

E.T. Culture



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Anthropologists have long sought to engage and describe foreign or 'alien' societies, yet few have considered the fluid communities centred around a shared belief in alien beings and UFO sightings and their effect on popular and expressive culture. Opening up a new frontier for anthropological study, the contributors to "E.T. Culture" take these communities seriously. They demonstrate that an E.T. orientation toward various forms of visitation - including alien beings, alien technologies, and uncanny visions - engages primary concepts underpinning anthropological research: host and visitor, home and away, subjectivity and objectivity. Taking the point of view of those who commit to sci-fi as sci-fact, contributors to this volume show how discussions and representations of otherworldly beings express concerns about racial and ethnic differences, the anxieties and fascination associated with modern technologies, and alienation from the inner workings of government. Drawing on social science, science studies, linguistics, popular and expressive culture, and social and intellectual history, the writers of "E.T. Culture" unsettle the boundaries of science, magic, and religion and of technological and human agency. They consider the ways that sufferers of 'unmarked' diseases such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome come to feel alien to both the 'healthy' world and the medical community incapable of treating them; the development of alien languages (like Klingon); attempts to formulate a sound technology - such as that created for the spaceship Voyager - that will reach alien beings; the pilgrimage spirit of UFO seekers; the out-of-time experiences of Nobel scientists; the embrace of the alien within Japanese animation and fan culture; and the physical spirituality of the Raelian religious network. Contributors include: Debbora Battaglia, Richard Doyle, Joseph Dumit, Mizuko Ito, Susan Lepselter, Christopher Roth, and David Samuels. Debbora Battaglia is Professor of Anthropology at Mount Holyoke College. She is the author of "On the Bones of the Serpent: Person, Memory, and Mortality in Sabarl Island Society" and the editor of "Rhetorics of Self-Making".

作者介绍:

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