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Philosophers Behaving Badly

NIGEL RODGERS

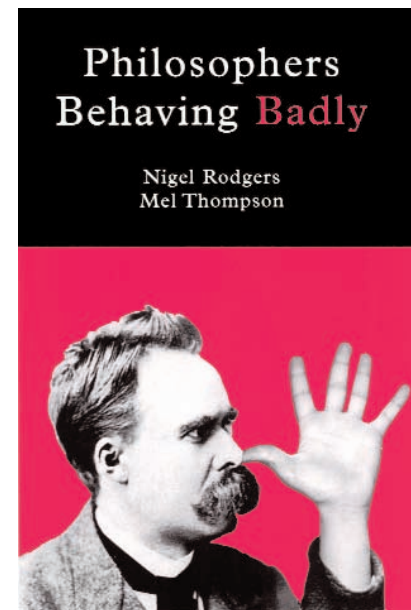
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MEL THOMPSON

NON FICTION/PHILOSOPHY

76,000 WORDS

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'Boy, do they behave badly, publicly expounding theories left, right and centre and seldom living by their own example. A wise lesson here: while philosophy can enlighten, it can also damage and delude.' – *Publishing News*

As Descartes observed, 'The greatest souls are capable of the greatest vices as well as the greatest virtues.' This book explores the perils of philosophy, showing that philosophers' own behaviour – sometimes bad, sometimes sad, occasionally downright mad – is seldom unconnected with their thinking. *Philosophers Behaving Badly* examines the lives of eight great philosophers: **Rousseau**, whose views on education and the social order seem curiously at odds with his own outrageous life; **Schopenhauer** and **Nietzsche**, two giants of the nineteenth century whose words seem even more relevant today; and five immensely influential philosophers of the twentieth century: **Russell**, **Wittgenstein**, **Heidegger**, **Sartre** and **Foucault**. What comes out of this entertaining look at the more cerebral side of human endeavour is a strong sense that a life of reason does not necessarily lead to a reasonable life.

'Combining poppy and selective summaries of the authors' subject's thinking, genius is cut down to size in a work that is impressive.' – *Guardian*

'Fascinating and revealing . . . Rodgers and Thompson are to be congratulated for taking an unholy slant on a holy subject . . . should certainly be on any university reading list'
– *Birmingham Post*

'Unapologetically leans towards exposing the less virtuous aspects of men (for they are all men) we hold in high intellectual esteem . . . this volume gives a new perspective for those familiar with ploughing through philosophy texts, in that doing so seems a cinch compared to spending time with their authors.' – *Herald (Glasgow)*

'Excellent . . . The premise is simple but I am not aware of it being done before – or at least not so well.' – *Times Higher Education Supplement*

'Shocks, entertains and provokes on its own, with no need to attempt grand critical theory . . . The upshot of *Philosophers Behaving Badly* is that even lovers of wisdom require strict scrutiny.' – *Philadelphia Enquirer*

Mel Thompson is the author of more than twenty books on philosophy and religion (including many published in the popular 'Teach Yourself' series), as well as being a lecturer in philosophy.

Nigel Rodgers is a historian and author of several publications, most recently *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Rome* (Lorenz, 2004).

For further information please contact Simon Smith at Peter Owen