

Writer's Guide to the Real Science of Plausible Time Travel

Time travel has long been a staple of science fiction, but is there any scientific basis for it? While there is no definitive answer, there are a number of theories that suggest that time travel may be possible, at least in theory. This article will explore the real science behind these theories and provide writers with tools to create plausible time travel stories.

Theories of Time Travel

There are a number of different theories of time travel, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Some of the most prominent theories include:



Time Travel: A Writer's Guide to the Real Science of Plausible Time Travel by Paul J. Nahin

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- **The Grandfather Paradox:** This is one of the most well-known paradoxes in time travel. It posits that if you travel back in time and kill your own grandfather, then you would never have been born. This

paradox has no easy solution, and it has led some scientists to believe that time travel is impossible.

- **The Novikov Self-Consistency Principle:** This principle states that it is impossible to create a paradox by traveling back in time. If you do something that would create a paradox, then the timeline will simply adjust itself to prevent the paradox from happening. This principle provides a way to resolve the Grandfather Paradox, but it also raises some new questions about the nature of time.
- **The Bootstrap Paradox:** This paradox occurs when an object or piece of information is sent back in time and then becomes the origin of itself. For example, you might travel back in time and give yourself a lottery ticket that you then use to win the lottery in the future. This paradox is difficult to resolve, but it provides a way to create some very interesting time travel stories.

Creating Plausible Time Travel Stories

When writing a time travel story, it is important to create a plausible scenario that does not violate the laws of physics. Here are a few tips:

- **Choose a theory of time travel.** Before you start writing, you need to decide which theory of time travel you want to use. This will determine the rules and limitations of your story.
- **Be consistent.** Once you have chosen a theory of time travel, you need to be consistent with its rules. Don't create situations that would violate the laws of physics.
- **Create a paradox.** Paradoxes are a great way to add suspense and excitement to a time travel story. However, you need to be careful not

to create paradoxes that cannot be resolved.

- **Use time travel to explore different themes.** Time travel can be a great way to explore themes such as the nature of time, the meaning of life, and the consequences of our actions.

Examples of Plausible Time Travel Stories

There are a number of classic time travel stories that have been praised for their plausibility. Here are a few examples:

- **The Time Machine** by H.G. Wells. This is one of the most famous time travel stories ever written. It follows the adventures of a Victorian inventor who travels to the future and the past.
- **Back to the Future** by Robert Zemeckis. This is a classic time travel comedy that follows the adventures of a teenager who travels back to the 1950s.
- **Primer** by Shane Carruth. This is a low-budget science fiction film that follows the adventures of two engineers who invent a time machine.

Time travel is a fascinating and complex subject that has been explored by scientists and science fiction writers for centuries. While there is no definitive answer to the question of whether or not time travel is possible, there are a number of theories that suggest that it may be. By understanding these theories and following the tips in this article, writers can create plausible and engaging time travel stories that will captivate their readers.

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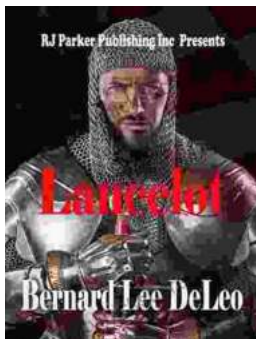
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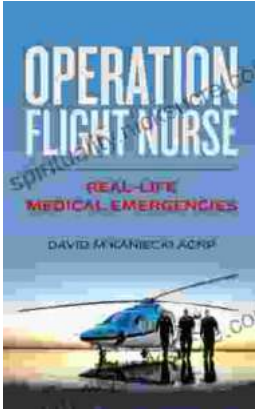
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