



SF DEFINITION, TIMELINE & THEMES

OE_ISF_HS30054, Unit 1

DEFINITION OF



SCIENCE FICTION



Science fiction (sci-fi or SF) is
a genre of speculative fiction which typically
deals with imaginative and futuristic concepts
e. g. advanced science and technology, space
exploration, time travel, parallel universes,
and extraterrestrial life



- ▶ Science fiction, though imaginative, is based on real-life understanding of contemporary developments in science and technology
- ▶ Science fiction explores science and technology in different ways, such as human responses to theoretical new advancements, or their consequences
- ▶ Science fiction influences literature, film, TV, and culture at large, providing entertainment, criticizing present-day society, exploring alternatives and inspiring a ‘sense of wonder’



- ▶ Subgenres include hard science fiction, which emphasizes scientific accuracy, and soft science fiction, focusing on social sciences
- ▶ Other notable subgenres are cyberpunk, which explores interface between technology and society, and climate fiction, addressing environmental issues

TIMELINE OF SCIENCE FICTION

TIMELINE

Lucian: *A True Story*

106–117: Roman Empire at largest extent under Emperor Trajan after conquering modern Romania, Iraq and Armenia

126: Hadrian completes Pantheon in Rome

161: Marcus Aurelius becomes emperor of Roman Empire

One Thousand and One Nights has several proto-science fiction stories

962: Otto the Great crowned Holy Roman Emperor; first to be crowned Holy Roman Emperor in nearly 40 years

987: Succession of Hugh Capet to French Throne and beginning of Capetian dynasty

c. 1270

Ibn al-Nafis: *Theologus Autodidactus*, which incorporates science fiction elements

1204: Sack of Constantinople during Fourth Crusade; beginning of decline of Byzantine Empire

1209: University of Cambridge founded

1215: Magna Carta sealed by John of England

1274: Thomas Aquinas' work, *Summa Theologica* is published, after his death (main staple of theology during Middle Ages)

TIMELINE

1420	<i>Vraye ystoire du bon roy Alixandre</i> (<i>The True History of the Good King Alexander</i> , Anonymous) has stories about him going underwater in a submarine
1516	Thomas More: <i>Utopia</i>

TIMELINE

1619	Johann Valentin Andreae: <i>Christianopolis</i>	1619: Dutch East India Company, English East India Company, and Sultanate of Banten fighting over port city of Jayakarta
1623	Tommaso Campanella: <i>The City of the Sun</i>	1620: Brownist Pilgrims arrive in the <i>Mayflower</i> at Cape Cod 1626: St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican completed
1627	Francis Bacon: <i>New Atlantis</i>	1632: Taj Mahal building work started in Agra, India 1633: Galileo Galilei arrives in Rome for his trial before the Inquisition 1633–1639: Japan transforms into 'locked country'

TIMELINE

1634	Johannes Kepler: <i>A Dream</i>	1636: Harvard University is founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts
1638	Francis Godwin: <i>The Man in the Moone</i>	1643: Louis XIV is crowned King of France 1649: King Charles I is executed for High treason, the first and only English king to be subjected to legal proceedings in a High Court of Justice and put to death
1657	Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac: <i>Histoire Comique par Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac, Contenant les Etats et Empires de la Lune</i> (Cyrano Bergerac's <i>Comical History, containing the States & Empires of the Moon</i>) published posthumously	1658: After his father Shah Jahan completes Taj Mahal, his son Aurangzeb deposes him as ruler of Mughal Empire 1663: Robert Hooke discovers cells using a microscope 1687: Isaac Newton publishes <i>Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica</i>

TIMELINE

1726 1733	Jonathan Swift: <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> Samuel Madden: <i>Memoirs of the Twentieth Century</i>	1735–1739: Russo-Turkish War 1739: Nader Shah defeats the Mughals at Battle of Karnal and sacks Delhi
1741	Ludvig Holberg: <i>Niels Klim's Underground Travels</i>	1740: Frederick the Great comes to power in Prussia 1740–1741: Famine in Ireland 1748: The Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle ends the War of the Austrian Succession
1752 1765	Voltaire: <i>Micromégas</i> Marie-Anne de Roumier-Robert: <i>Voyage de Milord Céton dans les Sept Planètes (Journeys of Lord Seton in Seven Planets)</i>	1760: George III becomes King of Britain 1761: Marine chronometer invented 1762–1796: Reign of Catherine the Great of Russia 1769–1770: James Cook explores and maps New Zealand and Australia 1769–1773: Bengal famine of 1770 kills one-third of the Bengal population

TIMELINE

1771	Louis-Sébastien Mercier: <i>The Year 2440</i>	1771: Richard Arkwright builds the first water-powered mill at Cromford 1775–1783: American Revolutionary War 1776: United States Declaration of Independence is adopted by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia 1778: James Cook becomes the first European to land on Hawaii
1780	Anonymous: <i>The Passage from the North to the South Pole</i>	1783: Montgolfier brothers invent hot air balloon 1785–1795: Northwest Indian War is fought between the United States and Native Americans 1787: United States Constitution is written in Philadelphia 1789: George Washington is elected the first President of US 1789–1799: French Revolution

TIMELINE

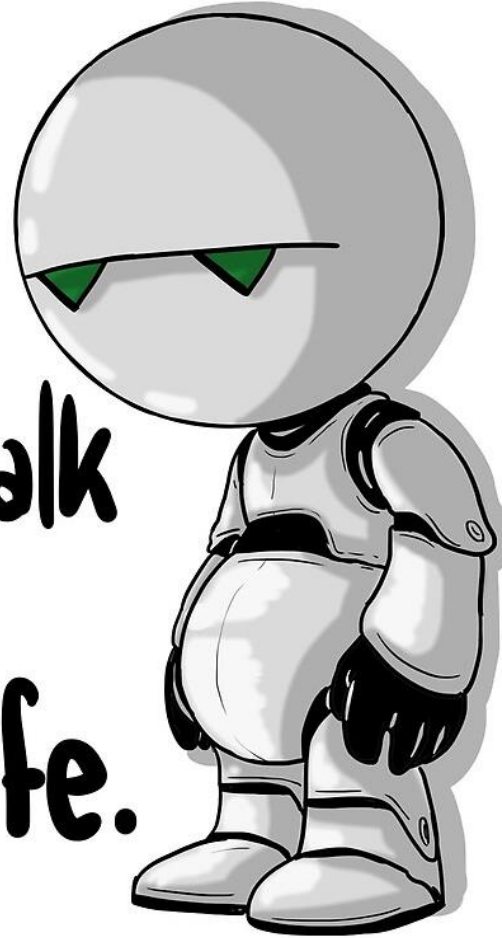
1805	Jean-Baptiste Cousin de Grainville: <i>The Last Man</i>	1800 & 1804: Napoleon becomes First Consul of France and then Emperor 1801: Giuseppe Piazzi discovers the dwarf planet Ceres 1804: First steam locomotive begins operation 1805: Battle of Trafalgar
1818 1826 1844	Mary Shelley: <i>Frankenstein</i> Mary Shelley: <i>The Last Man</i> Nathaniel Hawthorne: <i>Rappaccini's Daughter</i>	1815: Napoleon is defeated at Waterloo 1817: Jane Austen dies 1822: Charles Babbage develops the concept of the difference engine, the world's first computer
1851 1864 1865	Jules Verne: <i>A Voyage in a Balloon</i> Camille Flammarion: <i>Real and Imaginary Worlds</i> Jules Verne: <i>From the Earth to the Moon</i>	1861-1865: American Civil War is fought, introduces mechanized warfare and ironclad ships to battle

TIMELINE

1859	Hermann Lang publishes <i>The Air Battle: a Vision of the Future</i>
1864	Camille Flammarion publishes <i>Real and Imaginary Worlds</i>
1865	Jules Verne publishes <i>From the Earth to the Moon</i>
1868	Edward S. Ellis publishes <i>The Steam Man of the Prairies</i> , the first SF dime novel
1870	Jules Verne publishes <i>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas</i>
1871	Edward Bulwer-Lytton publishes <i>The Coming Race</i>
1872	Samuel Butler publishes <i>Erewhon</i>
1874	Jules Verne publishes <i>The Mysterious Island</i> in serial form from 1874 to 1875
1886	Robert Louis Stevenson publishes <i>Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>
1888	Edward Bellamy publishes <i>Looking Backward, 2000-1887</i> in January
1888	H. G. Wells publishes <i>The Chronic Argonauts</i>
1889	Mark Twain publishes <i>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</i>
1895	H. G. Wells publishes <i>The Time Machine</i>
1896	H. G. Wells publishes <i>The Island of Doctor Moreau</i>
1897	H. G. Wells publishes <i>The Invisible Man</i>
1898	H. G. Wells publishes <i>The War of the Worlds</i>

SCIENCE FICTION THEMES

Life.
Don't talk
to me
about life.



1. ENTITIES

- ▷ ROBOTS/ ANDROIDS
- ▷ CYBORGS/ REPLICANTS
- ▷ ARTIFICIAL LIFE CREATION/ CLONES
- ▷ ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
- ▷ SIMULATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS
- ▷ HYPOTHETICAL BIO-ORGANISM
- ▷ ALIEN LIFEFORMS
- ▷ HIVEMIND, INFOMORPH, MUTANT, SYMBIONT, SUPERHUMAN

2. BODY/ MIND ALTERATIONS

- ▷ BIOHACKING/ BIOPUNK
- ▷ ARTIFICIAL ORGANS/ PROSTHETICS
- ▷ ENHANCED SENSES
- ▷ GENETIC MODIFICATION/ CLONING
- ▷ BRAIN-COMPUTER INTERFACE/
NEURAL IMPLANTS
- ▷ INVISIBILITY
- ▷ CRYONICS/ DIGITAL IMMORTALITY
- ▷ MIND/ MEMORY CONTROL/ SWAP

3. HABITAT

- ▷ ALIEN PLANET/ COLONIZATION
- ▷ ARTIFICIAL WORLD/ DOME/
FLOATING CITY/ ARCOLOGY
- ▷ MEGACITY
- ▷ TERRAFORMING
- ▷ SPACE STATION/ SPACESHIP
- ▷ UNDERGROUND CITY
- ▷ UTOPIA/ DYSTOPIA
- ▷ CYBERSPACE

4. TECHNOLOGY

- ▷ ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY
- ▷ ASTEROID/ PLANET MINING
- ▷ NEURAL INTERFACE
- ▷ SELF-REPLICATION (VIRUS/ CLONE)
- ▷ SIMULATION/ VIRTUAL REALITY/
AUGMENTED REALITY
- ▷ NANOTECHNOLOGY
- ▷ SF WEAPONS/ MECHA
- ▷ SINGULARITY

5. TRAVEL

- ▷ TIME TRAVEL/ TIME LOOP
- ▷ SPACE TRAVEL/ EXPLORATION/ FASTER THAN LIGHT
- ▷ COLONIZATION
- ▷ GENERATION SHIP
- ▷ TERRAFORMING/ HOLLOW EARTH
- ▷ HYPERSPACE/ SLIPSTREAM, WARP DRIVE/
WORMHOLES
- ▷ PARALLEL UNIVERSE/ ALTERNATE PAST OR FUTURE
- ▷ TELEPORTATION

6. POLITICS

- ▷ ANARCHY
- ▷ EXTREME CAPITALISM/ ANY 'ISM'
- ▷ MEGACORP/ EVIL MASTERMIND
- ▷ UTOPIA/ DYSTOPIA
- ▷ POLLUTION/ OVERPOPULATION
- ▷ GALACTIC EMPIRE/ INTERSTELLAR WAR
- ▷ MASS SURVEILLANCE/ MIND CONTROL
- ▷ POST-SCARCITY ECONOMY
- ▷ TECHNOPHOBIA
- ▷ ECO/ BIOTERRORISM/ BIOETHICS



THANK YOU!