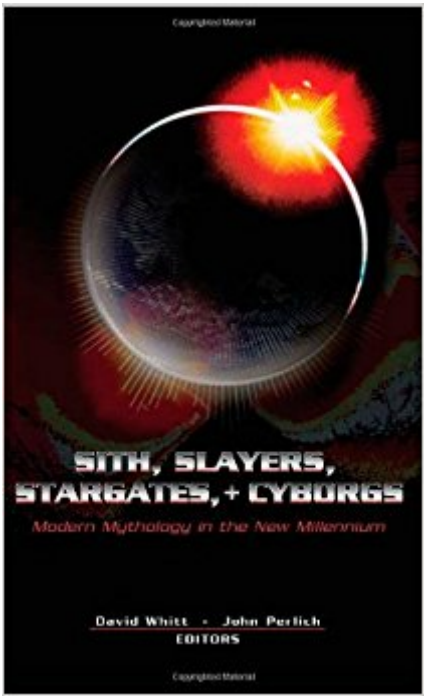
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Sith, Slayers, Stargates, + Cyborgs: Modern Mythology In The New Millennium



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Synopsis

The beginning of the twenty-first century has already seen its fair share of modern myths with heroes such as Spider-Man, Superman, and Harry Potter. The authors in this volume deconstruct, discuss, engage, and interrogate the mythologies of the new millennium in science fiction fantasy texts. Using literary and rhetorical criticism Ã¢â ¬â œ paired with philosophy, cultural studies, media arts, psychology, and communication studies Ã¢â ¬â œ they illustrate the function, value, and role of new mythologies, and show that the universal appeal of these texts is their mythic power, drawing upon archetypes of the past which resonate with individuals and throughout culture. In this way they demonstrate how mythology is timeless and eternal.

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Customer Reviews

Ã Â«This volume represents fan-scholarship at its most energetic, invigorating, and inspiring. The contributors couple a fanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s close reading and enthusiasm with the confidently-informed theoretical scope of academia Ã¢â ¬â œ and show that not only do the two approaches mesh perfectly, but that theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢re really not that far apart. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a tribute to the authors that however well you know these shows and movies, youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll find something here to surprise you; a way of seeing the familiar from a fresh perspective. YouÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll want to watch old DVDs again, and check out the ones you havenÃ¢â ¬â„¢t seen. YouÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll want to meet the contributors and talk through a few of their ideas Ã¢â ¬â œ and you get the feeling theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢d like that too.Ã Â» (Will Brooker is Principal Lecturer and Head of Film and Television at Kingston University in London. He is the author of several books and articles on popular culture and fandom,

including ?Batman Unmasked?, ?Using the Force?, and ?The Blade Runner Experience?)

"This volume represents fan-scholarship at its most energetic, invigorating, and inspiring. The contributors couple a fan’s close reading and enthusiasm with the confidently-informed theoretical scope of academia—and show that not only do the two approaches mesh perfectly, but that they’re really not that far apart. "It’s a tribute to the authors that however well you know these shows and movies, you’ll find something here to surprise you; a way of seeing the familiar from a fresh perspective. You’ll want to watch old DVDs again, and check out the ones you haven’t seen. You’ll want to meet the contributors and talk through a few of their ideas— and you get the feeling they’d like that too." Will Brooker, Principal Lecturer and Head of Film and Television at Kingston University in London and author Batman Unmasked, Using the Force,and The Blade Runner Experience.

Science fiction and fantasy have an epic presence that lets us approach common problems from uncommon angles, according to Whitt and Perlich. In a society that replaces cultural mythology with individual initiative, sci-fi’s allegorical structure lets us complete our collective psychological journey. Therefore, Whitt and Perlich help us look to these heightened mythic narratives to unlock our most treasured hopes and beliefs.Human beings don’t exist merely as we are, but in context, which we often cannot comprehend without symbolic narratives. For instance, the frontier promise of self-discovery and rugged autonomy is embossed in American culture. But our generation, with no physical frontier, needs symbolic replacements ("Space, the final..."). Our failure to grasp that frontier frustrates us, and that finds manifestation in the essential rootlessness shown in the series Firefly.Similarly, most of us struggle with the tension between individual needs and imposed social roles--tension, if you will, between Imperial order and free-spirited Rebellion. This translates into the struggles in the original Star Wars films. And Lucas’ lapse of his mythology into spectacle and pageant in his prequel trilogy lets us see not only why myth is important, but why its absence rips the rug out from under us.I wish this scholarly anthology addressed books. Sure, TV and movies have more cultural reach these days, but books like Harry Potter allow a more detailed and thematically rich exploration of these subjects than movies ever will. What about the changing social significance of a conscious myth-maker like Tolkein? Perhaps future critics will take this theme up. Perhaps I’ve found the topic for my own scholarship. Who knows.Though incomplete, this volume provides an interesting and inspiring primer of mythic studies in the new millennium. We could complain that its focus on visual media overlooks some treasured form, or that it omits franchises

we consider important; but that's niggling. No book can address everything. I see this as an invitation for future scholars to ask the same questions about current culture that we ask about the ancient past.

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