

ContactZone

Peer-reviewed International E-Journal
Call for Papers

Special Issue

Unruly Bodies and Astral Corporealities in Science Fiction Cinema and Television Series
edited by Giuseppe Balirano and Oriana Palusci

In recent decades, science fiction films and television have persistently reimagined the body as a site of contestation, hybridity, and transformation. From disabled and prosthetic bodies to queer, non-gendered, and monstrous forms of embodiment, the genre interrogates the boundaries of what is considered human, alien, artificial or cosmic. At the same time, astral and otherworldly corporealities disrupt traditional understandings of matter, identity, and subjectivity, proposing bodies that are not bound by earthly logics of conformity, productivity, or normativity.

This special issue seeks to explore how science fiction films and television stage non-normative embodiments, both terrestrial and astral, to challenge conventional narratives about gender, sexuality, ability, and monstrosity. We invite contributions that analyze the ways in which sci-fi series construct, critique, and celebrate bodies that resist classification, bodies that disturb comfort zones, and bodies that gesture toward new forms of being in the universe.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Disabled, prosthetic, and cybernetic bodies as counter-narratives to ableist futurisms
- Genderless, trans, and posthuman embodiments beyond binary logics
- Monstrous, hybrid, and alien corporealities as sites of resistance and desire
- Astral or cosmic bodies, immaterial or energy-based life forms, and their cultural meanings
- Intersections of race, disability, and queerness in the representation of non-conforming bodies
- The politics of spectatorship: how audiences engage with disruptive embodiments in science fiction films or TV series
- Case studies of specific series or characters (e.g., *Star Trek*, *Doctor Who*, *The Expanse*, *Sense8*, *Raised by Wolves*, *Black Mirror*, *Battlestar Galactica*, among others) or films

We welcome interdisciplinary approaches drawing from critical disability studies, queer theory, trans studies, posthumanism, media studies, and cultural studies.

This issue aims to foster a dialogue across disciplinary boundaries and to showcase innovative perspectives on how science fiction films and TV series destabilize normative visions of embodiment while imagining radical alternatives for the future.

Submission details:

Abstract submission:

Please send a 300-word abstract and a 100-word bio-note to the following emails:
gbalirano@unior.it and aisff.starfiction@gmail.com

Important dates:

Deadline for abstract submission: **30 October 2025**

Notification of acceptance: **10 November 2025**

Full papers submission: **20 January 2026**

Publication: **May 2026**

Language of the paper: English

All submissions will undergo a double-blind peer review.