



J.J. Abrams vs. Joss Whedon: Duel for Media Master of the Universe

Wendy Sterba

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J.J. Abrams and Joss Whedon are two of the most imaginative and accomplished men in Hollywood. As writers, directors, producers, and series creators, their credits have straddled the mediums of television and film and range across several genres, from science fiction and horror to action and drama. In addition to spearheading original projects like *Lost* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, each has also made his mark on some of the most successful franchises in popular culture—from *Mission Impossible*, *Star Trek*, and *Star Wars* (Abrams) to *Alien* and the *Avengers* (Whedon). Their output—both oddly similar and yet also wildly different—stand at the heart of twenty-first century film and television.

In *J.J. Abrams vs. Joss Whedon*, Wendy Sterba compares the parallel careers in film and television of these creative masterminds—pitting one against the other in a light-hearted competition. With in-depth discussions of their works, the author seeks to determine who is the Spielberg (or perhaps the Lucas) of the twenty-first century. The author looks back upon the beginnings of both men's careers—to Whedon's stint as a writer on *Roseanne* to Abrams' early scripts for films like *Regarding Henry*—and forward to their most recent blockbusters, *Avengers: Age of Ultron* and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. This book also looks at non-fantasy successes (Abrams series *Felicity*; Whedon's adaptation of *Much Ado about Nothing*), as well as commercial failures. At the heart of this study, however, is a tour of their genre-defining hits: *Alias* and *Buffy*, *Lost* and *Angel*, *Super 8* and *Serenity* along with Whedon's *Avengers* films, and Abrams' rebooted *Star Trek* adventures.

Filled with sharp-eyed analysis, illuminating anecdotes, and unexpected connections, *J.J. Abrams vs. Joss Whedon* will appeal to fans of either (or both!) of its subjects, and to any fan of well-told tales of the fantastic, on screens large or small.

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