

Come for the Space Fantasy, Stay for the Queer Representation: *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* by Noelle Stevenson
TV series by DreamWorks Animation
Kate Anderson

In this animated series reboot of the classic 80s show, military protégé and Hoard member Adora stumbles upon a magical sword and finds herself tied to an ancient prophecy to save the balance of the planet. Along with her friends Glimmer and Beau, she switches sides, starts to gather allies, and tries to reunite the former Princess Alliance, a group of badass women with a variety of magical powers, to fight against the evil Lord Hordak and his forces. Taking up the mantle of She-Ra, Princess of Power, Adora must grapple with her former life and relationships—including one with her former best friend and antagonist Catra— while saving the world with her new found family.



Image: <https://bit.ly/3uiE71i>

This is a wonderful and imaginative show from the legendary Noelle Stevenson, writer of the graphic novel series *Lumberjanes* and the Cartoon Network show *Steven Universe*. Teeming with adventure, humour, and representation galore for both queer and POC identities, this show deals with healthy and unhealthy relationships, found family, destiny, friendship, and the fight for good in a science-fiction/fantasy setting. It is suitable for a wide variety of ages and audiences, though very young children may be scared by the cartoon violence, suspense, and some of the more villainous characters. I think that it's an incredible piece of media for young adults to watch, because it normalizes both queer and BIPOC identities and relationships while simultaneously dealing with all the issues and struggles that people experience in a healthy and refreshing way. These characters don't feel like untouchable superheroes or perfect magical girls, but real people navigating real relationships and dealing with personal trauma in both healthy and unhealthy ways. While the premise of the show is fantastical and broad, the characters and their interactions are incredibly detailed, insightful, and relatable. I was so surprised how well the show approaches heartbreak, toxicity, trauma, communication, and emotion. Even the antagonists are portrayed in a way that allows the audience to understand and relate to their decision-making process while revealing the flaws in their logic.

This show is excellently crafted and paced, with a heartfelt and well-rounded story and world. It's an enriching escape with wonderful examination of real-world identities and relationships in a setting that is out of this world.

Representation: lesbian main character, bisexual side characters, BPOC characters

Potential triggers: cartoon/fantasy violence, character death, emotional abuse, toxic relationships

Reference

Stevenson, N., & Austen, C. (Executive producers). (November 13 2018 – May 15 2020). *She-Ra and the princesses of power* [TV series]. DreamWorks Animation Television & Mattel Creations.