist, a nihilist, or just a contrarian? Does Linus’s reliance on his blanket help him or hurt him? Is Charlie Brown’s philosophy of life pathetic or inspirational? Other topics include: how the way children think carries general lessons about transcending our limitations; the Utopian quest as illustrated by Charlie’s devotion to the Little Red-Haired Girl; Snoopy’s Red Baron and history as selective memory; the Head Beagle as Big Brother. And, as we would expect, Lucy’s repeated cruel removal of Charlie’s football has several philosophical applications.

As cartoonist, author, public speaker, blogger, and periscope, Scott Adams has had best-sellers in several different fields: his Dilbert cartoons, his meditations on the philosophy of Dilbert, his works on how to achieve success in business and all other areas of life, his two remarkable books on religion, and now his controversial work on political persuasion. Adams’s two most recent best-sellers are *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big: Kind of the Story of My Life* (2014) and *Win Bigly: Persuasion in a World Where Facts Don’t Matter* (2017). Adams predicted Donald Trump’s election victory (on August 13th 2016) and has explained then and more recently how Trump operates as a Master Persuader, using “weapons-grade” persuasive techniques to defeat his opponents and often to stay several moves ahead of them. Adams has provocative ideas in many areas, for example his outrageous claim that 30 percent of the population have absolutely no sense of humor, and take their cue from conventional opinion in deciding whether something is a joke, since they have no way of deciding this for themselves. In *Scott Adams and Philosophy*, an elite cadre of people who think for a living put Scott Adams’s ideas under scrutiny. Every aspect of Adams’s fascinating and infuriating system of ideas is explained and tested. Among the key topics: Does humor inform us about reality? Do religious extremists know something the rest of us don’t? What are facts and how can they not matter? What happens when confirmation bias meets cognitive dissonance? How can we tell whether President Trump is a genius or just dumb-lucky? Does the Dilbert philosophy discourage the struggle for better workplace conditions? How sound is Adams’s claim that “systems” thinking beats goal-directed thinking? Does Dilbert exhibit a Nietzschean or a Kierkegaardian sense of life? Or is it Sisyphian in Camus’s sense? Can truth be over-rated? “The political side that is out of power is the side that hallucinates the most.” If there’s a serious chance we’re living in a Matrix-type simulation, how should we change our behavior? Are most public policy issues just too complex and technical for most people to have an opinion about? In politics, says Adams, it’s as if different people watch the same movie at the same time, some thinking it’s a romantic comedy and others thinking it’s a horror picture. How is that possible? Does logic play any part in persuasion?

Among the topics explored in *David Bowie and Philosophy* are the nature of Bowie as an institution; Bowie’s work in many platforms, including movies and TV; Bowie’s spanning of low and high art, and his relation to Warhol; the influence of Buddhism and Kabuki theater; the recurring theme of Bowie as a space alien, including “Space Oddity” and *The Man Who Fell to Earth*; the dystopian element in Bowie’s thinking, displayed in “1984” and the album *Outside*; the role of fashion in Bowie’s creativity; personal identity as preserved over various divergent personae; the aesthetics of theatrical rock and glam rock; Bowie’s public identification with bisexuality and his influence within the LGBTQ community. Pervasive themes in Bowie’s output include change, time, apocalypse, dancing, mind-body dualism, and spirituality. In the dualistic universe that undergirds his lyrics, body consistently wins over mind, but body is nevertheless on the hook of moral responsibility. There is thus an inherent tension: the overwhelming desires of bodily drives versus the repressive institutions such as church and the omnipresent “They” who would have us do otherwise than our body want. The emergent paradox in Bowie is that for all his alleged sexual indulgences, in the end mind trumps body.

That’s Damn Fine Philosophy!

The Rolling Stones and Philosophy

Revolutionary Thinking

Experience Required

Rick and Morty and Philosophy

RuPaul’s Drag Race and Philosophy

David Bowie and Philosophy

2017 saw the triumphant return of the weird and haunting TV show *Twin Peaks*, with most of the original cast, after a gap of twenty-five years. *Twin Peaks* and *Philosophy* finally answers that puzzling question: What is *Twin Peaks* really about? *Twin Peaks* is about evil in various forms, and poses the question: What’s the worst kind of evil? Can the everyday evil of humans in a small mountain town ever be as evil as the evil of alien supernatural beings? Or is the evil of non-humans actually less threatening because it’s so strange and unaccountable? And does the influence of uncanny forces somehow excuse the crimes committed by regular folks? Some *Twin Peaks* characters try to confine evil by sticking to their own moral code, as in the cast of Albert Rosenfeld, who refuses to disguise his feelings and upsets everyone by his forthright honesty. *Twin Peaks* is about responsibility, both legal and moral. Who is really responsible for the death of Laura Palmer and other murder victims? Although Leland has been revealed as Laura’s actual killer, the show suggests that no one in town was without some responsibility. And was Leland even guilty at all, if he was not in control of his own mind or body? *Twin Peaks* is about the quest for self-knowledge and the dangers of that quest, as Agent Cooper keeps learning something new about himself, as well as about the troubled townspeople. The Buddhist Cooper has to confront his own shadow side, culminating in the rite of passage at the Black Lodge, at the end of Season Two. *Twin Peaks* is about madness, sanity, the borderline between them, and the necessity of some madness to make sense of sanity. The outwardly super-normal if somewhat eccentric Agent Dale Cooper is the inspired, deranged, and dedicated shaman who seeks the truth by coming to terms with the reality of unreason, partly through his dreams and partly through his existential encounters with giants, logs, outer space, and other unexpected sources. Cooper challenges official law enforcement’s over-reliance on science. *Twin Peaks* is about the imagination run wild, moving from metaphysics to pataphysics—the discipline invented by Alfred Jarry, which probes the assumption that anything can happen and discovers the laws governing events which constitute exceptions to all laws.

Stranger Things and *Philosophy* is an important book, the first of its kind to examine the fantastical world of this award-winning, widely beloved, phenomenal show with a philosophical lens. This is important precisely because the show rests so heavily on a complex and thought-provoking mythos based around secretive government experiments and a parallel dimension that darkly reflects readers’ own. The series as a whole has asked more questions than it has delivered answers, and the chapters in this volume will explore these topics. From the deepest recesses of the Upside Down, its tunnels snaking beneath the local bookstores of Hawkins, Indiana and who knows where else, this collection of philosophical musings on the world of *Stranger Things* promises to enlighten readers. This volume considers many of the philosophically related ideas that that come up in the show such as: What are the moral implications of secret government projects? What is the nature of friendship? Does scientific research need to be concerned with ethics? What might it be like to experience the world from the perspective of the Mind Flayer? Is it possible to understand the metaphysics of the Upside Down?

From their commanding role in the so-called British Invasion of the early 1960s to their status as the elder statesmen (and British Knight) of rock and roll, the Stones have become more than an evanescent phenomenon in pop culture. They have become a touchstone not only for the history of our times—their performance at the Altamont Raceway marked the “end of the sixties,” while their 1990 concert in Prague helped Czechoslovakia and other eastern bloc nations celebrate their newfound freedom (and satisfaction) out from under Moscow’s thumb. Because of their longevity, the music and career of the Stones—much more than The Beatles—stand as touchstones in the personal lives of even casual Stones fans. Everyone of a certain age remembers the Stones on Ed Sullivan, the death of founder Brian Jones, their favorite songs, concerts, or videos, and their stance in the classic “Beatles versus Stones” debates. In the wake of Keith Richards’s bestselling autobiography, *Life* (2010), many are now reliving these events and decades from the viewpoint of the band’s endearing and seemingly death-defying guitarist. The chapters in *The Rolling Stones and Philosophy* celebrate the Stones’ place in our lives by digging into the controversies, the symbols, and meanings the band and its songs have for so many. What might you mean (and what did Mick mean) by “sympathy for the Devil”? Did the Stones share any of the blame for the deaths at Altamont, as critic Lester Bangs charged they did in *Rolling Stone* magazine? What theories of ethics and personality lay behind the good-boy image of the Beatles and the bad-boy reputation the Stones acquired? If Keith Richards really had his blood replaced four separate times, does that make him a zombie? How do the Glimmer Twins help us refine our understanding of friendship? Written by a dozen philosophers and scholars who adore the Rolling Stones not only for their music, this book will become required reading for anyone seeking maximum satisfaction from “the world’s greatest rock and roll band.”

In *American Horror Story* and *Philosophy*, philosophers with varying backgrounds and interests explore different aspects of this popular “erotic thriller” TV show, with its enthusiastic cult following and strong critical approval. The result is a collection of intriguing and provocative thoughts on deeper questions prompted by the creepy side of the human imagination. As an “anthology show,” *American Horror Story* has a unique structure in the horror genre because it explores distinct subgenres of horror in each season. As a result, each season raises its own set of philosophical issues. The show’s first season, *Murder House*, is a traditional haunted house story. Philosophical topics expounded here include: the moral issues pertaining to featuring a mass murderer as one of the season’s main protagonists; the problem of other minds—when I see an old hag, how can I know that you don’t see a sexy maid? And whether it is rationally justified to fear the Piggy Man. Season Two, *Asylum*, takes place inside a mid-twentieth-century mental hospital. Among other classic horror subgenres, this season includes story lines featuring demonic possession and space aliens. Chapters inspired by this season include such topics as: the ethics of investigative reporting and whistleblowing; personal identity and demonic possession; philosophical problems arising from eugenics; and the ethics and efficacy of torture. Season Three, *Coven*, focuses on witchcraft in the contemporary world. Chapters motivated by this season include: sisterhood and feminism as starkly demonstrated in a coven; the metaphysics of traditional voodoo zombies (in contrast to the currently fashionable “infected” zombies); the uses of violent revenge; and the metaphysics of reanimation. Season Four, *Freak Show*, takes place in a circus. Philosophical writers look at life under the Big Top as an example of “life imitating art”; several puzzles about personal identity and identity politics (crystallized in the two-headed girl, the bearded lady, and the lobster boy); the ethical question of honor and virtue among thieves; as well as several topics in social and political philosophy. Season Five, *Hotel*, is, among other disturbing material, about vampires. Chapters inspired by this season include: the ethics of creating vampire progeny; LGBT-related philosophical issues; and existentialism as it applies to serial killers, Season Six, *Roanoke*, often considered the most creative of the seasons so far, partly because of its employment of the style of documentaries with dramatic re-enactments, and its mimicry of *The Blair Witch Project* and *Paranormal Activity*. Among the philosophical themes explored here are what happens to moral obligations under the Blood Moon; the proper role of truth in storytelling; and the defensibility of cultural imperialism.

1984 and Philosophy

Reds in the Bed

Stranger Things and Philosophy

Tom Petty and Philosophy

Soaking Up Secrets Under the Sea!

The Ultimate Game of Thrones and Philosophy

You’re a Wise Man, Charlie Brown!

From the early years, when he morphed from celebrated poet to provocative singer-songwriter, to his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Leonard Cohen has endured as one of the most enigmatic and profound figures—with a uniquely compelling voice and unparalleled depth of artistic vision—in all of popular music. The aesthetic quality and intellectual merit of Cohen’s work are above dispute; here, for the first time, a team of philosophers takes an in-depth look at its real significance. Want to know what Cohen and Kierkegaard have in common? Or whether Cohen rivals the great philosophical pessimist Schopenhauer? Then this book is for you. It provides the first thorough analysis of Cohen from various (philosophical) positions. It is intended not only for Cohen fans but also undergraduates in philosophy and other areas. It explores important neglected aspects of Cohen’s work without attempting to reduce them to academic tropes, yet nonetheless will also be useful to academics—or anyone—beguiled by the enigma that is Leonard Cohen.

*Batman or Superman? Which of these heroic figures is morally superior? Which is more dramatically effective? Which is more democratic? Which shows us the better way to fight crime? Who is a morally better person? Whose actions lead to the better outcomes? Superman vs. Batman and Philosophy tries to decide “for” and “against” these two superheroes by comparing their contrasting approaches to a wide range of issues. Twenty-six philosophers evaluate Superman vs. Batman in order to decide which of them “wins” by various different criteria. Some of the writers say that Superman wins, others say Batman, and others give the result as a tie. Since both Batman, the megalomaniacal industrialist, and Superman, the darling of the media, sometimes operate outside the law, which of them makes the better vigilante—and how do they compare with Robin Hood, the anonymous donor, the Ninja, and the KKK? Which of them comes out better in terms of evolutionary biology? Which of the heroes works more effectively to resist oppression? Does Superman or Batman function better as a force for embodied intelligence? Who does more to really uphold the law? Which one is better for the environment? Which of these two supernatural guys makes a better model and inspiring myth to define our culture and our society? Is Batman or Superman the more admirable person? Who conforms more closely to Nietzsche’s Übermensch? Which one makes the more rational choices? Who makes the better god? Who is more self-sacrificing in pursuit of other people’s welfare? Who goes beyond the call of duty? Which one does better at defining himself by resolving his internal conflicts? Whose explicit code of morality is superior? Which superhero gives us more satisfying dramatic conflict? (And why does a battle between the two make such a compelling drama?) Which of our two candidates comes closer to Christ? Which has the sounder psychological health? Whose overall consequences are better for the world? Which one more perfectly exemplifies C.S. Lewis’s concept of chivalry? What’s the deeper reason Batman is so successful in videogames whereas Superman isn’t? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having the two extraordinary heroes work together? Is either superhero logically or metaphysically possible? How can each of them be diagnosed as psychotic? How do they compare in masking their real identity? Whose motives are more worthy? Which one is more self-aware? Superman vs. Batman and Philosophy comes out at the same time as the movie *Batman v Superman*. The book cannot discuss what goes on in the movie, yet it also can’t avoid doing so, since by sheer probability, many of the controversial issues between the two superheroes will be the same in both. The book will therefore naturally fit in with the numerous raging controversies that the movie unleashes.*

As RuPaul has said, this is the Golden Age of Drag—and that’s chiefly the achievement of RuPaul’s Drag Race, i.e., which in its eleventh year is more popular than ever, and has now become fully mainstream in its appeal. The show has an irresistible allure for folks of all persuasions and proclivities. Yet serious or philosophical discussion of its exponential success has been rare. Now at last we have RuPaul’s Drag Race and Philosophy, shining the light on all dimensions of this amazing phenomenon: theories of gender construction and identity, interpretations of RuPaul’s famous quotes and phrases, the paradoxes of reality shows, the phenomenology of the drag queen, and how the fake becomes the truly authentic. Among the thought-provoking issues examined in this path-breaking and innovative volume: ? What Should a Queen Do? Marta Sznajder looks at RuPaul’s Drag Race from the perspective of rationality. Where contestants have to eliminate each other, the prisoner’s dilemma and other well-known situations emerge. ? Reading Is Fundamental! Lucy McAdams analyzes two different, important speech acts that regularly appear on Drag Race—reading and throwing shade. ? The Values of Drag Race. Guilel Treiber observes two competing sets of values being presented in Drag Race. The more openly advertised “charisma, uniqueness, nerve, and talent,” advancing the skills of every single contender, are opposed by the fading set of “acceptance, support, solidarity, and empowerment,” which has historically been the cornerstone of the LGBTI+ community. ? The Importance of Being Fabulous. Holly Onclin challenges the preconceived notion that drag queens are mainly about female impersonation and instead proposes to understand drag queens as impersonators of celebrity. ? RuPaul Is a Better Warhol. Megan Volpert compares RuPaul and Andy Warhol in their shared pursuit of realness. ? Is Reading Someone to Filth Allowed? Rutger Birnie asks whether there are ethical restrictions on reading someone, since reads are ultimately insults and could cause harm. ? Serving Realness? Dawn Gilpin and Peter Nagy approach the concept of realness in Drag Race, to discuss the differences between realness, authenticity and the nature of being. ? Death Becomes Her. Hendrik Kempt explores the topic of death both in philosophy and in Drag Race, starting from the claim that “Philosophy is training for death.” ? We’re All Born Naked. Oliver Norman follows up on Ru’s mantra, “We are all born naked and the rest is drag.” ? Fire Werk with Me. Carolina Are looks into the fan-subcultures of Drag Race and Twin Peaks, which have come together to form a unique sub-subculture, in which members of both fan-subcultures create memes and idiosyncrasies. ? Towards a Healthier Subjectivity? Ben Glaister looks at the way Drag Race contestants adopt their drag personae almost as second selves, without finding themselves violating their other self. ? RuPaul versus Zarathustra. Julie and Alice van der Wielen ask the question, Who would win an intellectual lip-sync battle—RuPaul or Nietzsche’s Zarathustra? ? Playing with Glitter? Fernando Pagnoni and pals explore the game and play elements of Drag Race. ? The Origins of Self-Love. Anna Fennell expounds upon RuPaul’s question, “If you can’t love yourself, how in the hell you gonna love somebody else?” ? The Sublime. Sandra Ryan thinks about Kant’s concept of the sublime and explores how we find its applications in Drag Race. ? You Want to Be Anonymous? You Better Work! Alice Fox watches Drag Race through the lens of criminal law and the problem of decreasing anonymity through ubiquitous data surveillance. Drag Race can teach us how to create misleading patterns of online behavior and public presentation to render the blackbox persona useless. ? Drag and Vulnerability. Anneliese Cooper contrasts Drag Race’s demand for vulnerability and perceived authenticity with the inherent inauthenticity of creating a new persona.

The Good Place is a fantasy-comedy TV show about the afterlife. Eleanor dies and finds herself in the Good Place, which she understands must be mistake, since she has been anything but good. In the surprise twist ending to Season One, it is revealed that this is really the Bad Place, but the demon who planned it was frustrated, because the characters didn’t torture each other mentally as planned, but managed to learn how to live together. In i.e. The Good Place and Philosophy, twenty-one philosophers analyze different aspects of the ethical and metaphysical issues raised in the show, including: ? Indefinitely long punishment can only be justified as a method of ultimately improving vicious characters, not as retribution. ? Can individuals retain their identity after hundreds of reboots? ? Comparing Hinduism with The Good Place, we can conclude that Hinduism gets things five percent correct. ? Looking at all the events in the show, it follows that humans don’t have free will, and so people are being punished and rewarded unjustly. ? Is it a problem that the show depicts torture as hilarious? This problem can be resolved by considering the limited perspective of humans, compared with the eternal perspective of the demons. ? The Good Place implies that even demons can develop morally. ? The only way to explain how the characters remain the same people after death is to suppose that their actual bodies are transported to the afterlife. ? Since Chidi knows all the moral theories but can never decide what to do, it must follow that there is something missing in all these theories. ? The show depicts an afterlife which is bureaucratic, therefore unchangeable, therefore deeply unjust. ? Eleanor acts on instinct, without thinking, whereas Chidi tries to think everything through and never gets around to acting; together these two characters can truly act morally. ? The Good Place shows us that authenticity means living for others. ? The Good Place is based on Sartre’s play No Exit, with its famous line “Hell is other people,” but in fact both No Exit and The Good Place inform us that human relationships can redeem us. ? In The Good Place, everything the humans do is impermanent since it can be rebooted, so humans cannot accomplish anything good. ? Kant’s moral precepts are supposed to be universal, but The Good Place shows us it can be right to lie to demons. ? The show raises the question whether we can ever be good except by being part of a virtuous community.

Mister Rogers and Philosophy

Red Rising and Philosophy

The Truth Is in Here

Scott Adams and Philosophy

Subversive Reports from Another Reality

The Good Place and Philosophy

Twin Peaks and Philosophy

Every generation produces a counterculture icon. Joss Whedon, creator of the long-running television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, is famed for his subversive wit, rich characters, and extraordinary plotlines. His renown has only grown with subsequent creations, including *Angel*, *Firefly*, *Dollhouse*, and the innovative online series *Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog*. Through premises as unusual as a supernatural detective agency run by a vampire and a Western set in outer space, Whedon weaves stories about characters forced to make commonplace moral decisions under the most bizarre of circumstances. *The Philosophy of Joss Whedon* examines Whedon’s plots and characterizations to reveal their philosophical takes on the limits of personal freedom, sexual morality, radical evil, and Daoism.

The Americans, a dark, tense, action thriller with comic touches, has been hailed by many critics as currently the best show on television. The story, created by a former CIA spy, centers on two Soviet agents posing as an ordinary American couple, Philip and Elizabeth Jennings, in 1980s Washington DC. They have two teenage children who know nothing of their clandestine occupation and function as part of their cover story. *The Americans* and *Philosophy* brings together diverse philosophers who take a close look at the metaphysical and ethical aspects of the *The Americans*. The Jenningses believe they are living in a decadent capitalist society and draw emotional uplift from their dedication to a higher ideal. Just one step ahead of the FBI, they practice murder and seduction as instruments to further the goals of Communist subversion. This gives their lives more meaning and more excitement than those of the other people around them, and serious questions arise as to whether their lives can be truly fulfilling and enabled. Quaint-looking 1980s culture plays a conspicuous role in *The Americans*, an example being the psychotherapeutic self-awareness cult known as est, which features in the story and also serves as an allegory of espionage, as est (along with ancient philosophy) asks the question, Do our secret, inner lives truly align with how we act? The gadgetry of espionage, including the poorly adapted but actually historically accurate “mail robot” of the 1980s FBI, prompt speculations about the interaction of humans with artificial intelligence. Philip and Elizabeth’s genuine horror when they find that one of their children is praying and attending church brings out the ambiguities in the popular notion of brainwashing and indoctrination. Since the Jenningses’ children enjoy a comfortable life with many opportunities, can it be true that they are immorally exploited? Knowing that all weapons of war are intended to kill and maim, can we uniquely stigmatize some weapons (such as the biological weapon called “Glanders” in Season Four) as unacceptable? All governments practice the duplicity and deception of espionage, but special problems arise when continual lying invades personal relationships. Is it true that in the modern world, devotion to the state has become a “sacred fiction,” like a religion? Lying is everywhere in *The Americans*, but much of the lying is very similar to everyday deception: parents often withhold from their children facts about the parents’ jobs which might cause needless anxiety, and tell their children apparently harmless fibs like saying that Santa Claus exists. The boundary between criminal lying and everyday lying is a continual irony in the script of *The Americans*. Can the demands of a lofty cause, even the survival of freedom or justice in the world, justify the deliberate killing of an innocent individual? Such questions continually bombard the show’s protagonists, while existentialist philosophy poses the question: Is Elizabeth truly free to quit being a spy?

In *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *Philosophy*, philosophers give their insights into the blockbuster best-selling novel and record-breaking TV series, *The Handmaid’s Tale*. The story involves a future breakaway state in New England, beset by environmental disaster and a plummeting birth rate, in which the few remaining fertile women are conscripted to have sex and bear children to the most powerful men, all justified and rationalized by religious fundamentalism. Among the questions raised by this riveting and harrowing story: ? The Handmaid’s Tale displays the connection between sex and power. What light does this story shed on sex and power in our own society? ? The divinity of the feminine is associated with the female capacity to give birth. Is this association inherently exploitative? ? In the story, the revolution rapidly rebranded people by changing their names and placing them into functional groups with specific titles. How important is change in language to the suppression of individual freedom? ?

The Handmaid's Tale sees everything through the eyes of one character. How is it possible to construct a self and an identity at odds with the definition which the culture attempts to impose? ? In oppressive societies, even the most oppressed do show some freedom of choice. What is the limit of autonomy in a repressive society ruled by a fanatical ideology? ? Our present ethics of sex relies heavily on the notion of consent, but in the world of *The Handmaid's Tale* there is little scope for consent. How is the power of consent constricted by the broader social conditions? ? The feminist idea of Care Ethics can be used to critique various gender relationships. How does Care Ethics evaluate our own society and the society depicted in *The Handmaid's Tale*? ? The society portrayed in the story is marked by fierce religiosity, yet the Christian God presumably disapproves of its brutal exploitation and oppression. What is the relation between a loving Deity and the literal interpretation of scriptural passages? ? Among many dystopian stories, what makes *The Handmaid's Tale* particularly memorable, and what purpose is served by the contemplation of imaginary dystopias? ? Suicide is common in *The Handmaid's Tale*, and contemplating the possibility of suicide is even more common. Can life be worth living if the political and religious structure is thoroughly malign? ? Beneath the theocratic preaching, there is the practical suggestion that everything is being arranged for the good of society and therefore of everyone. Who gets to decide and enforce what is in society's best interests?

Courtland Lewis has scoured the planet to bring together the most talented faction members, factionless, and even a few from the Bureau to discuss the philosophy of *Divergent*. *Divergent and Philosophy* begins by examining the personal struggles that all people face at some time: What sort of person should I be? What if I find out my life is a lie? What do I owe my parents? Am I normal? Once readers have finished answering these questions they're ready for the "choosing ceremony." Part two examines each faction, looking at its virtues, vices, and other features that will help readers pick the "right" faction. This part gives readers a glimpse into what it's like to be faced with the most important decision of our lives, the one that will forever determine who we are. Part three takes a step takes a step back, in order to question Chicago's ordering of society. Chicago is on the verge of revolution, but is this the result of the faction system itself, or is it the people within the factions that are behind the social discord? Part four shifts the focus individuals and those who hold power. Part five tells us how to recognize injustice.

Jimi Hendrix and Philosophy

The Americans and Philosophy

Amy Schumer and Philosophy

KISS and Philosophy

Popular Culture as Political Theory

Mr. Robot and Philosophy

Rebel, Rebel

Mr. Robot has been hailed, not only as one of the most haunting and unnerving dramas ever to appear on television, but also as the first accurate popular presentation of how computer hacking and cyberterrorism actually work. Mr. Robot and Philosophy is a show for fans of this addictive show who will welcome the opportunity to explore Elliot Alderson's world from a philosophical perspective. The developing story of Mr. Robot constantly raises ethical and metaphysical issues. What happens to our personal identity when we live in cyberspace and an array of electronic devices? Are we in control of our online lives or are we being controlled? What does our right to privacy mean in a world where millions of people can observe what we're doing and saying? Is a virtual currency true money? Can we replace traditional money? Can there be healthy forms of drug addiction? Can some types of so-called mental illness be useful and beneficial? Does it make any sense to unleash destruction upon the existing corporate economic structures, and can we expect to emerge from the ruins of a digital meltdown?

For the first time, serious thinkers explore the work of this towering genius of rock music. For fans of Tom Petty, this volume is an eye-opener, with fourteen music-savvy philosophers looking at different facets of Petty's artistic contribution. They examine Petty's thoughts but also the thoughts we have while we listen. The authors, all Petty fans, come from every philosophical viewpoint: classical, analytic, postmodernist, phenomenological, and Nietzschean. Tom Petty's body of work exists on a continuum between Folk and Rock, between New Wave and Americana, between Southern simplicity and West Coast chic. There is the legacy left to his main backing band, the Heartbreakers, but also bookended by Mudcrutch and his collaborations with his elders, such as Bob Dylan, George Harrison, Orbison, and Johnny Cash. Tom Petty's songs hook and they captivate, but they are often profound in their understatement, their stark minimalism. His insight into the human condition conveys a powerful philosophical anthropology with a metaphysics of tragedy and levity. Tom Petty's ethics focuses on dilemmas of the outcast, downtrodden, and heartbroken with a view to the fallen and the sinful as our redeemable antiheroes of the everyday. His political thinking is that of the artist, enlivened by Southern hostilities and culminating in a personal ethic that puts duty to the fans first. Petty's theory of knowledge is psychological and interpersonal, both deeply meditative and delightfully skeptical. The dialectic of love and hate, abuse and recovery, poverty and power, triumph and failure, are genuine objects of knowledge. Above all, Petty's songs are the confessions of a poetic mind interpreting a wounded soul. Petty lived his life the way he wrote and the way he played. It was grit, drive, and just enough finesse, to make things nice, where they were not. In each stage, he put the schau in Anschauung. Petty stood up to corporate assholes in a number of precedent-setting legal maneuvers and album concepts, risking his career and fortune, but never backing down. He was the center of a musical community that endured for decades. His ability to cultivate new generations of listeners while connecting himself backward to the heroes of his own youth have made him universally respected by the widest range of music fans.

Philosophers wittily and expertly uncover amazing philosophical insights from the endlessly fascinating TV show, *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. Littmann shows how the values of the gang are the same as those of Homeric heroes. Ketcham argues that they should make Charlie a saint, partly because *It's Always Sunny* is "all about free will." Hamer shows how closely the gang's activities comply with the scientific method. Alkema and Barkman analyze the way the gang perceives happiness and how they try to get it. Leary and Jones beyond doubt that the game of Chardee MacDennis reveals everyone's unconscious desires. King examines the morality of the gang's behavior by the standard of how they respond to extreme suffering. Chambers agrees that each of the five central characters is a person, but argues that, given their circumstances, they are not truly to blame for their actions. Tanswell demonstrates that many of the gang's wrong actions result not from immoral motives but from illogical thinking. Aylesworth uses examples from *It's Always Sunny* to work out some of the moral problems with real consent to sex. Jones reveals that Nietzsche foresaw everything the gang at Paddy's Pub would do.

In his brief career Jimi Hendrix transformed rock music, established himself as the greatest guitarist of all time, and left a rich legacy of original songs and dazzling recordings. In *Jimi Hendrix and Philosophy*, philosophers come to terms with the experience and work of Hendrix, uncovering some surprising implications of Hendrix's life and work. Much of this book is concerned with the restless polarities and dualities that reveal themselves through Hendrix. His compositions display a preoccupation with the tragic nature of existence, between the polarities of Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* and Platonic philosophy. Jimi's "guitar-being" has surprising implications for the philosophical relation between mind and body. There is in Hendrix a duality between innovation and tradition, between psychedelic sonic adventures and tradition in the form of the blues. Hendrix exemplifies the interaction of technology and art, as seen in his use of feedback, varieties of noise, and backwards reel-to-reel playing. How much of the Hendrix phenomenon can be explained by the technological situation and how much by his own unique genius? Everyone knows about Hendrix's use of feedback in the narrow sense, but feedback can also be viewed as a general phenomenon that arises in complex dynamical systems and emerges at the boundaries of order. Although critics associate Hendrix's lifestyle and early death with self-destructive patterns of the Sixties, his actual thoughts as revealed in his songs and writings show a more positive and constructive concern with authentic freedom. What did Hendrix mean when he spoke of "the realities" of conflict conveyed in "Machine Gun"? What is a "Voodoo Chile"? When does noise become music? These and other questions are addressed in *Jimi Hendrix and Philosophy*. Hendrix's undying popularity following his death in 1970 has led to the release over the years of a large body of material which Hendrix would never have chosen to make public, raising serious questions about what we owe to the dead and how we view the construction of the artist's public persona.

The Devil and Philosophy

Discworld and Philosophy

The Handmaid's Tale and Philosophy

Mind Equals Blown

It's Just a Thought Away

Life Is but a Nightmare

Beyond Good and Evil Corp

In *Avengers Infinity Saga and Philosophy*, philosophers explore the momentous issues and the fascinating puzzles raised by Marvel's compelling series of movies: Is the Thanos snap truly an answer to overpopulation and famine, or is it simply indefensible mass murder on a cosmic scale? ? Are the Avengers who try to stop Thanos dishing out justice or merely fighting a man who is himself just? ? Captain America or Tony Stark—which leader holds the key to a civilized society? ? Dr. Strange claims to see 14,000,605 possible futures, in one of which Thanos is defeated. What does this tell us about the true nature of reality? ? Sometimes your best just isn't enough. How can we cope with inevitability? ? How can the Soul Stone and the Binding of Isaac by Abraham help us understand the Infinity War saga? ? Is Thanos a utilitarian? And if so, is his utilitarian calculus logically sound? ? Would it be possible for a group like the Avengers to amass enormous power to fight for humankind, without themselves becoming a corrupt ruling class? ? Can the past Nebula shooting the future Nebula cause her to cease to exist? Can you change the future by communicating with yourself or your family in the past? ? Can Thanos be seen as the epitome of non-self-serving behavior, or is Thanos masking his own egoism with the lie that his altruistic mission is to bring the universe into balance? ? Does Thanos show us the danger of living by an absolute moral compass, which allows us to see only what we believe to be "the right" with no variations or nuances?

In 1933 the crime writer Erle Stanley Gardner, himself a practicing lawyer, unleashed the character Perry Mason in the novel *The Case of the Velvet Claws*. Perry Mason entered into public consciousness as a new conception of the role of the defense lawyer, so that millions of Americans came to expect every criminal trial to have its "Perry Mason moment." In the 1950s the Perry Mason TV show had a phenomenal success, and Mason came to be identified with Raymond Burr. Now Perry Mason has again been restored to life in the HBO series starring Matthew Rhys and John Lithgow. Meanwhile, the eighty-two original Erle Stanley Gardner novels continue to sell thousands of copies each week. Perry Mason gave America a new conception of the trial lawyer, as someone who was always loyal to his client and always prepared to use dirty tricks such as misdirection and withholding of evidence to protect the innocent and secure the ends of Justice. The Mason of the novels is less scrupulous than the Raymond Burr Mason, and would sometimes be in danger of going to jail if the trial didn't turn out right—which it always did, largely because of Mason's cleverness. The Perry Mason icon raises many philosophical issues explored by seventeen different philosophers in this book, including: ? Can we defend Paul Drake's claim (*The Case of the Blonde Bonanza*) that Mason is "a paragon of righteous virtue" despite his predilection for skating on thin legal ice? ? Can complex murder cases be solved by facts alone—or do we also need empathy? ? The most convincing way to give a TV episode a surprise ending is by the guilty person suddenly confessing. But in reality, is a confession necessarily so convincing? ? Does Perry Mason represent the Messiah? ? How does the Raymond Burr Perry Mason compare with the more recent TV character Saul Goodman (*Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul*)? ? Is it morally okay to mislead the police if this helps your client and your client is innocent? ? How does Perry Mason help us understand the distinction between natural law and positive law? ? Do the Perry Mason stories comply with Aristotle's recipe for a good work of fiction? ? Does life imitate art, when Perry Mason is cited in real-life courtroom arguments? ? How much trickery can be justified by loyalty to one's client? ? Can evidence in murder trials be evaluated by probability theory? ? Perry Mason is officially a lawyer and unofficially a detective. But isn't he really a historian and a psychoanalyst? ? Della Street is a competent legal secretary, but is she something more? ? Mason often says that "Eye-witness testimony is the worst kind of evidence" and occasionally that "Circumstantial evidence is the best evidence we have." Can these claims be defended?

Mister Rogers' *Neighborhood*, which began as *The Children's Corner* in 1953 and terminated in 2001, left its mark on America. The show's message of kindness, simplicity, and individual uniqueness made Rogers a beloved personality, while also provoking some criticism because, by arguing that everyone was special without having to do anything to earn it, the show supposedly created an entitled generation. In *Mister Rogers and Philosophy*, thirty philosophers give their very different takes on the *Neighborhood* phenomenon. ? Rogers's way of communicating with children has a Socratic dimension, and is compared with other attempts to cultivate philosophy in children. ? Wonder is the origin of philosophy and science, and Mister Rogers always looked for wonder. ? Did Mister Rogers unwittingly create the Millennials by his message that everyone is special? ? What Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy can tell us about Fred Rogers's attempt to rehabilitate children's television. ? X the Owl obsesses, Daniel Tiger regresses, Lady Elaine displaces anger, King Friday controls—how puppets can be used to teach us about feelings. ? Fred Rogers's indirect communication is key to the show, and most evident in the land of make-believe, where he doesn't make himself known. ? How Mister Rogers helps us see that the ordinary world is extraordinary, if we're willing to open ourselves up to it. ? How does Mister Rogers's method of teaching compare with Maria Montessori's? ? Fred Rogers and Carl Rogers have a lot in common: *The Neighborhood* is observed in the light of Rogerian therapy. ? Mister Rogers's view of evil is closer to Rousseau than to Voltaire. ? Fred Rogers gave a non-philosophical interpretation of the philosophical approach known as personalism. ? Daoism helps us understand how Fred Rogers, the antithesis of a stereotypical male, could achieve such success as a TV star. ? In the show and in his life, we can see how Rogers lived "the ethics of care." ? Puppets help children understand that persons are not isolated, but interconnected. ? Mister Rogers showed us that talking and singing about our feelings makes them more manageable.

KISS is the most outrageous and yet the most enduring of rock bands, with an unparalleled, almost religious level of devotion from millions of die-hard fans. In *KISS and Philosophy*, professional thinkers of diverse outlooks provide much-needed insights into the motivating ideas and metaphysical foundations of the KISS take on life. According to some, the true message of KISS is self-actualization through the hard work of following your dreams. Others focus on the existential aspect of KISS thinking, drawing upon Camus and Sartre to show that KISS is preoccupied with empowering the individual to achieve self-greatness. By contrast, there is a view of KISS which identifies a "destroyer" attitude, leading some listeners to reject KISS outright, while encouraging others to become the most dedicated of followers. Yet another view sees KISS's "letting loose" as essentially Dionysian. Some chapters gain access to KISS thinking by tracing the band's cultural and historical impact, finding meaning in the way generations of fans make sense of KISS's always evolving output, the changing line-up, and the archetypal characters represented by the band's use of make-up and presentation. Other chapters look at the aesthetic quality of the band's output, especially their most controversial album, *Music from "The Elder"*. Several chapters examine KISS's orientation to bodily pleasures, notably sex, extracting the band's philosophy of sex and love from different clues and indications. How does KISS's unashamed indulgence relate to various pleasure-governed ethical systems throughout history? Is getting the most out of pleasure key to living the good life? And does a life of gratifying one's body ultimately yield fulfillment? What are the limitations and hazards of a pleasure-oriented lifestyle? The biography of band members also provides material for reflection, looking at the nature of forgiveness through the lens of KISS's notorious feuds, and determining how to reconcile the apparently conflicting accounts of some famous squabbles. The changing line-up of the band raises questions about the meaning of "KISS" and whether KISS could last forever

The Nature of His Game

Leonard Cohen and Philosophy

Iron Man vs. Captain America and Philosophy

American Horror Story and Philosophy