What could possibly account for the scope and longevity of the Star Trek phenomenon? With legions of impassioned fans and a life span of 30 years and counting, the Star Trek television and film corpus has made Gene Roddenberrys creation nothing less than an American mythology. Deep Space and Sacred Time examines for the first time in book-length form the many ways Star Trek has served as a mythic reference point for American society--and suggests that an understanding of this might help us to see ourselves more clearly as a culture. Moreover, this thoughtful and thought-provoking work posits that Star Trek offers its audience a sense of hope and, in the setting of an orderly cosmos, the possibility for empowerment.

My Personal Review:
I decided to read this book mostly because of the title -- as a Trekker who is also Jewish, I was interested to see what these authors had to say about "sacred time," because, as Abraham Joshua Heschel said, we Jews live more in sacred time than in sacred places. So, any book with "sacred time" in the title is bound to catch my eye. As it turned out, their definition of "sacred time" wasn't quite the same as the Jewish one, but I still enjoyed the book. It's an excellent analysis of Star Trek from an anthropology POV. Especially useful to me was the clear, concise explanation of what "traditional," "modernist," and "post-modernist" worldviews mean in terms of how various cultures view time and the future. I had heard TOS called "modernist" and DS9 called "post-modernist" before, but could never really get a grasp on what that meant, exactly. (What can I say? I'm in the over-50 generation and haven't always kept up on the latest buzzwords.) This book clearly explained all three POVs -- traditional, modern, and post-modern -- then put them into the context of various Trek episodes. Great job! I also enjoyed the brilliant insight that Trek has, in effect, moved primal mythology from sharing a common story about the past, to sharing a common story about the future. In centuries gone by, each culture assumed its origins story to be the "real" story, and that was a unifying factor for each group. But today, with so many cultures colliding in an ever-shrinking world, we cannot assume that we all we share the same past heroes anymore. Instead, we look to the same future heroes on Star Trek for role models.
and inspiration. Whether or not Trek is the "real" future is beside the point here. It has become a mythology that people use on a global level (to greater or lesser degrees), regardless of the different creation stories that make up their individual cultures' past mythologies. I liked the fact that this book intelligently questioned some of the politically-correct criticisms of Trek that have come out in recent years. While not accepting everything on Trek at face value, this book does point out that some PC critics have bordered on the ridiculous. The authors here strike a very good balance between entering into the spirit of the Trek universe, and critically examining some of the basic assumptions that Trek makes about what the future "should be." >I highly recommend "Deep Space and Sacred Time" to anyone seriously interested in the impact of Star Trek on our modern (or is that post-modern?) culture.

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Deep Space and Sacred Time: Star Trek in the American Mythos by Jan Lundeen - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!