

Competitor Analysis—Science Fiction

Science fiction is gaining traction as a subject of study and discourse across geographically and academically diverse institutions. The digitized materials available for the study of science fiction are fragmented at best, and a comprehensive digitized collection conducive for research is unavailable. Of the major commercial competitors, none has a digital science fiction collection, and the two closest offerings are the following:

- Adam Matthew Digital's Popular Culture in Britain and America, 1950–1975

<https://www.amdigital.co.uk/primary-sources/popular-culture-in-britain-and-america-1950-1975>

This product contains manuscripts, typescripts, periodicals, memorabilia, pamphlets, and more. It broadly covers pop culture and includes artefacts related to the Vietnam conflict, the civil rights and women's liberation movements, youth/psychedelic culture, and more. Science fiction/fantasy is listed as a covered subject, but it is not the focus of the collection. Some of the sources for this collection are the Bancroft Library (UC Berkeley), Browne Popular Culture Library (Bowling Green State University), the Felix Dennis Archive, and the UK National Archives. This collection differs significantly from the proposed collection, so much as to not be of any concern.

- Gale Cengage's American Fiction, 1774–1920

<https://www.gale.com/c/american-fiction-1774-1920>

This Product contains more than 17,500 works of prose fiction from 1774 to 1920. Science fiction is not mentioned specifically, but “popular genre titles” are listed as part of the product. This product is also sufficiently different from the proposed collection as its focus is on fiction from a certain region and not genre fiction.

There are also some open-access digital collections and online resources that cover science fiction.

Many of these resources are large databases that offer materials in the public domain. Science fiction

periodicals are the most prevalent and available digitized items, but there are other materials available as described below. None of the open-access digital science fiction collections would be a problem for the proposed project; on the contrary, the survey of these resources indicated interest in science fiction at the academic level with no digitized collections serving this market.

- The Fanzines Archive

<http://fanzines.lmc.gatech.edu/>

This project consists of an ongoing digitization of the fanzines available in Georgia Tech's Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection. Materials include complete text and images from fanzines in the collection. This collection contains 949 items, but, as a picture of two pages from a single fanzine can count as one item, the collection contains significantly fewer items in their entirety. The Fanzines Archive is not of any concern for the proposed collection—it is too small and is limited to only fanzines, a niche within science fiction that had a brief window of popularity and is not the target of most scholarship on the subject.

- Digital Public Library of America

<https://dp.la/search?q=science%20fiction&type=%22text%22&page=1>

Filtering search results for “science fiction” with the category “text” produced 274 items. Materials included pamphlets, full-text nonfiction works about science fiction, full novels, etc. Filtering search results for “science fiction” with the category “image” produced 6,041 results, most of which were black-and-white photographs from science fiction conventions. The results of these searches were limited enough in scope to not be of concern to the proposed collection; the materials available are more suited for the casual reader than the university researcher.

- Internet Archive

The Internet Archive contains numerous scanned, public-domain books in its Science Fiction and Fantasy Collection contributed by the Charles E. Young Research Library (UCLA). Most of the materials available on the Internet Archive are science fiction periodicals. Many of the results are only available via waitlist. The Internet Archive's science fiction materials are suited for readers of science fiction periodicals and novels but not academic research, so it is not a concern for the proposed collection.

- Hathi Trust

Hathi trust offers novels and short fiction from authors like H.G. Wells, and many editions of *The Wellsian: The Journal of the H.G. Wells society*. It does not have digitized works of authors who are outside of the public domain, e.g. Asimov. Many texts from science fiction associations are indexed, but digitized versions are unavailable. Searching for materials is difficult due to the high number of irrelevant materials in search results. For example, a search for science fiction using the "book" filter returned titles such as *Systematic catalogue of the public library of the city of Milwaukee with alphabetical author, title and subject indexes, 1885*. Because of the above factors, Hathi Trust is not a serious concern for the proposed collection.

- Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg has a collection of science fiction ebooks. They are suitable for casual reading and entertainment but not for research, so the collection is not a concern for the proposed collection.

No digitized collections of authors' papers or manuscripts were found. Such collections exist in non-digitized formats at institutional repositories like the Harvard Library

(<https://library.harvard.edu/collections/science-fiction-collection>). It contains the papers of Sterling Lanier, page proofs of a George O. Smith novel, a collection of correspondence on science fiction clubs, records of the Pittsburgh Science Fiction Association, and more. Another example of an author collection is the H.G. Wells papers, 1845–1946. They are housed at the University of Illinois Urbana-

Champaign, and the collection includes correspondence, letters, journals, drawings, unpublished material, photographs, etc.

There are numerous science fiction collections at university libraries that are extensive and have not been digitized. Some of the major collections include the following:

- Jack Williamson Science Fiction Library, Eastern New Mexico University
- The Science Fiction Hub, University of Liverpool
- J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, and Utopian Literature, University of California Riverside
- La Maison d'Ailleurs, Switzerland
- Edward E. Marsh Golden Age of Science Fiction Library, San Diego State University

A more extensive list of these collections is provided in the Competitor Analysis Notes. These collections are not a concern for the proposed project because they are not digitized. However, if efforts were made to digitize these collections, then they could overlap with the product. Also, it is worth noting that quite a few of these collections were located in California—this might a higher level of interest in science fiction in that state relative to other parts of the U.S. and abroad. Course research will provide a better idea of the geographic distribution of science fiction courses taught in universities.