

Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction

By Scott Bukatman



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Scott Bukatman's *Terminal Identity*—referring to both the site of the termination of the conventional "subject" and the birth of a new subjectivity constructed at the computer terminal or television screen--puts to rest any lingering doubts of the significance of science fiction in contemporary cultural studies. Demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge, both of the history of science fiction narrative from its earliest origins, and of cultural theory and philosophy, Bukatman redefines the nature of human identity in the Information Age. Drawing on a wide range of contemporary theories of the postmodern—including Fredric Jameson, Donna Haraway, and Jean Baudrillard—Bukatman begins with the proposition that Western culture is suffering a crisis brought on by advanced electronic technologies. Then in a series of chapters richly supported by analyses of literary texts, visual arts, film, video, television, comics, computer games, and graphics, Bukatman takes the reader on an odyssey that traces the postmodern subject from its current crisis, through its close encounters with technology, and finally to new self-recognition. This new "virtual subject," as Bukatman defines it, situates the human and the technological as coexistent, codependent, and mutally defining.

Synthesizing the most provocative theories of postmodern culture with a truly encyclopedic treatment of the relevant media, this volume sets a new standard in the study of science fiction—a category that itself may be redefined in light of this work. Bukatman not only offers the most detailed map to date of the intellectual terrain of postmodern technology studies—he arrives at new frontiers, providing a propitious launching point for further inquiries into the relationship of electronic technology and culture.



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Editorial Review

Review

"A major addition to the critical study of science fiction. . . . [Bukatman's] analyses of the tropes and metaphors found in recent SF illuminate key areas of concern for postmodernism generally."—**Larry McCaffery**, editor of *Storming the Reality Studio: A Casebook of Cyberpunk and Postmodern Fiction*

"Scott Bukatman is a smart man who has been thinking hard and paying a lot of attention. People should listen to him."—**Bruce Sterling**, author of *The Hacker Crackdown:Law and Disorder on the Electronic Frontier*

"This book should appeal to . . . anyone in the humanities disciplines working within the discourses of postmodernism. The scholarship is absolutely superior."—**Vivian Sobchack**, author of *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film*

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About the Author

Scott Bukatman is Associate Professor of Art and Art History at Stanford University. He is the author of *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction*, published by Duke University Press.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mark Carter:

The reason why? Because this Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will zap you with the secret this inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such incredible way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book have got such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking means. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

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