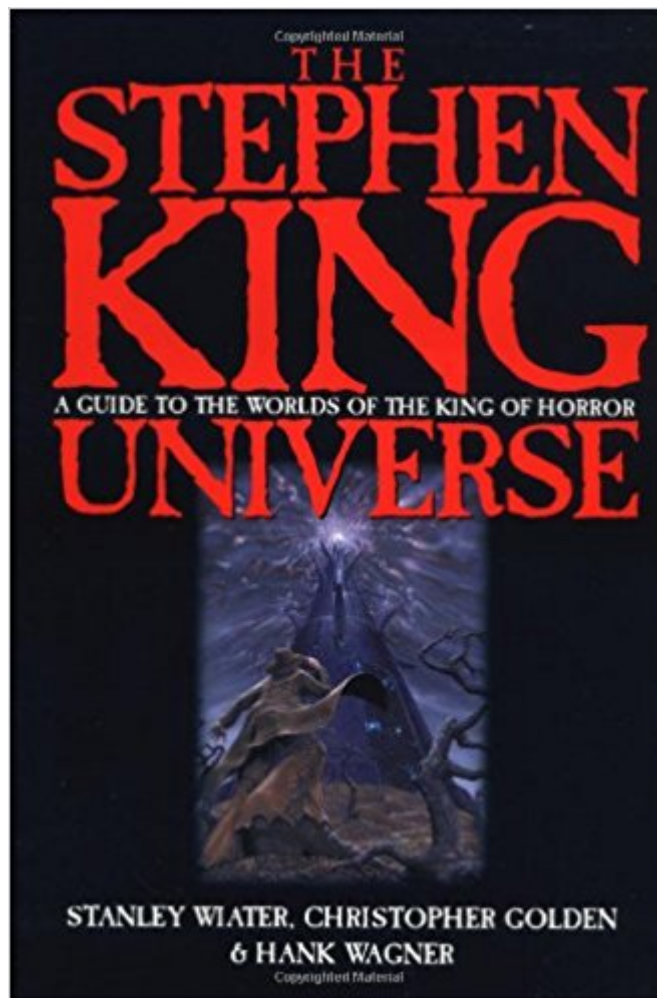


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The Stephen King Universe



Synopsis

"I am coming to understand that Roland's world actually contains all the others of my making"
--Stephen King
With those words, from *The Dark Tower: IV Wizard and Glass*, the world's most popular writer confirmed a suspicion long held by readers--that the myriad worlds and universes King has created are, in reality, one world, one universe. Here, for the first time ever is the guide to that universe, a thrilling road map and informative tour for new readers and diehard fans alike. *The Stephen King Universe* is the very first examination of all of King's fiction and the way in which its plots and characters, conflicts, and themes, intertwine. This definitive reference work examines his novels and short stories, as well as the motion pictures, miniseries, and teleplays that King has written. The authors spent three years discovering and tying together the threads that exist in King's fiction. Their insightful results will entertain and surprise readers new and old. Once you have read *The Stephen King Universe*, you will never read Stephen King the same way again

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Here is the Stephen King companion to end all Stephen King companions: *The Stephen King Universe: A Tale-by-Tale Examination of the Interconnected Elements in His Work*, by Stanley Wiater, Christopher Golden and Hank Wagner. The three authors bring their considerable expertise to a survey of the complete King fictional corpus, grouping novels and tales by setting and theme. An indispensable insider's guide to the influences on King, his plots and characters, TV and film adaptations and more, including 25 b&w photos. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Wiater and his coauthors, all writers deeply involved in sf and horror writing or criticism, here aim to show that King's stories are interconnected by theme or character and that the "Dark Tower series is the core of the Stephen King universe." In their investigation of linked themes, the authors limit themselves to King's published titles, including his early work only if a specific title has been published in a collection. Appendixes include a chronology of Stephen King's life and works, a bibliography of King's writings, a list of recommended web sites, recommended reading, and an index. Taking a different tack on King's corpus, admitted King fan Spignesi (The Complete Stephen King Encyclopedia, The Lost Work of Stephen King, and two Stephen King quiz books) specifies King's 101 best works and also lists all 553 works with publication status at the end of the volume. (His index was unavailable for review.) Like Wiater, Spignesi discusses story lines and main characters, also including little-known tidbits and a comment from King regarding each title. Both books include information about film adaptations with Spignesi listing the movie's cast and Wiater presenting movie reviews. Wiater also indicates when a story has been released in other formats. Both titles will appeal to serious King fans, but Wiater's will be an especially useful addition to academic resources on contemporary authors. Recommended for those libraries with a need for in-depth information on King and his work. Laurie Selwyn, San Antonio P.L., TX Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Received as described excellent condition.

I'm one of the co-authors, so I have nothing but good things to say about the book. Don't take my word for it, however. Publishers Weekly liked the SKU, and so did the Library Journal, among others. But my favorite comments so far come from noted King scholar Stephen J. Spignesi, author of THE COMPLETE STEPHEN KING ENCYCLOPEDIA, THE LOST WORK OF STEPHEN KING, and THE ESSENTIAL STEPHEN KING. I'd like to share them with you. Stephen Spignesi on the SKU: A thought occurred to me while reading THE STEPHEN KING UNIVERSE. It occurred to me that this book might be one of the single most important books about Stephen King ever written. Why? Because it not only proceeds from the assumption that King's work is worthy of intensive, comprehensive study, but it also puts his entire body of work within a specific context. It treats his lifetime of writing as a Master's Catalog of Art that can be looked at as a single entity, regardless of the varying degrees of excellence present in individual works. Beginning with the premise that all of King's work is intertwined in an intricate weave of overlapping narrative threads,

with the world of the DARK TOWER as the linchpin around which everything else orbits, Wiater, Golden, and Wagner carefully prove their point, in an entertaining, intriguing, and, thoroughly indisputable way. Is there another 20th/21st century writer whose work is worthy of such deconstruction? Of course...but the names on THAT list are going to be John Irving, Tom Wolfe, Don DeLillo, Gore Vidal, Norman Mailer, John Updike, Joyce Carol Oates, Thomas Pynchon, etc., NOT the best-selling "popular" writers that are often mentioned in the same breath as Stephen King and with whom he often shares spots on the best-seller lists. THE STEPHEN KING UNIVERSE is as important a book as Douglas Winter's seminal STEPHEN KING: THE ART OF DARKNESS, which paved the way for the rest of us, we Chroniclers of the King. THE STEPHEN KING UNIVERSE is a major contribution to the field of scholarship about King, and King's fans should be grateful that Stan Wiater, Chris Golden, and Hank Wagner - a truly talented and insightful drawing of the three -- have done the kind of work it took to research and write THE STEPHEN KING UNIVERSE. Hank Wagner back again: Be careful Steve, you'll turn our heads!

This book begins with a fascinating, revelatory concept -- that all of Stephen King's fiction is telling one massive story about the eternal struggle between good and evil (or, in King parlance, the Purpose and the Random) -- and then proceeds to expound upon just how that is the case. And when the authors stick to their thesis, they are on solid ground. However, the book is flawed in more ways than one, and as such I can't give it any praise but faint praise. For one thing, the book's thesis virtually disappears about halfway through, and the result is about two hundred pages that don't amount to much more than plot summary. For another, even in the sections that really deal with the question of a King Mythos, there is never any sort of summation, never a conclusion as to What It All Means. And for criticism to really work, a conclusion is necessary; it isn't enough to point interesting things out, you have to show why they're interesting in the first place. I don't think the authors succeeded in that respect. Perhaps this is worth your time, but if you really want to explore the Stephen King universe, you should just go straight to the source. Oh, and if you haven't read the novels, then by all means, avoid this book, as there is a spoiler in practically every sentence.

Love, love him. I buy every book by him and about him. When I get a new SK book, I open it and cannot put it down until I read the whole thing.

Stanley Wiater, Christopher Golden, Hank Wagner are quite overwhelmed with their enterprise : to describe the Universe of Stephen King's fiction. But they do a marvelous job at it, even if some

purists may find some mistakes, contradictions, etc. Each entry gives you a general presentation of the work, then a presentation of the characters and finally eventual adaptations to the screen. They also include in their work (which is not an encyclopedia) the works that were only produced for the screen, like *The Golden Years* and *Cat's Eye*. They try, everytime it is possible to connect the characters, places, situations and artifacts from one book to the others. That is where the purists find some mistakes or misleading elements. But, as far as I know it is the first time such a book is published in such a format, in such length, hence in such usefulness, not only for Stephen King fans or addicts, but also for those who consider Stephen King's multimedia fiction as a social, cultural, and even political phenomenon that has to be studied in depth, in its plots, in its style, in its cross references. And it is not a simple compilation if not piling up of raw data, as so many other attempts amount to. No reference given here by me. Let me regret one thing though : the sources are not given, and that is a shortcoming. Stephen King always or nearly always works from a "model", a starting block that is a prompter : a film, a book, a situation (from the news for instance), and it would be interesting to show how on some themes he does not distance himself from the general principles of the model (Vampires are beasts that have to be destroyed, except in the long short-story "Popsy" where the vampire is actually a justice-maker and with a family structure behind : grandfather and grandson), to show too how on some themes, like Extraterrestrials, he takes a stand between two models and chooses the urban paranoid one : destroy them to the last. Where are the Encounters of the Third Type ? I will regret, for example too, that they do not study the rock and roll quotations in *Christine*. They are the reference used by King and they are meaningful and significant. A last remark : works are not in chronological order, neither of their actual writing nor of their publishing. This is also a handicap for those who want to understand the evolution of King's art and influence. An essential book nevertheless. Dr Jacques COULARDEAU

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