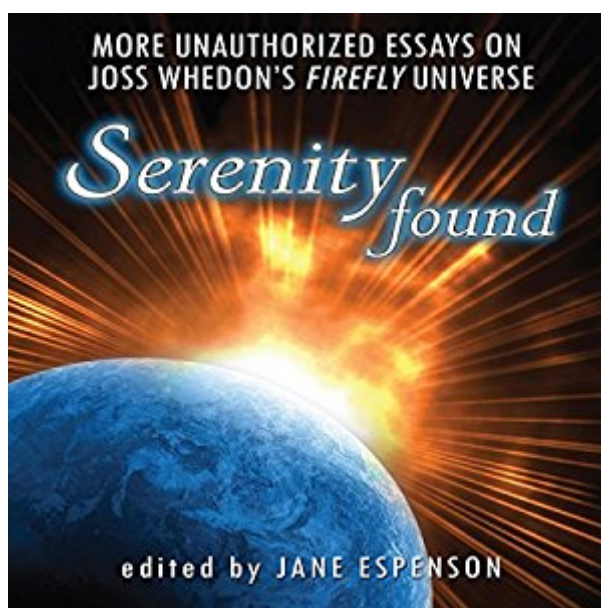


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Serenity Found: More Unauthorized Essays On Joss Whedon's Firefly Universe



Synopsis

A lot has happened since Finding Serenity. We learned River's secret; Mal took on the Alliance. Our favorite crew became Big Damn Heroes. And the Browncoats proved that hard work, passion, and a little fan coordination can do the impossible. Serenity Found takes the contents of Finding Serenity even further, exploring not just the show but the events of the film as well, to create an anthology that's even more thought-provoking, fascinating, and far-thinking than its predecessor. Acclaimed science fiction author Orson Scott Card lauds Serenity as film sci-fi finally done right Writer and comedian Natalie Haynes reveals the real feminist savvy of the Firefly universe: the girls get the guns and the gags Pop culture critic Michael Marano connects damaged, ass-kicking River to the other weaponized women of the Whedonverse Multiverse executive producer Corey Bridges explains why the world of Firefly is the perfect setting for an MMORPG Mutant Enemy's visual effects wizard Loni Peristere relates what he's learned from Joss about telling stories, and tells a story of his own about Serenity's design Television Without Pity recapper Jacob Clifton frames Serenity as a parable about media: how it controls us, how we can control it and how to separate the signal from the noise And Nathan Fillion, Firefly and Serenity's Captain Malcolm Reynolds, shares his affinity for Mal and his love of Mal's ship and crew.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love collections of essays about pop culture phenomena, and Serenity/Firefly is one of the greatest sci-fi cult phenomena since the original Star Trek. Moreover, Serenity Found offers readers a wide

variety. Some of the essays explore philosophical themes in the show. Others focus on character development. We also essays from writers, special effects artists, and actors involved in the show sharing their experiences, including Nathan Fillion himself. Overall, there's something for everybody here. Personally, I thought the essays that explored the characters were the most interesting. They provide interesting insights about the crew of the Serenity. Of those, the essay about Shepherd Book and faith is fascinating and even provides hints about Shepherd's past. That said, I think the collection would have benefitted from a bit more editorial control. Some of the essays are sloppy. Orson Scott Card's essay is particularly bad, all praise without any sort of analysis or insight. Card trashes all other sci-fi but doesn't really explain why Serenity/Firefly is better. As I tell my students, it's crucial to address strong counterarguments and make a focused point. Some of the other essays seem like they were written hastily without much thought (the Libertarian essay goes to such absurd extremes I laughed out loud). Overall, this book is definitely worthwhile for Serenity/Firefly fans who want to think more about the series. Especially for the current Kindle price, which is less than a bag of chips at an airport.

"Serenity Found" is a mixed bag of essays looking at "Firefly," a space-western television series that was unveiled a decade ago and lasted a half-season, and "Serenity," the film sequel to the tv series. While the show was axed a decade ago, it retains a very loyal following due to its well-written scripts, original settings and some excellent characters. While "Firefly" does not rank as one of Joss Whedon's more commercially successful outings, the fact that there remain intense fans of the show a decade later reveals its worth. These essays will appeal to fans of the show but readers outside that sub-group should not bother with it. There are some interesting pieces from fans of the show and crew members who worked on it. There is a fun essay by actor Nathan Fillion who played the role of the lead character. Orson Scott Card, an excellent sci-fi novelist, offers his musings on the show with a few funny but gratuitous jabs at Star Wars and Star Trek that seemed a little out of place--especially coming from the author who penned a novel based on the James Cameron film "The Abyss." There are some excellent essays, including one by Evelyn Vaughn, comparing the frontier setting in "Firefly" to life in America after the Civil War. A solid collection of essays to be sure--but not one that will appeal to readers outside of die-hard "Firefly" fans. While I am a fan of the show, I found a certain assumption in some of the essays to be grating. They were preaching to the converted and bemoaning the show's and the movie's fate and made no effort to reach out to new viewers. Instead of being inspired to watch once again one of the great shows in television history, these essays made me feel like I was at a funeral as writer after writer returned to the wailing wall.

Even the most passionate of "Firefly" fans might find this off putting. This book needed a bit more of a tone indicating the fondness of disappointed love--what I hope I have for the show--instead of more eulogies to entomb the show. Still, the most devout fans of the show will profit from this work and perhaps even enjoy it.

Jacob Clifton's work alone would have been enough to get me to buy this, but I ended up enjoying nearly the entire book, even more so than its predecessor, Finding Serenity, which contained the silly "Firefly is like the Tick" essay, the ludicrous "Joss Whedon isn't feminist enough because Zoe loves her husband and respects her boss" essay, and the offensive as hell "Joss Whedon can't possibly be a feminist, because no thinking man would be" essay. This second volume is better for following the movie, for one thing, giving the authors more of the full story to work with, whereas the first book had only the series with its unanswered questions to consider. There are still some weak points, such as the too-personal-to-be-terribly-interesting "Things my spouse and I argue about while watching Firefly" piece; and the script outline of 'Out of Gas' by a guy who thinks the structure should be laid out scene-by-scene to demonstrate how cool it is...that one really lacked a thesis; and the "admittedly I have a huge chip on my shoulder" exhortation to geeks to be proud of their geeky selves, in which it was actually suggested that David Krumholtz could be plausibly seen as other than hot....But there were really insightful essays outnumbering the ones that had me rolling my eyes and mouthing, "Blah blah blah," as I read. Jacob's was great, of course (I refer to him by his first name because I am a huge fan of his work and knew him only as Jacob of TWOP long before I learned his surname). There was a really thorough examination of the Libertarian ethics portrayed in Firefly; a thoughtful discussion of the Unification War in terms of its deliberate reflection of the American Civil War and even more carefully depicted differences from it; an in-depth look at many of Joss Whedon's female characters who have been essentially weaponized by meddling men; and several other really interesting takes on the Firefly 'verse that aren't for whatever reason leaping to mind right now. Both books could easily have been trimmed, and one big book might have included only the best of these essays rather than a hit-and-miss double collection. On the other hand, it's great to have new Firefly-related stuff to devour at intervals with the show and film in the past and no likely sequels on the horizon.

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