

The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader (Essential Reader Contemporary Media and Culture)

By J.P. Telotte

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Once confined solely to literature and film, science fiction has emerged to become a firmly established, and wildly popular, television genre over the last half century. The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader provides insight into and analyses of the most important programs in the history of the genre and explores the breadth of science fiction programming. Editor J. P. Telotte and the contributors explain the gradual transformation of the genre from low-budget cinematic knockoffs to an independent and distinct televisual identity. Their essays track the dramatic evolution of early hits such as The Twilight Zone and Star Trek into the science fiction programming of today with its more recent successes such as Lost and Heroes. They highlight the history, narrative approaches, and themes of the genre with an inviting and accessible style. In essays that are as varied as the shows themselves, the contributors address the full scope of the genre. In his essay "The Politics of Star Trek: The Original Series," M. Keith Booker examines the ways in which Star Trek promoted cultural diversity and commented on the pioneering attitude of the American West. Susan George takes on the refurbished Battlestar Galactica series, examining how the show reframes questions of gender. Other essays explore the very attributes that constitute science fiction television: David Lavery's essay "The Island's Greatest Mystery: Is Lost Science Fiction?"calls into question the defining characteristics of the genre. From anime to action, every form of science fiction television is given thoughtful analysis enriched with historical perspective. Placing the genre in a broad context, The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader outlines where the genre has been, where it is today, and where it may travel in the future. No longer relegated to the periphery of television, science fiction now commands a viewership vast enough to sustain a cable channel devoted to the genre.

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Editorial Review

Review
"This well-edited collection offers a richly detailed and critically penetrating overview of science fiction television, from the plucky adventures of Captain Video to the postmodern paradoxes of The X-Files and Lost. Sixteen essays by major scholars in the field address topics ranging from the politics of Star Trek to the mythic resonances of The Twilight Zone, from the complexities of adapting material from other media to the science-fictionality of television itself. Teachers, students, and fans of SFTV will learn much from this engaging, indispensible volume."?Rob Latham, coeditor of Science Fiction Studies"

"Telotte's volume makes clear how much science fiction is on television (and how much television has been the subject of science fiction). The contributors to this volume demonstrate how much this matters. These are well-written, accessible, and informative essays that cover the subject in depth, from Captain Video to Star Trek; from The X-Files to Firefly."?Robert Kolker, University of Virginia"

"Recommended for academic libraries with an interest in communication, media, and culture." ?Rosalind Dayen, Library Journal"

"J. P. Telotte, a leading authority in the field of media studies, has compiled an impressive and qualified list of contributors to provide a synthesis of insight and analysis of the most important programs in the history of the genre's progress." ?Paintsville Herald"

"The huge increase in the number of complex, culturally significant series in the last twenty years makes the genre a vital one for close study." ?Joe Milicia, The New York Review of Science Fiction"

"Renowned scholar J. P. Telotte explores how animation has confronted the blank template, and how responses to that confrontation have changed." ?thebookstallblog.blogspot.com"

"Provides a provocative glimpse into cultural perspectives of space as a method for understanding both a technological and aesthetic history of animation and the evolution from a modern to postmodern mind-set." ?Humanities"?

About the Author
J. P. Telotte, professor of literature, communication, and culture at the Georgia Institute of Technology, is the author or editor of numerous books.

Users Review

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