

40th SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) – The
Next Steps (A4)
SETI II : SETI and Society (2)

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INFLUENCE OF WORKS OF FICTION ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF SETI

Abstract

Space to the society is perceived as a bundle of solutions to many questions bothering mankind since the very beginning. Among these questions, one significant unanswered question is “Are we alone in this universe?”. From the earliest era of Space research, the concept of the higher frontier has influenced all of the human populace in innumerable aspects. Since the launch of the first object into outer space, man’s sense of fiction has been fuelled continuously to reflect upon his wide sense of imagination as to what exists beyond his blue planet. Thousands of literary works can be cited at this point, each portraying a figment of imagination of the author coupled with a small bit of convincing reality as ascertained from time to time through the ongoing Space Research. These works have inspired many motion pictures in the recent years and have affected a wide range of audiences worldwide.

Hundreds of works of fiction relating to Space Missions, Apocalyptic themes, Space Travel, Space Exploration, Colonization of Outer Space and Extra terrestrial life have been produced in recent times. Some of them have influenced the way we respond to the countless advancements in Space Research made world over.

These works have projected some very fine concerns of the Outer Space. Some of them scare us with calamitous results of our continuous provocation of objects in Outer Space. They speak of fictitious apocalypse on Earth due to the influence of Asteroids or even evil Alien life. On the contrary, some others speak of excessively sensitive and friendly Extra Terrestrial Intelligence or colonization of distant celestial objects. Many books and motion pictures have been based on human errors and aim to educate the masses towards appropriate civic sense to be adopted to preserve our resources. Thus, to space, as some would say, there is definitely more than meets the eye.

This paper intends to analyze and bring out a comprehensive study on the many significant works of fiction concerning Space. The paper focuses on the real features of the imagery brought out by writers and filmmakers and their subsequent importance in furthering Space Sciences. The research suggests how these works have holistically influenced mankind’s perception of alien life. The goal is to learn the willingness of the masses to support or involve themselves in the ongoing Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI).