

# HL3011

## Science Fiction: Origins to Parody

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Tracing its origins from nineteenth-century writing on the possibilities and threats of technology and the newly established sciences to its genre reconstruction and intertextual revisiting over the centuries, the analysis of its most prominent as well as of recently rediscovered works aims to illustrate how science fiction has transformed literature and film. In this, it also seeks to map the genre's most defining topoi: travel through space, time, and parallel universes; experimental technology; alien life; testing the boundaries of the mind and manipulating the body (cloning). Science fiction has always been experimental in its technique as well as in its criticism of social, psychological, and scientific definitions of selfhood, and its study taps into encompassing explorations of epistemological as well as ontological anxieties.

This course specifically addresses genre formation. We shall be looking at a number of different texts, and students will need to read beyond the “core texts.”

Please note that this course is 100% CA (Continuous Assessment).

**Research paper: 50%**

**Poster Presentations (shared via NTU Learn) 20%**

**Participation in the Discussion Forum in NTU Learn: 10%**

**Assignment (this might involve a blog post or something similar – tbc): 20%**

## Core Texts:

Please note that the presentations will be on texts outside the core texts.

## Print:

Brian Aldiss, "Super-Toys Last All Summer Long"

[http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/5.01/ffsupertoys\\_pr.htm](http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/5.01/ffsupertoys_pr.htm)

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Isaac Asimov, *I Robot*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

## Film Texts:

James Whale, *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935)

George Pal, *The Time Machine* (1960)

"The City on the Edge of Forever" (A *Star Trek* Episode, 1967)

*E.T.* (1982)

*Galaxy Quest* (1999)

## Lecture Schedule

Week No.	Topics	Readings
11 Aug	Introduction	Outline: Structure & Requirements
18 Aug	Science of the Times I: Making Good Monsters	<i>Frankenstein</i>
25 Aug	Science Fiction Icons and their Origins	<i>Frankenstein</i>
1 Sep	Science of the Times II: Evolution and the Making of Dystopia	<i>The Time Machine</i>
8 Sept	Time Travel I: The Future Work on Group Projects	<i>The Time Machine</i>
15 Sept	Union Day	No class
22 Sept	Time Travel II: The Past and its Alternatives	“The City on the Edge of Forever”
29 Sept	<i>Recess</i>	
6 Oct	Artificial Intelligence	<i>I Robot</i> ; “Super-Toys Last All Summer Long”
13 Oct	Poster Presentations	
20 Oct	Poster Presentations	
27 Oct	Aliens	<i>E.T.</i>
3 Nov	Science Fiction Comedy	<i>Galaxy Quest</i>
10 Nov	Revision	