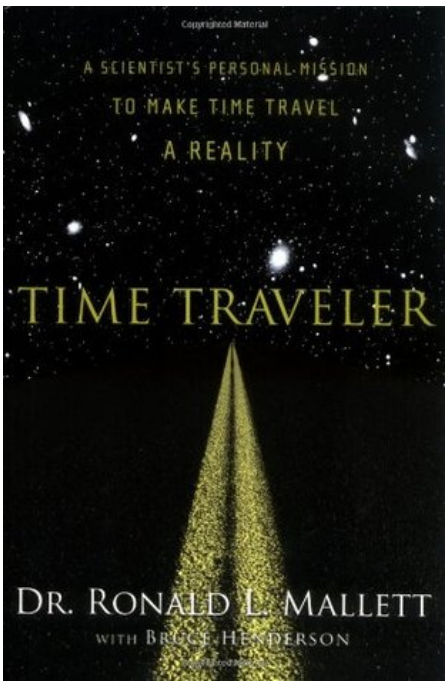

Time Traveler: A Scientist's Personal Mission to Make Time Travel a Reality

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This is the dramatic and inspirational first-person story of theoretical physicist, Dr. Ronald Mallett, who recently discovered the basic equations for a working time machine that he believes can be used as a transport vehicle to the past. Combining elements of Rocket Boys and Elegant Universe, Time Traveler follows Mallett's discovery of Einstein's work on space-time, his study of Godel's work on a solution of Einstein's equation that might allow for time travel, and his own research in theoretical physics spanning thirty years that culminated in his recent discovery of the effects of circulating laser light and its application to time travel. The foundation for Mallett's historic time-travel work is Einstein's theory of general relativity, a sound platform for any physicist. Through his years of reading and studying Einstein, Mallett became a buff well before he had any notion of the importance of the grand old relativist's theories to his own career. One interesting subtext to the story is Mallett's identification with, and keen interest in, Einstein. Mallett provides easy-to-understand explanations of the famous physicist's seminal work.

Time Traveler: A Scientist's Personal Mission to Make Time Travel a Reality Details

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From Reader Review Time Traveler: A Scientist's Personal Mission to Make Time Travel a Reality for online ebook

Mariam says

3.5/5 stars

As a person who normally sticks to reading science fiction and fantasy novels, I found this nonfiction book about time travel very compelling to read. I am a huge geek/nerd/otaku for time travel, and this led me to wonder how possible is it for time travel to actually occur.

Dr. Mallet has a way of explaining time travel in a way that readers are easily able to understand. He reiterates on topics and theories such as the theory of relativity and what frame dragging is, as well as explaining circulating light beams and the idea that it might produce closed time loops, which in other words means to travel back into the past.

This book is more like an autobiography (hence the keyword PERSONAL), in which the author gave an account of the events of his life and what motivated him to become a physicist and start building a time machine. For this, I find myself idolizing Dr. Mallet since the death of his father propelled him to become a physicist and he achieved his goal of becoming one.

He may not have achieved his ultimate dream of building a real life functioning time machine that sends a person into the past yet...but to know that his ambitions brought him this far gives me more confidence in accomplishing my personal goals.

Charlotte says

This book is fantastic. I don’t normally write reviews but I enjoyed this book so much that I’m going to go ahead and do it.

Robert Hammond says

Cinematic story of a young boy who wants to build a time machine in order to reach out to his deceased father. He grows up to become a renowned theoretical physicist who breaks the code to making time travel a real possibility. Love to see the adaptation on the big screen.

Jason Bergman says

If you're planning to read this book, you need to know up front that there's a lot of physics in here. The authors do a good job of dumbing it down for us lay people, but there's a lot of crazy theoretical physics talk, and it can be overwhelming.

Also, while Mallett has had some ups and downs in his life, it's not the most dramatic autobiography you'll ever read. He's not a wild adventurer, he's a professor and lecturer. If you want to read the adventures of a wild scientist, read Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!: Adventures of a Curious Character (actually, just read it regardless - it's an amazing book).

But I enjoyed this book. I wish it had an ending, but alas, his research, despite some very, very promising theoretical implications, is not complete as yet. Perhaps once the machine is turned on, he can send the afterward back through time so we can see how it will all conclude. Until then, it ends on a hopeful note.

Crystal Starr Light says

I may have started out my year a bit unsteady with the goofy "Tinker", but if this book is an indication of what is to come, I may fall in love with reading again!

I don't recall exactly when I bought this book, other than it was several moves ago. For whatever reason, it survived multiple cullings but I never read it because I figured this would be a book going into some hardcore math and science - and as much as I love math and science, you gotta be in a mood for that.

I probably would have left it on the shelf for many more years if I hadn't come across an Audible deal for this. I snapped it up, and when I finished Tinker, I thought I'd whip through this 7-hour read.

Best Money I've Spent. Best 7 Hours of My Life (and given most of those hours were when I was sick on my bed, that's pretty damned high praise!).

This wasn't a hardcore math/science of the feasibility of time travel - this was one man's personal journey from losing his father as a child, dealing with grief and then discovering, via reading "The Time Machine" by H.G. Wells his passion - time travel.

This book has it all - it's poignant and powerful. It is smart and funny. It talks about race relations (Ronald Mallet is a black man), it talks about grief. From the beginning to the end (with one MINOR MINOR blip that a part gets repeated without acknowledging it was discussed earlier), I was ENTHRALLED. There were moments I wanted to cry. There were moments when I was on the edge of my seat, dying to know what happened next.

I think that Ronald Mallet has an incredible story, one that packs a powerful punch. If you are remotely interested in science or perhaps want to seek out stories for Black History Month, this needs to get on your list. Even if you hate math and don't know what a differential equation is, I think you will find something to enjoy!

Melody says

I read this book because this is one of my favorite stories that has ever been featured on This American Life, in the episode "My Brilliant Plan."

As a young boy, the author's beloved father died very suddenly. So, as a ten year old, he decides that what he needs to do is build a time machine so he can go back in time and warn his father to take better care of himself and prevent him from dying young. Most kids would stop with the dream, but Ronald Mallett went

on to devote his entire life to the study of theoretical physics and the advancement of the possibility of time travel.

This book delves more deeply into issues of race than the TAL story does, which I found to be very interesting. It also goes into quite a bit of detail about Dr. Mallett's research (a lot of detail for a lay person like me, that is). A lot of the physics went over my head, which says something because I do have a strong interest in physics, thanks to a superb high school teacher and an excellent astronomy class in college.

Though I was occasionally challenged by some of the more technical aspects, this is an incredible story that's both inspiring and heartbreaking. And given my strong interest in time travel, I found the book particularly interesting.

This was also a great book to read while watching the final season of "Lost." It certainly gave me some ideas about how the series might end!

Wolfzone says

This is a wonderful book. I was actually moved to tears more than once (does not happen often). The sorrow felt at the loss of the author's father at such an early age impacted his psyche and helped shape this brilliant man's destiny. The unwavering love for his Dad takes him on an incredible lifelong journey stemming from comic books, and "magical thinking" to an esteemed career in theoretical physics and a quest to explore the staggering possibilities that arise from new discoveries - all while having to confront society's deepest pitfalls such as ugly racial bigotry and other trials presented by small minded rigidity. There's also considerable anecdotal nods to great physicists, including of course, Einstein, which made this read all the more enjoyable. I was never a physics student so some of this was beyond me, however this is written with enough patience in breaking things down as to not become boring or alienating for nonacademics. In my opinion, the greatest takeaway is how one can be inspired to build their dream in this very short life, against all adversity, and accomplish some amazing things. Beautiful book.

Chris says

There are a lot of reasons to want to build a time machine. To learn the truth about historical places and events, to see creatures that have been extinct for millions of years, to kill Hitler - always a favorite. You could go to the Library of Alexandria and save the works of great scientists and philosophers that have been lost to history. You could document the Crucifixion or watch the fall of Rome first-hand. You could see Jimi or Elvis or Janice or Kurt in their heyday, watch the original performances of Shakespeare's plays, or talk engineering with DaVinci. With a time machine, the whole of history is open to you, and your options are just about limitless.

All Ron Mallett wanted to do with his time machine was see his dad.

This book is not just about how one man went about figuring out how to travel through time. That in itself would be interesting, since time travel has been a dream of mankind ever since we figured out that time was a thing. There's a lot of complicated science that goes into not just manipulating time, but figuring out that it *can* be manipulated, and it takes half a lifetime to master. A lot of popular science books focus on the science, unsurprisingly, and talk about how certain things were discovered and what can be done with them in the future.

That's all well and good, but this book adds an extra element that's often missing from other popular science texts. It talks about *why*.

When Ron Mallett was ten years old, his father died of a heart attack brought about by a combination of smoking, poor dietary choices, and a genetic inclination towards heart problems. Overnight, the man that young Ron loved and idolized was gone, leaving him directionless at an age when having a father can be so very important. With the loss of a beloved parent, it's entirely possible that Ron could have seen his life crippled from that day onward.

It might have been, if not for H.G. Wells and his famous book, *The Time Machine*.

After he read this book, the notion that time could be navigated became the center of his life. His first attempt at a time machine - built of pipes and wires in his basement - was unsuccessful, of course. But he was undeterred, and realized that if he was going to make this dream come true, he would have to buckle down and start learning some science. Just the idea that he might one day build a machine to travel through time was enough to give him direction and purpose, and it set him on a course that would go on to define his life.

The book is a memoir of his own travels through the world of physics and relativity, moving from one point to another as new ideas and discoveries signposted his route towards a theory of time travel. Initially guided by Einstein, Mallett went from being a young academic to programming computers for the Air Force, to becoming a full-fledged academic at the University of Connecticut. He makes sure that the reader can not only follow all the steps that he took, but that we can also see why he took them. What chance encounters and lucky finds pushed him forward, or what unfortunate incidents slowed him down. He reminds us all throughout the book of why he has chosen to do science, and never lets us forget this motivation.

At the same time, he is sure to tell us about two rather significant obstacles to his progress. The first, of course, was that he felt he couldn't be honest about why he was studying what he was studying - relativity, black holes, lasers, that kind of thing. For fear that he would be labeled a crackpot and denied the opportunities he would need, he revealed his ambition to build a time machine only to those he felt he could absolutely trust. As far as anyone else was concerned, of course, he was just another theoretical physicist trying to figure out how the universe worked.

The other challenge he faced was that he was African-American in a field that was very, very white at the time. He had to deal with racism in both its overt and covert forms, and work even harder to prove himself to those who couldn't - or wouldn't - see past his skin color. He doesn't dwell on it in this book, since that's not what this book is about. But I'm sure if he wanted to write about what it was like trying to break into physics academia as an African-American in the 60s and 70s, he probably could.

What's most important, though, is that he continually reminds us of *why* he's doing what he's doing. He talks about his father, and the memories he had of him. He keeps his non-academic life in view, letting us in on his personal triumphs and failures, his struggles with depression and his joys at advancing towards his goal. The end result is a book that is not only about science, but about a person. The emotional thread that runs through this book is strong, and even if you can't quite follow the science, you can still follow the passion that Ron Mallett has for this project.

The book, while fascinating, is technically unfinished. He has yet to build his time machine, and there's no proof that the ideas he's come forward will actually work, even if the math says they should. As the book finishes, he has a plan, and he lays out the way he thinks his machine *should* work, but we'll have to wait to see how that works out. Whether he succeeds or fails, though, he has built up a lifetime of research that has expanded our understanding of space and time in such a way that Einstein - and Ron Mallett's father - would no doubt be proud of.

"Time stopped for me in the middle of the night on May 22, 1955."
- Ron Mallett, "Time Traveler"

Jean says

Truly, there is a review that says what I want to say about this book and he got it spot on. Credit goes to and now I cannot find it. Well this book inspired me, it touches on family dynamics, emotional issues, depression, drive and determination, passion, racial issues, love, and science. Dr.Mallett talks about Physics in a way that even I could grasp it and there were times when I was clueless about his descriptions and explanations, but this book is very readable and I now want to meet Dr. mallett. Interesting tidbit _ he works at UConn and so do I. Cannot wait for his next talk there! Found it! Chris is the reviewer who nailed it.

Jack Oughton says

I love this guy. Ronald has the entirely unreasonable goal of making time travel a reality, so that he can go back and see his Dad one more time.

As one of the world's leading physicists, he also has the intellectual knowledge to help make this a reality.

I found his story to be honest, heartwarming, slightly naive and quite inspiring, and was most interested by his layman's explanations of various scientific concepts, though there is a lot of autobiography in there as well.

Paula Cappa says

Understanding time travel was always such a dense mystery to me, but Mallett is highly skilled in how he explains it for the ordinary person. I'm a writer of supernatural mysteries and do not have a mind for math, physics, or electrical technology at all. After reading Time Traveler, I have a much clearer perspective on just how possible time travel might actually be. Mallet explains about laser optical time, unidirectional circulating light beams and closed time loops in clear easy-to-understand language. There is even a drawing of the transmitter for the time travel machine that made sense to me.

But this is not just a book about a theory into a scientific adventure of traveling back in time. We are brought into the personal life of Mallett, into his trials as he grows up and becomes the gifted and passionate scientist that he is today. As any childhood trauma can redirect a life, Mallett writes about his father's death with deep sensitivity and focuses on the emotional growth that directed him into the field of science. Can time and space be manipulated so a person can go back into the past? Do we have that knowledge or can we acquire that scientific knowledge? Einstein thought that "imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." This book shows that Mallett certainly has the scientific knowledge, the passion, and the imagination to get us there.

Vince Home says

Interesting Book. Didn't think it was going to be about his as much as it was and gets pretty boring in the middle.

D. says

Amazing and touching book. Discuss some serious physics which might lead to real time travel.

Matt says

I bought an autographed copy of this book for $1.99 from an independent seller on the Barnes & Noble web site -- and the seller didn't even bother to mention that it was autographed. I took this as a bad sign. Ron Mallett, the likable physicist who co-authored this true-life account, has a great story to tell of the journey that led him to figure out a way to make time travel a reality. Unfortunately, not all great stories make great books, and this is the case here. The story, fortunately only 198 for those forced to read this because someone picked it in their book club, is clouded with too much irrelevant minutiae and technical explanations of theories to be compelling enough to let the good parts stand out. Worse, it is not all that well-written and very poorly edited -- surprising for a book that had two authors. All I can figure is that the publisher either rushed the printing or got tired of messing with it. I stopped counting the errors (mostly grammatical but also many other notable mistakes) after the first 50 pages. The final two chapters are especially grueling and follow what really could have been the perfect ending. I must also complain that Mallett cites many recent movies dealing with time travel and not once mentioned the fantastic "Donnie Darko" (and I am betting Roberta Sparrow's "Philosophy of Time Travel" is much more interesting). So unless you are especially into reading physics theorems and a mark for sci-fi time-travel stories, I suggest skipping this. But Mallett and his story are definitely interesting. Maybe it will get a Hollywood treatment somewhere down the line.

Robby Charters says

I was directed to this brilliant set of memoirs by another author, who's book I had just reviewed, The Negative's Tale, in which I had made a comment regarding his fictional science: "...Not being a nuclear physicist myself, I don't know where the hard science ends and his ingenuity begins..." The author, R. Leib messaged me that he had gleaned his hard science from Ronald Mallet's Time Traveler. Intrigued, I found it, and downloaded it. I was richly rewarded.

Ronald Mallet sets before us all the principles of quantum physics that could make time travel possible, in the form of a very readable story of his own life. It all began with his relationship with his own father, an electrical engineer, and his sudden death when Ronald was only eleven. Devastated, Ronald went downhill emotionally until he became interested in science fiction, and dreamed of building a time machine to go back and talk to his father. Very skilfully and eloquently, he explains each concept as he encountered it, beginning with H.G. Wells' The Time Machine, explaining Einstein's theory, the contributions of others, like Erwin Schrodinger, John Wheeler, Francis Everitt, Joseph Taylor, ending with his own involvement in an experiment in frame dragging. By the end of the book, the reader -- I'll speak for myself -- I knew a lot more

than I did before about many of the various principles of quantum mechanics.

It's also a testament to how a life can be guided towards reaching ones full potential by a supportive father figure, even if he's dead. His father had encouraged him to learn, and had personally shown things about electricity, his own area of expertise. Most importantly, he was there for him until separated by death. With the ever present guiding light in his life, Ronald overcame many of the obstacles that are thrown in the path of people in his community, and became one of the first Black Americans to receive a PhD in Theoretical Physics, and became a recognised and respected voice in his field.

As for myself, now I'll be that much better equipped when I start my next science fiction novel...
