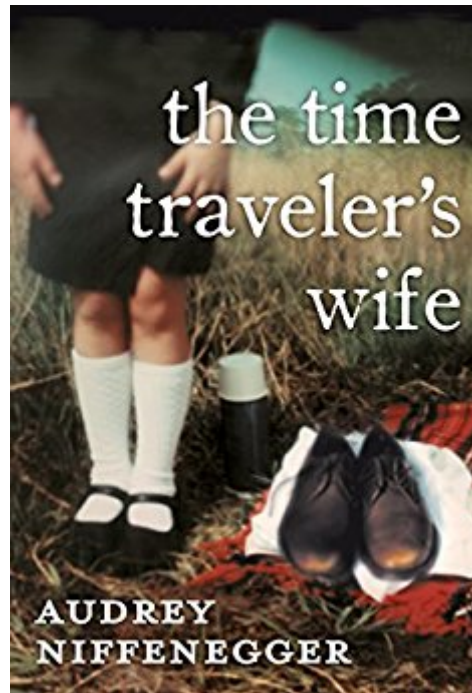




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# The Time Traveler's Wife



## Synopsis

Audrey Niffenegger's innovative debut, *The Time Traveler's Wife*, is the story of Clare, a beautiful art student, and Henry, an adventuresome librarian, who have known each other since Clare was six and Henry was thirty-six, and were married when Clare was twenty-three and Henry thirty-one. Impossible but true, because Henry is one of the first people diagnosed with Chrono-Displacement Disorder: periodically his genetic clock resets and he finds himself misplaced in time, pulled to moments of emotional gravity in his life, past and future. His disappearances are spontaneous, his experiences unpredictable, alternately harrowing and amusing. *The Time Traveler's Wife* depicts the effects of time travel on Henry and Clare's marriage and their passionate love for each other as the story unfolds from both points of view. Clare and Henry attempt to live normal lives, pursuing familiar goals--steady jobs, good friends, children of their own. All of this is threatened by something they can neither prevent nor control, making their story intensely moving and entirely unforgettable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I should start off by saying that this book definitely was not my cup of tea and if I wasn't reading it for book club, I probably would not have picked this book up at all. I can't say that I hated the book (I DID rate it 3 stars after all), but there were enough things I disliked about it that made the reading experience less than enjoyable for me. The two biggest problems I saw were in the writing and structure of the book (two things that matter a great deal to me when I'm reading fiction, so that's where I tend to pay more attention). I also didn't like any of the characters much either -- especially the two main characters Henry and Clare -- which in large part was due to the way the characters were written. I found it difficult to develop any type of emotional attachment to any of the characters, which I know sounds awful given the many hardships the characters go through in the story, but I just wasn't able to "feel" for them for some unexplainable reason. For me, this book was an extremely tedious read, to the point that I actually set the book aside 3 different times while reading so I could finish other books that ended up being way more "worthy" reads. I felt that the pacing of the book was way too slow and oftentimes, the story went absolutely nowhere. A large part of this had to do with the writing being very inconsistent -- at times, the writing was choppy, with a whole paragraph consisting of short, and sometimes incomplete, sentences, but then the next paragraph would have super long sentences and descriptions, then a few paragraphs later, it would be choppy again. Speaking of descriptions, that was another area which, looking at some of the reviews, I wasn't the only one who felt was problematic. Normally, I have no problem with authors being descriptive, as long as it is done properly and there is an identifiable purpose to being overly-descriptive -- for example, to establish setting or to pull the reader into the characters' worlds or to relay particular characters' emotions, train of thought, etc. Unfortunately, this wasn't one of those cases, at least not for me. Throughout the book, the author often went into excruciating detail about the smallest of things that, for the most part, did nothing to further the plot (i.e. the grocery lists, detailed descriptions of food, the steps that Clare would take when putting together an art project, etc.). There were also entire swaths of dialogue between characters (i.e.: "there is a knock at the door, Henry says, 'Come in', the door opens") as well as quite a few scenes that I felt were meaningless, to the point that I wondered (more often than not) why the author even bothered to put those scenes in there (one example that sticks out is that scene at a party where Henry was having a detailed discussion with some strangers about what constitutes "punk" and "rock" and then proceeds to rattle off a list of rock (punk?) bands that they should be listening to). To me, all these extraneous descriptions, scenes, dialogue, etc. felt like 'unnecessary fluff' that seemed to serve no purpose other than to make the book way longer than it needed to be (my version was 530 pages). I honestly feel that if all the

unnecessary stuff was cut from the book, it could've probably been pared down to around 350 pages or so). I also found the way the book was structured to be very distracting but this could just be me not understanding (or appreciating) the author's way of telling the story. The narrative goes back and forth in time, which is not a problem, since a lot of books do this and usually it just takes a little bit of slowing down the reading and sometimes checking back a few pages to see where the previous time period left off. The problem with the narrative here is that it doesn't simply switch back and forth between time periods rather, it mixes past, present, and future sporadically throughout the book. Even though each chapter was labeled with the dates and characters involved as well as their ages at the time, I still found it extremely hard to follow the narrative, mostly because the order with which the author places many of the events that occur didn't really make sense. It also didn't help that some of the scenarios were too far-fetched (which I guess should be expected given this book is about time travel and therefore already puts it into 'science fiction' territory). Perhaps I'm just not keen on time-travel and science fiction stuff but I truly felt confused with all the instances of the characters appearing with different "versions" of other characters (i.e. the different versions of Clare that didn't always match up with the different versions of Henry) or, in some cases, the same character appearing in "duplicate" form (i.e. Henry's current self with his past self or future self). I actually spent so much time trying to sort out which Henry and which Clare was narrating each section that I ended up not paying much attention to the story itself (which was another reason why I wasn't able to relate to any of the characters on an emotional level I could barely keep up with who was who)! I think if the author had structured the book differently, like in a way that was less distracting, I may have been able to focus on the story itself and perhaps actually find something to enjoy about it. Overall, despite the issues I talk about above, I don't feel that this book was a complete lost cause (which I guess is obvious since I chose to give 3 stars instead of 1 or 2). It was definitely readable and some sections I would even say were entertaining. However, taken as a whole, the story didn't work for me. Even when I tried approaching it from a "contemporary romance" point of view, the story still fell flat for me, as I felt emotionally detached from the characters and didn't feel anything for anyone except for maybe one or two minor characters. While I don't really feel it is appropriate for me to comment on whether I would recommend this book or not (it didn't work for me but perhaps it might work for others), I know for sure that this is one book I wouldn't want to spend time reading again.

This is by far one of the best books I have read. I love science fiction so this hit the spot. I will not spoil it for anyone but it certainly had funny, sexual, thrilling, and emotional gorilla glue that keeps

you from putting the book down. I like to take my time to read books but this one I had to finish as quickly as possible. Thank you Audrey Niffenegger for allowing your awesome work to be published so I and others can read it via digital devices. I love paper books but with my line of work, I travel frequently so lugging around books is not a simple task and takes up too much space. Thank you again and I look forward to the follow on book about Alba.

**WARNING --** The author is neither a scientist nor a philosopher, and the quandaries of time travel are glossed over in favor of a romantic story. Enjoy the "paranormal romance" for what it is, but don't let the book title that suggests "science-fiction" fool you. The first hundred or so pages until the reader catches up to Henry and Clare in the present are fairly good. Readers who thought he was a pedophile for hanging around her as a little kid are off base. I thought it was thought-provoking and had a lot of potential. And as a woman, I can see how she'd grow up with a school-girl crush on him. Last thirty or so pages also fairly good. The end should've been so much better though. It was telegraphed with almost a hundred pages left in the book. That was a let-down. But the book was a quick and easy read. Due to the casual way the author tosses around time travel, she creates a bit of a paradox. Henry cannot change events that have already occurred. The dilemma of free-will vs. predestination is clear...but Niffenegger breaks this rule repeatedly in other ways (no spoilers but I could go on and on). It's like she's saying, "Don't worry about the details. They're in luvuuuv!" But the love story is weak too. Their lust for each other is clear, but there are times when it seems like Henry really needs her toward the end and she's off making paper sculptures. A couple scenes (one in particular) seemed sexually explicit to me. I feel like Niffenegger constantly pushes it down the reader's throat, like "Look, they're having sex again. They're so in luvuuuv!" The POV switches between Henry and Clare, presented in journal form. Each chapter or scene change is preceded by the date, ages of Henry and Clare, and whose POV it is. This discredits the reader, especially in Henry's POV when he lands somewhere and doesn't know when he is. The visual clues would've been far more interesting, but instead he has to go find some clothes and food. Yeah, after about the third time, it got old and it was fairly void of action too. Meaning: pointless. But that's only half of it. Henry and Clare have exactly the same voice. I had to check back a few times to see whose section it was. There are two POVs. It is written in first person. The switch should be obvious. Both were hipsters with no distinguishing features POV-wise. As characters go, I feel like Henry was the most developed. His past is colorful and interesting, and it's easy to see how time traveling has shaped him over the course of time, and how meeting Clare gave him a reason to live. Clare, on the other hand, feels like a fairytale rich girl (reader: please insert self here into wish-fulfillment novel).

We're introduced to a host of minor characters in the present, all of whom are one-dimensional. The lack of plot makes the middle of the book fairly pointless. Ultimately, the fixed-future paradigm diffuses most of the tension. Everything works out because Henry knows it does and sometimes he tells Clare and she loves him and they have sex and all is well. Did I mention there's no plot? Or action? It works as a weak romance but not much more. Nothing profound happens, a shame because this could've been wickedly smart story. Instead...Boy-meets-girl. Life happens. The end.

A riveting journey through time abounding in sensual color and vivid life. My heart strings were woven into the lives of two beautiful people who clung to hope and learned to live their lives to its fullest in the now.

Loved this story, can't wait for the sequel. The images from the book stayed in my mind, and as I moved through the story I could not put it down. Compelling and very dear love story amid the problems of the practicality of popping through time unexpectedly.

I just reread this for about the 5th time. It's such an amazing story. Niffenegger is a tough, but great, writer. As a person who doesn't like violence, this book hits my limit, but the amazing romance and the masterful writing make it well worth reading. The characters are fully fleshed and draw the reader in to the fascinating story.

This is one of my favorite books. I have read it twice and I am sure I will read it again. I wish it was available as a kindle book, however, since it isn't, I purchased a paperback because I like to own a copy of my favorite books.

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