



If You Like **MAD MEN**

BY KEVIN SHARP

**"If you don't like what's being said,
change the conversation."**

—Don Draper, *Mad Men*

**"One minute you're on top of
the world, the next minute some
secretary's running you over with
a lawn mower."**

—Joan Holloway, *Mad Men*

Mad Men debuted on the AMC network in July 2007 to critical and public acclaim. Beginning in 1960, the series follows various employees at the fictional Sterling Cooper advertising agency on Madison Avenue in New York City, as they grapple with work, their personal lives, and the changing world around them. (The series takes its title from

a phrase coined by real-life Madison Avenue advertisers to describe themselves.)

The protagonist is handsome chameleon Don Draper, master of the universe by day, suburban family man (and womanizer) by night. As creator Matthew Weiner told the *New York Times*, "What I always wanted to do is to take this classic American archetype of the late 1950s, with all the trappings of that time, and see how he ends up in 1970 or '72." Six seasons have aired thus far; Weiner has confirmed that the seventh will be the last.

The series explores familiar territory for post-World War II American fiction: the return of the war veteran to regular life; the organization man balancing home and office; the business world and its battles; changing roles for women outside the home in a male-centric society; changing views of sexuality; the suburban lifestyle undercut by a sense of unease and even desperation; the racial tensions and war protests rocking the nation.

Below, we present books, both fiction and nonfiction, that touch on many of these themes. Because the series is partly about how the 1950s became "The Sixties," we have included books set in both decades. While awaiting the end

of Don Draper's journey, viewers will find a rich literary tradition.

Marriage, Family, and Relationships

FICTION

REVOLUTIONARY ROAD (1961)

By Richard Yates

◆ TIME MAGAZINE'S ALL-TIME BEST 100 NOVELS

Frank and April Wheeler, the central characters of Yates's debut novel, have a seemingly perfect marriage, two children, and a starter house in the Connecticut suburbs. Beneath the surface, however, the foundations of their lives are starting to crack. Yates brilliantly lays out the now-familiar story of struggle against conformity and social expectations. Matthew Weiner says that if he had read this novel before writing the pilot of *Mad Men*, he wouldn't have been able to continue: "Yates was there. This is what he was writing about."

AMERICAN PASTORAL (1997)

By Philip Roth

◆ PULITZER PRIZE

◆ TIME MAGAZINE'S ALL-TIME BEST 100 NOVELS

Roth's first novel in his American Trilogy tells the story of Seymour "Swede" Levov, married to a former beauty queen and successfully managing his father's New Jersey glove factory. He lives comfortably and happily, until the political and social turmoil of the late 1960s—race riots, Vietnam War protests, domestic terrorism—threaten to devour his American Dream and teach him "the worst lesson that life can teach—that it makes no sense."

BULLET PARK (1969)

By John Cheever

Eliot Nailles, who lives in the titular New York suburb, is a mouthwash salesman with a depressed son, a sexless marriage, and a tranquilizer addiction. Hammer, the newest resident of Bullet Park, arrives with an ulterior motive: choosing a representative suburbanite to sacrifice in the cause of awakening a spiritually lost world. Cheever is best known for chronicling suburban malaise in his masterful short stories; here, on a larger canvas, he plays with narrative technique while exploring larger issues of deliverance, the nature of faith, and the failure of the American Dream.

RABBIT, RUN (1960)

By John Updike

"You do things and do things and nobody really has a clue." Updike, then 28, became a literary star with the publication of this novel about 26-year-old Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom. Rabbit's glory days as a high school basketball star have passed; he now has a wife and child and makes his living selling the kitchen gadget MagiPeeler. Rather than continue living with daily dissatisfaction of his middle-class life, Rabbit decides to "escape"—but he finds that this new freedom he seeks brings its own set of challenges. Updike followed this story through the decades with *Rabbit Redux* (1971), *Rabbit is Rich* (1981), *Rabbit at Rest* (1990), and *Rabbit Remembered* (2001).

FURTHER READING

Fiction

THE BOY WHO WENT AWAY (1997) | ELI GOTTLIEB

THE BROTHERS K (1992) | DAVID JAMES DUNCAN

LIGHT YEARS (1975) | JAMES SALTER

PEYTON PLACE (1955) | GRACE METALIOUS

The Search for Personal Identity

FICTION

THE GOOD SON (1982)

By Craig Nova

Like Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (see below), this novel follows the story of a World War II veteran trying to restart his life.

Chip MacKinnon's combat and POW experiences leave him drastically changed from the young man who went off to war; his former existence holds little appeal. Chip's father, though, has plans for climbing the social ladder, and after the death of his older son, he needs Chip's cooperation to make this happen. Nova presents a brilliant kaleidoscope of multiple first person points of view in crafting a novel that is both a coming-of-age story and a treatise on one's role in society.

SECONDS (1963)

By David Ely

Antiochus Wilson has seemingly achieved the American Dream: a good job, a loving wife, a successful child. Why, then, is he so deeply dissatisfied? When a mysterious company offers him that other fundamental American idea—a second chance—Wilson agrees. He starts over as a single, handsome artist with a California beach home—the



exact type of escape he wanted. Why, then, is he so nostalgic for the life he left behind? Ely's taut novel is part social critique, part science fiction, and part thriller.

A SINGLE MAN (1964)

By Christopher Isherwood

"Now is ... a cold reminder; one whole day later than yesterday, one year later than last year." Isherwood's novel, while light on plot, is justifiably famous for its narrative voice. We follow a day in the life of George Falconer, a middle-aged English professor at a Los Angeles university (like Isherwood) in the early 1960s, as he struggles to cope with the death of his gay partner, Jim. This is a story of the mundane details of life, of being at odds with oneself, of trying to transcend to something greater without even knowing what that something is.

JACK HOLMES & HIS FRIEND (2012)

By Edmund White

White's novel, spanning the 1960s to the 1980s, is both sprawling and intimate. Jack Holmes and Will Wright meet while working at a magazine in New York City, just ahead of the coming counterculture upheaval. Jack is gay and Will is straight; through their story, we also follow the story of the gay rights movement and the free love era of the late 1960s. One of White's great skills as a writer is letting the historical details grow organically, while never losing sight of why readers are drawn to fiction in the first place.

FURTHER READING

Fiction

ALTAMONT AUGIE (2011) | RICHARD BARAGER
MR. SAMMLER'S PLANET (1970) | SAUL BELLOW
OURSELVES TO KNOW (1960) | JOHN O'HARA

The World of Business

FICTION

THE MAN IN THE GRAY FLANNEL SUIT (1954)

By Sloan Wilson

In season two of *Mad Men*, obnoxious comedian Jimmy Barrett greets Don Draper as "the man in the gray flannel suit," underscoring the cultural impact of Wilson's novel (and how much of its DNA is present in the show). Tom Rath, the story's protagonist, returns from action in World War II to

his wife and three children. While the novel's plot concerns Tom's job at a public relations firm and his struggles with PTSD, the book really examines a man's battle against social conformity.

THE SPACE MERCHANTS (1952)

By Frederik Pohl and C. M. Kornbluth

Imagine a 20th-century where Earth is a battlefield, not for armies, but for competing corporations. Mitch Courtenay works as a copywriter at the advertising firm Fowler-Schocken. As one of the stars of the company, he is assigned the task of selling the colonization of Venus to an overcrowded world; if only Venus weren't a hellish environment, the job would be so much simpler. Pohl and Kornbluth's funny, cynical novel—at once a satire and a detective story of sorts—truly deserves the label "ahead of its time."

NONFICTION

CONFESSIONS OF AN ADVERTISING MAN (1963)

By David Ogilvy

One of the superstars of the advertising world, Ogilvy started his own agency (Ogilvy & Mather) at age 37 and was responsible for some of the mid-20th century's most memorable campaigns. This seminal work on the topic of business, filled with both advice and anecdotes, displays Ogilvy's clean, to-the-point writing style (honed during his years as a copywriter). Topics include getting and keeping clients, launching campaigns, and creating TV commercials. Ogilvy's book went from an initial print run of 5,000 to become an international best seller, and it's still worth reading today.

FROM THOSE WONDERFUL FOLKS WHO GAVE YOU PEARL HARBOR

Front Line Dispatches from the Advertising War (1970)

By Jerry Della Femina

"Advertising is the most fun you can have with your clothes on." Femina brings a brash sense of humor to this overview of his career in advertising between the 1950s and the 1980s, including the famous Joe Isuzu car commercials. If we accept his introductory



claim that, “99 44/100 per cent of the names, agencies and situations are real,” then this book offers readers a wide-ranging overview of both the business side of the advertising world, as well as behind-the-scenes personal drama. Matthew Weiner’s blurb on the book cover of the 2010 paperback edition calls this “one of the key texts for *Mad Men*.”

FURTHER READING

Nonfiction

THE HIDDEN PERSUADERS (1957) | VANCE PACKARD

Feminism, the Single Girl, and the Expanding Female Workplace

FICTION

THE BEST OF EVERYTHING (1958)

By Rona Jaffe

Jaffe’s best seller, which the author wrote while working at Fawcett Publications in the 1950s, takes readers into the lives of four young women at a New York publishing house as they navigate their way between modernity and conformity. We see the surface glitz of Rockefeller Center, well-dressed people, and the five o’clock martini. But we also see the humdrum rooms to which the girls go home, their most private moments, and their deepest anxieties about their roles in the changing world.

THE DUD AVOCADO (1958)

By Elaine Dundy

Sally Jay Gorce, the 21-year-old heroine of Dundy’s cult, somewhat avant-garde, autobiographical novel, tells us, “It’s difficult to explain, but I just somehow feel that I never really *have* lived; that I never really will live—exist or whatever—in the sense that other people do.” Instead of living the American workplace lifestyle, she escapes to Paris for a series of comic and romantic adventures. Few novels offer such a glimpse into the wandering spirit of the 1950s woman who may not know what she wants, but certainly knows what she doesn’t.

NONFICTION

MAD WOMEN

The Other Side of Life on Madison Avenue in the ‘60s and Beyond (2012)

By Jane Maas

Maas started her advertising career as a copywriter at Ogilvy & Mather in 1964, before eventually becoming its creative director. She offers a female perspective on the typically male-dominated world of that era, though from a more rarified air than most women (think Peggy Olson of *Mad Men*) could offer: Maas had a full-time nanny and a progressive husband who encouraged her career. The book is written in a breezy, almost gossipy style that presents all the egos, sexuality, power struggles, three-martini lunches, and, of course, the campaign stories a reader would expect.

SEX AND THE SINGLE GIRL (1962)

By Helen Gurley Brown

Brown’s legendary advice book has sex on its mind, but also careers, money, home entertaining, diet, and more. The book became a massive success upon publication, in part because of a creative advertising campaign, and it led to the author’s taking over editorial duties at *Cosmopolitan* three years later. Readers might wonder about a guidebook more than 40 years old, but much of what Brown counsels seems designed to work in any decade: “Theoretically a ‘nice’ single woman has no sex life. What nonsense! She has a better sex life than most of her married friends. Her choice of partners is endless.”

MEMOIRS OF A BEATNIK (1969)

By Diane di Prima

While most readers would likely think of books by Allen Ginsberg or Jack Kerouac as documents of the Beat era, di Prima’s part-real, part-fictionalized account provides a very different perspective. We tour the familiar bohemian art scene of the 1950s and 1960s, mostly in and around Greenwich Village, but this time with a free-spirited female guide. The loose, conversational writing brings the scenery to life, but an abundant amount of sex may not be for all tastes.

FURTHER READING

Fiction

THE EASTER PARADE (1976) | RICHARD YATES

VALLEY OF THE DOLLS (1961) | JACQUELINE SUSANN

Nonfiction

BAD GIRLS GO EVERYWHERE: THE LIFE OF HELEN GURLEY BROWN (2009) | JENNIFER SCANLON

FIFTH AVENUE, 5 A.M.: AUDREY HEPBURN, BREAKFAST AT TIFANY’S, AND THE DAWN OF THE MODERN WOMAN (2010) | SAM WASSON

JUST KIDS (2010) | PATTI SMITH

THE RECEPTIONIST: AN EDUCATION AT THE NEW YORKER (2012) | JANET GROTH



Counterculture New York

FICTION

THE BUTTERFLY KID (1967)

By Chester Anderson

The place is Greenwich Village. The time is the late 1960s, or perhaps a science fiction future. The characters are hippies experimenting with psychedelic drugs that may or may not alter reality. The suppliers of the drugs are alien lobsters. If the book sounds too out there, rest assured that among the science fiction trappings is a vivid snapshot of a time and a place. Anderson lived the life he describes while writing the novel (well, maybe not the lobster part). This is the first book in the Greenwich Village Trilogy, followed by *The Unicorn Girl* by Michael Kurland, and *The Probability Pad* by T. A. Waters.

FIN & LADY (2013)

By Cathleen Schine

Schine's novel follows 11-year-old Fin and his half sister, 24-year-old Lady, as they transition from Connecticut (following the death of Fin's parents) to Greenwich Village. We follow Fin's coming-of-age-story and Lady's romantic adventures against the backdrop of the counterculture and the civil rights movement, as well as the escalation of the Vietnam War. Schine's richly observed story, both comedic and heartfelt, takes readers from the lighthearted hippie days to the arrival of "something menacing" as the late 1960s take a darker turn.

NONFICTION

A FREEWHEELIN' TIME

A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the Sixties (2007)

By Suze Rotolo

"I've always had trouble talking or reminiscing about the 1960s," Rotolo writes near the opening of her story. The author is most famous as the girl walking arm-in-arm with Bob Dylan on *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* album cover. Here, we learn about the girl behind the image: her

time as the daughter of Communist parents in Queens, her adoption of Greenwich Village (and vice versa), and her meeting 20-year-old Dylan when she was 17. The book is simultaneously autobiography, music history, and cultural document.

JOE GOULD'S SECRET (1993)

By Joseph Mitchell

In piecing together the life and death of Greenwich Village writer Joe Gould, Mitchell tells the story of underground New York—from the bohemians to the Beats. Gould lived an intentionally downtrodden existence around the city while writing "An Oral History of Our Time"—that time being most of the first half of the 20th century. While the story ends in the late 1950s (right before the *Mad Men* era), we can see the seeds of what would become the counterculture planted in Mitchell's book.

FURTHER READING

Fiction

DIVINE RIGHT'S TRIP (1971) | GURNEY NORMAN

FRANNY AND ZOOEY (1961) | J. D. SALINGER

Nonfiction

THE VILLAGE: 400 YEARS OF BEATS AND BOHEMIANS, RADICALS AND ROGUES, A HISTORY OF GREENWICH VILLAGE (2013) | JOHN STRAUSBAUGH

Race Relations and the Civil Rights Movement

FICTION

ANOTHER COUNTRY (1962)

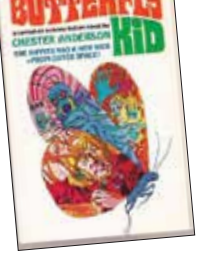
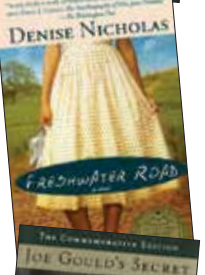
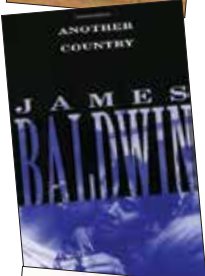
By James Baldwin

Baldwin's novel of 1960s Greenwich Village and Harlem (among other places) could be placed in any of the categories on this list. The author refers to one of his lead characters, jazz musician Rufus Scott, as "an embodiment of the curse that lurks within the American soul." Alongside Rufus is a mixed group of friends and lovers; alongside issues of race, Baldwin explores class, social roles, and sexual orientation without ever being didactic.

FRESHWATER ROAD (2005)

By Denise Nicholas

Nicholas draws upon her real-life experience as a student volunteer in 1964 Mississippi for this story of Celeste Tyree, an African-American student at the University of Michigan. Celeste takes a summer off from her academic life to work on the One Man, One



Vote campaign in small-town Mississippi. We see the strife, hatred, and small triumphs of the civil rights movement through the eyes of a captivating protagonist, a girl for whom history lessons and life lessons become the same thing.

THE TIME OF OUR SINGING (2002)

By Richard Powers

David Strom and Delia Daley are a mixed-race couple who meet in 1939 and then wed despite the surrounding prejudice. Jonah, Joseph, and Ruth, their children, come of age during the civil rights era. Powers's novel tells their stories, along with the story of the 20th century—from Nazi Germany to the turbulent 1960s to racially divided late-century America. Rather than presenting a dry history lesson, Powers expertly weaves deft characterization and a love of music throughout his generational tale.

NONFICTION

AMERICA IN THE KING YEARS (1988-2006)

By Taylor Branch

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–63 (F Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award; 1988)

Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years, 1963–65 (1998)

At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965–68 (2006)

Branch's exhaustive three-volume magnum opus is thick with detail but reads as smoothly as a novel. While the titles might indicate a biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., the author unravels the American landscape (both physical and psychological) starting at the end of World War II and going up to King's assassination and its aftermath. The names are familiar—King, the Kennedy brothers, J. Edgar Hoover, and more—but here we meet them as actual people rather than simply names from history.

FURTHER READING

Fiction

THE HELP (2009) | KATHRYN STOCKETT

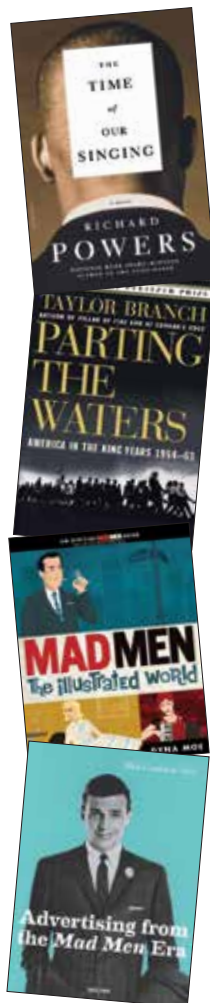
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MISS JANE PITTMAN (1971) | ERNEST J. GAINES

Nonfiction

LISTEN TO THE LAMBS (2009) | JOHNNY OTIS

THE LOST PROMISE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (2007) | RISA L. GOLUBOFF

TEN BLOCKS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE: ANATOMY OF THE WASHINGTON RIOTS OF 1968 (1968) | BEN W. GILBERT



Mad Men Tie-Ins

MAD MEN

The Illustrated World (2010)

By Dyna Moe

The only officially licensed book about the show, this irreverent, kitschy art book covers such subjects as fashion, the office, 1960s icons, cocktail recipes, and the suburban lifestyle.

MAD MEN, MAD WORLD

Sex, Politics, Style, & the 1960s (2013)

Edited by Lauren M. E. Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovsky, and Robert A. Rushing

For readers interested in a more scholarly approach, this collection of essays examines the series from such perspectives as history, civil rights, fashion, and feminism. *Mad Men, Mad World* is considered as both a document of the 1960s and a commentary on the present day.

MID-CENTURY ADS

Advertising from the Mad Men Era (2011)

By Steven Heller and Jim Heimann

This two-volume hardcover collection immerses the reader in the world of vintage ads from the 1950s and 1960s. The images reflect the transition from the cold war to the space age to the 1960s aesthetic featured on the show.

SOME BOOKS FEATURED ON MAD MEN

ADMIRAL HORNBLOWER IN THE WEST INDIES (1957) | C. S. FORESTER

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN (1884) | MARK TWAIN

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY (1961) | IRVING STONE

ATLAS SHRUGGED (1957) | AYN RAND

BABYLON REVISITED AND OTHER STORIES (1931) | F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

THE CHRYSANTHEMUM AND THE SWORD (1946) | RUTH BENEDICT

THE CRYING OF LOT 49 (1966) | THOMAS PYNCHON

EXODUS (1958) | LEON URIS

THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE (1963) | BETTY FRIEDAN

THE GROUP (1963) | MARY MCCARTHY

THE HUCKSTERS (1946) | FREDERIC WAKEMAN

THE IMAGE: A GUIDE TO PSEUDO-EVENTS IN AMERICA (1961) | DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER (1925) | D.H. LAWRENCE

THE LONELY CROWD: A STUDY OF THE CHANGING AMERICAN CHARACTER (1950) | DAVID RIESMAN

MEDITATIONS IN AN EMERGENCY (1957) | FRANK O'HARA

THE ORGANIZATION MAN (1956) | WILLIAM H. WHYTE

SHIP OF FOOLS (1962) | KATHERINE ANNE PORTER

THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD (1963) | JOHN LE CARRÉ

THE SOUND AND THE FURY (1929) | WILLIAM FAULKNER

YOU ARE NOT THE TARGET (1963) | LAURA ARCHERA HUXLEY ■