F402 Time Travel in Science Fiction

Overview

- Session 1 – Lecture on genre
- Session 2 - All You Zombies
- Session 3 - 1632 Parts 1-4
- Session 4 - 1632 Parts 5-7 and open discussion
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Session 1

- Introduction and readings
- Scope
- Category
- History of genre
- Representative authors
- Timeline of representative stories
- Representative movies and TV shows
- Mechanism
- Issues
- Tropes
- References
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Scope

- Bidirectional
- Transfer of matter or information into the past by natural means
- Long Sleeps and time dilation don't count
- Exceptions
  - Stories important in the history of the genre
  - Stories too well known to ignore
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Category

- Immutable time
- (space-time view)
- Mutable time
- (branched space-time)
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History of genre

- **Supernatural**
  - *Oedipus Rex*
    - Sophocles
      - *Oedipus the King*
    - Tom Lehrer
      - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mScdJURKGWM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mScdJURKGWM)

- **Ad hoc**
  - *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

- **Pseudo-scientific techno-babble**

- **New Physics**
  - *FTL* signals in *Special Relativity*

- **General Relativity**
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Representative movies and shows

- **12 Monkeys**
- **About Time**
- **Back to the Future**
- **Doctor Who**
- **Peabody's Improbable History** Segment in *Rocky and His Friends* and *The Bullwinkle Show*
- **Peggy Sue Got Married**
- **The Terminator**
- **The Time Traveler's Wife**
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Mechanism

- Hand waving
- New physics
  - Special Relativity
    - Tachyons
  - General Relativity
    - Gödel metric
    - Tipler cylinder
    - Wormholes
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Issues

● Subjective time
● Conservation
Tropes

• Temporal Inertia
• Legal issues
• Meddling
• Time wars
• Paradoxes
  • Bootstrap paradox, or Predestination paradox
  • Grandfather paradox
• Secrecy
• Stranded
• Time Police
• Exploitation
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References

  - Bootstrap paradox
  - Grandfather paradox
  - List of 1632 characters
  - List of 1632 characters (fictional)
  - Predestination paradoxes in popular culture
  - Time travel in fiction
  - Time travel themes
  - Time travel in novels and short stories
- Storypilot list of stories
- 1632 character grid
- 1632 Teachers Guide
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Session 2
All You Zombies

- Play audio recording
- Play short movie version
- *I'm My Own Grandpa*
  - Lyrics At http://gean.wwco.com/grandpa/
  - Play
- Play alternate short movie version
- Discussion
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Session 2 Discussion Points
All You Zombies

- What do you think of the action?
- What do you think of the characterization?
- Was the sequence of events plausible?
- Did you see it coming?
- Was the behavior of the character(s) plausible?
- How did the movie compare to the story?
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Session 2
All You Zombies (concluded)
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Sessions 3-4
Discussion points

- What do you think of the action?
- The characterization?
- Was the behavior of the characters plausible?
- Was the behavior of the characters appropriate?
- Was the depiction of historical characters accurate?
- How did the size of Grantville affect events?
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Session 3

*1632* Part One, chapters 1-14

- Initial reaction to the ring of fire
- Battles at farmhouse
- *Rebecca*'s reactions
- *Mike*'s reactions
- Town meeting
- Cabinet meeting
- Lapse of continuity between chapters 8 and 9
- *Gustavus II Adolphus*
- Reaction of *Mackay*'s troops
- Reaction of Mackay to uptimers
- Meetings at the *Roth*'s
1632 Part Two, chapters 15-33

- Camp followers
- Battle of the Crapper
- Gretchen
- Jeff
- Melissa
- Showers
- Cafeteria
- Proposal and aftermath
- Choosing of the Living
- Wedding and family
Battle of Breitenfeld

Gretchen Richter

Julie Sims

Alexander Mackay

Battle of Jena

Committee of Correspondence

Abrabanel family

Diplomatic and political maneuvering

Club 250, Thuringen Gardens and the elections
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Session 4 discussion points

1632  Parts 5-6, chapters 45-58

- Diplomatic maneuvering
- Nobility
  - *Gustav*
  - *Julie*
- Wartburg
- Croat raid
Session 4 discussion points

1632  Part Seven, chapters 59-61

- The deal
  - From the perspective of Grantville
  - From Gustav's perspective
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Session 4
wrap-up

- **1632** Retrospective
  - How was the story affected by Flint's choice of Grantville, Thuringia and the 17th Century?
  - How might the story have played out differently with other choices?

- Other stories
- Reprise of Session 1