



Inception and Philosophy: Because It's Never Just a Dream

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Inception and Philosophy: Because It's Never Just a Dream From imusti

A philosophical look at the movie *Inception* and its brilliant metaphysical puzzles

Is the top still spinning? Was it all a dream? In the world of Christopher Nolan's four-time Academy Award-winning movie, people can share one another's dreams and alter their beliefs and thoughts. *Inception* is a metaphysical heist film that raises more questions than it answers: Can we know what is real? Can you be held morally responsible for what you do in dreams? What is the nature of dreams, and what do they tell us about the boundaries of "self" and "other"? From Plato to Aristotle and from Descartes to Hume, *Inception and Philosophy* draws from important philosophical minds to shed new light on the movie's captivating themes, including the one that everyone talks about: did the top fall down (and does it even matter)?

- Explores the movie's key questions and themes, including how we can tell if we're dreaming or awake, how to make sense of a paradox, and whether or not inception is possible
- Gives new insights into the nature of free will, time, dreams, and the unconscious mind
- Discusses different interpretations of the film, and whether or not philosophy can help shed light on which is the "right one"
- Deepens your understanding of the movie's multi-layered plot and dream-infiltrating characters, including Dom Cobb, Arthur, Mal, Ariadne, Eames, Saito, and Yusuf

An essential companion for every dedicated Inception fan, this book will enrich your experience of the *Inception* universe and its complex dreamscape.

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Inception and Philosophy: Because It's Never Just a Dream From imusti Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #430615 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2011-11-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.04" w x 6.00" l, 1.17 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 400 pages

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Did the top fall?

Was the whole movie just a dream?

Is it possible for us to know what is truly real?

When should we take our own leap of faith?

Is paradox possible?

In the complex world of Christopher Nolan's four-time Academy Award–winning metaphysical heist film, *Inception*, Dom Cobb has the ability to infiltrate people's dreams to steal and even alter their beliefs and thoughts. Lurking behind these acts of extraction and inception are profound moral and philosophical issues. From Plato to Aristotle, from Descartes to Hume, *Inception and Philosophy* draws from the greatest philosophical minds to shed new light on the movie's key questions and captivating themes. Can we tell whether we are dreaming or awake? Is inception possible? Can sense be made of paradox? And the one that everyone still talks about: did the top fall—or does it even matter? You'll also deepen your understanding of the movie's multilayered plot and dream-crashing characters, examine different interpretations of the film, and discover whether or not philosophy can help determine which interpretation is the "right" one. You'll even find a list of hidden secrets in the movie that you missed!

About the Author

David Kyle Johnson is assistant professor of philosophy at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and the editor of *Heroes and Philosophy*.

William Irwin is a professor of philosophy at King's College. 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 *House and Philosophy*, *Alice in Wonderland and Philosophy*, and *Mad Men and Philosophy*. To learn more about the Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture series,

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William Holt:

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