

There are three distinguishable but overlapping categories of fiction in the genre - Invasion Scare, Future War and Espionage.

Invasion Literature - stories set in the near future that describe a planned or actual invasion of the homeland by an enemy.

Future War Fiction - stories of future wars that are distinguished by new techniques of warfare or new technologies - such as air-warfare or submarines. These tend to fall into two sub-types:

Technological - new ways of fighting wars

Geo-political - extrapolating political conflicts or animosities

Spy Fiction - stories of spies and espionage - either by the enemy or by the home country.

Although I tend to use the phrase 'Invasion Literature' as a catchall.

Note: espionage is often a feature within the other categories but can also be the core of stories specifically featuring spies and spying.

The [scope of the website](#) discusses what is and what is not covered on this site.

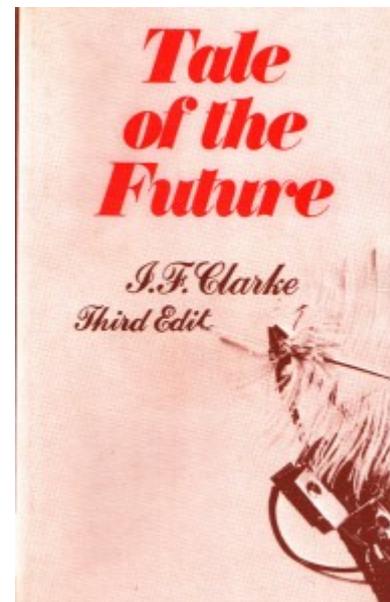
Invasion and Future War literature can be regarded as a subset of more general futuristic writing that began in the 19C.

Its origins can best be summarised by this extract from I.F. Clarke:

"[A] factor at work in the evolution of futuristic fiction was the recent and rapid development of the war technologies - ironclads, breach-loading artillery, new rifles, the use of railways in the concentration and deployment of troops. The American Civil War, and more especially the Franco-German War of 1870, were a warning that the conduct of war was changing and, given the experimentation then gang on, would continue to change. For an island people, dependent on foreign trade and unaccustomed to conscription, the defeat of the French was an omen that the British had to take seriously. So, a colonel of Engineers sent the editor of Blackwood's Magazine an admonitory tale about a future invasion of the United Kingdom that ended in exemplary fashion with the destruction of British power. The uproar following on the publication of *The Battle of Dorking* in the May of 1871 showed that the tale of the future had once again discovered a prophetic model which was perfectly adapted to conveying serious messages about the state of the national defences. When Sir George Tomkyns Chesney's short story burst on the nation and the world, it was evident that the tale of the future had become a powerful and popular

means of communication. For three months editions poured from the Blackwood presses in Edinburgh, and more than a dozen imitations and counterblasts appeared within weeks. There were voluminous reports in the European papers, and translations into Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese; and special editions appeared in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. Chesney had given the nineteenth century nation-states a potent device - *Der Zukunftskrieg*, *Les guerres imaginaires* - that proved to be a favoured means of propaganda in the decades before the First World War. Even more important, he had confirmed the tale of the future in its role as mediator between science and society, between the people and the possible."

Clarke, I. F. (1978). *Tale of the future : from the beginning to the present day : an annotated bibliography*. London, Library Association.



It is described by Wikipedia as:

"Invasion literature (or the invasion novel) is a literary genre most notable between 1871 and the First World War (1914) but still practised to this day. The genre first became recognizable starting in Britain in 1871 with *The Battle of Dorking*, a fictional account of an invasion of England by Germany. This short story was so popular it started a literary craze for tales that aroused imaginations and anxieties about hypothetical invasions by foreign powers, and by 1914 the genre had amassed a corpus of over 400 books, many best-sellers, and a world-wide audience. The genre was influential in Britain in shaping politics, national policies and popular perceptions in the years leading up to the First World War, and remains a part of popular culture to this day. Several of the books were written by or ghost-written for military officers and experts of the day who believed that the nation would be saved if the particular tactic that they favoured was or

would be adopted.”

Wikipedia – Invasion Literature –

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_literature

It goes on to define Future-War Literature as:

“The first “future war” story was George T. Chesney’s *The Battle of Dorking*, a story about a British defeat after a German invasion of Britain, published in 1871 in *Blackwood’s Magazine*. Many such stories were written prior to the outbreak of World War I. George Griffith’s *The Angel of the Revolution* (1892) featured “terrorists” armed with then-non-existent arms and armour such as airships, submarines, and high explosives. The inclusion of yet-non-existent technology became a standard part of the genre. Griffith’s last “future war” story was *The Lord of Labour*, written in 1906 and published in 1911, which included such technology as disintegrator rays and missiles. H. G. Wells’ novel *The War of the Worlds* inspired many other writers to write stories of alien incursions and wars between Earth and other planets, and encouraged writers of “future war” fiction to employ wider settings than had been available for “naturalistic” fiction. Wells’ several other “future war” stories included the atomic war novel *The World Set Free* (1914) and *The Land Ironclads*, which featured a prophetic description of the tank, albeit of an unfeasibly large scale.”

Wikipedia – Space warfare in fiction –

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_warfare_in_fiction#Future_war:_the_precursor_to_space_warfare