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DAYS OF FUTURE PAST: FILM VISIONS OF SPACE EXPLORATION, COMMERCIALIZATION  
AND TOURISM

**Abstract**

As a mainstay of popular culture, films have always had a significant effect on shaping imagination. A powerful cultural force, film can depict visions of space and space travel that shape public perception as well as influence those innovators and policy makers involved in actual space development itself. How have films attempted to create realistic depictions of space travel and themes in the past? How has that evolved as events in space moved from science fiction to fact and the technology of film continued to advance? This paper will explore the historical landscape of a selection of space science fiction films from “A TRIP TO THE MOON” (1902) to “MOON” (2009) highlighting the films’ production, vision and technology. From the prophetic to the farcical, cinematic narratives including space exploration and commercialization themes will be illuminated. The paper will also indicate how films utilize production wizardry and cultural traditions to make their visions of space flight seem real and appealing.