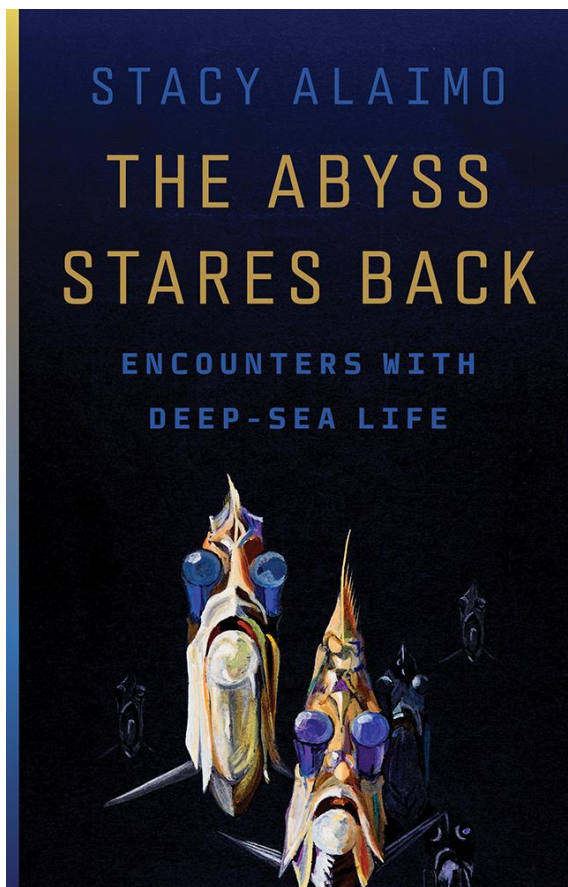


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The Abyss Stares Back: Encounters with Deep-Sea Life

Alaimo, Stacy

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The Abyss Stares Back analyzes a diverse range of scientific, literary, and artistic accounts of deep-sea exploration, including work from the naturalist William Beebe and the artist Else Bostelmann as well as results of the Census of Marine Life that began at the turn of the twenty-first century. As

she focuses on oft-overlooked creatures of the deep, such as tubeworms, hatchetfish, siphonophores, and cephalopods, which are typically cast as “alien,” Alaimo shows how depictions of the deep seas have been enmeshed in long colonial histories and racist constructions of a threatening abyss.

Drawing on feminist environmentalism, posthumanism, science and technology studies, and Indigenous and non-Western perspectives, Alaimo details how our understanding of science is fundamentally altered by aesthetic encounters with these otherworldly life forms. She argues that, although the deep sea is often thought of as a lifeless void with little connection to human existence, our increasing devastation of this realm underscores our ethical obligation to protect the biodiverse life in the depths. When the abyss stares back, it demands recognition.

(Source: [University of Minnesota Press](#))

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