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# Spongebob Squarepants And Philosophy Soaking Up Secrets Under The Sea 1 2 | 1 2 Spongebob Squarepants Philos Paperback

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## THOMAS STOKES

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*Revolutionary Thinking* Open Court  
 Publishing

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 not only Tom 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, Roy 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, gravity, 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 Californian futilities, 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 loss provide the 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 need to be nice. On 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 over four 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.

**Brainwreck!** University Press of Kentucky  
*The Simpsons* questions what is culturally acceptable, showcasing controversial issues like homosexuality, animal rights, the war on terror, and religion. This subtle form of political analysis is effective in changing opinions and attitudes on a large scale. *Homer Simpson Marches on Washington* explores the transformative power that enables popular culture to influence political agendas, frame the consciousness of audiences, and create profound shifts in values and ideals. To investigate the full spectrum of popular culture in a democratic society, editors Timothy M. Dale and Joseph J. Foy gather a top-notch team of scholars who use television shows such as *Star Trek*, *The X-Files*, *All in the Family*, *The View*, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and *The Colbert Report*, as well as movies and popular music, to investigate contemporary issues in American popular culture.

**Mr. Robot and Philosophy** Open Court Publishing

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.

**Beyond Good and Evil Corp** *SpongeBob SquarePants and Philosophy Soaking Up Secrets Under the Sea!*

*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 love someone, while at the same time 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 body? Is it moral to sell oneself into

slavery, 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 an impactful story. Brown pulls no punches, 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.

**KISS and Philosophy** Open Court Publishing  
 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?  
**South Park and Philosophy** Open Court Publishing

As RuPaul has said, this is the Golden Age of Drag—and that’s chiefly the achievement of RuPaul’s *Drag Race*, 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.

#### **Jimi Hendrix and Philosophy Open Court**

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. [Blade Runner 2049](#) and [Philosophy Open Court](#)

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.

#### **Bigger, Longer, and More Penetrating**

University Press of Kentucky  
SpongeBob SquarePants and Philosophy Soaking Up Secrets Under the Sea! Open Court Publishing  
**It's Just a Thought Away** Open Court Publishing

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.

*Avengers Infinity Saga and Philosophy*  
Open Court Publishing

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 meaning, but who embraces science and 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 and Philosophy focuses on the 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 has access to technology that allows him 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 if his Morty dies, he can always replace his Morty with 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 husband of Rick's daughter. Jerry is a 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 in a position where he can save one of 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 and Julian Savulescu 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 and therefore required, 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 "Socratic aporia," or confusion. Viewers are forced to reflect on their own moral beliefs about the world when characters do something that seems good but results in horrendous consequences.

**Reds in the Bed** Open Court Publishing  
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 arrive at a deeper understanding of 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 individualist-cosmopolitanism. Matthew William 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 political and social implications of 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 heroes' journeys in the movies, 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 side of Security (Iron Man) versus 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 was wrong about what was best for 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—and that makes him the better 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 Stark clearly make him the better 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 conflict and the cycle of violence continues. 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 advocates. Fernando Pagnoni 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 imperative. Christophe Porot claims that the 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 isn't standing up to bullies, but comes out of 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: Civil War centers on the 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 rather stems from the likelihood that both 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 bias may influence the design and programming. 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 David Hume's understanding of 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 logical process from *Summa Theologica* 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 Elsby argue that gods cannot be heroes, and therefore that the god-like members of the Avengers (Iron Man, 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 like the gods and the government.

Rick and Morty and Philosophy Open Court Publishing

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.

**A Womb of One's Own** Open Court Publishing

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.

Scott Adams and Philosophy Open Court

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?

**Amy Schumer and Philosophy** Open Court Publishing

*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 Philosophy of Joss Whedon** Open Court

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?

*Westworld and Philosophy* Open Court Publishing

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 the phenomenon 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 life, moving 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—innovation in 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 border of chaos and 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 Twilight Zone and Philosophy* Open Court

As cartoonist, author, public speaker, blogger, and periscoper, 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 Sisyphean 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? *RuPaul's Drag Race and Philosophy* Open Court Publishing  
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, as well as humans, have the job of hunting down the dangerous models and "retiring" (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 2049 and *Philosophy* is a collection of 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: What does Blade Runner 2049 tell us 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 their memories, so what happens when memories 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 human-looking replicants have civil and 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. What's the evidence on both sides? Is 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 have been praised for their 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 visions of the future changed between the two 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 psychological implications of human-AI sexual relations?

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