


# The Wire and Philosophy: This America, Man (Popular Culture and Philosophy)

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By many accounts, HBO's *The Wire* was and remains the greatest and most important television drama of all time. Conceived by writers David Simon and ex-Baltimore homicide detective Ed Burns, this five-season, sixty-episode *tour de force* has raised the bar for compelling, intelligent television production. With each season addressing a different arena of life in the city of Baltimore, and each season's narratives tapping into those from previous seasons, *The Wire* was able to reveal the overlapping, criss-crossing, and colliding realities that shape—if not control—the people, institutions, and culture of the modern American city.

*The Wire and Philosophy* celebrates this show's realism as well as its intellectual and philosophical clarity. Selected philosophers who are fans of *The Wire* tap into these conflicts and interconnections to expose the underlying philosophical issues and assumptions and pursue questions, such as, can cops really tell whether they are smarter than their perps? Or do they fall victim to intellectual vanity? Do individuals really have free will to resist the temptations—of gangs, of drugs, or corruption—that surround them? Is David Simon a modern-day Marx who sees capitalism leading ultimately to its own collapse, or is Baltimore's story uniquely its own?

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## Editorial Review

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