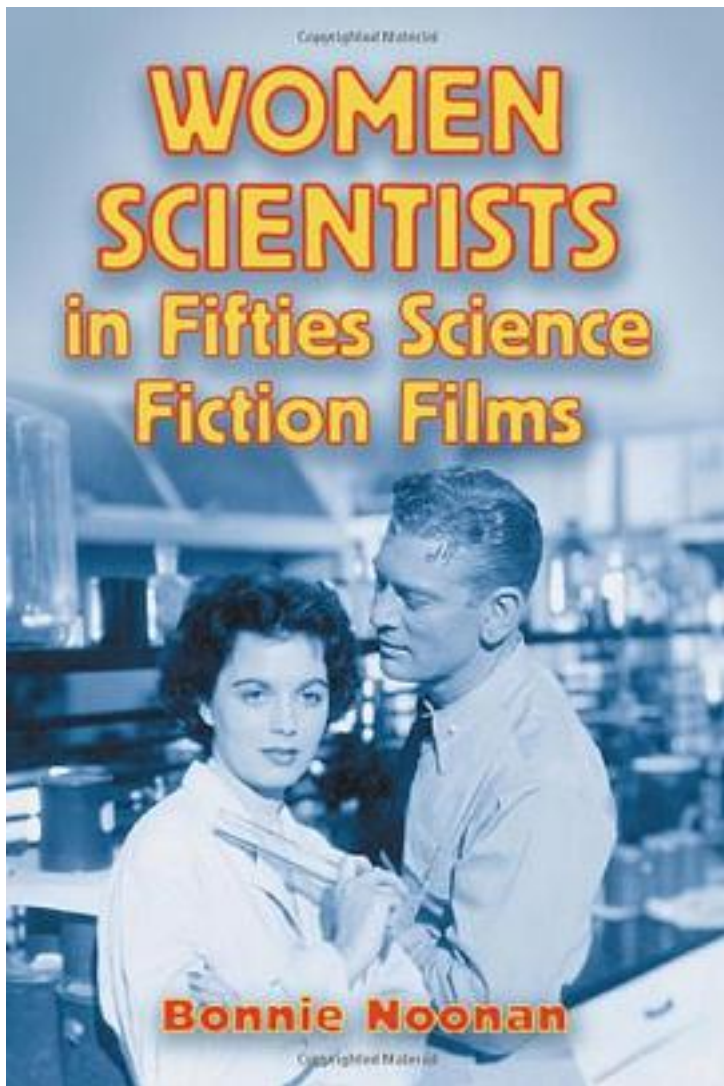


Women Scientists in Fifties Science Fiction Films



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In the 1950s, science was rapidly advancing, and so were scientific opportunities for women. Modern science fiction films reflected these simultaneous social developments. This book proposes that the social ideology of the 1950s, which was partly concerned with gender issues, saturated the B science fiction films of that era and inspired a new appreciation for the role of women in scientific advancements and other social achievements. Drawing on feminist literary and cultural theory, the author argues that the emergence of the modern American science fiction film in 1950 and the situation of post-World War II female scientists together created a film genre. That genre was explicitly amenable to exploring the tension between a woman's place in her home and her place in the work force, particularly in scientific fields. Early chapters provide a general introduction to the science fiction genre and specifically describe 1950s B science fiction films as they resonate with concerns proper to feminist theory. Subsequent chapters offer detailed, historically situated readings of 10 B science fiction films from the 1950s that feature women in science. The cinematic representations of female scientists are compared and contrasted with real female professionals of the time, illuminating the changing gender dynamics reflected in popular film in the 1950s. Films analyzed include "Rocketship X-M, It Came from Beneath the Sea, Them, Tarantula, The Deadly Mantis, Beginning of the End, Kronos, Cat-Women of the Moon, World Without End," and "Queen of Outer Space."

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