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# James Bond And Philosophy: Questions Are Forever (Popular Culture And Philosophy)



## Synopsis

James Bond. Since Sean Connery first uttered that iconic phrase in *Dr. No*, more than one quarter of the world's population has seen a 007 film. Witty and urbane, Bond seduces and kills with equal ease; often, it seems, with equal enthusiasm. This enthusiasm, coupled with his freedom to do what is forbidden to everyone else, evokes fascinating philosophical questions. Here, 15 witty, thought-provoking essays discuss hidden issues in Bond's world, from his carnal pleasures to his license to kill. Among the lively topics explored are Bond's relation to existentialism, including his graduation beyond good and evil; his objectification of women; the paradox of breaking the law in order to ultimately uphold it like any "stupid policeman"; the personality of 007 in terms of Plato's moral psychology; and the Hegelian quest for recognition evinced by Bond villains. A reference guide to all the Bond movies rounds out the book's many pleasures.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The latest volume in the Popular Culture and Philosophy series (which has also tackled the philosophical import of the Simpsons and Bob Dylan, among others) is sure to appeal to Bond fans. The contributors, professional philosophers, ask us to look at 007 as Kierkegaard's "seducer," a man who lives "purely at the aesthetic level of existence

Entertains, but topics repeat themselves. Last essay on the anthology is really bad.

Just read the essay about the 00-status - it really is razor blade sharp philosophy and also possesses a kind of humor which I do not want to declare as 'british'.

Love the book.

thanks my friends

As a big fan of both James Bond and Open Court's Popular Culture and Philosophy series, I might be somewhat biased in this review. I read "James Bond and Philosophy: Questions are Forever" with some relish, and came away very impressed. Fifteen philosophers, (not 17), have a go at bringing their philosophical meanderings to the phenomenon and cultural icon of Bond. No mean feat, especially in a book only 227 pages long, (not including the bits at the back). These people cover everything from epistemology, phenomenology, existentialism, morality and ethics and healthy doses of Nietzsche. The fifteen essays are divided into five broad sections: "Bond, Existentialism and Death", "The Man Behind the Number", "Bond, Politics and Law", "Knowledge and Technology", and "Multiculturalism, Women and a More Sensitive Bond". It should be noted that the book makes extensive use of the novels. While those who have only seen the movies will not be greatly disadvantaged, it would be useful to have read some of the books. Also, this is perhaps the most difficult book of the series that I have read. While not completely odious, there were parts that I found tough to digest. This was more noticeable than in other volumes in the series. Overall, this is an excellent book, and will leave you with much food for thought. I enjoyed the look into the deeper side of James Bond, (including his dietary choices!), and found myself absorbed. A great volume in a great series!

'Questions are Forever' in James Bond and Philosophy, another addition to Open Court's popular 'pop philosophy' series linking popular culture with philosophical ideas and insights. This is no light read, however: seventeen philosopher scholars examine the underlying philosophical issues in the Bond universe, providing weighty connections, reflections, and insights relating Bond to Nietzsche and others. College-level courses in philosophy seeking such connections between the genre and modern life will find this sparks classroom interest and debate. Diane C. Donovan  
California  
Bookwatch

In the film "History of the World Part Two" there is a scene with Mel Brooks in ancient Rome applying for a job. The clerk asks him for his profession. He replies that he is a "standup philosopher." The clerk replies, "Oh a B S artist". There is certainly a lot of that in this book. It is a collection of essays by people who are reputedly at the top of their field and who attempt to define the character of James Bond, 007. Of course I may be prejudiced as a Bond fan since the fifties and one who has seen all the films and has shelves of books on Ian Fleming, the Bond films and of course all the Bond novels and short stories. I have even used the Bond films in the classroom. My expectations may have been too high as the writers in this book have good credentials. I will admit they know philosophy and they cover every philosopher from Plato to Nietzsche to prove their points. Actually more time is spent by some of the writers on examining the philosophers than Bond. I'm sure that as professionals and Bond fans (I would hope) they had fun writing this. More fun than the reader will have. Some of the authors do a good job in what they are supposed to be selling while others just natter on in a most boring fashion. They would have done better to have followed the lead of the excellent "James Bond Dossier" by Kingsley Amis and so many other authors in following decades who have attempted to analyze Ian Fleming and James Bond. The problem is that you cannot pin down James Bond from the various author descriptions by Ian Fleming, Kingsley Amis, the brilliant John Gardner and Raymond Benson married to the twenty one Bond films and portrayals by all the Bond stars, from Connery to Craig, as scripted and directed in the films. There are differences. You cannot make an analysis of the books and films together or separately without looking at Ian Fleming himself. The James Bond of Ian Fleming originally was based in looks on "a young Hoagy Carmichael" and in personality on Fleming himself. The book Bond was not originally the lady killer that Sean Connery portrayed. The book is interesting only as an exercise in thoughts and I do appreciate the attempt of each writer in this collection to tie their interpretation of Bond in with their own philosophic beliefs. However I must say that from my view the book does not add anything to understanding the James Bond phenomena and how it relates to our world today.

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