

Mad Men: a question of style

Mad Men – an American television series set in the 1960s – depicts a world where advertising **executives**, who smoke and drink all the time, dream up ingeniously intuitive campaigns for cigarettes, **bras** and airlines. It has itself become the object of a kind of madness. The critical reception both in the US and **abroad** has been delirious; a recent and not atypical reference in the *Times* of London called it “one of the best television series of all time”. The show has repeatedly won the *Emmy*, the Golden Globe, the Screen Actors Guild **Award**, the Writers Guild of America Award and the Producers Guild of America Award for Best Drama Series.

At first glance, its **appeal** seems to have a lot to do with the show’s much-discussed visual style – the coolness of dress and decor. The **clothing retailer**, in partnership with the show’s creators, devised a nationwide campaign evoking the show’s distinctive 1960s look and now offers a style guide to help consumers look more like the show’s characters. The **toy maker** Mattel has released **dolls** based on some of the show’s characters. Most intriguingly, Brooks Brothers has partnered with the series’ costume designer to produce a limited edition *Mad Men* **suit** – which is, **in turn**, based on a Brooks Brothers design of the 1960s.

The people who watch *Mad Men* are adults – most of them between the ages of nineteen and forty-nine. That is to say that most of the people who are so **addicted** to the show are either younger adults, or younger baby boomers –

people in their forties and early fifties. For **either** audience, then, the show’s style is essentially symbolic: it represents fantasies, or memories, of significant potency.

(Adapted from Daniel Mendelsohn, *New York Review*, “The Mad Men Craze”, 29 March 2011)



abroad: *all'estero*
addicted: *dipendente, incapace di fare a meno di qlc.*
appeal: *fascino, richiamo*
award: *premio*
bra: *reggiseno*
executives: *dirigenti*
clothing-retailer: *ditta di abiti al dettaglio*
doll: *bambola*
either: *entrambi*
in turn: *a sua volta*
suit: *completo da uomo*
toy maker: *produttore di giocattoli*

1 Decide if the following sentences are true or false and correct the false ones.

- The passage above is a review.
- The writer doesn't like the series.
- The characters smoke a lot.
- Mattel has released cartoons based on some of the show's characters.
- The TV series has won no awards.
- The visual style in this TV series is inaccurate.
- The people who watch *Mad Men* are grown-ups.
- Most of viewers are addicted to the show.

T	F
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>