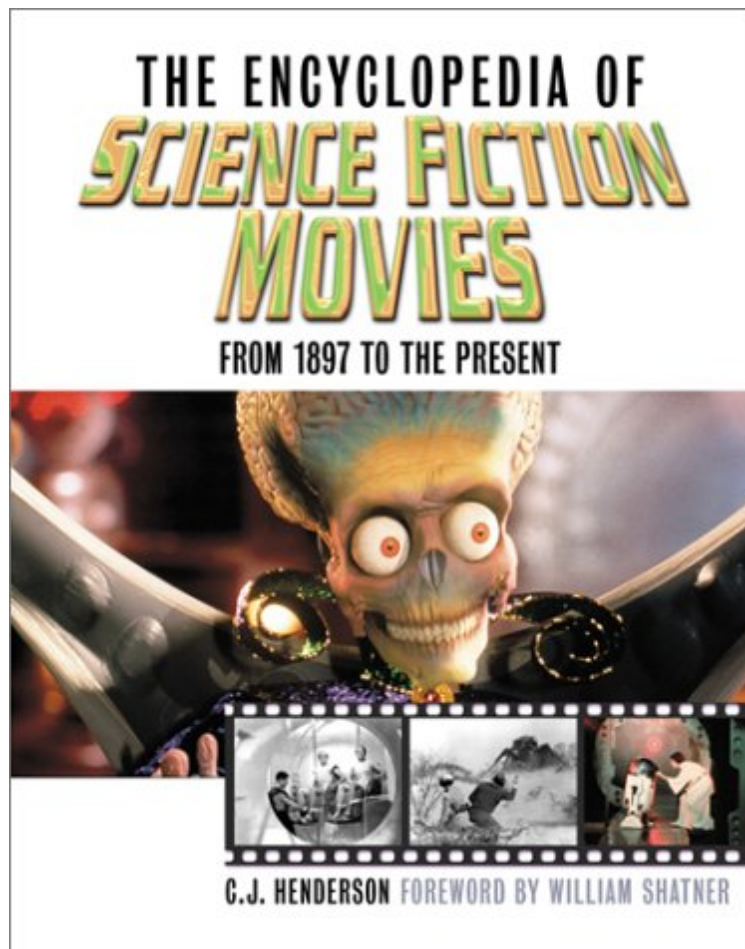


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Encyclopedia of Science Fiction Movies: From 1897 to the Present (Facts on File Film Reference Library)

C. J. Henderson

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C. J. Henderson : Encyclopedia of Science Fiction Movies: From 1897 to the Present (Facts on File Film Reference Library) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Encyclopedia of Science Fiction Movies: From 1897 to the Present (Facts on File Film Reference Library):

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Origin of some glaring errors in plots.By AlchemystAZReviewing the other 4 reviews, I see agreement that the book is smug, sarcastic, pretentious, and pompous, and full of errors. I wonder if this book is the origin of the wildly incorrect statement that the expedition of ROCKETSHIP X-M was blown off course by a meteor storm. The head of Griffith Park Observatory passed on that error in a Sky Telescope article years ago. The true reason for going to Mars instead of The Moon is a radical change in fuel mixture. The meteor storm had nothing to do with the course change. Now it has come out that the black-listed great Dalton Trumbo

actually wrote RXM, which explains its anti-nuclear-war plot, and raises it far above DESTINATION MOON. Another glaring error is about RIDERS TO THE STARS: the real reason for wanting to know how meteor metal survives in outer space is Radiation Damage, and NOT anything to do with surviving re-entry through Earth's atmosphere. The movie starts with showing a piece of rocket metal that crumbles and easily shatters. (An interesting fact recently discovered is that meteors are sometimes covered in carbon, diamonds! The movie science got it right, although one wonders how. The writer of RTTS was a genius, the same who wrote DONOVAN'S BRAIN.) Anyway, I struggled through the whole E of SF Movies just to find movies that I had not yet seen. I could have gone to instead of wasting half a day with Harry and The Hendersons reviews. OMG, that sounds like one of the dumb jokes in E of SF!4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Pretty lazy for "research"By Alberto MartinezThe best thing about this book is the foreword by William Shatner. Let's face it, anything Shatner does is bound to be entertaining. However, the rest of the book is a huge disappointment. Points for effort are given to author Henderson as he clearly loves sci fi films, but that is no excuse for lazy writing. For instance, his review of the first Godzilla film, a classic milestone, is nothing you haven't read before. However, the rest of the Godzilla films, save for G 1985 and 2000, are all summarized by this tiring line: Please see Godzilla, King of the Monsters. Even King Kong vs Godzilla has this (and refers to it as a "minor film." The G series are all summed up on a sentence or two each in the GKOTM review, as are the Heisei series in G 1985. Normally, such a book wouldn't be looked down as harshly, except books like Phil Hardy's Overlook Science Fiction Encyclopedia have set the standard for how to analyze the genre properly and insightfully. Hardy uses a lot of psychological analysis in many of his reviews, and keeps it as objective as possible, and when he is subjective he allows you to see why (whether you agree or not.) Henderson on the other hand merely says "it is good" "it is bad" without saying why. He speaks of GINO (Tri-Star's G film) as being "completely respectful of its original source material" and wonders why fans and critics didn't like it. Well, if Henderson had done his research, he would have known why the film was universally bashed, and making such comments like his only invites hardcore GINO bashers to further vent. Henderson should have explain how it was respectful rather than tell us. There is nothing wrong with a differing opinion as long as you can explain your reasons for it. Otherwise, it becomes a hollow statement. Of ID4's liberal use of science, he states that "it's reduced to its most simplistic form in many cases, at least it's reasonably accurate." He also claims the ALIEN series got better after part two, which he called the worst of the series. Again, I have no qualms about differing opinions, but he states that ID4 is an entertaining movie all around despite its inaccurate science and yet blasts ALIENS for being a special effects spectacle that throws basic science out the window. Again, I have no problems with opinions but I do have a problem with inconsistency, and the comparison of his reviews of ID4 and ALIENS symbolizes much of what the problem is. There quite a few reviews that are summed up with a sentence and supposedly witty remark, but it does nothing for the reader to grow curious about the film's content. Though there are some reviews where he hits the mark (his reviews for Jurassic Park and Cronenberg's The Fly for instance are dead on,) there just isn't enough of it to make me continue further. Hardy's reviews are consistent and thought provoking. Henderson's are lazy and frustrating. In short, if you already own Hardy's book, don't bother wasting your money on Henderson's. However, if you have nothing and want a good place to start a book collection of genre films, this book is affordable and would make a nice gift for simple minds.3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Wish I'd read the reviews before buying it. . .By R. Reilly. . . because the three negative reviews below reflect my own judgment as well. Fortunately, I didn't pay full price. I bought the book at a used book store, hoping for a useful guide to sci-fi flicks that I should try to catch when they appear late nights on T.V. But I soon found that many of Henderson's opinions were just the opposite of mine. For instance, he pans movies like Terminator 2 and Aliens, while praising Alien 3, Battle Beyond the Stars, and Tri-Star's Godzilla (failing, by his own admission, to comprehend why Godzilla fans didn't like it). And, as noted by the others below, his criticisms often seemed inconsistent, praising a quality in one film (such as its campiness) that he criticized in another. Of course, that his opinions were different than mine doesn't mean they were wrong. But I soon decided that for me, at least, this was not the guide I was looking for.

This work provides an A-Z historical review of science fiction in the cinema from the earliest experiments in silent film in the 1890s to the most recent blockbusters. Each of the 1300 entries includes the film's vital statistics - title, year released, director, screenwriter, cast, studio, and running time - along with a summary of the film and a critique. Select entries contain additional information, such as anecdotes on the making of the film provided by the cast and crew. It includes a list of science fiction films that have been nominated for an Academy Award - including those that have won the coveted Oscar. The reference also contains an interview with Frank Herbert, author of Dune, regarding the film adaptation of his landmark novel.

From BooklistOne wonders if the world is in need of yet another science fiction encyclopedia, be it covering film, television, or literature. Yet it is hard to fault this offering from Facts On File. In spite of some rather dubious additions to make the work appeal to the science fiction market (an off-putting introduction by Star Trek's William Shatner and an interview with Frank Herbert discussing the first movie adaptation of Dune,) it provides a basic

overview of the science fiction movie genre. The main part consists of alphabetically arranged entries for more than 1,300 theatrical-release science fiction movies. Some basic credits are included, as well as the availability of the title on video, DVD, or laser disc. Then follows a synopsis and the author's opinions of the movie's watchability, validity as science fiction, and overall contribution to the genre. There is no standard length, with some entries earning two or three columns depending on their importance. The author, a film critic, makes no apologies for the fact that the opinions are his and his alone. The work tries to include "as many movies as possible." It opens with an entry on the horrendous Abbott and Costello Go to Mars (1953) and closes with Z.P.G. (for zero population growth) (1971). In between are some of the gems of the genre, including Enemy from Space (Quatermass II) (1957), Metropolis (1926), and This Island Earth (1954). The entries are followed by four appendixes, one a useful list of literature adapted to the screen and another of science fiction at the Oscars. The other two, the aforementioned interview and a chart explaining the language created for Quest for Fire, add nothing. The book is a worthy addition to science fiction reference, but libraries with tight budgets might want to assess if their collections are already complete enough before purchasing.

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