

# 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).

**Essay: 50%**

**Group Presentation 20%**

**Participation in class: 10%**

**In-class writing/ quiz: 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" (1969)

[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* (1950)

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818)

H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (1895)

## Film Texts:

Spielberg, *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001)

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

George Pal, *The Time Machine* (1960)

"The City on the Edge of Forever" (1967)

*E.T.* (1982)

*Galaxy Quest* (1999)

"The Measure of a Man" (1989)

## Preliminary Lecture Outline

Week No.	Topics	Readings
10 Aug	Introduction	Outline: Structure & Requirements
17 Aug	Science of the Times I: Making Good Monsters	<i>Frankenstein</i>
24 Aug	Science Fiction Icons and their Origins	<i>Frankenstein</i>
31 Aug	Science of the Times II: Evolution and the Making of Dystopia	<i>The Time Machine</i>
7 Sept	Time Travel I: The Future	<i>The Time Machine</i>
14 Sept	Time Travel II: The Past and its Alternatives	“The City on the Edge of Forever”
21 Sept	Aliens	<i>E.T.</i>
28 Sept	<i>Recess</i>	
5 Oct	Artificial Intelligence	<i>I, Robot</i> ; “Super-Toys Last All Summer Long”; “The Measure of a Man”; <i>A.I.</i>
12 Oct	Science Fiction Comedy	<i>Galaxy Quest</i>
19 Oct	Group Presentations	
26 Oct	Group Presentations	
2 Nov	Revision	<i>Quiz</i>
9 Nov	Essay due	