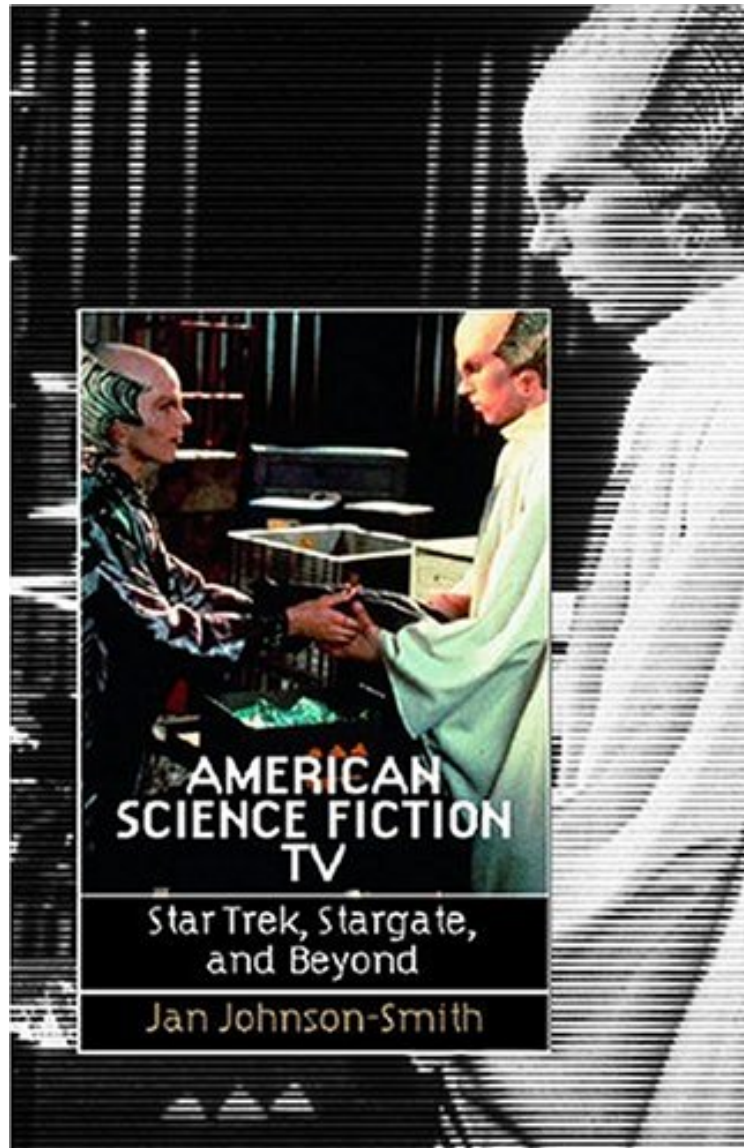


(Mobile book) American Science Fiction TV: Star Trek, Stargate, and Beyond

American Science Fiction TV: Star Trek, Stargate, and Beyond

Jan Johnson-Smith

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#1356688 in Books Wesleyan 2005-01-10 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.52 x .93 x 5.501, .90 #File Name: 0819567388304 pages | File size: 65.Mb

Jan Johnson-Smith : American Science Fiction TV: Star Trek, Stargate, and Beyond before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Science Fiction TV: Star Trek, Stargate, and Beyond:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. evolving themes of TV science fiction By Henry Berry Johnson-Smith, a lecturer in film and TV at an English university, reaches the conclusion that unlike earlier periods of science fiction, "modern American sf fiction is neither utopian or dystopian...it enforces a critique of the Western mythos

whilst renegotiating its finer aspects." This Western mythos centers on the desire for exploration. This desire was seen as far back as the Gilgamesh myth of the ancient Babylonians; and it emerged in American culture especially in Westward expansion and the related romance of the West. It entails a sense of wonder and the hope of encounter with the Sublime--elements undeniably evident in modern TV sci-fi, which are a major reason for their appeal. But imparting this sense of wonder and picturing the Sublime became possible only when TV technology improved from its first days. Only in recent years has TV arrived in an "era where far-seeing 'tele-vision' can finally live up to its name" by making use of "brilliant colors and dynamic motion" to enhance sf narratives. Today's TV science-fiction shows, notably "Star-Trek," are contrasted with earlier ones such as "Twilight Zone" creating an atmosphere mainly by suggestion, leaving much to the viewer's imagination. The author identifies a new era in science-fiction TV and analyzes the bases of its themes and popular appeal.⁴ of 5 people found the following review helpful. Surveys the development of science fiction television

By Midwest Book Review

American Science Fiction TV: Star Trek, Stargate And Beyond by Jan Johnson-Smith (Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Theory, Bournemouth University Media School, United Kingdom) surveys the development of science fiction television over the last twenty years with a special focus on narrative, imagery, and ideology. The author makes some fascinating connections between the ancient tradition of the epic journey with the more recent American tradition of the "Wild West". The reader is shown how themes of journey and exploration, and the archetypal characters associated with these themes, have continued from ancient times to the modern era. Johnson-Smith utilizes case studies of several key science fiction series including "Babylon 5", "StarGate SG-1"; "Space: Above and Beyond", and others to reveal common narrative patterns and visual styles. These case studies explore diverse themes including politics, ideology, race and ethnicity, gender difference, militarism, and the use of science fiction narratives as allegories of present-day social and political issues. American Science Fiction TV will prove of immense interest to students of American Popular Culture, the history of American television programming, and fans of fantasy and science-fiction.

From The Next Generation and The X-Files to Farscape and Enterprise, science fiction television shows have millions of devoted fans. American Science Fiction TV is the first full-length study of this popular genre. Writing with the clarity of a scholar and the enthusiasm of a fan, Jan Johnson-Smith shows how science fiction television has displaced the Western in the American cultural imagination. As advances in special effects have made science fiction television technically feasible on a more lavish scale than ever before, visual style has become as important as narrativesometimes even more importantin expressing the meaning of the genre. The main part of the book uses case studies of several key science fiction series, including Space: Above and Beyond, StarGate SG-1, and Babylon 5, to exemplify particular narrative patterns and visual styles. The case studies explore themes such as politics, ideology, race and ethnicity, gender difference, militarism, and the use of science fiction narratives as allegories of present-day social and political concerns. American Science Fiction TV opens an important new area of genre studies and will be of interest to scholars and fans alike.

"An original and significant study. American Science Fiction TV is the first thoroughgoing analysis of the genre. Johnson-Smith writes with both the authority of a scholar and the passion of a genre fan. The book is to be welcomed as an important contribution to TV studies." -- James Chapman, author of Licence to Thrill: A Cultural History of the James Bond Films

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