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Book Catalog

Time

A Traveler's Guide

By [Clifford Pickover](#)

Our Price: **\$25.00**

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304 Pages, Hardcover

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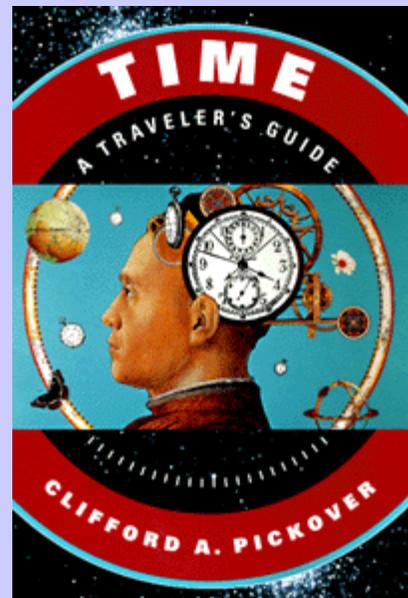
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Date: 1998 ISBN: 0-19-512042-6

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From the Book Cover

"Bucky Fuller thought big," *Wired* magazine recently noted, "Arthur C. Clarke thinks big, but Cliff Pickover outdoes them both." And now, in his newest book, Cliff Pickover outdoes even himself, probing a mystery that has baffled mystics, philosophers, and scientists throughout history -- What is the nature of time?

In *Time: A Traveler's Guide*, Pickover takes readers to the forefront of science as he illuminates the most mysterious phenomenon in the universe--time itself. Is time travel possible? Is time real? Does it flow in one direction only? Does it have a beginning and an end? What is eternity? These are questions that Pickover tackles in this stimulating blend of Chopin, philosophy, Einstein, and modern physics, spiced with diverting side-trips to such topics as the history of clocks, the nature of free will, and the reason gold glitters. Pickover includes numerous diagrams so readers have no trouble following along, computer code that lets us write simulations for various aspects of time travel, and an on-going science fiction tale featuring quirky characters who yearn to travel back in time to hear Chopin play in person. By the time we finish this book, we understand such seemingly arcane concepts as space-time diagrams, light cones, cosmic moment lines, transcendent infinite speeds, Lorentz transformations, superluminal and ultraluminal motions, Minkowskian space-times, Goedel universes, closed timelike curves, and Tipler cylinders. Learn about tachyonic aliens from other worlds, how free will and consciousness impact our perception of time, and perform experiments on your computer...

And most important, we will understand that time travel need not be confined to myth, science fiction, Hollywood fantasies, or scientific speculation. Time travel, we will realize, is possible.

Clifford A. Pickover is Research Staff Member at the IBM T.J. Watson Research Center. The lead writer for the brain-boggler column in *Discover* magazine, Pickover is the author of many bestselling books on popular science topics. He lives in Yorktown Heights, New York.

Reviews

"H.G. Wells, call your office! Pickover has stolen your time machine. Well, not quite. But he does move the concept of time travel out of wild fantasy into scientific possibility. In an entertaining dialogue between imaginary characters from the twenty-first century, he draws out the imaginative and scientific implications of a technology that would allow us to tunnel back into the past or catapult into the future. Neither the theoretical prohibition against faster-than-light motion nor the logical contradiction of rewriting our own history daunts this bold explorer. And less readers dismiss his speculations too lightly, Pickover appends a "Science behind the Science Fiction" section to every chapter, marshaling the latest research on relevant topics. The temporal strangeness of wormholes, quantum connections, and cosmic strings will unsettle the skeptic and prompt new wonderings about what it would be like to visit -- or be visited by -- our descendants in future millennia. *The intellectual daring of this book guarantees it a sizable readership now and -- who knows? -- perhaps in the distant past and future as well.* - Bryce Christensen, *Booklist*, April 15, 1998

"If you thought time travel was just for science fiction nuts, think again. As Pickover demonstrates, time travel is not the stuff of Asimovian dreams, it being theoretically possible. Of course, how to travel through time is no simple matter, nor is explaining it, but Pickover rises to the challenge in many ways. Witty and profound quotations -- from Einstein to Woody Allen -- about time and our relation to it are liberally scattered throughout. Pickover's masterstroke, however, is to divide each chapter into two sections. The first is a second-person narrative recording the impromptu discussions about time-travel of a Chopin-obsessed curator from a Museum of Music with his assistant, "a Zetamorph, a member of a race of philosophers from a subterranean air pocket of Ganymede, a moon of Jupiter" and with a female earthling student. The second section, dutifully labeled "The Science behind the Science Fiction," is a sober essayistic review of topics addressed in the narrative half. Despite the popular tone, Pickover does not shy away from the mathematics of

time travel. (He even includes an appendix of programmable algorithms.) A careful reader with some basic science should be able to follow Pickover chapter by chapter . The imaginative and humorous approach makes a difficult subject palatable -- and gives a plug for Chopin at the same time." - *Publisher's Weekly*, April 20, 1998

"A playful introduction to modern physics from a Discovery magazine columnist.... Frequent references to popular sci-fi movies and stories make the concepts even more accessible to readers. ...The basic principles are clearly explained... An entertaining introduction to modern scientific principles for bright students as well as adults." - *Kirkus Review*, April 15, 1998

Praise

"Only Clifford Pickover would think of mixing time travel and music. Gripping, clear -- this book could well be his best yet! A must buy for all wannabe time travelers."

- Ian Stewart, *Scientific American*

"It is impossible to read Clifford Pickover's latest book without learning a great deal about modern physics, and at the same time being overwhelmed by the impenetrable mystery of time and its role in those other two dark mysteries, consciousness and free will. As always, the author's pages are exciting, entertaining, and a delight to read.

- Martin Gardner

"Cliff Pickover explores most aspects of the implausible prospects of practical time travel. If not a visitor from the future, he's at least a man ahead of his time."

- Julien Clinton Sprott, Professor of Physics, University of Wisconsin

"Time: A Traveler's Guide is certain to shed new light, raise new questions, and make your mind reel over the ancient and illusive concept of time."

- Theoni Pappas, *The Joy of Mathematics*

"The arrow of time and our understanding of it defines much of our humanity. Whether it be correcting past mistakes, regaining lost youth, or leaning what comes next, everyone yearns to overcome the consequence of time. Traveling through time creates enormous paradoxes, but modern physical theories do no eliminate the possibility. In this book, Clifford Pickover presents those theories in layman's terms. To understand time is to know the ambitions of humans, something Pickover excels at."

- Charles Aschbacher, *Journal of Recreational Mathematics*

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