



# The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason

*George A. Dunn (Editor) , Nicolas Michaud (Editor) , William Irwin (Series Editor) , Andrew Zimmerman Jones (Contributor)*

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**A philosophical exploration of Suzanne Collins's *New York Times* bestselling series, just in time for the release of *The Hunger Games* movie** Katniss Everdeen is "the girl who was on fire," but she is also the girl who made us think, dream, question authority, and rebel. The post-apocalyptic world of Panem's twelve districts is a divided society on the brink of war and struggling to survive, while the Capitol lives in the lap of luxury and pure contentment. At every turn in the Hunger Games trilogy, Katniss, Peeta, Gale, and their many allies wrestle with harrowing choices and ethical dilemmas that push them to the brink. Is it okay for Katniss to break the law to ensure her family's survival? Do ordinary moral rules apply in the Arena? Can the world of *The Hunger Games* shine a light into the dark corners of our world? Why do we often enjoy watching others suffer? How can we distinguish between what's Real and Not Real? This book draws on some of history's most engaging philosophical thinkers to take you deeper into the story and its themes, such as sacrifice, altruism, moral choice, and gender.

Gives you new insights into the Hunger Games series and its key characters, plot lines, and ideas Examines important themes such as the state of nature, war, celebrity, authenticity, and social class Applies the perspective of some of world's greatest minds, such as Charles Darwin, Thomas Hobbes, Friedrich Nietzsche, Plato, and Immanuel Kant to the Hunger Games trilogy Covers all three books in the Hunger Games trilogy An essential companion for Hunger Games fans, this book will take you deeper into the dystopic world of Panem and into the minds and motivations of those who occupy it.

## The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason Details

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# From Reader Review The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason for online ebook

## Mark says

An in depth analysis of everything that is The Hunger Games. My only complaints are that some of the chapters copied the same pivotal moments in the trilogy, but that is evened out by the different takes on the moments. Also some of the chapters (luck, chimeras, mimetic art) didn't ring especially true to me. Chapters on Schadenfreude, Invisible strings (favors), Just-War tradition, Being versus Seeming to be, Morality and the War of All against All, were very cohesive and interesting. The motives behind why the Hunger Games were accepted in Panem and were accepted in some fashion in our past time were explored. My favorite series was broken down expertly; the authors did a great job not over analyzing Collins' moral questions. The book is always a smart delve into the series and only solidifies my love for the books; this book only makes me want to check out the others in the series of Philosophy.

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## Danie Tanaka says

I liked this compilation of essays by philosophers much better than any 'pop culture' book of this kind I've gotten that had to do with psychology. Though, out of pure curiosity in the case of this one series I actually wouldn't mind reading the psychological analysis in essays of The Hunger Games Trilogy truth be told. There is plenty of dysfunction going on that I'd love them to pick to death. In fantasy books, the psychology analysis is sort of pointless. But a philosophical book of essays would be more interesting. I discovered the psychology pop culture books through my love of Harry Potter and wasn't impressed, though found a psychological analysis of The Simpsons (the cartoon that hasn't stopped since it's debut on Fox when I was in Third or Fourth grade!) was entertaining. Now a philosophical rendering of the Hunger Games was really thought provoking in all honesty. I loved this book. I loved the essays.

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## Valter says

After having passionately read THG trilogy, I was somehow disappointed with this book.

It's interesting and, at times, inspiring, but the average feeling is... just Ok. I must add the first chapters were boring and uninteresting to me (2 stars), while the last ones were much better (4 stars), thus the 3 stars average.

Two issues I had with this book:

- The connections with THG world are sometimes a bit of a stretch. Like the authors wanted to talk about some philosophical topic, so they tried hard to find some links to THG, even when there weren't much.
- The tone and writing sound like it's made for young readers. Me being an adult knowing a thing or two about philosophy, made it a bit "Meh".

Since the target for THG is Young Adults, this is not a fault per se; but if you're an adult and you aren't new to philosophy, this might be annoying.

In conclusion, it can be worth a read if you're really passionate about THG and want to go deeper with its ethical / social / political implications. But if you're already versed in philosophy, you won't find much new

here.

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### **Steph says**

Easily the best of the Pop Culture and Philosophy books I've read. I think the somewhat more simple content of the Hungers Games books, compared to the sprawling world and myriad character of Game of Thrones, actually led to a more complex and comprehensive discussion of the philosophical problems in the series. There are some fantastic entries here, and unlike the two GoT philosophy books I've read, I never felt that I was being talked down to or that all the philosophical aspects were being over explained or overly simplified.

I'm not going to single out my favourite chapters, which are too numerous to count. But the Political Philosophy section in particular stood out as a good blend of philosophy and the world of the Hunger Games which felt organic and unforced.

Overall one of the better collections of Pop Culture and Philosophy books out there.

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### **Luke Daghir says**

Overall The Hunger Games and Philosophy was very intriguing and brought to light many ethical and philosophical issues throughout the trilogy. I recommend this book to anyone who has read the Trilogy to further advance their thinking within the Trilogy.

My favorite aspect of this book was that each chapter had a new author discuss a certain philosophical theme. The quest for truth is what Katniss is in search of throughout the entire Trilogy and The Hunger Games and Philosophy delves into the various layers of falseness helping the reader grasp the authenticity of virtue integrated throughout the story.

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### **Catarina Miranda says**

OMG I NEED THIS

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### **Marcia says**

I read this book as part of the research I am doing for my master thesis, which is about the current popularity of the dystopian genre amongst adolescents.

I liked the essays in this book, some were more useful than others. The essays were interesting but not very special or groundbreaking. Just an ok read I suppose.

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## **Megan says**

"The Hunger Games and Philosophy" is a collection of essays in which writers look back through philosophical history and apply those principles to various aspects of Panem and the characters within the Hunger Games' world. It's an interesting and unique way to explore this trilogy in context of the real world and historical society.

The book is a little dry, in my opinion, and hard to get into. If, however, you're a fan of philosophy and/or consider yourself a philosopher then this collection will definitely be an enjoyable read. I am glad I read it but I don't anticipate picking it up. It's educational and interesting to be sure and well worth it for any fan of the Hunger Games trilogy who wants to delve deeper into the concepts hinted at.

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## **Hilary says**

I am possibly teaching a HG special topics seminar next year(!) so I've been researching some textbooks to use (thank you, desk copies). This was fantastic. The philosophy is pretty 101-y, which is fine for an undergrad class, especially one in an English department taught by a non philosophy professor. Not every chapter is amazing, but most are really well done, and cover topics/philosophers like Plato, Socrates, Nietzsche, Kant, Butler, and a bunch of Greco-Roman philosophers whose names I certainly can't spell without looking at the book. Topics include class, gender, decision making, government, food, love, etc. It's really really neat, even if a lot of the authors use the same evidence from text to make their points. I actually couldn't put it down, but I'm also a nerd, so.

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## **Chelsea Fitzgerald says**

Attention: To start off this review, I would like to say I am way below the recommended age of this book. I will state if my problems with this book are related to demographic age or quality or the book itself.

This book was a very unique read! It made me think more about The Hunger Games trilogy and how it compares to our real life past, present and future. This took me a while to read because some of the chapters were a little slow moving(demographic and book quality), because each chapter is written by a different author. This was a positive as you got to read different styles of writing, but also negative because the chapters were either dragged on too long or they used too many quotes from philosophers. I was also sick for a period of time while reading this. You definitely need to pay close attention and comprehend what you read so I needed to take a break from this book so I could truly appreciate all it had to offer. I loved how you didn't need to know a lot about philosophy (just The Hunger Games) to understand the themes of each chapter.

The funniest thing about this book was how they talked about Seneca the philosopher and Seneca Crane, the Gamemaker of the 74th Annual Hunger Games, "Shooting arrows at distracted Gamemakers out of frustration at their inattention won't win her any points with Seneca (even if it did with the Gamemakers)," (Pg.268)

I would recommend this to high school if not college age students or older because of comprehension and some slightly adult oriented themes.

Warning: You need to have read the entire Hunger Games trilogy otherwise there will be huge spoilers and you will not understand what they are referencing.

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### **Bishop Harber says**

*The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason* is an interesting read. If you enjoyed *The Hunger Games* Trilogy, and you're interested in digging deeper into both philosophy and *The Hunger Games*, then this might be the book for you. For me, this volume was actually far more interesting than the trilogy itself. Topics from morality to Darwinian competition to Stoicism to Just-War theory and even identity issues are all discussed in this book. Most of the essays are well done. Some are a bit more dry than others.

Overall, it's well worth the read if you need to make connections between philosophy and pop culture, and especially if *The Hunger Games* is your thing.

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### **Courtney says**

Some very good essays; some were okay; a couple just didn't jive for me. At times, I felt like the authors didn't explore their topics as deeply as I would have liked- I found myself interested in the essay's argument, but it didn't go far enough for me. I realize, though, that these essays are published for a general interest audience who may not already have a background in critical and philosophical theory, so I can understand some of those editing decisions. At other times, the author seemed to be "trying too hard" to be accessible. (Maybe it's just a picky personal preference that no one else shares, or maybe it's just an occupational hazard when writing for this kind of audience, but I didn't care for the excessively casual tone in one or two of the essays) All in all, an interesting read that brought up some ways of looking at *The Hunger Games* that I had never considered.

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### **Mockingjay says**

As a huge Hunger Games fan I really enjoyed this book. The perfect book for fans of the series who want to know more about the background of the whole story.

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### **Julee T says**

I can't decide what is scarier, to think that Susan Collins had all of that philosophical and historical content whizzing about in her head when writing the Hunger Games or to believe that she just wrote it all and stumbled upon the connections! No I'm going with, she's a philosophical and historical genius! No wonder when I got to the third book in a week I started to get a bit overwhelmed and fragile. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this series of critical philosophical essays, they were riveting. Although I would have liked to read more dissection on the final power-play in the capital and why Katniss could never have chosen Gale afterwards. Moreover I'd like to see it examined from Gale's decision making viewpoint. At what point did Gale decide to tip the scales against himself, let go of Katniss forever and become the career soldier?

Thinking back it could have been as early as standing in her kitchen with the statement " I knew you'd kiss me, you only see me when I'm in pain". That is probably a misquote but it's the sentiment. A history lesson in human nature!

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## **Walter says**

By now, I've read a pretty wide selection of the "Philosophy and Pop Culture" series put out by several publishing houses over the last decade or so, and while it's commendable that important scholars and philosophers have finally agreed to descend from their ivory towers to grace us with their ultimate knowledge by starting to use pop culture items to "layman-ize" classic, difficult texts, their efforts do have certain drawbacks.

For instance, after the third "*[insert movie, book, show, band here]* and Philosophy" book, you do start getting the feeling that they all but run out of books and ideas to present to us humble readers. How many times do I have to read about Utilitarianism and its fundamental differences with Kantian ethics? Or about Plato's analogy of the cave, and how it pertains to the "reality" argument? Truth vs Ignorance? You get my point.

It makes one wonder if sometimes in the act of making philosophy more accessible to the masses, much is not lost in the way of respect for the reader, simply by not trusting him/her to move past the basics into more challenging territory. Ultimately, it is the challenge that makes philosophy so rewarding.

"The Hunger Games and Philosophy" is sadly no different. You have to make it all the way down to the last three chapters to find something truly rewarding and thought provoking, with the power to redeem the preceding essays. It's not that they're bad, it's just that I've feel like I've read them before.

In short, if you're new to philosophy or are just looking for a primer, then you'll thoroughly enjoy this read. However, if you're either familiar with the basics or are simply curious about the depth to which "The Hunger Games" has been probed, then you might be disappointed.

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