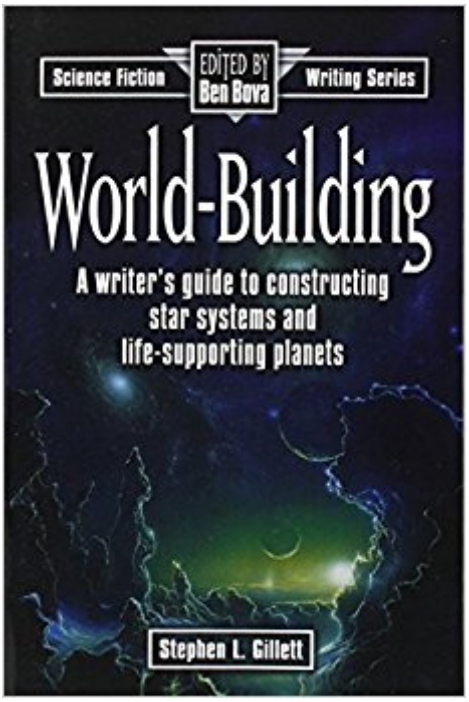
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World-Building (Science Fiction Writing)



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Synopsis

This book is designed to give science fiction writers the solid grounding they need in real science to make their fictions read like fact. World Building is a blueprint in words, calculations, tables and diagrams to help writers transport readers from one world to another.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Another in Ben Bova’s series on Science Fiction Writing, here geologist and SF scribe Stephen Gillett helps you construct star systems and planets from the atoms up. While it may take you a little more than the proverbial seven days (well, six with rest), when you’re done, your knowledge of gravity, weather patterns, cosmic mass and stellar patterns--in this universe--will be greatly enhanced. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A s a budding sci-fi writer (having written in-game content for the online RPG EVE Online), I have to say this is one of the most interesting and informative books on the market on the subject of that all-important aspect: building sci-fi worlds. My library is full of books on writing, most of which simply gathered dust after a first reading, This is not one of those. Gillett’s book is dog-eared, plagued with yellow high-lighter markings, and filled with my hand-written notations. This is definitely a working writer’s book, and an invaluable tool.But, I am also a gamer, as I alluded to. And if you are interested in writing in-game content for video games, or even creating a video game of your own, I

strongly recommend you pick up a copy of this book. It’s easy to read, fun, engaging, and humorous. Most of all, though, it will provide an entry- intermediate level course in world-building - one that really does contain practical, useful information. I can’t recommend this book highly enough.

I’ve only relied on a couple resources while writing my new sci-fi books, and this is one of them (the other being a book on physics by the great Michio Kaku). This book contains a variety of sections on different aspects of building a fictional world from scratch, and I think the original audience was very much diverse in regards to skill level. But it’s without a doubt the most in-depth exploration of the physics, geography and science behind what makes a planet behave in the way it does.What happens if you’re designing a world powered by a larger sun? A smaller, brighter sun? How does it affect everything from orbit to color? What’s the point of plate tectonics, anyway? All of these questions are answered with excruciating detail (and a significant amount of math!). If you’re looking for something a little bit more generalized, you might want to grab a collection of Asimov essays, because this book takes you waaaaay down the rabbit hole.On the plus side, writers looking for a serious exploration of what makes a planet habitable can’t do much better than this book. Even if you don’t plan on putting human beings on this planet (or want to give your human characters a real survival challenge), you’ll find a ton of scientific explanations for different possibilities for life on planets that don’t have the same atmospheric composition as earth’s.

It’s good for science fiction writers, but I should warn you there is a lot of math and science involved. Some of it is okay, but sometimes it will get to complicated. Since my biggest issue has been math, it makes it more difficult for me and does not simplify it for me.It’s a good book but I think most people will not like it do to its complicated math and pyschics.

In this book you will find the math that will enable you to see whether or not your solar system in which your action will take place is the stuff of legend or the stuff of sniggers. Assuming you care.Which you should. Other than stories firmly in the fantasy mold, SF readers expect anything you say about real universe things to obey real universe physics.Even if you do not need to know how your planet dances around its star (but beware making bold statements about the weather and seasons if you *don’t*) you will perhaps need to know how far away the horizon of your stage appears to your leading actors.You get the equations to help you sort it all out but no tedious derivation - think of this as a cheat sheet for SF writers. You get explanations in brief of what

governs the factors you will be playing with when you set your stage, enough to whet your appetite if you have any feel for the genre at all. You get references to steer you onward to more detail and depth if you want it.And tanjit, making feasible worlds is just plain good SF fun. There's fun to be had from a Barsoom, Trenko or Dying Earth to be sure, and I've devoured stories set on all of those, but none of those worlds *work* and so cannot be explored in any manner other than within the confines of plot. What you will be able to do with this book is build a real (albeit imaginary) world, set it spinning in a real (ibid) solar system and then see what happens.Harlan's World, Helliconia Spring/Summer/Winter, Ringworld were all set on such carefully built worlds, and were the better for it. Were they perfect? No, but they were convincing enough that few noticed the duct tape.I plan on using this to build a couple of places central to a space opera RPG, where the players will be spending much time. If I ever get around to writing real stories It'll be essential.Recommended.

This book is very wordy. Not exactly what I expected. Was looking more for tips on world building in literature in a more scifi and fantast style rather than a scientific literal planet building manual.

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