

Not Your Typical Time Travel Novels

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Light sabers and space ships don't always appeal to me; I'm not usually a hard core science fiction reader. One science fiction theme that does speak to me, however, is time travel. I love authors that weave time travel into a character-driven story, or when an ordinary life is suddenly transformed by this one extremely extraordinary concept.

I just finished reading "In Another Time" by Jillian Cantor. Max suspects that there is something strange about the closet in the back of his deceased father's Berlin book shop; his father warned Max never to open it. When the Nazis gain power in Berlin, Max realizes that the closet might be the best way to help Jews escape, including his love Hanna. Although Max can't slip Jews safely out of Germany, he can help them escape the years of WWII altogether. I enjoyed this story very much, including the fact that Cantor did not deliver the ending I was expecting.

What kind of effect could time travel have on our moral and ethical values? Kate Mascarenhas explores this question in "The Psychology of Time Travel." It is 1967 and four female scientists have completed the first successful time travel trip by humans. Bee experiences a mental breakdown upon their return to the present, and is subsequently exiled from the team in order to save the experiment from public scrutiny. She spends her life trying to get back into the group's good graces, even as more scandalous rumors are spreading about how the ever-expanding group conducts itself during time travel missions. A fascinating exploration of how our human hubris might cause the worst behavior in those who believe their mission is of the highest importance and for the greatest good.

Farway McCarthy is on track to become a time-traveling Recorder. He is shocked when he fails his final exam because of a glitch in the system. Desperate to time travel, he begins working as a time-traveling privateer, stealing historical relics before they can be lost to time or natural disaster. During a heist on the Titanic, Farway recognizes the young woman he thought to be the glitch in his exam and is on the chase to figure out who she is and why she wants to ruin his career! Young Adult novel "Invictus" by Ryan Graudin was an intriguing adventure; I thoroughly enjoyed the characters and the plot.

Kate is a successful Wall Street analyst who can't figure out why she is so drawn to legendary businessman Julian. As their worlds become more entwined, Julian seems to know more about Kate than any new acquaintance should. As Kate learns more about Julian, she realizes that their past might go further back than she ever expected, all the way to World War I, which might just be where her future leads her. Beatriz Williams' "Overseas" tells the story of how Kate's and Julian's futures and past loop and converge into one epic romance. This novel made me a loyal Beatriz Williams reader.

There are many more unconventional time travel stories to be found. Stop by the library and we'd be happy to help you locate them!