



# Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction

By Booby Brown

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## Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction

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The definitive encyclopedia for the science fiction fanatic.

From *Barbarella* to *Blade Runner*, from *Solaris* to *Star Wars*, and from *1984* to *2001*, *Sci-Fi Chronicles* seeks out 200 of the greatest galactic creations.

Presented in an arresting blend of incisive text, infographic timelines, and stunning photographs, each chronologically arranged entry features an entertaining overview written by a science fiction expert, plus:

- The lifespan of sci-fi creations, for example, from book to movie to television series
- Other key media, such as comics, graphic novels, video games, manga, where appropriate
- Film and television stills, book and comic covers, and other archive material.

Larger franchises -- such as *Doctor Who* and *The War of the Worlds* -- feature lavish spreads of photographs illustrating how they have evolved from black-and-white beginnings to big-budget blockbusters. Seminal sagas like *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* enjoy not only a "real world" timeline of films and TV broadcasts, but also a fascinating spread detailing their role in the series' fictional universe.

The book is divided into five distinct sections:

- Early Science Fiction: The Birth of a Genre, 1818-1940 including *Frankenstein*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *A Connecticut Yankee*, *The Time Machine*, *The Lost World*, *Tarzan*
- The Golden Age: 1920-1950 including Karel Capek, *Metropolis*, Buck Rogers, Olaf Stapledon, *King Kong*, *Flash Gordon*, Frederick Pohl, *The Thing*, *Batman*, Stan Lee, Arthur C. Clarke, George Orwell
- The Era of the Atom: The Marvels and Perils of Science, 1950- 1970 including Dan Dare, *Quatermass*, *The Fly*, *The Twilight Zone*, *Solaris*, *The Jetsons*, *Barbarella*, *Dune*, *Soylent Green*, *Logan's Run*, *Land of the Giants*, *The Iron Man*, *A Boy and His Dog*
- Dark Futures: Apocalypse and the War in Space, 1970-1990 including *The*

*Stepford Wives, Moebius, Star Wars, Judge Dredd, Mork and Mindy, V, Neuromancer, Back to the Future, Red Dwarf*

- The Adventure Continues: Modern Science Fiction, 1990-Present including *Jurassic Park, Men in Black, Doom, Babylon 5, Stargate, The Matrix, Halo, Jericho, The Hunger Games, Fringe, Wall-E, Avatar.*

*Sci-Fi Chronicles* is a truly international guide, with entries focusing on everything from Hollywood blockbusters to Russian cult classics, and from European literature to Australian franchises. It is perfect for dipping into, while its memory-jogging mentions and illustrations make it impossible to put down. It will delight long-standing sci-fi aficionados, yet with a scope that extends from vintage volumes to amazing anime, *Sci-Fi Chronicles* will also entrance a younger generation.



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### **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #1558504 in Books
- Published on: 2014
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.92" h x 1.97" w x 6.97" l, 3.10 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

General editor Guy Haley is out to map every last sub-, micro-, and nano-genre. Short essays alongside colourful timelines, stills, and promo images profile over 200 works--not just movies and novels but also TV shows, video games, manga, and more, from Buck Rogers and The Jetsons to Le Guin and Tarkovsky. There's even a chart in the back showing silhouettes of famous spaceships (Tie Fighter, Cylon Raider, Klingon D7 Battle Cruiser, et cetera) in case you spot one and are wondering what it is. (Brian Lynch *Georgia Straight* 2014-12-25)

This collection goes beyond the final frontier and takes you into the furthest reaches of the imagination. Over 500 pages of detailed information cover an incredible range of science fiction. Books, movies, comics, video games and every possible combination that explores an unknown future are collected together in these pages.... Any lover of science fiction will embrace their inner nerd with a copy of this book. (Terry Peters *North Shore News* 2014-10-17)

Reference books are a tough market in the days of Google and Wikipedia, but Sci-Fi Chronicles is one worth checking out. A combination timeline and encyclopedia of the genre, it's a terrific compilation of information, lavishly illustrated and surprisingly well written. Covering fiction, film, television and video games, it's the kind of guide that invites a browsing frenzy... The coverage is excellent, ranging from the giant franchises such as Star Trek and Star Wars to entries on leading authors of the golden age. (Alex Good *Toronto Star* 2014-12-07)

This is the kind of book that science fiction fans like myself drool over... I'm still digging through its treasures. (John DeNardo, editor of SF Signal *Kirkus Reviews* 2014-11-01)

More than 200 influential science-fiction titles -- encompassing books, comics, magazines, television, computer games, and film -- are profiled in this chronology of the genre from its origins, in 1818, with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, to today's popular franchises like the *Hunger Games* and *Halo*. Entries range from one to six pages and feature brief narratives on the evolution of a particular title or author, a time line of publication, and a complete photo spread of titles in order of publication. As a reference source, the index provides the best access, but this book will delight science-fiction fans interested in learning more about the development of the genre, making it a great choice for the circulating collection. (Craig Clark *Booklist* 2014-12-01)

Made to be flipped and browsed and wallowed in and gifted... an enjoyable time-killer. (Gary K. Wolfe *LOCUS Magazine* 2014-12-01)

#### About the Author

Guy Haley is an experienced science-fiction journalist and critic. He was deputy editor of *SFX* magazine, and edited gaming magazine *White Dwarf* and SF magazine *Death Ray*. He is the author of *Reality 36*, *Omega Point* and *Champion of Mars*.

## Introduction by Guy Haley

Science fiction is arguably the most exciting genre of entertainment. No other form of storytelling shapes our culture as much, or is as popular. You may not think yourself a fan of science fiction, but consider the last movie you saw, or the last TV show, or the last video game you played. Whoever you are, some of your favorite entertainments will be listed in these pages.

Before starting work on this book, we had to ask ourselves a question: what is science fiction? Seemingly simple, but in reality the answer was hard to formulate. This is the definition we settled upon:

Science fiction is a member of a group of fictional genres whose narrative drive depends upon events, technologies, societies etc. that are impossible, unreal, or that are depicted as occurring at some time in the future, the past or in a world of secondary creation. These attributes vary widely in terms of actuality, likelihood, possibility and in the intent with which they are employed by the creator. The fundamental difference between science fiction and the other "fantastical genres" of fantasy and horror is this: the basis for the fiction is one of rationality. The sciences this rationality generates can be speculative, largely erroneous, or even impossible, but explanations are, nevertheless, generated through a materialistic worldview. The supernatural is not invoked (although in some settings might feature alongside SF trappings). Science fiction can be pure fantasy with bad science draped over it as a disguise -- this is irrelevant, so long as the narrative geography is a nominally realistic geography, and is not one of magic. In this sense both the movies *Armageddon* (about a big asteroid hitting the Earth) and *Godzilla* (about a giant, atomically mutated lizard) are equally science fiction, even though the former is possible and the latter is not. They are both science fiction because the language used in both to frame the events is that of science.

There is a certain snobbery against science fiction. Mainstream critics will say that the likes of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *The Road*, or *Children of Men* are not science fiction. However, the criteria for saying so seems to be that they are "good art," and that "good art" cannot possibly be science fiction. Author Margaret Atwood once described the genre as "talking squids in space," despite herself writing little but science fiction. Why should she feel ashamed?

Science fiction's sheer broadness is chiefly to blame. It can revel in ridiculous escapism. *Power Rangers*, for example, is not "good art," although it is perfectly suited to entertaining small children.

A further issue is the grave error made regarding science fiction's relationship with the future. Despite appearances to the contrary, science fiction does not set out to predict, and its visions of the world to come date quickly. There have been a handful of examples of individual technologies being foreseen by science-fiction writers -- no more. The impact of computers was almost completely overlooked by the writers of the early 20th century, for example. Science fiction is not predictive. "What if?" is its stock in trade.

It does, however, have an effect on the future.

Science fiction is a product of its time. The futures of the 1950s are those of atomic rockets and pipe-smoking engineers, those of the 1960s are replete with moonbases and free love, while worlds dreamt up in the 1980s are dominated by wicked corporations or scoured by nuclear apocalypse. But in being so parochial, SF fulfills a valuable function. Holding up a mirror to its present, it is consequently an image of its time. But it does not have to follow the rules of its time, and is often most fruitful when set in direct opposition to them. In this way, the very best science fiction has tremendous power. When Orwell wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the horrors of Stalinism were not widely accepted. H.G. Wells' Morlocks and Eloi are a damning indictment of the social divisions of the 1890s; the first inter-racial kiss on American screens was on *Star Trek*. Through exaggerated or simplified versions of our reality, science fiction opens our eyes to the truth of the world, and in doing so can even act as a preventative against disaster.

The wild, glorious visions of SF inspire real scientists. Often one hears scientists and technologists say, "I saw this in a science fiction show, and I wondered how I could make it work." *Star Trek* is particularly influential -- you can thank it for your mobile phones, but also for ongoing research into teleportation and faster-than-light travel. In a similar vein, should we ever colonize another world, many of the problems of how we would survive there have already been examined by science fiction, while if we meet a sentient alien species, science fiction will have prepared us (as certain conspiracy theorists hold, deliberately) through numerous scenarios.

We will likewise be prepared if we find ourselves alone in the universe. In a secular society, science fiction provides room for the numinous; it is modern Western society's mental and spiritual gymnasium.

At other times, science fiction has acted as a smokescreen to dissent, giving a platform to writers to criticize repressive regimes.

The genre is not without its faults. It is almost certainly to blame for its own ghettoization. It can be exclusive and narrow-minded, being predominantly the product of male, Western minds. It can be shoddy, infantile and distracting. But even when it is, it is never less than entertaining, and is often beautiful.

As you probably appreciate, science fiction is a vast field, comprising many subgenres. We cannot possibly cover it all. Therefore, we have attempted to provide you with an overview, something that illustrates science fiction's history, breadth and influence. Any omissions are necessarily somewhat subjective, but sadly unavoidable.

Science fiction may not predict, but we will -- that the scholars of the future will look back upon science fiction as a crucial part of 20th and 21st-century culture. So, join us on our odyssey through this amazing genre's past and present, and feast your eyes on the myriad futures it has depicted.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Keisha Kent:**

Do you among people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable looking at experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to provide to you. The writer associated with Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction content conveys the thought easily to understand by many individuals. The printed and e-book are not different in the content material but it just different such as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

#### **Carole Garner:**

The guide with title Sci-Fi Chronicles: A Visual History of the Galaxy's Greatest Science Fiction has a lot of information that you can discover it. You can get a lot of profit after read this book. That book exist new understanding the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world at this

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**Ira Atwood:**

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