

Televisions Second Golden Age

This is an insider's tour, touching on the network's dizzying decision-making process, and the artists who have revolutionized the medium.

As American television continues to garner considerable esteem, rivalling the seventh art in its "cinematic" aesthetics and the complexity of its narratives, one aspect of its development has been relatively unexamined. While film has long acknowledged its tendency to adapt, an ability that contributed to its status as narrative art (capable of translating canonical texts onto the screen), television adaptations have seemingly been relegated to the miniseries or classic serial. From remakes and reboots to transmedia storytelling, loose adaptations or adaptations which last but a single episode, the recycling of pre-existing narrative is a practice that is just as common in television as in film, and this text seeks to rectify that oversight, examining series from M*A*S*H to Game of Thrones, Pride and Prejudice to Castle.

Traces the history of broadcasting and the influence developments in broadcasting have had over our social, cultural and economic practices. Examining the broadcasting traditions of the UK and USA, 'The Television History Book' make connections between events and tendencies that both unite and differentiate these national broadcasting traditions. Documenting the efforts of one grassroots organization that made a difference, Dorothy Swanson's story extends beyond the realms of television to demonstrate the rewards of making the voice of public opinion heard.

(FAQ). TV Finales FAQ is the first book devoted exclusively to television's most memorable series finales. From Mary Richards' heartfelt goodbye to the WJM-TV newsroom in the classic finale of The Mary Tyler Moore Show to the puzzling conclusion of the enigmatic adventure series, Lost, to the tumultuous final hours in the life of Breaking Bad's Walter White, TV Finales FAQ takes an up close, insightful, and entertaining look at the most memorable final episodes of television's most popular prime time, daytime, and late night series. Crafting the final episode to a long-running television series can be challenging for producers and writers who want to remain faithful to the show's characters and history, yet, at the same time, satisfy the high expectations of its loyal fan base. TV Finales FAQ offers television viewers the inside story on the creation, broadcast, and aftermath of the most famous (and infamous) final episodes of over 50 television series from the 1960s through the present day. The book features such shows as Dexter, Roseanne, Will & Grace, X-Files, The Sopranos, and some classic talk and late-night programs such as The Oprah Winfrey Show and The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson, and many others.

In his seminal book "Television's Second Golden Age", Robert Thompson described quality TV as 'best defined by what it is not': 'it is not "regular" TV'. Audacious maybe, but his statement renewed debate on the meaning of this highly contentious term. Dealing primarily with the post-1996 era shaped by digital technologies and defined by consumer choice and brand marketing, this book brings together leading scholars, established journalists and experienced broadcasters working in the field of contemporary television to debate what we currently mean by quality TV. They go deep into contemporary American television fictions, from "The Sopranos" and "The West Wing", to "CSI" and "Lost" - innovative, sometimes controversial, always compelling dramas, which one scholar has described as 'now better than the movies!' But how do we understand the emergence of these kinds of fiction? Are they genuinely new? What does quality TV have to tell us about the state of today's television market? And is this a new Golden Age of quality TV? Original, often polemic, each chapter proposes new ways of thinking about and defining quality TV. There is a foreword from Robert Thompson, and heated dialogue between British and US television critics. Also included - and a great coup - are interviews with W. Snuffy Walden (scored "The West Wing" among others) and with David Chase ("The Sopranos" creator). "Quality TV" provides throughout groundbreaking and innovative theoretical and critical approaches to studying television and for understanding the current - and future - TV landscape.

This book examines how the iconic character Hannibal Lecter has been revised and redeveloped across different screen media texts. Hannibal "The Cannibal" Lecter has become one of Western culture's most influential and enduring models of monstrosity since his emergence in 1981 in Red Dragon, Thomas Harris' first Lecter book. Lecter is now at the centre of an extensive cross-mediated mythology, the most recent incarnation of which is Bryan Fuller's television program, Hannibal (NBC, 2013-2015). This acclaimed series is the focus of Hannibal Lecter's Forms, Formulations, and Transformations, which examines how Fuller's program harnesses the iconic character to experiment with traditional boundaries of genre, medium, taste, and narrative form. Featuring chapters from established and emerging screen and popular culture scholars from around the world, the book outlines how the show operates as a striking experiment with televisual form and formula. The book also explores how this experimentation is embodied by the boundary-defying character, the savage cannibalistic serial killer, practicing psychiatrist, and cultured art enthusiast, Hannibal Lecter. The chapters in this book were originally published as a special issue of the journal, Quarterly Review of Film and Video. Seeing It on Television: Televisuality in the Contemporary US 'High-end' Series investigates new categories of high-end drama and explores the appeal of programmes from Netflix, Sky Atlantic/HBO, National Geographic, FX and Cinemax. An investigation of contemporary US Televisuality provides insight into the appeal of upscale programming beyond facts about its budget, high production values and/or feature cinematography. Rather, this book focuses on how the construction of meaning often relies on cultural discourse, production histories, as well as on tone, texture or performance, which establishes the locus of engagement and value within the series. Max Sexton and Dominic Lees discuss how complex production histories lie behind the rise of the US high-end series, a form that reflects industrial changes and the renegotiation of formal strategies. They reveal how the involvement of many different people in the production process, based on new relationships of creative authority, complicates our understanding of 'original content'. This affects the construction of stylistics and the viewing strategies required by different shows. The cultural, as well as industrial, strategies of recent television drama are explored in The Young Pope, The Knick, Stranger Things, Mars,

Fargo, The Leftovers, Boardwalk Empire, and Vinyl.

A revealing look at the shows that helped TV emerge as the signature art form of the twenty-first century In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the landscape of television began an unprecedented transformation. While the networks continued to chase the lowest common denominator, a wave of new shows on cable channels dramatically stretched television's narrative inventiveness, emotional resonance, and artistic ambition. Combining deep reportage with cultural analysis and historical context, Brett Martin recounts the rise and inner workings of a genre that represents not only a new golden age for TV, but also a cultural watershed. *Difficult Men* features extensive interviews with all the major players, including David Chase, David Simon, David Milch, and Alan Ball; in addition to other writers, executives, directors and actors. Martin delivers never-before-heard story after story, revealing how cable television became a truly significant and influential part of our culture. *True Detective: Critical Essays on the HBO Series* includes a breadth of scholarly chapters that cross disciplinary boundaries, interrogate a range of topics, and contribute to critical debates surrounding representations of gender, depictions of place, and narrative forms in the HBO series *True Detective*.

When television sets were still a luxurious novelty, manufacturers had to sell the new technological wonders by emphasizing their most glamorous, comforting, and appealing attributes. *Window to the Future* is a nostalgic, humorously prescient look at the ads and graphics that introduced TV to a consumer public who would make it a fixture in the home within a few short years. From fanciful visions in early radio magazines to the lifestyle ads in the heyday of the "talking picture box," *Window to the Future* brims with images that projected idealized scenarios of the television as a treasured addition to the household. Celebrities who would come to dominate the medium (Walt Disney and Ronald Reagan not least) endorsed the latest Westinghouses and Zeniths, while illustrations of dapper men and elegant women hosting cocktail hour in front of their new black-and-white console projected the party trend of the future. More than 150 print advertisements, magazine covers, and catalog images show the evolution of our complex relationship with this ubiquitous domestic appliance and a pixellated trip down memory lane of television's youthful innocence.

With Amusement for All is a sweeping interpretative history of American popular culture. Providing deep insights into various individuals, events, and movements, LeRoy Ashby explores the development and influence of popular culture -- from minstrel shows to hip-hop, from the penny press to pulp magazines, from the NBA to NASCAR, and much in between. By placing the evolution of popular amusement in historical context, Ashby illuminates the complex ways in which popular culture both reflects and transforms American society. He demonstrates a recurring pattern in democratic culture by showing how groups and individuals on the cultural and social periphery have profoundly altered the nature of mainstream entertainment. The mainstream has repeatedly co-opted and sanitized marginal trends in a process that continues to shift the limits of acceptability. Ashby describes how social control and notions of public morality often vie with the bold, erotic, and sensational as entrepreneurs finesse the vagaries of the market and shape public appetites. Ashby argues that popular culture is indeed a democratic art, as it entertains the masses, provides opportunities for powerless and disadvantaged individuals to succeed, and responds to changing public hopes, fears, and desires. However, it has also served to reinforce prejudices, leading to discrimination and violence. Accordingly, the study of popular culture reveals the often dubious contours of the American dream. *With Amusement for All* never loses sight of pop culture's primary goal: the buying and selling of fun. Ironically, although popular culture has drawn an enormous variety of amusements from grassroots origins, the biggest winners are most often sprawling corporations with little connection to a movement's original innovators.

Although Film Studies has successfully (re)turned attention to matters of style and interpretation, its sibling discipline has left the territory uncharted - until now. The question of how television operates on a stylistic level has been critically underexplored, despite being fundamental to our viewing experience. This significant new work redresses a vital gap in Television Studies by engaging with the stylistic dynamics of TV; exploring the aesthetic properties and values of both the medium and particular types of output (specific programmes); and raising important questions about the way we judge television as both cultural artifact and art form. *Television Aesthetics and Style* provides a unique and vital intervention in the field, raising key questions about television's artistic properties and possibilities. Through a series of case-studies by internationally renowned scholars, the collection takes a radical step forward in understanding TV's stylistic achievements.

In its exploration of some of the most influential, popular, or critically acclaimed television dramas since the year 2000, this book documents how modern television dramas reflect our society through their complex narratives about prevailing economic, political, security, and social issues.

- Identifies and explores connections between critically acclaimed television dramas and real life in the 21st century
- Documents the qualities of television drama series since the turn of the 21st century in the latest era in television that some refer to as the "third golden age of television"
- Offers accessible analysis of popular and current television dramas relevant to educators and students in the fields of media studies, television, and popular culture as well as anyone who enjoys modern television drama

The first and only complete, fully authorized "biography" of one of TV's most beloved sitcoms, including the first complete viewer's guide to all 158 episodes, as well as special behind-the-scenes trivia and a full chapter concordance. 50 black and white photos.

The history of prime-time television in the United States.

Legitimizing Television: Media Convergence and Cultural Status explores how and why television is gaining a new level of cultural respectability in the 21st century. Once looked down upon as a "plug-in drug" offering little redeeming social or artistic value, television is now said to be in a creative renaissance, with critics hailing the rise of Quality series such as *Mad Men* and *30 Rock*. Likewise, DVDs and DVRs, web video, HDTV, and mobile devices have shifted the longstanding conception of television as a household appliance toward a new understanding of TV as a sophisticated, high-tech gadget. Newman and Levine argue that television's growing prestige emerges alongside the convergence of media at technological, industrial, and experiential levels. Television is permitted to rise in respectability once it is connected to more highly valued media and audiences. Legitimation works by denigrating "ordinary" television associated with the past, distancing the television of the present from the feminized and mass audiences assumed to be inherent to the "old" TV. It is no coincidence that the most validated programming and technologies of the convergence era are associated with a more privileged viewership. The legitimization of television articulates the medium with the masculine over the feminine, the elite over the mass, reinforcing cultural hierarchies that have long perpetuated inequalities of gender and class. *Legitimizing Television* urges readers to move beyond the question of taste—whether TV is "good" or "bad"—and to focus instead on the cultural, political, and economic issues at stake in television's transformation in the digital age.

Regarded by his contemporaries as one of television's premier comedy creators, Nat Hiken was the driving creative force behind the classic 1950s and 1960s series *Sgt. Bilko* and the hilarious *Car 54, Where Are You?* *King of the Half Hour*, the first biography of Hiken, draws extensively on exclusive first-hand interviews with some of the well-known TV personalities who worked with him, such as Carol Burnett, Fred Gwynne, Alan King, Al Lewis, and Herbert Ross. The book focuses on Hiken's immense talent and remarkable career, from his early days in radio as Fred Allen's head writer to his multiple Emmy-winning years as writer-producer-director on television. In addition to re-establishing Hiken's place

in broadcast history, biographer, David Everitt places him in the larger story of early New York broadcasting. Hiken's career paralleled the rise and fall of television's Golden Age. He embodied the era's best qualities—craftsmanship, a commitment to excellence and a distinctive, uproariously funny and quirky sense of humor. At the same time, his uncompromising independence prevented him from surviving the changes in the industry that brought the Golden Age to an end in the 1960s. His experiences bring a fresh and until now unknown perspective to the medium's most extraordinary period.

This book revisits and celebrates the cultural legacy of the cult television series *Northern Exposure*. With a focus on its production history, fan culture, and individual episodes, it reveals the show's profound influence and argues its status as the prototype contemporary television series.

With twelve original essays that characterize truly international ecocriticisms, *New International Voices in Ecocriticism* presents a compendium of ecocritical approaches, including ecocritical theory, ecopoetics, ecocritical analyses of literary, cultural, and musical texts (especially those not commonly studied in mainstream ecocriticism), and new critical vistas on human-nonhuman relations, postcolonial subjects, material selves, gender, and queer ecologies. It develops new perspectives on literature, culture, and the environment. The essays, written by contributors from the United States, Canada, Germany, Turkey, Spain, China, India, and South Africa, cover novels, drama, autobiography, music, and poetry, mixing traditional and popular forms. Popular culture and the production and circulation of cultural imaginaries feature prominently in this volume—how people view their world and the manner in which they share their perspectives, including the way these perspectives challenge each other globally and locally. In this sense the book also probes borders, border transgression, and border permeability. By offering diverse ecocritical approaches, the essays affirm the significance and necessity of international perspectives in environmental humanities, and thus offer unique responses to environmental problems and that, in some sense, affect many beginning and established scholars.

Even though it's frequently asserted that we are living in a golden age of scripted television, television as a medium is still not taken seriously as an artistic art form, nor has the stigma of television as "chewing gum for the mind" really disappeared. Philosopher Martin Shuster argues that television is the modern art form, full of promise and urgency, and in *New Television*, he offers a strong philosophical justification for its importance. Through careful analysis of shows including *The Wire*, *Justified*, and *Weeds*, among others; and European and Anglophone philosophers, such as Stanley Cavell, Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, and John Rawls; Shuster reveals how various contemporary television series engage deeply with aesthetic and philosophical issues in modernism and modernity. What unifies the aesthetic and philosophical ambitions of new television is a commitment to portraying and exploring the family as the last site of political possibility in a world otherwise bereft of any other sources of traditional authority; consequently, at the heart of new television are profound political stakes.

Despite the increasing number of popular and celebrated sports documentaries in contemporary culture, such as ESPN's 30 for 30 series, there has been little scholarly engagement with this genre. Sports documentaries, like all films, do not merely showcase objective reality but rather construct specific versions of sporting culture that serve distinct economic, industrial, institutional, historical, and sociopolitical ends ripe for criticism, contextualization, and exploration. *Sporting Realities* brings together a diverse group of scholars to probe the sports documentary's cultural meanings, aesthetic practices, industrial and commercial dimensions, and political contours across historical, social, medium-specific, and geographic contexts. It considers and critiques the sports documentary's visible and powerful position in contemporary culture and forges novel connections between the study of nonfiction media and sport.

Television in the Antenna Age is a brief, accessible, and engaging overview of the medium's history and development in the US. Integrating three major concerns--television as an industry, a technology, and an art—the book is a basic primer on the complex, fascinating, and often overlooked story of television and its impact on American life. Covers the entire history of American television, from its urban, middle-class beginnings in the late 40s, to the contemporary impact of new technologies and consolidated corporate. Includes interview segments with industry insiders, pictures, and sidebars to illustrate important figures, trends, and events

This textbook for students and teachers of media studies in higher education takes the reader beyond introductory material. This is a collection with a web-enhanced instructional design built into its format.

Difficult Women on Television Drama analyses select case studies from international TV dramas to examine the unresolved feminist issues they raise or address: equal labor force participation, the demand for sexual pleasure and freedom, opposition to sexual and domestic violence, and the need for intersectional approaches. Drawing on examples from *The Killing*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Big Little Lies*, *Wentworth*, *Outlander*, *Westworld*, *Being Mary Jane*, *Queen Sugar*, *Vida*, and other television dramas with a focus on complex female characters, this book illustrates how female creative control in key production roles (direct authorship) together with industrial imperatives and a conducive cultural context (indirect authorship) are necessary to produce feminist texts. Placed within the larger context of a rise in feminist activism and political participation by women; the growing embrace of a feminist identity; and the ascendance of post-feminism, this book reconsiders the unfinished nature of feminist struggle(s) and suggests the need for a broader sweep of economic change. This book is a must-read for scholars of media and communication studies; television and film studies; cultural studies; American studies; sociology of gender and sexualities; women and gender studies; and international film, media and cinema studies.

Television today is better than ever. From *The Sopranos* to *Breaking Bad*, *Sex and the City* to *Girls*, and *Modern Family* to *Louie*, never has so much quality programming dominated our screens. Exploring how we got here, acclaimed TV critic David Bianculli traces the evolution of the classic TV genres, among them the sitcom, the crime show, the miniseries, the soap opera, the Western, the animated series, the medical drama, and the variety show. In each genre he selects five key examples of the form to illustrate its continuities and its dramatic departures. Drawing on exclusive and in-depth interviews with many of the most famed auteurs in television history, Bianculli shows how the medium has evolved into the premier form of visual narrative art. Includes interviews with: MEL BROOKS, MATT GROENING, DAVID CHASE, KEVIN SPACEY, AMY SCHUMER, VINCE GILLIGAN, AARON SORKIN, MATTHEW WEINER, JUDD APATOW, LOUIS C.K., DAVID MILCH, DAVID E. KELLEY, JAMES L. BROOKS, LARRY DAVID, KEN BURNS, LARRY WILMORE, AND MANY, MANY MORE

Richly researched and engaging, *The Columbia History of American Television* tracks the growth of TV into a convergent technology, a global industry, a social catalyst, a viable art form, and a complex and dynamic reflection of the American mind and character. Renowned media historian Gary R. Edgerton follows the technological progress and increasing cultural relevance of television from its prehistory (before 1947) to the Network Era (1948-1975) and the Cable Era (1976-1994). He considers the remodeling of television's look and purpose during World War II; the gender, racial, and ethnic components of its early broadcasts and audiences; its transformation of postwar America; and its function in the political life of the country. In conclusion, Edgerton takes a discerning look at our current Digital Era and the new forms of instantaneous communication that continue to change America's social, political, and economic landscape.

This book explores how to understand the international appeal of Danish television drama and Nordic Noir in the 2010s. Focusing on production and distribution as well as the series and their reception, the chapters analyse how this small nation production culture was suddenly regarded as an example of best practice in the international television industries, and how the distribution and branding of particular series – such as *Forbrydelsen/The Killing*, *Borgen* and *Bron/The Bridge* – led to dedicated audiences around the world. Discussing issues such as cultural proximity, transnationalism and glocalisation, the chapters investigate the complex interplays between the national and international in the television industries and the global lessons learned from the way in which screen ideas, production frameworks and public service content from Denmark suddenly managed to travel widely. The book builds on extensive empirical material and case studies conducted as part of the transnational research project 'What Makes Danish Television Drama Travel?'

What becomes of life, experience, and truth in the hyperconsumeristic culture of the twenty-first century? What happens to the phenomenological call to go "back to the things themselves" when these things, to an ever greater degree, involve a televised life that is not ours to live, celebrities who are utterly like us yet infinitely untouchable, and uncannily pluripotent electronic gadgets? Combining sustained philosophical inquiry with fragmentary and experimental theoretical interventions, Anthony Curtis Adler rethinks Marxist materialism and the Heideggerian project in terms of the singular experiences of late capitalism. In doing so, he reveals how the disarticulation of life via the commodity fetish demands at once a new notion of phenomenological method and an ontology oriented toward the radical contingency of being itself as transcendental ground.

This book examines the process of transnationalization of Latin American television industries. Drawing upon six representative case studies spanning the subcontinent's vast and diverse geo-political and cultural landscape, the book offers a unique exploration of the ongoing formation of interrelated cultural, technological, and political landscapes, from the mid-1980s to the present. The chapters analyse the international circulation of the genres and formats of entertainment television across the subcontinent to explore the main driving forces propelling the production and consumption of television contents in the region, and what we can learn about the cultural and social identities of Latin American audiences following the journey of genres, formats, and media personalities beyond their own national borders. Taking a contemporary interdisciplinary approach to the study of transnational television industries, this book will be of significant interest to scholars and students of television and film studies, communication studies, Latin American studies, global media studies, and media and cultural industries.

This collective book analyzes seriality as a major phenomenon increasingly connecting audiovisual narratives (cinematic films and television series) in the 20th and 21st centuries. The book historicizes and contextualizes the notion of seriality, combining narratological, aesthetic, industrial, philosophical, and political perspectives, showing how seriality as a paradigm informs media convergence and resides at the core of cinema and television history. By associating theoretical considerations and close readings of specific works, as well as diachronic and synchronic approaches, this volume offers a complex panorama of issues related to seriality including audience engagement, intertextuality and transmediality, cultural legitimacy, authorship, and medium specificity in remakes, adaptations, sequels, and reboots. Written by a team of international scholars, this book highlights a diversity of methodologies that will be of interest to scholars and doctoral students across disciplinary areas such as media studies, film studies, literature, aesthetics, and cultural studies. It will also interest students attending classes on serial audiovisual narratives and will appeal to fans of the series it addresses, such as *Fargo*, *Twin Peaks*, *The Hunger Games*, *Bates Motel*, and *Sherlock*.

Over the past two decades, new technologies, changing viewer practices, and the proliferation of genres and channels has transformed American television. One of the most notable impacts of these shifts is the emergence of highly complex and elaborate forms of serial narrative, resulting in a robust period of formal experimentation and risky programming rarely seen in a medium that is typically viewed as formulaic and convention bound. *Complex TV* offers a sustained analysis of the poetics of television narrative, focusing on how storytelling has changed in recent years and how viewers make sense of these innovations. Through close analyses of key programs, including *The Wire*, *Lost*, *Breaking Bad*, *The Sopranos*, *Veronica Mars*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, and *Mad Men* the book traces the emergence of this narrative mode, focusing on issues such as viewer comprehension, transmedia storytelling, serial authorship, character change, and cultural evaluation. Developing a television-specific set of narrative theories, *Complex TV* argues that television is the most vital and important storytelling medium of our time.

Ever since HBO's slogan "It's Not TV, It's HBO" launched in 1996, so-called quality television has reached a new level of marketing, recognition, and indeed quality. With other networks imitating the formula, the "HBO effect" triggered a wave of creative output. This turn to quality set off two shifts: (a) Contemporary television staged an international resurgence of the auteur, and (b) America transformed into an "on-demand nation." The chapters in this volume analyze new television lifestyles including marginalized perspectives, fan participation, and an emerging nostalgia correlated with trash aesthetics.

Religion and popular culture is a fast-growing field that spans a variety of disciplines. This volume offers the first real survey of the field to date and provides a guide for the work of future scholars. It explores: key issues of definition and of methodology religious encounters with popular culture across media, material culture and space, ranging from videogames and social networks to cooking and kitsch, architecture and national monuments representations of religious traditions in the media and popular culture, including important non-Western spheres such as Bollywood This Companion will serve as an enjoyable and informative resource for students and a stimulus to future scholarly work. For the past several years, critics have been describing the present era as both "the end of television" and one of "peak TV," referring to the unprecedented quality and volume and the waning of old technologies, formats, and habits. Television's projections and reflections have significantly contributed to who we are individually and culturally. From *Rabbit Ears* to the *Rabbit Hole: A Life with Television* reveals the reflections of a TV scholar and fan analyzing how her life as a consumer of television has intersected with the cultural and technological evolution of the medium itself. In a narrative bridging television studies, memoir, and comic, literary nonfiction, Kathleen Collins takes readers alongside her from the 1960s through to the present, reminiscing and commiserating about some of what has transpired over the last five decades in the US, in media culture, and in what constitutes a shared cultural history. In a personal, critical, and entertaining meditation on her relationship with TV—as avid consumer and critic—she considers the concept and institution of TV as well as reminiscing about beloved, derided, or completely forgotten content. She describes the shifting role of TV in her life, in a progression that is far from unique, but rather representative of a largely collective experience. It affords a parallel coming of age, that of the author and her coprotagonist, television. By turns playful and serious, wry and poignant, it is a testament to the profound and positive effect TV can have on a life and, by extrapolation, on the culture.

This book explores the relationship between fictional television and American world politics in the period from 9/11 through to the presidency

of Donald J. Trump. This period comprises a second golden age for fictional TV. The book therefore explores some of the best TV of all time across two decades of heightened political controversy.

No generation eludes definition as much as Generation X. Rob Owens opens with a history of network and cable television since the birth of Generation X, but goes on to explore the symbiotic relationship between television and this largely misunderstood age group. From the first megahit *The Brady Bunch* to today's *Friends*, Owen unflinchingly describes the boob tube as the ubiquitous babysitter for millions of young people. Television, Owen maintains, consumes innocence as viewers encounter countless episodes of society's woes, from political strife and environmental decimation to everyday violence and crime.

This book shows how the unique characteristics of traditionally differentiated media continue to determine narrative despite the recent digital convergence of media technologies. The author argues that media are now each largely defined by distinctive industrial practices that continue to preserve their identities and condition narrative production. Furthermore, the book demonstrates how a given medium's variability in institutional and technological contexts influences diverse approaches to storytelling. By connecting US film, television, comic book and video game industries to their popular fictional characters and universes; including *Star Wars*, *Batman*, *Game of Thrones* and *Grand Theft Auto*; the book identifies how differences in industrial practice between media inform narrative production. This book is a must read for students and scholars interested in transmedia storytelling.

"Television shows have now eclipsed films as the premier form of visual narrative art of our time. This new book by one of our finest critics explains--historically, in depth, and with interviews with the celebrated creators themselves--how the art of must-see/binge-watch television evolved. Darwin had his theory of evolution, and David Bianculli has his. Bianculli's theory has to do with the concept of quality television: what it is and, crucially, how it got that way. In tracing the evolutionary history of our progress toward a Platinum Age of Television--our age, the era of *The Sopranos* and *Breaking Bad* and *Mad Men* and *The Wire* and *Homeland* and *Girls*--he focuses on the development of the classic TV genres, among them the sitcom, the crime show, the miniseries, the soap opera, the western, the animated series and the late night talk show. In each genre, he selects five key examples of the form, tracing its continuities and its dramatic departures and drawing on exclusive and in-depth interviews with many of the most famed auteurs in television history. Television has triumphantly come of age artistically; David Bianculli's book is the first to date to examine, in depth and in detail and with a keen critical and historical sense, how this inspiring development came about"--

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