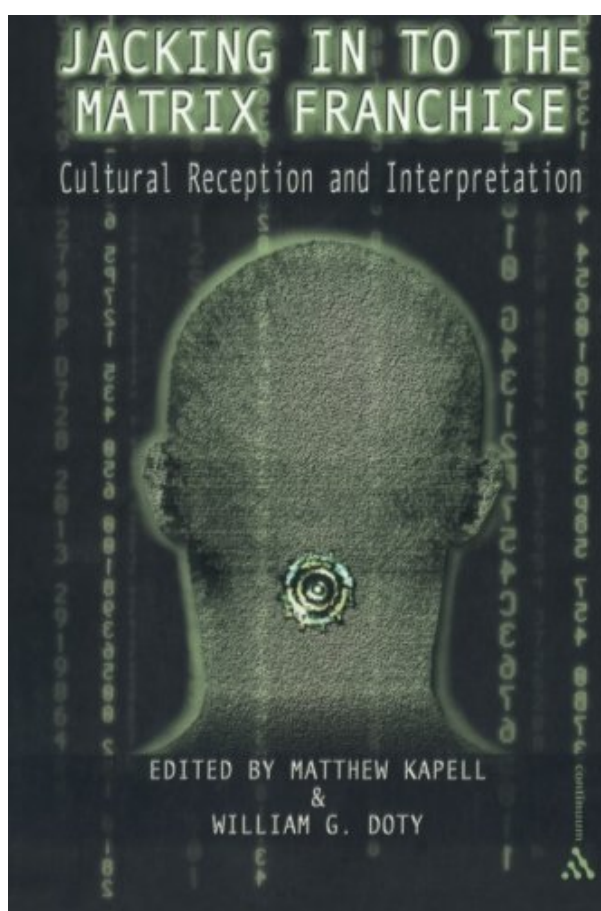
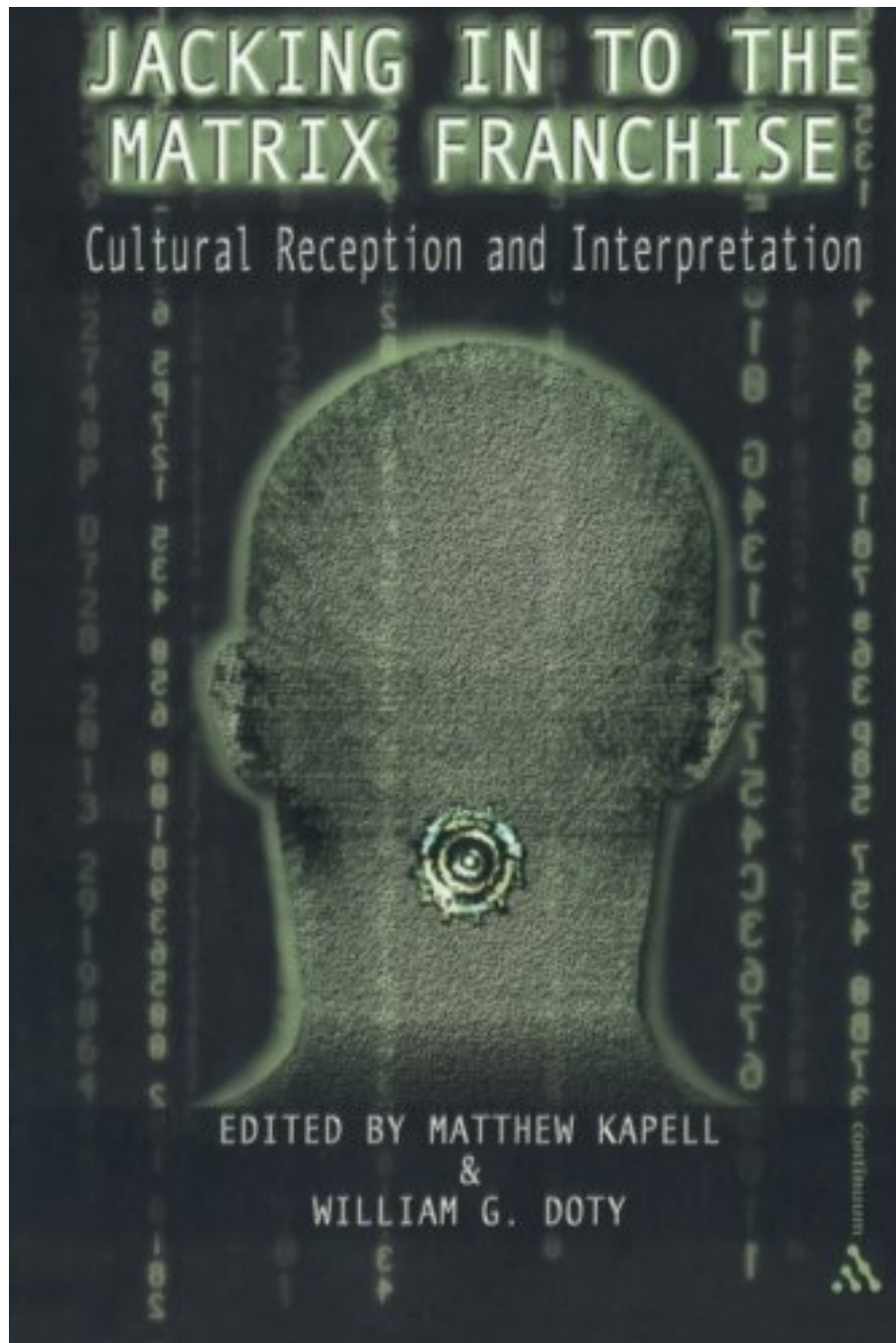


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CULTURAL RECEPTION AND
INTERPRETATION BY MATTHEW KAPELL,
WILLIAM G. DOTY**



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Review

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“Any book under the editorial leadership of Professor William Doty is an event. His authority insures that the articles have intellectual density and academic weight. Yet, what is much rarer in this kind of publication, is a style that will captivate anybody interested in understanding how we experience and interpret films. The discussion is fascinating, the ideas fresh, the bibliographies precious. The title: *Jacking into the Matrix Franchise: Cultural Reception and Interpretation*, is too restrictive as it may appear like it is only addressed to fans of the Matrix films (of which I am not). But the collection of articles offers much more: it is a grand tour of all the subjects that matter in film studies: gender and degenderization, race and multiraciality, evolving and contradictory definitions of male and female heroism, religious symbolism in an entertainment culture, hidden agendas and embedded political values, postmodern deconstruction and reconstruction of hope, archetypal characters showing up unannounced, the opposition of an old in the new market of spiritual values and more I am one of those who, twenty some years ago, immensely enjoyed Baudrillard’s *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981). Doty and Kapell’s collection of articles are the best update on the subject I have read since. I am ready to bet my copy of *Bound* (another Wachowski brother’s movie), that Doty and Kapell’s collection of articles will become a classic in film studies. I think of *Bound* as the best film ever made about

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There have already been several very successful books devoted to the original film in the Matrix trilogy. This entirely new collection of essays is the first book to examine the trilogy as a whole - as well as related products such as The Animatrix and the computer game. Contributors tackle these subjects from a range of perspectives: religion, philosophy, gender, race, film studies, and science, providing a comprehensive view of everything Matrix-related. Reviewing the cultural and religious implications of the trilogy, authors look at: * American Religion, Community and Revitalization: Why The Matrix Resonates * Religion and Salvation, the Optiate of The Matrix Franchise * Gimme that Bullet Time Religion, or, The Dream of Spiritually Perfect Violence * Ultimate Reality: Buddhist and Gnostic Constructions of Bliss Also covered are theories of cyberworlds, issues of gender and race and the games and ethics of simulation.

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Superb writing, accessible and insightful

By A Customer

This is unquestionably the best quality book in a field crowded with poseurs and worse. See particularly the essays by Wilhelm & Kapell, John Shelton Lawrence, Flannery-Dailey & Wagner, and Mizelle & Baker. Accessibly written, enlightening, intellectually stimulating, with touches of humor that delight and intrigue, this book is worth every penny. The primary editor, Kapell, along with the highly competent Dr. Doty, have selected papers which are reflexive, more than capably developed, and multi-faceted in their approaches to the Matrix franchise. Enjoy this literate and worthy book!

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

A Good Read

By A Customer

Jacking In to the Matrix Franchise is the red pill that makes us understand the world of the Matrix in ways we could not while we were immersed in it, since the volume's essays serve as a comprehensive look into the Matrix franchise, not just the film trilogy composed by *The Matrix*, *The Matrix: Reloaded*, and *The Matrix: Revolutions*. For the Matrix directors, Andy and Larry Wachowski, orchestrated an array of artistic endeavors, including a collection of short anime stories entitled *The Animatrix*, the video game *Enter The Matrix* and the *The Matrix* comics as alternative texts that provide background or side narratives to *Reloaded* and *Revolutions*. In the Fall of 2004, the Matrix saga will continue in the form of a massively multiplayer online role-playing game, *The Matrix Online*.

As co-editor William G. Doty claims in the introduction, *Jacking In* situates the franchise in the context of "the history of thought"-from Romanticism to Postmodernism and the posthuman-and in the context of cinema. Accordingly, the volume is multidisciplinary in scope, though it remains firmly set in the humanities and social sciences, as shown by the authors' credentials: Religion and Culture, Comparative Ethnic Studies,

English, Philosophy, History, Anthropology...

Besides Doty's introduction, other highlights of *Jacking In* include John Shelton Lawrence's reading of the film trilogy as a fascist narrative, and Frances Flannery-Dailey and Rachel L. Wagner's analysis of the franchise's problematic connection of violence and religious themes.

Jacking In also includes a useful appendix with a glossary of names and terms used in the franchise, plus a collection of internet sites by theme and a short bibliography of recommended readings.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

The ONLY book on the Matrix you need

By Phil

This is far and away the best work on the Matrix films. It is the only one that covers the entire franchise; the films, the games, the pop culture aspects. Doty's introduction is amazing, while the other chapters manage to cover just about every aspect of the series you can imagine.

Highly useful for anyone interested in figuring out which colored pill to take.

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