With roots in the 19th century, science fiction is very diverse and overlaps with a number of other genres.

One simple definition of science fiction is that “posits worlds and technologies that could exist in a setting outside everyday reality”.

A useful way of understanding science fiction is by dividing it into two major categories of “hard science fiction” and “soft science fiction”.

Hard science fiction focuses on technology and the physical sciences such as astronomy, biology and physics.

Soft science fiction focuses on psychology and sociology. There are many small categories or “subgenres” within science fiction, but keep in mind that any one work may fall into many subgenres.

New members are always welcome

Where: Northfield Public Library
upstairs in the Pye Room
When: 7pm-8pm on the last Monday of the month

Discussions usually focus on topics and ideas brought up in the book. Copies can be found on the hold shelf next to the circulation desk. Everyone is encouraged to bring their own questions for the group and to help moderate the discussion. At the end of the meeting members decide on the next book to read.

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Books discussed in 2017

The Time Machine
H.G. Wells

The Dead Lands
Benjamin Percy

The Hydrogen Sonata
Iain banks

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
Jules Verne

Foreigner
C.J. Cherryh

Martin Time-Slip
Philip K. Dick

The Handmaid’s Tale
Margaret Atwood

The Three-Body Problem
Cixin Liu

Blue Remembered Earth
Alastair Reynolds

Snow Crash
Neal Stephenson

Among Others
Jo Walton

CHARACTERS
Were the characters, especially the main character, fully developed? Or did they seem “wooden” or “flat”?

Do the characters of the story participate in a documented or controversial area of science?

PLOT
Do you think this novel is a good or bad science fiction text, based on the definition of science fiction?

How did you feel about the pacing of the book? Was it a fast paced page-turner, or slow and densely packed with scientific explanations?

What did you think of the ending? Was it a satisfying or appropriate conclusion to the book?

THEMES
Was the story engaging?

What societal issues and predictions does this book make?

Did the book make you more positive about the future or make you more fearful of what we could become?

OVERALL
Has this novel stood the test of time?

Did the author do a good job of using proven scientific principles or theories?

Was there a new scientific principle or technology introduced in the novel?

Did your opinion of the book change as you read it?

Would you recommend it to a friend?

If this was part of a series, would you seek out the others in the series?