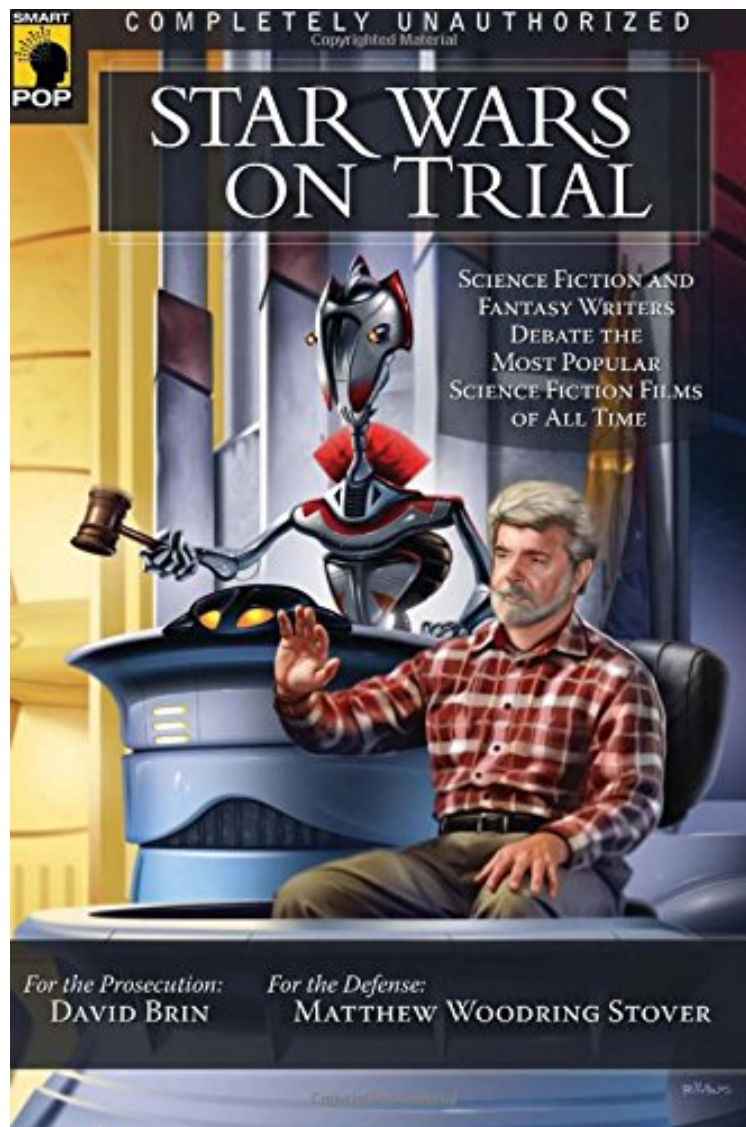


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Star Wars on Trial: Science Fiction And Fantasy Writers Debate the Most Popular Science Fiction Films of All Time (Smart Pop series)

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From Brand: Smart Pop : Star Wars on Trial: Science Fiction And Fantasy Writers Debate the Most Popular Science Fiction Films of All Time (Smart Pop series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Star Wars on Trial: Science Fiction And Fantasy Writers Debate the Most Popular

Science Fiction Films of All Time (Smart Pop series):

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wicked piece of work
By Jessica Krucek
Allronix the Fanfic Mistress
If you like the SW universe and think it's fine as-is, don't get this. If you dislike the SW universe and share the opinions Dr. Brin expressed in his salon.com article - take a pass here. If you like the SW universe, but ever found yourself feeling a little disturbed by the implications of certain scenes or events in the movies, GET THIS. Brin gets WAY too caught up in delivering his panegyric about American society and humanist values, but that doesn't mean the man can't make a few valid shots. The grousing about whether SW belongs on the fantasy or SF shelf is ridiculous. It's like trying to argue if Firefly belongs on the SF or Western shelf. Ditto with the usual "death of the midlist" argument and "dumbing down SF" arguments that also undercut their argument they're populists who trust the common man (after all, the common man isn't paying attention to the REAL story. Furthermore, they read THOSE books, and not the ones who will Uplift - pun intentional - them). The upside is that Karen Traviss's essay is one of several hilarious rebuttals. Many of these arguments are like really good fanfic - they stretch the limits of that universe and make may out of the holes and bugs they find there. Some get really creative in explaining certain things - I'm thinking Brin's take on Yoda and Metzger's idea of the Jedi as more or less like Neo from the Matrix - exploiters of the universe's programming bugs. These guys don't go far into the Expanded U, so don't expect any debate on the Vong or the Ruusan events. If you wanted to pass this along to your fellow SW fans, though, I'm sure they'd love to expand it to those.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Literary criticism made palatable
By Julie W. Capell
I'm writing this review quite a few years after I read the book, but I remember it was extremely well-received by my sci-fi book club, giving us many topics to talk about. The book is comprised of a series of essays by many well-known sci-fi authors, organized around the conceit that they are arguing either for or against a particular charge that has been leveled against that most beloved of sci-fi franchises, Star Wars. Some of the authors present arguments that are just plain silly (yes, I'm talking about you, Robert Metzger) but most of them understand that the topics they have been given are bigger than Star Wars, existing as indictments of sci-fi as a genre. The charge that Star Wars is anti-Democratic and elitist had actually never occurred to me before reading this book, but once I read Keith R A DeCandido's argument I found myself reassessing much of sci-fi through this lens and realizing he had a very valid point. The essays on women in Star Wars were another high point. The essay by Jeanne Cavelos, "How the Rebel Princess and the Virgin Queen became Marginalized and Powerless" was the best in the book. In it, Cavelos makes a convincing case that Leia, who starts out as a powerful leader of the rebellion, very quickly is relegated to the submissive and powerless role of victim while the men are cast as her rescuers. This is a perennial problem, not just in science fiction, but in most Western literature and cinema and is a point worth discussing. This essay changed the way I read most books and should be required reading in every women's literature class. But I don't want to give the impression that this book was a serious, hard slog through the marsh of literary criticism. There are many laugh-out-loud moments, such as this one from Jeanne Cavelos' essay: "If Leia has a 'bad feeling' about Cloud City, then she should investigate, not change her clothes and braid her hair." Another of my favorite quotes comes from John C. Wright's "May the Midichlorians be with You," in which Wright states that there is neither ethics nor religion in Star Wars. Instead, he makes the case that the Force "is for doing super-ninja-leaps with Way Cool psychokinetic powers." In another excellent essay, "Star Wars as Anime," Bruce Bethke points out that Lucas borrowed from so many sources, from Buck Rogers to the Hidden Fortress, that you can find any influence you are looking for. "For example, the story of the original movie can also be summarized as, 'A restless young boy chafes at life on the farm, until he meets a wizard and is swept away to a wondrous land where he meets some munchkins, a tin man, a cowardly lion and Harrison Ford as the scarecrow.'" Serious readers of science fiction will find a lot to think and argue about in this ingenious book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very amusing
By Karen Silver
Loved that it was amusing and incorporated much SF history. David Brin is great. The best part is the feminist argument about Princess Leia and Queen Amidala.

Debates on the authenticity of the Star Wars franchise and the hero-or-villain status of George Lucas are at the heart of these essays by bestselling science-fiction authors. The incredible popularity of the movies has led to the formation of strong emotions within the science fiction community on the strengths and flaws of the films, exemplified here by David Brin's attacks and Matthew Woodring Stover's defense of the movies. This intense examination of the epic works addresses a broad range of issues from politics, religion, and the saga's overall logic to the impact of the series on bookshelf space as well as science-fiction film. The question Is George Lucas a hero for bringing science fiction to a mass audience or a villain who doesn't understand the genre he's working for? is discussed before a final "Judge's Verdict" on the greatness or weakness of the franchise is reached.

About the Author
David Brin is the author of 15 novels, including *Earth*, *Startide Rising*, and *The Uplift War*, and numerous short stories. He is the recipient of three Hugo Awards and one Nebula Award. He lives in Encinitas, CA.
Matthew Woodring Stover is the author of the film novelization *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*, as well as *Blade of*

Tyshalle and Star Wars: Shatterpoint. He lives in Chicago, IL.