Overview

Steampunk is a genre of speculative fiction that incorporates science, technology and aesthetics inspired by nineteenth century industrial steam-powered machinery as well as Victorian ideals. Steampunk works are often set in the British Victorian era or American "Wild West" or in a future world that evolved but never moved beyond the foundation of steam power technologies and sciences of the nineteenth century.

Though many would point to Jules Verne and H.G. Wells as the sources of Steampunk, most sources cite the term steampunk being originated by science fiction author K. W. Jeter in the 1980s. He and other authors were writing speculative fiction taking place in a 19th century (usually Victorian) setting similar to H.G. Wells and Jules Verne. He was looking for a classification term and recommended to a publisher 'steam-punks', perhaps.

Steampunk incorporates anachronistic versions of technology such as steam engines, lighter-than-air airships, clockwork, analog computers, and futuristic designs similar to Tesla's inventions. Steampunk also has its own aesthetic and fashion with a mix of Victorian classic, American west, art nouveau, and clockwork, along with leather & brass accents.

Vernean vs Dickensian

There is some debate whether steampunk should be more Vernean or Dickensian.

- Vernean Steampunk, following the writings of Jule Verne, looks at steampunk as optimistic and futuristic with lots of science, technology and heroism.
- Dickensian Steampunk, following the writings of Charles Dickens, looks at steampunk as darker and more foreboding with lots of industry, greyness, and villainy.

Following are sources of information pertaining to Steampunk to assist prospective game masters, game designers, writers, and storytellers to know where to start their research.

Articles

Blending genres, bending time: Steampunk on the western Frontier
By Miller C.J.; Van Riper A.B.

Extraordinary Past: Steampunk as a Mode of Historical Representation
By Rose, M.

Prescriptivists vs. Descriptivists: Defining Steampunk
By Nevins, J.
Source: Science Fiction Studies, Vol. 38, No. 3 (November 2011), pp. 513-518
**Steampunk**
By Wilson, K.

*Vapour trails: Steampunk’s florid industrial nostalgia might yet be the defining aesthetic of our time*
By Coulthart, J.
Source: *Eye* (London) n86 (2013 09 01): 72-76

**What Is Steampunk, and Do I Want It in My Library?**
By Rozmus, E.
Source: *Library Media Connection*, v30 n2 p31-33 Oct 2011

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**Books**

*Anubis Gates*
By Powers, Tim

*Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*
By Reynolds, K. D.

*Boneshaker*
By Priest, Cherie

*Britain’s Century*
By Rubinstein, W. D.

*The Crimean War*
By Baumgart, Winfried

*The Difference Engine*
By Sterling, Bruce and Gibson, William

*Girl Genius – comic series*
By Foglio, Phil & Kaja

*The Great Exhibition of 1851: a Nation on Display*
By Auerbach, John

*Hellboy – comic series*
By Mignola, Mike

*Homunculus*
By Blaylock, James

*How to Be a Victorian: A Dawn-to-Dusk Guide to Victorian Life*
By Goodman, Ruth

*The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen – comic series*
By Moore, Alan

*Leviathan*
By Westerfeld, Scott

*Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences*
By Ballantine, Philippa and Morris, Tee

*Morlock Night*
By Jeter, K.W.

*Mortal Engines*
By Reeves, Philip

*Parasol Protectorate*
By Carriger, Gail

*Steampunk: An Illustrated History of Fantastical Fiction, Fanciful Film and Other Victorian Visions*
By Robb, Brian J.

*The Steampunk Bible: An Illustrated Guide to the World of Imaginary Airships, Corsets and Goggles, Mad Scientists, and Strange Literature*
By VanderMeer, Jeff and Chambers, S.J.
Steampunk: Fantasy Art, Fashion, Fiction & The Movies (Gothic Dreams)
By Winchester, Henry

The Steampunk Gazette
By Willeford, Thomas

The Time Machine
By Wells, H.G.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea
By Verne, Jules

Victorian America and the Civil War
By Rose, Anne C.

Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London
By Nead, Lynda

The Victorian City: Everyday Life in Dickens’ London
By Flanders, Judith

This Victorian Life: Modern Adventures in Nineteenth-Century Culture, Cooking, Fashion, and Technology
By Chrisman, Sarah A.

Victorian Values
By Marsden, Gordon

The Warlord of the Air
By Moorecock, Michael

Cinema

20,000 Leagues Under The Sea
The Adventures of Baron Munchausen
The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr. - TV
Around the World in 80s Days
Atlantis: The Lost Empire
The Brothers Grimm
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
Hellboy
Iron Sky

Games

Abney Park’s Airship Pirates - RPG
Assassin’s Creed - Computer Game
BioShock - Computer Game
Brass and Steel - RPG
Journey to the Center of the Earth
The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
Legend - TV
Q.E.D. - TV
The Prestige
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows
Steamboy
The Time Machine
Van Helsing
Wild Wild West - TV
Young Sherlock Holmes

Locations

Antique Gas And Steam Museum
http://steam-museum.com/

London Museum Of Water And Steam
http://waterandsteam.org.uk/

Nikola Tesla Museum
http://www.tesla-museum.org/meni_en.htm

The Steam Museum
http://steam-museum.com/

Steampunk World’s Fair
http://www.steampunkworldsfair.com

TeslaCon
http://teslacon.com/

Tesla Science Center at Wardenclyffe
http://www.teslasciencecenter.org/

Thomas Edison National Historical Park
http://www.nps.gov/edis/index.htm

People

Charles Babbage
Isambard Kingdom Brunel
Samuel Colt
Charles Darwin
Humphry Davy
Charles Dickens
Thomas Edison
Michael Faraday
 Freemasons
Robert Fulton
Illuminati
Jack the Ripper
Abraham Lincoln
David Livingston
Ada Lovelace
Samuel Morse
Charles Algernon Parsons
Edgar Allen Poe
George Pullman
George Stephenson
Mary Shelley
Nikola Tesla
Richard Trevithick
Thuggees
Jules Verne
Queen Victoria
Werner von Siemens
Vril Society
James Watt
H.G. Wells