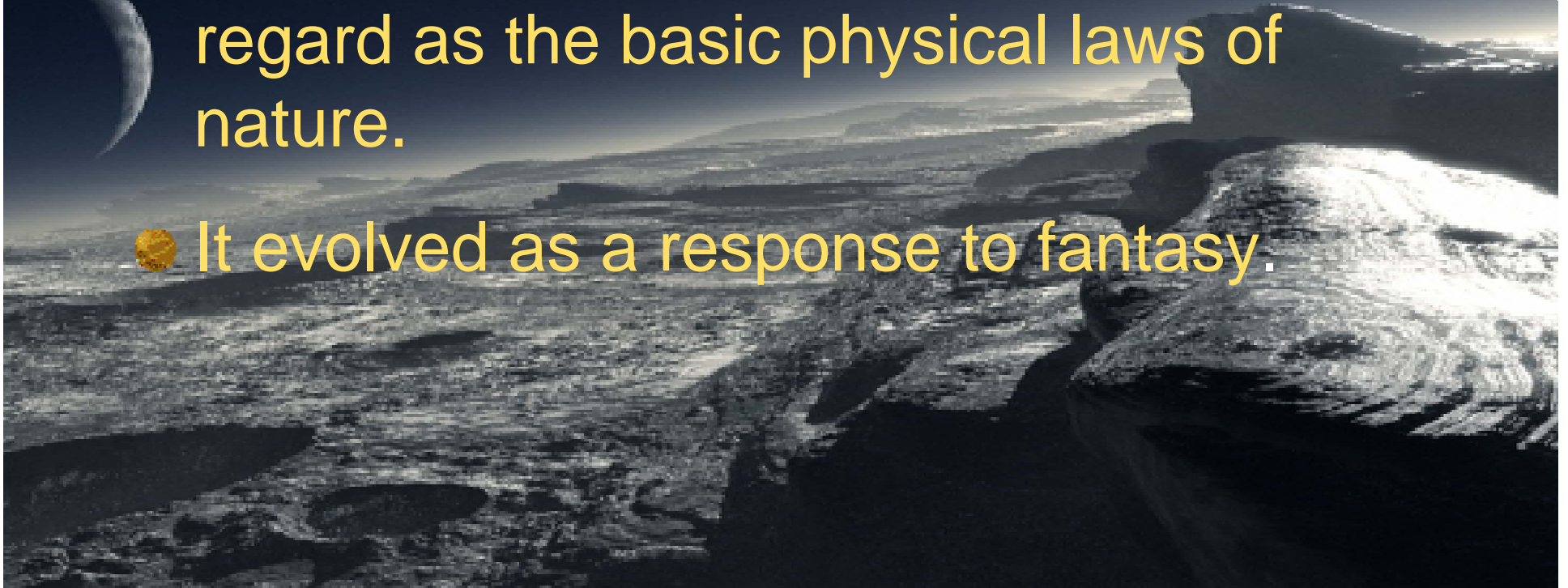


# Introduction to Science Fiction



# What is Science Fiction?

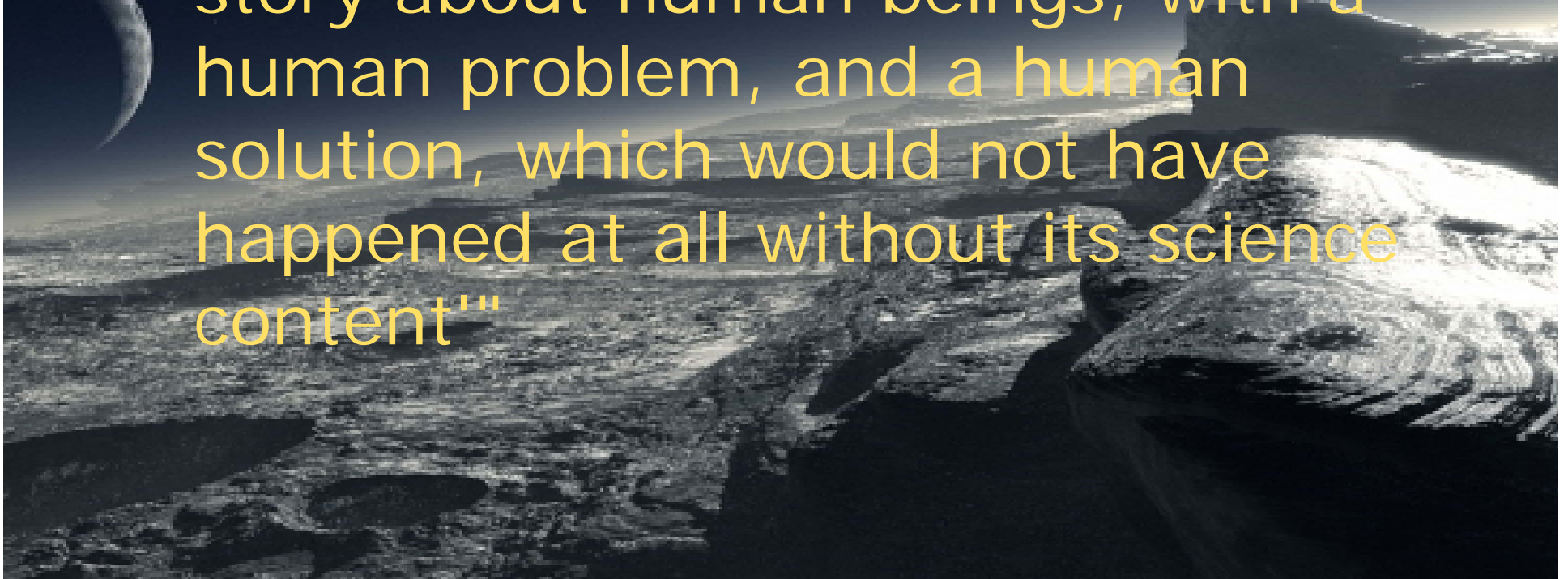
- Science fiction is a writing style which combines science and fiction.
- It is constrained by what we presently regard as the basic physical laws of nature.
- It evolved as a response to fantasy.



# Sci Fi Author's Definitions

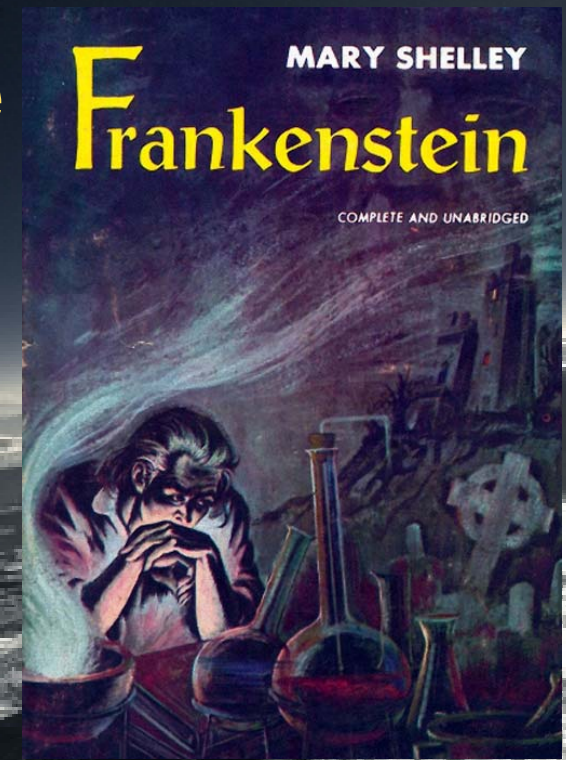
**Theodore Sturgeon**, author:

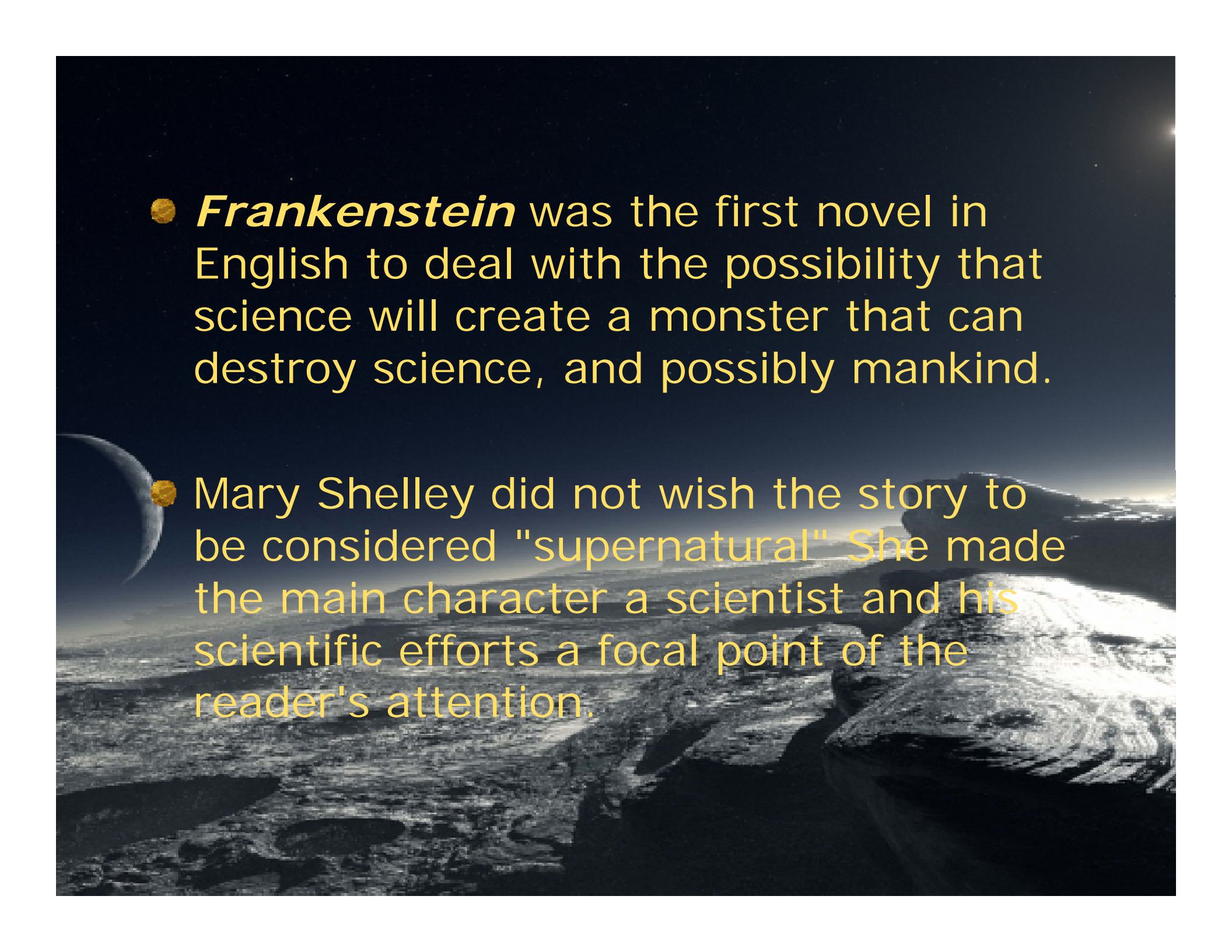
"A good science-fiction story is a story about human beings, with a human problem, and a human solution, which would not have happened at all without its science content"



The first true science fiction novel was Frankenstein by Mary Shelley.

She used a scientific rationale to persuade the reader that her story took place in the realm of the possible.





- ***Frankenstein*** was the first novel in English to deal with the possibility that science will create a monster that can destroy science, and possibly mankind.

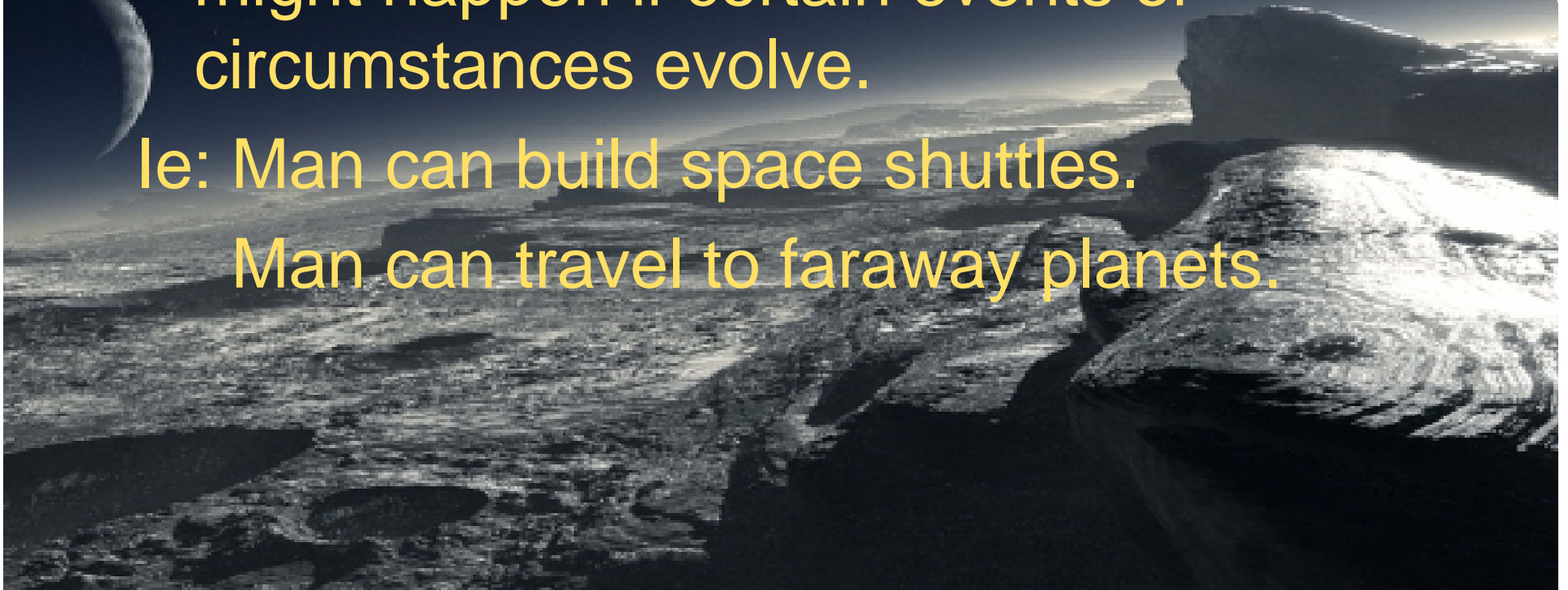
- Mary Shelley did not wish the story to be considered "supernatural". She made the main character a scientist and his scientific efforts a focal point of the reader's attention.

# What is Extrapolation?

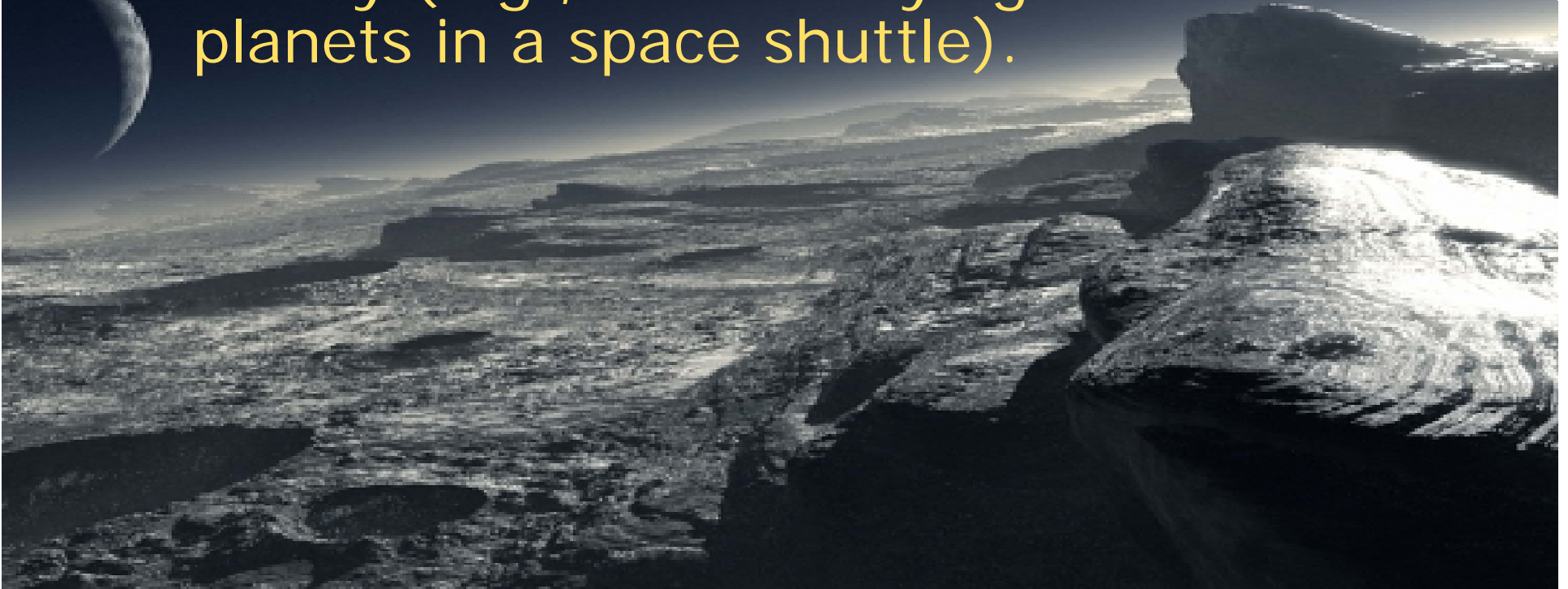
- Extrapolation is when a writer takes a known scientific fact and imagines what might happen if certain events or circumstances evolve.

le: Man can build space shuttles.

Man can travel to faraway planets.



It is a common science fiction **convention** that authors should not contradict known scientific fact (e.g., humans flying on their own without the use of devices), but may do what they wish with commonly-accepted scientific theory (e.g., humans flying to distant planets in a space shuttle).



# Major Themes in Science Fiction

- **Space travel to and from other planets**  
(ie: **Star Wars, Star Trek**)
- **Time travel to the past and future**  
(ie: **Back to the Future**)





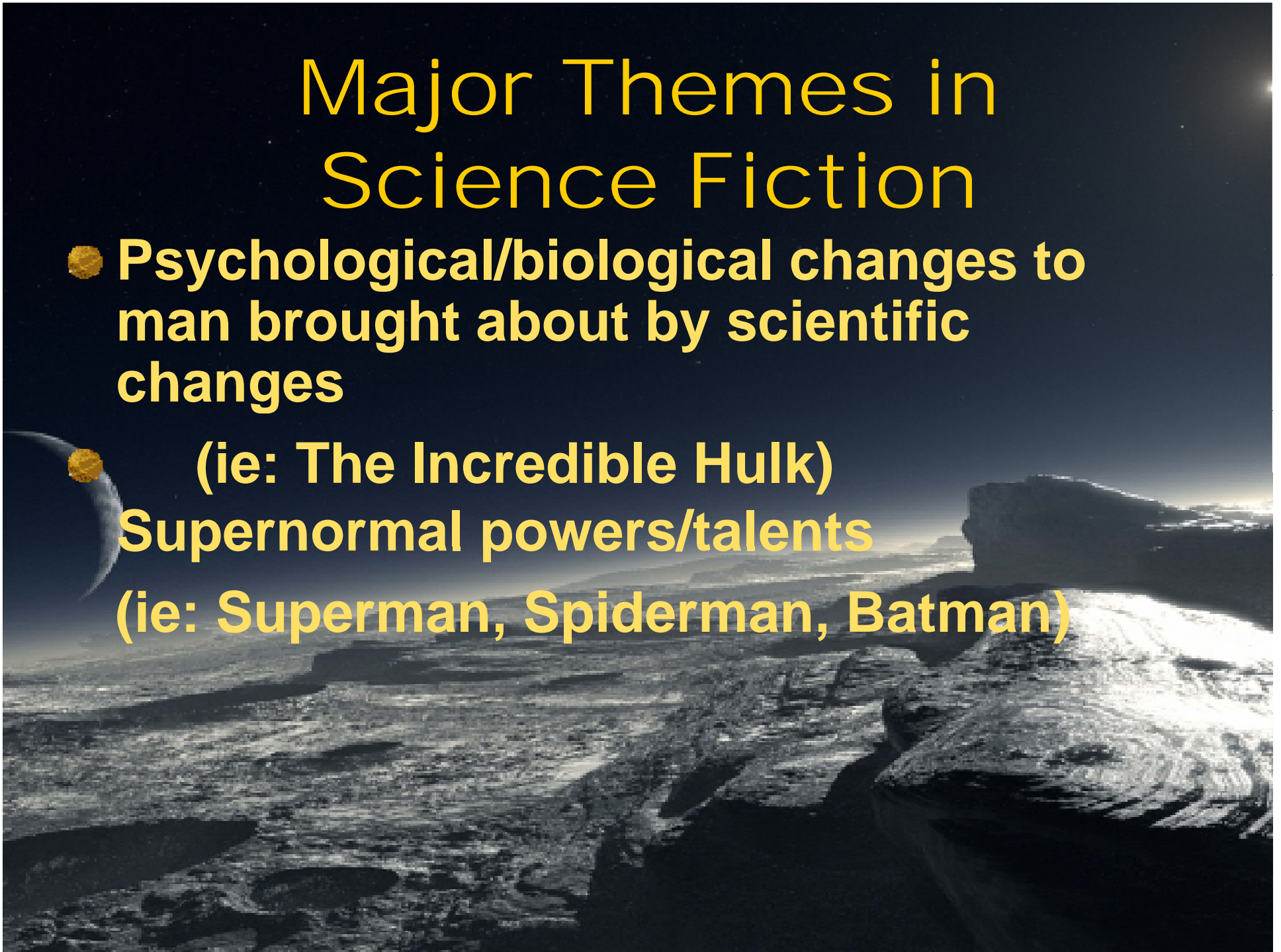
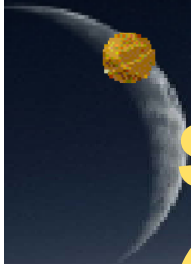
# Major Themes in Science Fiction

- **Psychological/biological changes to man brought about by scientific changes**

**(ie: The Incredible Hulk)**

**Supernormal powers/talents**

**(ie: Superman, Spiderman, Batman)**



**Science applied to human relations for  
constructive or destructive purposes  
(ie: Weird Science)**

**Battle with alien life forms  
(ie: Signs)**

**Alternate Universe  
(ie: Star Wars)**

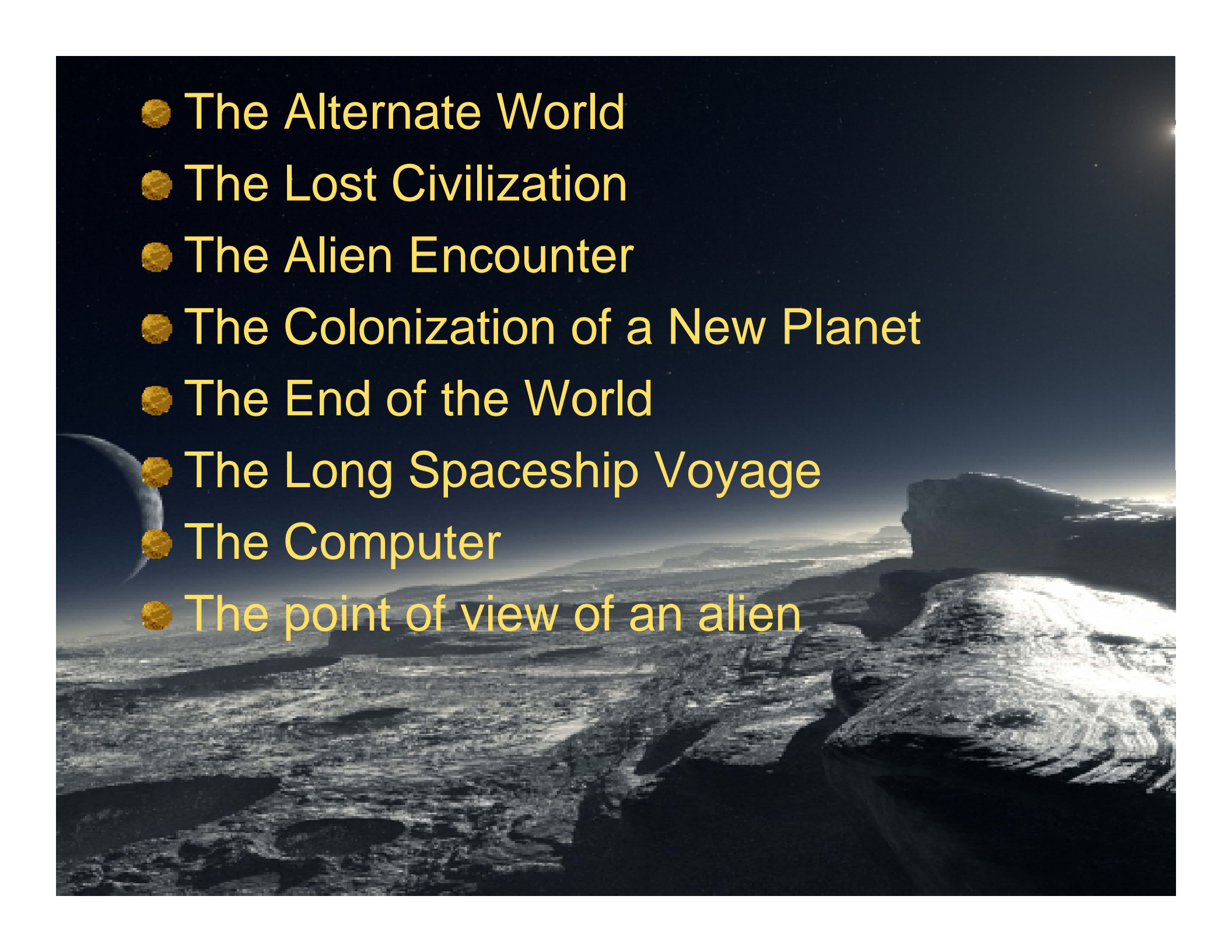


# Plot Conventions of Science Fiction

Examples of Story Ideas:

- The Last Man/Woman on Earth
- The Robot
- The First Landing Story
- Time Travel



- 
- The Alternate World
  - The Lost Civilization
  - The Alien Encounter
  - The Colonization of a New Planet
  - The End of the World
  - The Long Spaceship Voyage
  - The Computer
  - The point of view of an alien

# Sci Fi in the Movies

- Even before talkies, science fiction made its mark on film:
- ***A Trip to the Moon*** (1902) by the Frenchman Georges Melies
- ***Metropolis*** (1926) by the German Fritz Lang, the first classic science fiction film

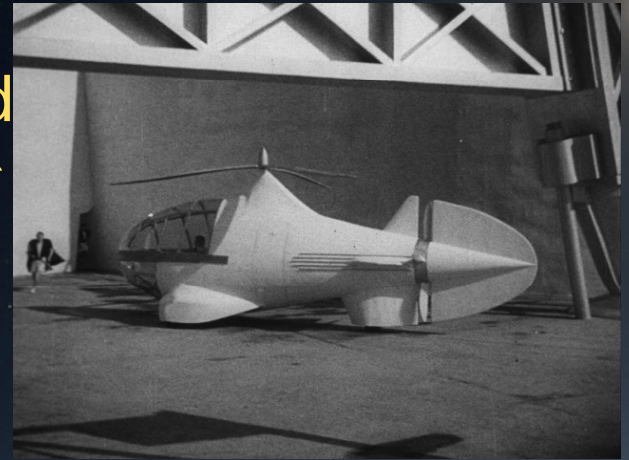


In the 1930s several great classic films were produced:

- ***Frankenstein*** (1931), with Boris Karloff, followed by endless sequels and remakes,
- ***Invisible Man*** (1933), starring Claude Rains, from the novel by H.G. Wells



***Things to Come*** (1936) from the screenplay by H.G. Wells and based on his novel ***The Shape of Things to Come***. This is the first great sound picture in the field and the first film to show a utopian future that includes the promise of space flight.



Two prominent serials of the era are ***Flash Gordon*** (1936) and ***Buck Rogers*** (1939).



# THE FIFTIES

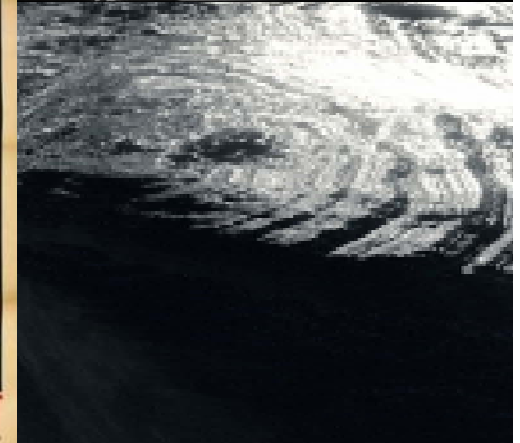
- An estimated 500 feature films and shorts that can be classified science fiction were made between 1948 and 1962.
- Science fiction really began to proliferate on film after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. This event prompted a rash of after-the-bomb and alien invasion films.
- *The Thing* (1951), based on John W. Campbell's short story "**Who Goes There?**," features James Arness as a fearsome, defrosted alien; the film was remade in 1982.





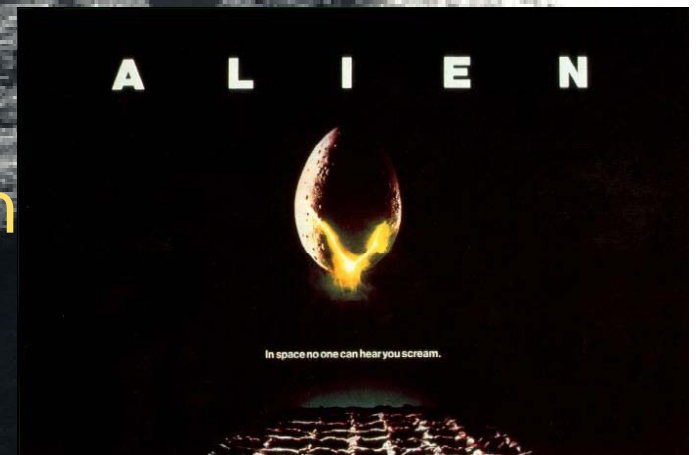
# Sci Fi Movies in the '60's

- Also in 1960 came *The Time Machine*, from the novel by H. G. Wells.
- Stanley Kramer made another foray into science fiction in 1964 with *Dr. Strangelove*
- *Fahrenheit 451* (1966) François Truffaut's film of the Ray Bradbury novel.



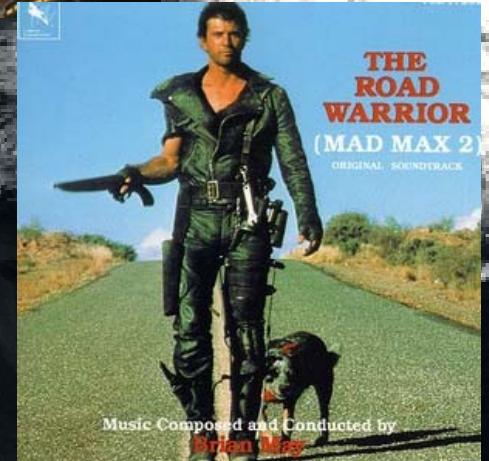
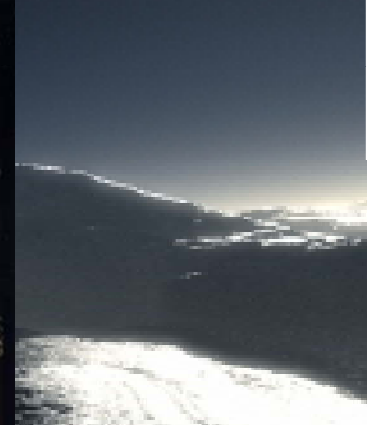
# Sci Fi Movies in the 70's

- In 1977 the debut of *Star Wars* sparked a revitalization of science fiction.
- Due to the huge success of this film, the market for and interest in science fiction as film and as literature skyrocketed into the stratosphere again, rejuvenating and expanding the entire field.
- *Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) comprise the middle trilogy of a projected three-trilogy cycle of films by George Lucas, based in part on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*.
- 1979 – *Alien* – beginning of Alien franchise



# Movies in the 80's

- ***Batman*** (1989) is a stylish telling of the story of the Caped Crusader (Michael Keaton).
- ***Blade Runner*** (1982) is Ridley Scott's stylish film of Philip K. Dick's novel, ***Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?***
- ***The Road Warrior*** (1981) is the second and best of the **Mad Max** films about a post-nuclear-holocaust world.



- ***E.T., the Extra-Terrestrial*** (1982), another blockbuster from Steven Spielberg, was reissued with new footage for its 20th anniversary in 2002.

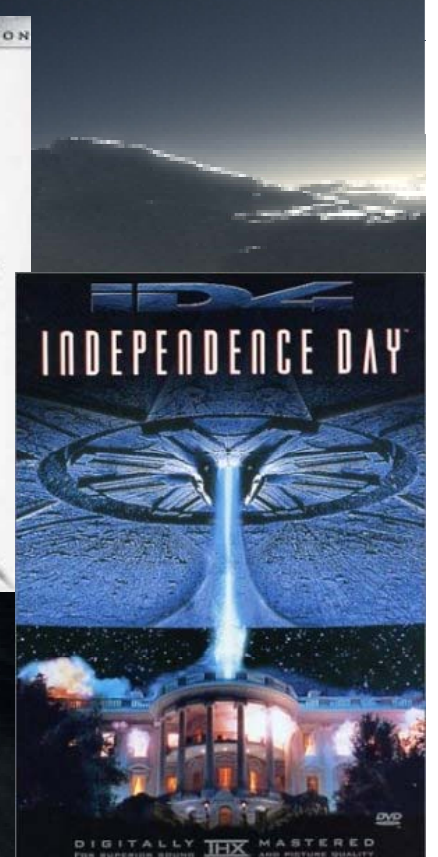
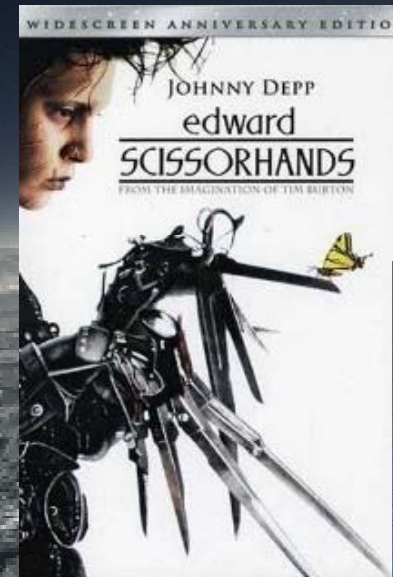


- ***The Terminator*** (1984) is a James Cameron film featuring Arnold Schwarzenegger as a killing machine of the future; the sequel ***Terminator 2*** (1991) picks up where the first film left off. A third film, ***T3: Rise of the Machines***, was released in 2003.



# Sci Fi Movies in the 90's

- ***Total Recall*** (1990) is loosely based on Philip K. Dick's short story, "**We Can Remember It For You Wholesale.**"
- ***Edward Scissorhands*** (1993) is a **Frankenstein** take-off.
- ***Independence Day*** (1996), a wildly-patriotic film, also turned out to be eerily prophetic in the wake of 9/11.

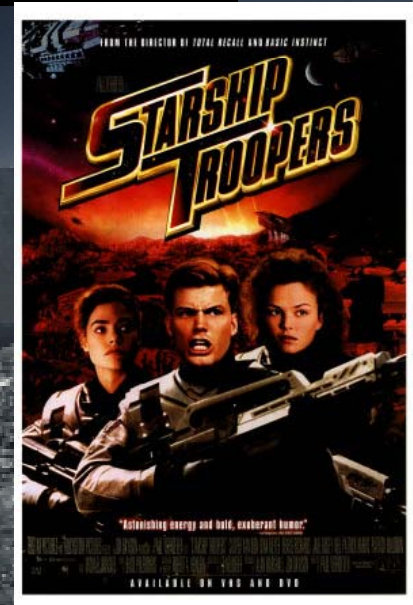


Several major films came out in 1997:

- ***Men in Black***
- ***Contact***, based on a novel by Carl Sagan
- ***Starship Troopers***, based on the novel by Robert A. Heinlein.
- ***Face/Off***, a fantasy thriller about stolen identities



**MIB**  
**MEN IN BLACK**

The poster features the title 'MIB' in large, bold, white letters. In the center of the 'I' is a silhouette of two men in suits, one holding a gun. Below 'MIB' is the subtitle 'MEN IN BLACK' in a smaller, bold, white font. The background is black.

- The long-awaited first Star Wars' trilogy began with *The Phantom Menace* in 1999

- *The Matrix* 1999



# Sci Fi Movies Today

What are some famous science fiction movies in this decade?





# Why should we study Science Fiction?

- Entertaining
- Makes the audience wonder “What If?”
- Encourages creativity in writing and role-playing
- Introduces students to a new literary genre
- Teaches lessons about the value and dangers of advanced technology
- Enhances imagination

