



universität  
**uulm**

**Physikalisches Kolloquium**  
**Einladung**

**Physics Colloquium**  
**Invitation**

**Monday, 05 May 2025**


Lecture Hall N24/H13, at 16:15

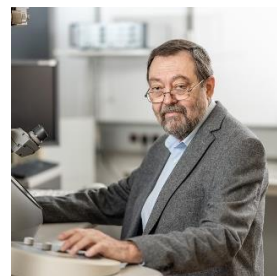
Coffee and cookies will be served in front of the lecture hall from 16:00

## Science and Science Fiction: The Misjudged Twins

**Prof. Dr. techn. Dipl.-Ing. Mag. rer. nat.**  
**Peter Schattschneider**

TU Wien  
USTEM facilities

 <https://www.tuwien.at/forschung/facilities/ustem/mitarbeiter/schattschneider/physik-der-science-fiction>



Many scientists regard science fiction (SF) as unscientific escapism, if not nonsense. SF enthusiasts, on the other hand, often confuse it with predictions of the future. While much SF is indeed unscientific and not at all visionary, a significant proportion of SF authors have a scientific or technical background that is evident in their work. Is this so because reading SF in their youth has sparked a fascination with science? Concerning predictions, some ideas from SF were indeed realized later or allegedly led to inventions such as the solar sail for space propulsion or the cellular phone. It appears that there is a closer connection between science and SF than is commonly supposed. But what is the shared feature?

As far as physics is concerned, I show by way of example that certain texts can be analyzed scientifically. Some descriptions are amazingly meticulous, even in mathematical terms, while others are flawed (sorry, Mr. Wells). Such analysis is thought-provoking and provides surprising insight into physics at various levels from high school to graduates.

These examples suggest an answer to the question posed earlier: The common element of science and science fiction - the misjudged twins - is the passion to explore envisioned realities.

Peter Schattschneider is professor emeritus at the Vienna University of Technology. His research focuses on analytical electron microscopy. In parallel to his scientific work, he is author of SF stories and novels. Together with colleagues, he lectured in Paris, Vienna and Beijing on the relationship between science and science fiction.

Recent publication: Peter Schattschneider, Der Traum des Philosophen. Hirnkost Verlag 2024. SF stories (in German).



Host: Prof. Dr. Ute Kaiser, Institute of Quantum Optics (Electron Microscopy)

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