

# Science Fiction Readalikes

## **Stranger in a Strange Land** *by Robert A Heinlein (1961)*

Human raised by Martians arrives back on Earth, inherits a fortune and is indoctrinated by a Heinlein-like author. He becomes a messiah and free-love abounds. A controversial bestseller in its day.

## **Brave New World** *by Aldous Huxley (1932)*

Justifiably famous dystopian discourse on the dangers of technology and hedonistic pleasures.

## **2001: A Space Odyssey** *by Arthur C Clarke (1968)*

Story of human evolution that culminates in a mission to Saturn to track down the origins of a monolith found on the moon. The super-intelligent HAL 9000 computer starts getting some ideas of his own along the way.

## **Fahrenheit 451** *by Ray Bradbury (1954)*

Near-future 'firemen' are charged with the responsibility of burning all books in order to wipe out dangerous and subversive ideas. Wall-to-wall TV satiates the masses, while fireman hero Montag secretly reads books. He finally flees the city and takes refuge with a group of 'memorisers' - quite literally people who memorise books.

## **I, Robot** *by Isaac Asimov (1950)*

Sees 'The Three Laws of Robotics' fall far short of being foolproof - with humanity copping some bumps and bruises as a result. Robots go mad, get superiority complexes, enter politics, read our minds, and even develop a sense of humour.

## **Starship Troopers** *by Robert A Heinlein (1959)*

A pivotal book in the history of militaristic sci-fi. After some seriously gung-ho training, a space-marine is thrown into a war against some really nasty and violent alien bugs. Duty and country (i.e. America) are of paramount importance.

## **The Mote in God's Eye** *by Niven & Pournelle (1975)*

The first of several successful collaborations set in Pournelle's **CoDominium** future. A fully-blown interstellar human empire - complete with royalty and a powerful military sub-class - have an unexpectedly dangerous encounter with the alien Moties.

## **Childhood's End** *by Arthur C Clarke (1954)*

Straightforward writing propels this intriguing tale about the evolution of humanity. Dreaded aliens invade and impose peace on the planet. They turn out to be reasonably benevolent as they go about unselfishly raising humanity to a new plane of spiritual evolution. A breath-taking climax tops things off, making this Clarke's best by far.

## **Hyperion** *by Dan Simmons (1989)*

Human ascendancy in the galaxy is under siege as seven pilgrims set off for the Time Tombs to find the creature called Shrike. Along the way they trade their stories - each one harbouring a dark secret. Well constructed high-tech future that adroitly mixes religion and revelation into the plot.

## **The War of the Worlds** *by H G Wells (1898)*

Wells often referred to this original alien-invasion story as a 'scientific fantasy'. Martians invade and inflict mass destruction on humankind. All resistance fails and things look pretty grim until the aliens eventually succumb to an Earth-bound virus.

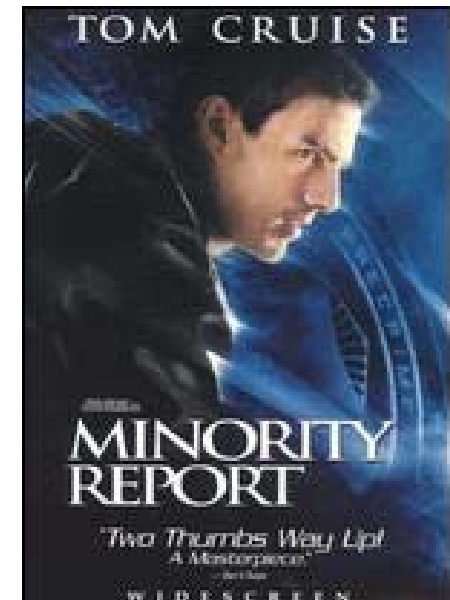
## **The Forever War** *by Joe Haldeman (1974)*

Haldeman's use of deep space settings to portray Vietnam-era military training methods and combat strategies is a history lesson from someone who was there. In a few months at the front lines centuries can pass by on Earth. Sexually-liberated soldier William Mandella finds that things aren't much fun in the 32nd-century.

## **The Man in the High Castle** *by Philip K Dick (1962)*

The pick of the alternative-history bunch and the novel that established Dick as a major sci-fi writer. In 1962 the few surviving Jews live in fear, and slavery is legal - all because America lost World War II.

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### **The day of the triffids**

John Wyndham

Classic post-apocalyptic disaster novel. The beginning of the recent film '28 days later' is lifted straight out of Wyndham's masterpiece.

FIC / SciFi WYN

### **Doomsday book**

Connie Willis

The Middle Ages meets the future in this exploration of time travelling history, with scholars heading back to research the past and finding more than they bargained for. Stunning exploration of the effects of pandemics on society, relevant in these 'bird flu' days.

FIC / Hard Core SciFi WIL

### **There and back again**

Pat Murphy

Space adventure involving salvaging junk, that you gradually realise is a humorous science fiction retelling of Tolkien's 'The Hobbit'.

FIC / Hard Core SciFi MUR

### **Bitter waters**

Wen Spencer

Meet Ukiah Oregon, a young man with accelerated senses who was raised by wolves, domesticated by two women, trained as a tracker and has now attracted a Borg-like enemy, the Ontongard.

FIC / SciFi SPE

### **The Armageddon inheritance**

David Weber

Colin MacIntyre's life as a NASA astronaut might not have been exciting but at least it was orderly. That was until he was kidnapped by an ancient self-aware starship masquerading as Earth's moon. And that was only the beginning.

FIC / SciFi WEB

### **On Basilisk Station**

David Weber

The first in the critically acclaimed Honor Harrington series. Space combat with a female Hornblower.

STACK / SciFi WEB

### **March to the stars**

John Ringo and David Weber

The spoilt heir to a galactic empire is stranded on the planet Marduk, whose jungles are full of carnivorous plants, torrential rain and barbarian hordes with really bad dispositions. Now all Roger has to do is hike half-way around the entire planet, capture a spaceport, comander a starship, and head home.

FIC / SciFi WEB

### **Battlefield Earth** Ron Hubbard

One of the best-selling science fiction novels of all time. Earth has been dominated for 1 000 years by an alien invader – and man is an endangered species!

FIC / Hard Core SciFi HUB

### **Foundation** Isaac Asimov

The tale of the fall of the Galactic Empire and the rise of the Foundation, an empire guided by psychohistory, a scientific method of predicting the future. Possibly the best sci-fi book in existence.

FIC / SciFi ASI

### **Sassinak** Anne McCaffrey and Elizabeth Moon

Sassinak was twelve when the raiders came. When the chance comes to escape from the pirates, she takes it. Sassinak joins the Fleet, surprising everyone by her rapid rise to senior rank. And then her vengeance begins in earnest.

FIC / SciFi MCC

### **Once a hero** Elizabeth Moon

One day Esmay Suiza found herself in the middle of a space battle and the senior surviving officer in a mutiny against a traitorous captain. She becomes both the youngest and lowest ranking member of Fleet ever to win a major battle. And once a hero...

FIC / Hard Core SciFi MOO

### **Starship troopers**

Robert Heinlein

In one of Heinlein's most controversial novels a recruit of the future goes through the toughest boot camp in the Universe – and into battle with the Terran Mobile Infantry against mankind's most alarming enemy.

FIC / Hard Core SciFi HEI

### **Classics**

#### **Dune by Frank Herbert (1965)**

The first and by far the best of Herbert's **Dune** series - to survive on sandworld Arrakis, water resources must be carefully preserved. A political power struggle over an immortality drug sees the hero lead desert dwellers and sandworms into battle and begin his rise to messiah status.

#### **Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card (1985)**

The first book in Card's superb **Ender** sequence, Humanity is attacked by aliens and almost wiped out. Child genius Ender Wiggin is top of the heap in the government's military genius breeding program. A race against time springs some surprises for both Ender and the invading forces.

#### **Foundation Trilogy by Isaac Asimov (1951-53)**

Much-loved series tracing the decline and fall of a galactic empire. Psychohistorian Hari Seldon, however, makes contingency plans - with art, science and technology eventually saving the day

#### **Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams (1979)**

It's the end of the world as we know it - and when a book is this funny - I feel fine. The guide, of course, is what we segue to as we follow Arthur Dent, the last human left alive, on his unlikely travels around the galaxy.

#### **Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell**

A minor bureaucrat in a totalitarian state rebels against the ruling Party and its almost mythical leader Big Brother. Terms like Newspeak, Doublethink and Thought Police became part of the language.

#### **A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess (1962)**

Jailed for delinquent excesses, an ultra-violent youth is subjected to an experimental form of aversion therapy. Complications arise when his sense of humanity and love of classical music are destroyed. His confessions are told in a Russified near-future teenage jargon.