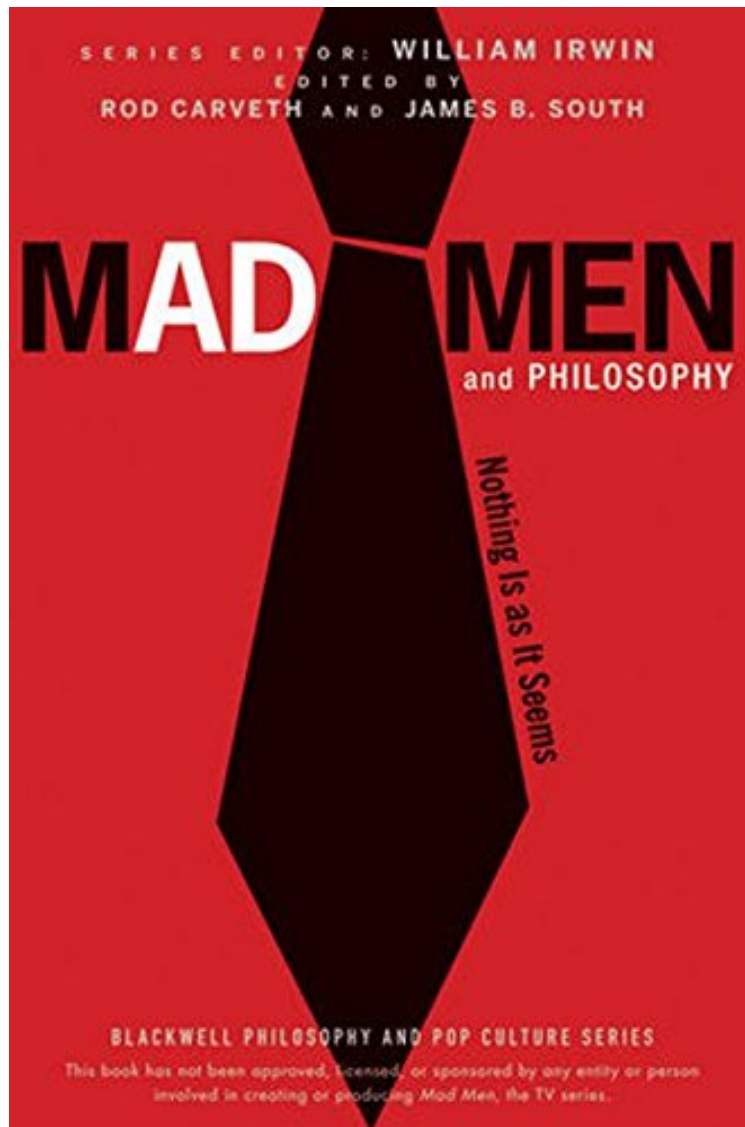


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Mad Men and Philosophy: Nothing Is as It Seems

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From imusti : Mad Men and Philosophy: Nothing Is as It Seems before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mad Men and Philosophy: Nothing Is as It Seems:

7 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Rationalizing DesireBy Jeffrey SwystunThis is the first effort I read from "The Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture Series". It is a very engaging and entertaining premise with the editors also covering Alice in Wonderland, Twilight, The Daily Show and other subjects in the series. Mad Men would seem to be a natural for philosophical, if not, psychological analysis. I am confident that even if I did not work for an

advertising and communications company, I would still watch Mad Men because of the childhood nostalgia for the era and its oft-recognized authenticity (costumes, sets, historic references). Where people's views differ about the show is in the plot lines covering infidelities, sexism, racism, and other human foibles that fuel the drama. The book examines a number of these subjects from its various contributors. The intent, I gather, is to add variety of thought but unfortunately there is so much repetition and duplication in the analysis that after the first third of the book it became the law of diminishing returns. I did enjoy the parts dealing with justification and how often we fool ourselves into believing what we are doing is right (as defined by our own moral code). And it was great to rediscover standpoint theory or standpoint epistemology which I subscribe to because it is predicated on actual experiences. Also Socrates' "passions prevailing over scruples" is a key theme of Mad Men and is linked to the debate of how different being motivated by self-interest is from actually acting on that self-interest. Truly compelling is Plato's belief that "our emotional responses to fictional drama tend to shape how we respond to events in real life". This notion is deserving of a book dedicated to how aspects of society are now shaped by 'reality television'. The book also ventures into the debate of just how influential or manipulative advertising is in our daily lives. I tend to favor the theory advanced by contributor Kevin Guilfooy and advanced by economist Milton Friedman who "argues that advertising is informative, not persuasive. Don Draper can't create desire, but even if he could it would not cause us to choose." The book covers the first three seasons and I expect it will become source reading for liberal arts sociology and philosophy programs who trove pop culture as a means of connecting with youthful intellectuals. 13 of 17 people found the following review helpful. The Way We Were By Douglas K. Pinner Like another reviewer I was introduced to Madmen by my daughter and immediately became hooked. I don't normally watch series with the exception of the Sopranos in which I see the same exceptional qualities of outstanding ensemble casting and realistic portrayal of quotidian life in the milieu of larger societal cultural issues. Hence, I got the book and was not disappointed. Written as a series of articles dealing with both the philosophical and social aspects of the age, this is one fun read. The philosophical backdrop ranges from classical Greek to the existentialists with due note to Kant, Nietzsche, and others, all arranged around major themes of knowledge and freedom, meaning, ethics and happiness, and social dynamics. Larger philosophic issues devolve intriguingly around the characters such as "The Existential Void of Roger Sterling", "Is Don Draper a Good Man". The latter is indicative of the general tone of evenhanded non judgemental analysis and one I found particularly thoughtful. While written primarily from an Aristotelian and Platonic framework, his conclusion, to me, was refreshingly existential and in an eastern context, very Taoistic. On a personal note, as a newly minted M.B.A., I entered the business world on the shank end of this era and readily relate and identify. While on the one hand distant, change a few details and major cultural shifts and you have the offices and characters of latter day NY big biz, be it adguys (or gals now) or Wall Street. So... Is this a "better" time, are we "happier"? Hmmm... Before rushing to judgement I propose an interesting 'thought experiment'. Produce a current version of Madmen and televise it to the characters on the show back in the 60's. What would a "Madmen and Philosophy" of 2010 read like in a similar analysis in the 60's?.. Perhaps the conclusion would similarly mirror that of "Is Don Draper a Good Man or a Bad Man".OR....A Taoistic "It just is". In conclusion, what a fun and interesting read. If nothing else, it assuages any guilt in sitting around watching TV and elevating it to cultural, societal, philosophic commentary :) 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. :-0 By MadMaude53 Got this as a gift for my son and his girl friend as they loved this series. They enjoyed it.

A look at the philosophical underpinnings of the hit TV show, Mad Men With its swirling cigarette smoke, martini lunches, skinny ties, and tight pencil skirts, Mad Men is unquestionably one of the most stylish, sexy, and irresistible shows on television. But the series becomes even more absorbing once you dig deeper into its portrayal of the changing social and political mores of 1960s America and explore the philosophical complexities of its key characters and themes. From Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle to John Kenneth Galbraith, Milton Friedman, and Ayn Rand, Mad Men and Philosophy brings the thinking of some of history's most powerful minds to bear on the world of Don Draper and the Sterling Cooper ad agency. You'll gain insights into a host of compelling Mad Men questions and issues, including happiness, freedom, authenticity, feminism, Don Draper's identity, and more. Takes an unprecedented look at the philosophical issues and themes behind AMC's Emmy Award-winning show, Mad Men Explores issues ranging from identity to authenticity to feminism, and more Offers new insights on your favorite Mad Men characters, themes, and storylines Mad Men and Philosophy will give Mad Men fans everywhere something new to talk about around the water cooler.

From the Back Cover Is Don Draper a good man? What do Peggy, Betty, and Joan teach us about gender equality? What are the ethics of advertising or is that a contradiction in terms? Is Roger Sterling an existential hero? We're better people than we were in the sixties, right? With its swirling cigarette smoke, martini lunches, skinny ties, and tight pencil skirts, Mad Men is unquestionably one of the most stylish, sexy, and irresistible shows on television. But the series becomes even more absorbing once you dig deeper into its portrayal of the changing social and political mores of 1960s America and explore the philosophical complexities of its key characters and themes. From Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle to John Kenneth Galbraith, Milton Friedman, and Ayn Rand, Mad Men and Philosophy brings the

thinking of some of history's most powerful minds to bear on the world of Don Draper and the Sterling Cooper ad agency. You'll gain insights into a host of compelling Mad Men questions and issues, including happiness, freedom, authenticity, feminism, Don Draper's identity, and more and have lots to talk about the next time you find yourself around the water cooler.

About the Author
ROD CARVETH is an assistant professor in the department of Communications Media at Fitchburg State College. JAMES B. SOUTH is chair of the philosophy department at Marquette University. He edited *Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Philosophy* and *James Bond and Philosophy*. WILLIAM IRWIN is a professor of philosophy at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He originated the philosophy and popular culture genre of books as coeditor of the bestselling *The Simpsons and Philosophy* and has overseen recent titles including *Batman and Philosophy*, *House and Philosophy*, and *Twilight and Philosophy*.