

20C TECHNOLOGY AND THE MOVIES

Many science fiction stories and movies build plots around the impacts of the technology of the future. In almost every case we see a dystopian future rather than a utopia:

Metropolis (1927)-Fritz Lang's classic- Future industrialists live in skyscrapers while machine workers live underground

Flash Gordon (1936) - A death ray from an alien planet is aimed at earth

Buck Rogers (1939) - Future earth conquered and ruled by a group with superior technology

The Time Machine (1960) -Based on the novel by H.G. Wells – Two classes of beings in the future: leisure class has lost strength, spirit, and intellect; working class has become monsters who use machinery

Fahrenheit 451 (1966) -Based on the novel by Ray Bradbury– Future society where books are outlawed and firemen burn all books

2001, A Space Odyssey (1968) – HAL, the space ship's computer, takes over the ship and attacks the crew

Planet of the Apes (1968) - Mutant humans vs. intelligent gorillas

THX 1138 (1971) – Future citizens are controlled by android police and drugs

Soylent Green (1973) -Overpopulation and pollution in the world of the future

Logan's Run (1976) - Mandated killing of everyone over age 30

Star Wars (1977-1983)–Evil Empire rules a galaxy; Death Star; robot army

Blade Runner (1982)-Based on the story by Philip K. Dick- Future bounty hunters look for fugitive artificial humans (Replicants)

The Terminator (1984) -Cyborg assassin from the future sent back to earth in 1984

1984 (1984) –Based on the novel by George Orwell -Massive surveillance in a totalitarian super-state (“Big Brother is watching you.”)

Robocop (1987)-Super crime-eradicating cyborg in Detroit

Total Recall (1990) -False memories implanted of a secret adventure on Mars

Demolition Man (1993) - A police officer is brought out of suspended animation

Gattaca (1997) –Genetic engineering of superior people –technology reduces human potential and variation

Starship Troopers (1997) –Military regime takes over the world; war with giant alien bugs

The Fifth Element (1997) – Life force element vs. demolition of 23rd Century planet earth

Brave New World (1998) –Based on the novel by Aldous Huxley- Artificial breeding, subconscious messaging, sleep-learning, loss of human initiative

The Matrix (1999) - Living in a total virtual world/simulation; humans used as an energy source

A.I. (2001) - Robotic children in human families

Minority Report (2002) –Police have the ability to predict future crimes

I, Robot (2004)-Based on stories by Isaac Asimov- Was a humanlike robot responsible for a scientist's murder?

Avatar (2009) –Human consciousness controlling an alien body; exploitation of a distant lush planet

The Hunger Games (2012) -Televised fight to the death of young people

Prometheus (2012) - A search for human origins leads to a strange world and fight for survival

Elysium (2013) – Earthlings live in poverty and pollution while the super-rich live in luxury aboard a space station

Ex Machina (2014) – Programmer tests a humanoid robot with possible consciousness

Her (2014) – Man becomes romantically involved with an a.i. virtual assistant on his computer

Transcendence (2014) - A scientist uploaded to his computer system begins to control other's minds