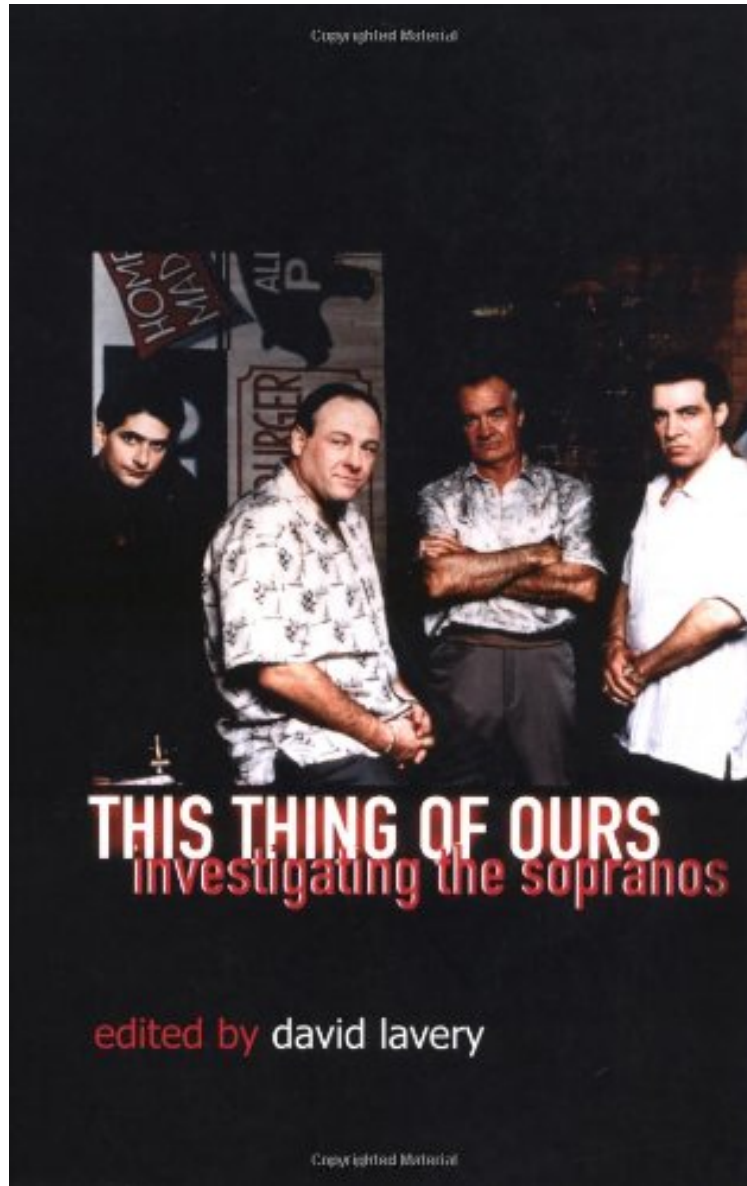


[Free] This Thing of Ours

## This Thing of Ours

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**From Columbia University Press : This Thing of Ours** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised This Thing of Ours:

In a first-season episode of The Sopranos, Tony Soprano is once again in conflict with his uncle Carrado "Junior"

Soprano. Tony is in no mood for conciliation, but neither is Junior, who warns his nephew not to return unless he is armed: "Come heavy," he insists, "or not at all." As a work of popular culture, a ground-breaking television series, and a cultural phenomenon, *The Sopranos* always "comes heavy," not just with weaponry but with significance. The cultures of the United States, Great Britain and Canada, Australia, and even Italy (where it premiered in the spring of 2001) have come under its influence and contributed to the cultural conversation about it. Talk, discourse, about *The Sopranos* has migrated far beyond the water cooler, and not all of it has been praise. David Chase's *The Sopranos* has also received starkly contradictory critical assessments. In the eyes of Ellen Willis (whose seminal essay in *The Nation* is reprinted in this volume), for example, the HBO series is "the richest and most compelling piece of television no, of popular culture that I've encountered in the past twenty years... a meditation on the nature of morality, the possibility of redemption, and the legacy of Freud." Others have condemned it for racial and sexist stereotypes, excessive violence, and profanity. These eighteen essays consider many facets of *The Sopranos*: its creation and reception, the conflicting roles of men and women, the inner lives of the characters, obesity, North Jersey, the role of music, and even how food contributes to the story.

From Publishers Weekly *The Sopranos* is the "richest and most compelling piece of television no, of popular culture that I've encountered in the past twenty years... [it's a] meditation on the nature of morality, the possibility of redemption, and the legacy of Freud," writes critic Ellen Willis in *This Thing of Ours: Investigating The Sopranos*. Edited by David Lavery, the book collects 18 essays by academics covering a range of subjects, such as the conflicting roles of men and women, obesity, "Old Jersey" versus "Nouveau Jersey," food, music and more. The essays are at once entertaining and serious pieces of social criticism. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. Fulfills its promise of a fair trial... [and] provides a dose of fun at the end. (New York Magazine) The essays are at once entertaining and serious pieces of social criticism. (Publishers Weekly) A gloriously over-the-top exercise, proof--if any more were needed--of the way *The Sopranos* is now embedded in the culture generale. (It is proof, also, that the academy has not entirely lost its sense of humor.) (The Wall Street Journal) As the cleverly chosen subtitle suggests: it is a good place to start, both for scholars and fans, and for those numerous people who are both. (Film International) About the Author David Lavery is a professor of English at Middle Tennessee State University. He is the author, editor, or co-editor of several books, including *Deny All Knowledge: Reading The X-Files*; *Full of Secrets: Critical Approaches to Twin Peaks*; *Late for the Sky: The Mentality of the Space Age*; *Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and *Teleparody: Predicting/Preventing the TV Discourse of Tomorrow*. He lives in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Paul Levinson contributed an essay to *This Thing of Ours*.