



Time Enough for Love

Robert A. Heinlein

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Time Enough for Love

Robert A. Heinlein

Time Enough for Love Robert A. Heinlein

The capstone and crowning achievement of Heinlein's famous Future History, *Time Enough for Love* follows Lazarus Long through a vast and magnificent timescape of centuries and worlds. Heinlein's longest and most ambitious work, it is the story of a man so in love with Life that he refused to stop living it.

Time Enough for Love Details

Date : Published August 15th 1988 by Ace (first published June 19th 1973)

ISBN :

Author : Robert A. Heinlein

Format : Mass Market Paperback 589 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Science Fiction Fantasy

 [Download Time Enough for Love ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Time Enough for Love ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Time Enough for Love Robert A. Heinlein

From Reader Review Time Enough for Love for online ebook

J.L. Sutton says

There is plenty of Heinlein's reshaping/questioning of social mores in Time Enough for Love (much like Stranger in a Strange Land); however, without the driving force of Stranger's narrative behind it, Time Enough mostly feels disjointed and long-winded. The novel begins with a recalling of adventures from the oldest man alive. There are some interesting stories here (including one involving colonization on a more primitive planet and time travel to one's own youth); however, the more developed stories occur very late in the novel. Throughout the book, his spokesman makes interesting observations on life and love (but some of that is undermined by Heinlein's patriarchal tone, preoccupation with incest and his seeming belief that most women want to have lots and lots of children). The biggest problem, though, was lack of a sustained narrative. I will read more Heinlein, but this one didn't quite do it for me.

Emily says

What would you do if you could live 4,000 years? Try out every profession at least once? Make enough babies to populate a planet? Travel as far as the galaxy goes? Lazarus Long has done all that and more. He's about to die peacefully when he's kidnapped and rejuvenated and coerced to tell his memoirs. I could read stories about Lazarus' life for months, but unfortunately this book only contains two. The rest is action in the 'present' (4272 Gregorian), and at the end, an account of Lazarus' trip back in time to visit his "first family" (parents, brothers and sisters, grandfather).

This is the first of the last four books Heinlein wrote, and it was clear he was nearing the end of his life, looking mortality straight in the face and writing his fantasy of living forever. Lazarus shares his collected wealth of knowledge and wisdom, although he'd insist he's got nothing to say of any worth, and much of it is the best advice I've ever heard.

Those not familiar with Heinlein might find his morals a little depraved, especially the more sexually straight-laced, although science fiction often contains stories of societies whose taboos are not our own, and would be scandalized by ours. The only complaint I have about the book is how annoying that is that certain parts are (omitted), then return to the story in the middle of the sentence. It's not smooth, and although the omissions are mostly for brevity's sake, I felt like I missed something important. I wish I had access to the complete memoirs of Lazarus Long, but unfortunately they won't be available for a couple thousand years, and I'm pretty sure I'm not going to live that long.

Tracey says

I love Lazarus Long. That is all.

I think RAH transcends mere sexuality (or he's a horny old goat, one) and winds a tale in his 'future history' series that is unlike anything else I've ever read. IOW, I don't think he could have quite told the tale without sorta 'getting rid' of standard morals about sex and love.

This IS one of my favorites of the series, but I've got to re-read it to remember why I was left with such

strong sentiment about this particular book. It, along with Number of the Beast, has gag-worthy sex scenes if that sort of thing bothers you, but I think the sex scenes were really meant to put away the sex and create a new reality. I generally wasn't interested in the um, scientific improbabilities? ...or the morals, of the strange sex scenes. I found I could get through them by trying to find metaphor [where, okay, MAYBE he meant to write soft porn and I was looking past it too much, heh.]

If anything bothered me about this super-human incestuous bunch of long lifers, it was that I was concerned that they were too cocky, maybe too TOO removed from humanity, that if one of them were raped or hurt during one of their myriad adventures, the typical fare of a silly kiss and/or strange sex or medicine wouldn't quite patch them up. If one killed themselves, they probably all would. IOW, they started to seem cult-like with no leader. (Which I'd imagine was NEVER RAH's intention.)

I love Lazarus Long, cranky old coot who needed to be put in his place and that place, at least in part, is (in part) in my consciousness. Which put these books on my Favorites List.

Gabriel C. says

Holy fucking shit. I made a bad mistake, I'm never going to read 30 books in April now. This book is as long-lasting and stupid and boring and disgusting and horrifying as its main character. I'm almost halfway through it and I need to write a half review because I'm going to lose my memories just like Lazarus Long.

#1. This isn't science fiction. This is a pathetic old man (Heinlein was 66) hanging on to his memories of a bygone era. Everything good is frozen in the pioneer era. Pathetic. They have space travel but they can't muster any technology and trade price-fixed wheat across space. A spaceship is not a grain train, dude. Economies don't scale like that, and technology doesn't freeze in one place but not in th'other.

#2. He hates taxes so badly. SO BADLY. But he loves the idea of joining the navy, not doing anything, and then lying to retire early with a disability pension. Who pays that pension? FUCK YOU, ASSHOLE!

#3. It goes without saying, but this is some fucked up gender shit. Right now I just got to the part where he rescues an orphan, raises her from age four, and then slips with no discomfort into her bed. I expect this from Fabio's "Pirate." I guess that's about the quality I'm stuck with here.

#4. Unrelated, but related. Page 222 was a doozy. It had both of these:

Addressing the computer: "Dear, I wish you were a human girl with a spankable bottom long enough for me to spank it--I would!"

and here's the real quibbler.

"Anyone...knows that a boy can get as horny over his sister as over the girl down the street, and his sister is often more accessible. And little Libby was a redheaded pixie so endearingly sexy at eleven that even I could feel it." The narrator is hundreds of years old.

Intermission: Oh fuck I just accidentally read the synopsis on goodreads. Now I know how this weak ass shit is going to end.

OMG the synopsis was a lie. I finished and immediately started swearing. I wanted him to die soooo badly. Of course he couldn't die. That would be too fucking easy. It seemed like it was happening, such a fucking cock tease.

Oh, the plot? You want to know about the plot of the second half? I don't really care about the incest taboo so that wasn't going to shock me. The second half is all about how he joins a plural marriage, fucks his two female clones and goes back in time to seduce his mother and then kidnap her into the future to join the plural marriage. Nothing objectionable in the content, I guess, if you're an immature slob, but do you see how I did that in three lines? Do you see how it didn't take me 280 pages of garbage? Also, can we talk a little bit about gramp and what a piece of shit he is? All jingoistic and patriotic at the drop of a hat even though he was all fraud-y and cynical two seconds ago? Fuck this weak tea. Three more shit Heinlein books and I'm done forever.

Manny says

- Mr. Lazarus Long, since you happen to be passing through the early twenty-first century, could you give us a few priceless gems of homespun wisdom for the Goodreads membership to marvel at?

- Gosh darn it, when I see all the cute females on this site, how can I say no? Could you just pass me the... cuneiform tablets? Papyrus rolls? Parchment? Oh yes, laptop. Sorry, hard to keep things straight. So...

1. If you're a tired SF hack who's completely run out of ideas, don't worry. Just recycle the old ones, and pretend nothing's wrong.

2. You may imagine that the books will come out painfully thin. Far from it. They'll be thicker than ever.

3. Next time someone calls you a motherfucker, simply take them at their word. Of course, a time machine is useful here.

4. Don't make these lists too long. By the time you've got half a dozen items, everyone will already be yawning.

5. Er...

6. That's it.

- Done! Now, surely there's some gorgeous woman here who's dying to have sex with me?

Caroline says

[The author's command of the English language was acceptable, but there were a few spelling errors that made

S.C. Jensen says

People seem to have a love it or hate it kind of relationship with Heinlein's *Time Enough for Love*. And I've gotta say I'm strapped firmly to the former bandwagon. Granted, I can see why some of the negative Nancy's are getting their panties in a knot (okay, maybe the incest theme goes a little far), but Heinlein's weirdness just doesn't bug me. And I think some critics have missed the mark entirely, by focusing on the wrong stuff. Which is fully within their rights, of course, and an opinion is only an opinion. Blah blah blah. Here's my two cents on why they're wrong:

Time Enough for Love is set up as a series of tales told by the oldest living man in the universe, Lazarus Long. Lazarus is confined to a rejuvenation clinic, where he is being held against his will by a team of people dedicated to preserving his knowledge. You see, they've "rescued" Laz from attempted suicide, in order to record his life's story and hopefully glean some of the wisdom he's accumulated in over two-thousand years of life. And Lazarus has agreed not to try to take his own life again, until he's told them about the most important lessons learned in his long life. *Time Enough for Love* is like *Arabian Nights*, but in reverse; Laz is telling his stories for his right to die.

So the structure necessitates a kind of "bracketing" set up, wherein Lazarus' tales are divided by his present experiences in the rejuvenation clinic. And I've got to admit, Lazarus' voice is where Heinlein's storytelling excels. I sometimes had to restrain myself from skipping forward until the next story, although, in the end I'm glad that I did (restrain myself, that is). Heinlein brings everything together nicely once Lazarus regains an interest in life and goes on to set up his free-lovin' hippie commune on the planet Boondock, and all of a sudden his present becomes the next tale.

The number one complaint that I've noticed in other reviews is with Heinlein's apparent preoccupation with incest. But I think that, unusual as the theme is in modern writing, it has a place in the story and is essential to Lazarus' character. First and foremost is the fact that Lazarus Long is completely obsessed with genetic purity. As one of the first "long-lifers" on Earth, he was contractually obligated to reproduce only with other long-lifers in order to preserve the longevity they had acquired. Then, there is the fact that old Laz, being nearly three-thousand years old, is the great-to-the-nth-degree grandfather of nearly everyone in the universe, so the older he gets the harder it is for him to find partners with whom he is genetically compatible (not being related to them is virtually impossible).

Lazarus comes to view the appropriateness of sexual pairings solely through the lens of healthy reproduction—and then, only if reproduction is the goal (in the most extreme example (view spoiler)). And although the taboo of incest, in the traditional sense, once served a primitive purpose to people who didn't really understand genetics—the over simplified concept is not applicable in Lazarus' world. In any case, I really didn't find any of the questionable relationship in this novel to be creepy, even if I did raise an eyebrow at them initially.

Creepy incestuous relationships aside, the next biggest complaint of this novel that I've encountered has to do with Heinlein's characterization. Really, everyone in the novel except for Lazarus himself, seems to fall into a stereotypical kind of mould. Every male character is interchangeable with every other male character, and the same goes for the female characters, even if they have slightly different physical characteristics. However, I would argue that, perhaps this sameness has more to do with Lazarus' memory than Heinlein's skill as a writer. It seemed to me, that people kind of blend together for Lazarus; every character is a mixture

of all of the people he has ever known, their personalities and their deeds are not necessarily attributed accurately (Lazarus is a textbook unreliable narrator, and is frequently caught in contradictions and fallacies throughout the book). The secondary characters in Lazarus' tales are place-holders, used by Lazarus to get his point across to his audience, but not important in their individuality. They are anecdotal.

This sameness, I would also argue, serves to illustrate Heinlein's vision of human kind. Ultimately, even thousands of years in the future, human beings can be reduced to their basic needs—the same needs that we have had since the beginning of time. First and foremost, is our need for love. Lazarus' overarching lesson for humanity is that a person's worth is measured not by the property and wealth that they accumulate, or by the fantastic deeds that they accomplish, but by the quantity and quality of the time that they spend with those they love—family, friends, and lovers.

And that's a position that I can stand by.

L S says

All right, another rating biased by the age at which I read this book. I read *Time Enough for Love* in what was then the Soviet Union over the course of a white night. I'm not kidding.

At any rate, *Time Enough for Love* is a decent enough story and entertaining. Par for the course with Heinlein, though, is negotiating his complicated relationship to gender and his often overblown moralising. This is not to say that these issues are wholly negative; Heinlein's relationship to gender and morality is more or less a caricatured libertarianism but, like libertarianism, is often theoretically interesting.

I still enjoy the book on rereading but it may be difficult for a first time adult reader. As I've mentioned in other reviews, the use of early 20th century Americana always draws me in; there's something mesmerizing about the exaggerated wholesomeness of the time contrasted with its twisted provincialism, although I can't put a finger on what exactly that something is.

Till Noever says

(Read the other reviews for plot summaries. No point in rehashing.)

Heinlein has profoundly influenced my thinking and life since I was but in my early teens, so I guess this review isn't exactly impartial. Still, there are books of his that bored me, among them *Stranger in Strange Land*. In other words, I know the man's limitations.

With all this said, I still think that *TEFL* qualifies as a curmudgeonly masterpiece, and it banged my head against a wall again and again and said "Get a life, man! Get a sense of perspective about what matters and what doesn't."

For that's what it's all about. Quoting the man himself: "*May you live as long as you wish and love as long as you live.*" It was YB Yeats who wrote that "Sex and death are the only things that can interest a serious mind." While that almost covers it, and while it's a very Heinleinian thing to say (even though it came from

Yeats), I suspect that Heinlein would have replaced the word 'sex' by 'love', with a particular emphasis on the 'romantic' kind.

In TEFL, like in other novels, Heinlein cut through taboos (and especially those relating to sex and its many expressions) with gusto. He had the audacity (and it still scandalizes a lot of people today, as evidenced by the comments on this book) to assert that all taboos are social construct—which they self-evidently are!—with possibly a biological basis (e.g. incest); but when that basis disappears then screw the taboos. Move on and get a life.

The biggest one of these taboos is incest. I wonder how long it'll take until, for example, consenting, non-child-issue sex between consenting adult siblings will be decriminalized and destigmatized, and become so accepted that the 'ick'-factor disappears from people's knee-jerk reactions. Anybody reading TEFL has to confront this issue and their own reactions to it. The point is that Heinlein shows the breaking of these taboos *not* as something to be disgusted about, or as something that has terrible social consequences, which is the usual way of representing it in almost all fiction, but rather as no 'biggie' at all.

About that other subject of the Yeats quote above:

It's been said that TEFL is Heinlein's personal 'fantasy' about immortality, written at a time when he was pretty much staring his own death in the face. Sure, that's what TEFL is also all about. A very thoughtful treatise on human life beyond the boundaries currently imposed on it. And along the way, for those who think about the potential for significant human longevity becoming a reality fairly soon, it gives us a lot of food for thought. Because if human life expectancy is, indeed, extended on a large scale to possibly hundreds of years, all bets are off, and the rules of society and personal life as we know them now are going to go out the window.

But if we're still wanting to be 'human', despite our longevity, and if we continue to be driven by our basic human urges, how will we cope with that? Heinlein is the only author I know of who had probed this in sufficient depth, both intellectually and emotionally—and for that alone we should look to this novel as a guide into a possible future by a visionary and passionate humanist who was many decades ahead of his time.

But in the end, TEFL is really about the central story, the tale of the adopted daughter, which is still one of the most touching stories I've ever read. It's about love and death and being human and what it all means; what it all can mean, if it's to mean any damn thing at all. And can you really ask for more than that from a storyteller?

Mike (the Paladin) says

Not his best (in my opinion). Tying up the Long's story. In his later years Heinlein got more comfortable with putting his thoughts into his books. I find him (and some may disagree with this or find it odd) very close to Ayn Rand in some ways.

David says

The calculation of literary kink: 2 stars for coming up with an interesting premise (2000 year old man reminiscing about life and his times among the stars) MINUS 1.5 stars for ignoring said premise and instead focusing on taunting every sexual more known to current cultural standards, culminating in time-travel visits to meet Mom and thus begin what I can only describe as pornographic Back To The Future fan-fiction.

Plus half-a-star to have the willpower/stubbornness/tone-deafness to continue on despite the oracles and naysayers that must have (justifiably) populated the road to publication.

Philosophical query: if you had sex with an opposing gender clone of yourself, have you committed incest?

Lyn says

Was Robert A. Heinlein a dirty old man?

Yes.

But he was also a visionary who saw the trends of Western Civilization and expounded out into a foreseeable future, not just in terms of science fiction but also in regard to cultures, morals, sociology and ideology. Time Enough for Love demonstrates the fundamental attractiveness of science fiction, the eternal hope that things will get better.

Dystopian fantasies aside, science fiction deals with the future, and that there are people in the future still carrying on everyday lives. At its heart, science fiction is about hope, hope that we'll see a few more years ahead. Time Enough for Love goes one step further and introduces us to Lazarus Long (though he was in prior Heinlein novels) as the oldest living human, over 2,000 years old. Thus, Heinlein allows us to imagine an almost eternal existence, and without the need to live at night and drink blood.

I like reading Heinlein because I like Heinlein, chauvinistic and militaristic as he may be; he is also a libertarian humanist who loves life and tells a good story.

He's not misogynistic, he clearly loves women and sees them as capable and wonderful people. Heinlein's voice, whether Lazarus Long, or Jubal Hershaw, is that of Heinlein himself, his experience is cast upon science fiction of the future.

The best thing about Heinlein is that he is a good writer, a great writer of science fiction.

And that is demonstrated both in the positive and negative in TEFL. When he is telling a story, it is very good, but in the "in between sections" it drags poorly. The best section is the story about Lazarus and his marriage to short lived Dora and their pioneer life. If RAH made the "Tale of the Adopted Daughter" a full length novel, cutting out about 300 pages, this would have been a very good story. Ultimately, it's just too long, Heinlein is too ambitious and throws too much in and it collapses under it's own weight.

Ivis Davis says

Robert Heinlein was a brilliant author and an observer of the strength and frailties of man. He develops all of his stories around the relationships of the characters, and allow them to reveal the story and all its diversities in a natural flow and rhythm. Were he a musician, he would be a maestro.

Lazarus Long is old and tired, and has come home to one of his favorite planets to die quietly among strangers. After 2400 years of life, and out lived many families, he has run out of reasons to live. He leaves his private interstellar yacht at the spaceport and goes about his final preparations as he feels the chill of death wrapping around his frail bones. He buys old rags for clothing, and retires to a flop house where he pays in advance and lays down to die among the sounds and odors of mankind.

When he awakens, not to the expected darkness of death, but to find himself in a hospital having undergone advanced geriatric regeneration, he is furious enough to kill. "Why?" he demands, "am I in this damn jail?" The answer to that question, by the head of the planetary government, outrages him even more. "Lazarus, we need your wisdom."

In the midst of a dozen people who utterly love him, Lazarus Long is slowly restored to love of life and living and finds a challenge and a reason to live. During this process, the 'wise' old man gives his memories of his long life, and proves the value of teaching the young, though he is loathe to do so.

Young people don't know what they don't know. Old people realize that the young often don't want the hard-won gems of wisdom they possess. When the two come together in affectionate relationships, the exchange of wisdom for enthusiasm brings a delightful life to all concerned.

If you read this story, you'll meet a crusty old codger, wise, worn and petulant. I promise you will discover the humor of the aged, rich with the experiences of life, with a little self deprecation thrown in. You'll also read a story of stories, written first person, and perhaps the most excellent and diverse novel I have ever read.

I highly recommend this novel to people of mature years, as they'll need the wisdom to sort out the gems from the rubbish, and to ignore a growing sexuality prone to depravity and incest.

Mr. Heinlein, like a great many authors, fell to the trap of the intellectual. He believed his own press. His insights, while diverse and hilarious, were tainted with his sexuality, which I feel deprived this and many of his later novels of the dignity they deserved. So I took away a star many people thinks he deserves.

Peter says

A Review

-----The Players-----

Terence Ash – publisher and editor

Robert Ash – younger brother, sub editor

Chartwell - Office assistant and explorer of the darker corners of staples

Edgar – warehouseman and dogsbody

Heinry Lein - writer

TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE

Henry Lein - Hello I wonder if you would be so kind as to look at this.

Robert Ash - What is it?

Henry Lein - A manuscript.

Robert Ash - A manuscript?

Henry Lein - You Know Ink on paperWords.

Robert Ash - Oh! Mmmmm. What is it about?

Henry Lein - Well, this man he does things and....and travels to places and talks to people

Robert Ash - Really! Sounds exciting.

Henry Lein - It is, it is.

Robert Ash - Terence what do you make of this

Terence Ash - Ahhh. My goodness it's a selection of words on paper. There's was, the. Good grief theirs even r, f, t and d and well letters bludgeoned and smeared everywhere.

Phone rings.

Chartwell - Hello, chartwell here sir. I'm afraid there has been an accident and thirty manuscripts have been knocked over and they seem to have mixed together. At least four thousand pages sir.

Terence Ash - Never mind just shuffle them together and release them as alternate fiction and then we will sort them out later.

Chartwell - Very good sir.

Terence Ash - Now tell me more.

Henry Lein - Well he travels back in time and you know "does it with his mother."

Terence Ash - Does it?

Henry Lein - The thing.... The beast with two backs.

Terence Ash - You mean to say, he turns the hands back on the clock and does rude things with his mummy.

Henry Lein - Weeeelllll, yes and no.

Rings chartwell.

Terence Ash - Chartwell get in here and have a look at this.

Chartwell - I say.

Terence Ash - What do make of it?

Chartwell - It is a WH Smith number 48 staple in the corner, Very nice.

Robert Ash - AND the rest of it?

Chartwell - Ink and paper. Makes words sir.

Terence Ash - Thank you Chartwell, get Edgar for me on the way back.

Robert Ash - Aaaahh Edgar do come in.

Edgar - Yus sIR.

Terence Ash - Tell me your honest opinion on this if you will.

Edgar - Yes sIR. Mmmnmnmnmnmnm fnm.mnmnm.

Terence Ash - Well Edgar?

Edgar - Issa steaming puddle of horse piss sIR.

Terence Ash - T.R. Ash would be honoured to publish this delightful book.

Edgar walks down the hall.

Edgar - They'll print any old shite these these dayze mumble, mnrnmn.

Robert Ash - Chartwell shuffle some of those pages together, about two hundred. Just enough to fatten this up.

Chartwell - Yes sir.

Dear lord Terence and Robert Ash might return.

Raja99 says

This is (probably) a great book, but it does have one significant barrier for the reader. I don't consider bringing it up to be a spoiler, since it's an idea and not a plot point, but if you hate even minor spoilage, you should stop reading **NOW**.

Time Enough for Love consists of a framing story, set in (our) far future, about the oldest man in the universe, and his reminiscences. The final section merges the two. It's less a solid, streamlined novel than a

fixup. Which is fine with me; fixups are my favorite strategy for long-form fiction. The reminiscences (and the last section) are extremely readable, and I (mostly) found them hard to put down. The parts of the book that *aren't* centered on the main character are often tedious, cringeworthy, or both. (For instance, the leadup to the last section took me many days to get through; by contrast, the last section, which was perhaps 3x as long, was hard for me to put down.) The most famous of the reminiscences is the centerpiece, titled "The Tale of the Adopted Daughter"; it's often referred to among Heinlein fans as "The Dora Story", and Virginia Heinlein wrote that when Robert died, she turned to it for consolation.

The main character would be horrifically unlikeable in real life but, due to Heinlein's considerable skills, comes off as a charming, eccentric old coot rather than one of the hectoring lecturers who inhabit far too many of Heinlein's novels. (Of course, your mileage may vary.) One of the things I like is that he is clearly an unreliable narrator; he claims that some of the stories aren't about him, but about one of his friends, and the stories are larded with inconsistencies with each other and with the real world. (Or "our timeline", anyway.)

Why do I say this is "probably" a great book, and what is the significant barrier? This is a book about incest. Heinlein leads up to it gradually, and in a gingerly fashion, but it becomes more and more central to the story. (If there is a form of heterosexual incest that isn't featured here, I missed it.) I borrowed a copy of this book from a friend who's a bigger Heinlein fan than I am, and he warned me that it was a book he hadn't been able to finish (and he didn't want me complaining later that I hadn't warned him ;-). If it hadn't been for that warning, I might not have been able to finish the book (motivated slightly, perhaps, by my desire to finish a Heinlein book that he hadn't ;-). I therefore extend the same warning to anyone reading this.

(Finished 2010-09-15 0:08:59.6 +/- 0.01s, approximately.)

Angel says

I have a love-hate relationship with Heinlein. Some of his stuff is great. Some of it, like *Farnham's Freehold*, which I reviewed here, I simply hate. However, I like enough of his work that I seek more. This was a book that took me a long time to get through, but when I got done, it was well worth it. I read it back in 2002. From my journal back then:

>>I found it to be a book that makes you think. I thought the opening was a bit slow, but once the narrative was set up, it got interesting.... I found that reading the book in segments, a part here and a part there, worked better for me. One of my favorite parts was the Notebooks of Lazarus Long, a section of maxims full of common sense. I also enjoyed the tale of Dora very much, a moving tale of how Lazarus fell in love with an ephemeral woman and their life together til death did them part.<<

I also recall the ending for having a nice twist (I am not saying, go read it instead). This is a book about a rascal, a picaro to borrow the Spanish word, which is so much better than just saying "rascal," if nothing else. It integrates different genres. In some ways reminded me of works like *One Thousand Nights and a Night* and *Don Quixote* (not the Man of La Mancha's idealism, but the novel's integration of different genres and elements). This has become one of my favorite books.

Smokey says

Presented primarily as the musings, ramblings, and experiences of one Woodrow Wilson Smith, aka. Lazarus Long, et. al., this book has enough proverbs, pithy sayings, thou-shalt-nots, and who-begat-whom's to qualify as a potential "Hedonists' Bible." Unlike some of Heinlein's other works, the gratuitous sex is kept to something of a minimum (not ignored!), and he instead focuses on the attitudes and platitudes that have allegedly kept his main character alive for 2500+ years in an exciting and dangerous universe.

Why "allegedly?" Because the "historians" who claim authorship of the volume (themselves characters in the story) sincerely doubt that Senior Long is telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Still, they admit, it's a pretty good yarn, and so leave in even the "obvious" lies so that the reader may come "to better understand" the oldest man who ever lived.

I read this book years ago, but just recently re-read it to refresh my memory, and had a blast doing it. This book is a must-read, not only for science-fiction fans, but also for anyone interested in philosophy, space/time, the nature of life, and the meaning of love. Of course, the unabashedly humanist ideals laid out tend to grate harshly against most other religions and philosophies, but the book is an excellent exercise in rational thought for the mature reader. (Sorry, youngsters - you just don't have a chance here.)

So leave your moral distaste at the door (you can always pick it back up later), put on your thinking cap, and enjoy one of the best tall tales ever told. It'll be well worth your while.

Jim says

This is one of his pivotal books. Until the 60s, he was quite constrained by what he could write by contracts (e.g., Scribner Juveniles) & editors. After his big hit with *Stranger in a Strange Land* & several others, his popularity grew & the reins slipped off. In 1970, he had a close brush with death, was desperate to publish what he wanted without restraint, & did so. The result was *I Will Fear No Evil*, his descent into wordiness & weird sex. This book followed a few years later. *The Number of the Beast* used this one to take the idea of multiple universes further which then allowed him to tie all his characters & stories together. Yuck.

Lazarus Long, the main character of this book, is a great character in a lot of ways. I first recall reading about him in *Methuselah's Children*. He's one of the early Howard family members & a sport who manages to survive long enough to become pretty much immortal. Now he's 3000 years old & tired of life, but the families don't want to let him go due to his wealth of knowledge & experience. Interesting & horrifying on different levels which Heinlein uses as the vehicle to explore a lot of subjects in this brick of a book.

Lazarus frequently lapses into recollections that are novellas. Interludes explore a variety of other subjects such as what love is, how people & attitudes have changed, & sometimes just a few pages of saucy sayings. (I think the sayings are also published as *The Notebooks of Lazarus Long*, same things, just a way to grab more money.) A lot of it is interesting, but be prepared to skim other parts. He gets very wordy as Lazarus (Heinlein) expounds on certain ideas.

Unfortunately, he descends into exploring sex, not a topic that he handles well. The free love isn't bad, but he did it better & more thoroughly in *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*. Transgender & homosexuality issues were OK in their time, but now they're common place & his handling was rather clumsy. The worst was the age of

consent & promotion of incest. These are social attitudes that are certainly valid to explore, but he manages to turn me off completely. Heinlein doesn't seem to understand kids at all. Unsurprising since he never had any. There's a huge disconnect between their intelligence & emotional maturity which he completely ignores. Age of consent varies a lot depending on the culture, in part because of how the society educates & shapes expectations.

I wonder if he didn't harbor a streak of pedophilia. I read *The Door Into Summer* not long ago & the romance creeped me out even though Dan at least waited until Ricki grew up. Still, there are a lot of older men bopping young girls in his books. In *Farnham's Freehold*, Hugh is bopping his daughter's friend Barbara. After 1970, practically every book is full of it. Younger men (men, not boys) having sex with older women isn't uncommon in his books, but that's consenting adults, IMO. The girls are often barely at or below what I'd consider mature enough levels.

As for incest, he's just weird. I don't understand his fascination at all. As a mental exercise & exploring such a forbidden topic, his friend Theodore Sturgeon (who belonged to the same nudist colony) did a much better job in the short story "If All Men Were Brothers Would You Let Your Sister Marry One?" Heinlein is just crass about it, but then what passed for his sex scenes were always awful.

Maybe I'm just being provincial, but I can't think of anything that turns me on less than the thought of having sex with my daughter or mother. There's some scientific thought that this is actually hardwired into us.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/art...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incest_...

Anyway, if you're a fan of Heinlein, read this book, but do it as text so you can skim at times. It has a lot of great stuff, but a lot of dreck, too.

Felix Dance says

I'd been looking out for this one ever since I saw it new in the KL super-bookshop several months back. A few days ago I got it in exchange for AK from the American girl in my Kathmandu hotel. Unfortunately, as I read the first few pages I realised I'd made a terrible mistake. *Lazarus Long*, the main character from *Methuselah's Children*, is, inexplicably, 2000 years old and living on a distant planet. The leader of this planet has foolishly asked the rambling old man to tell him random and stupid stories from his past, giving the lecherous bore an excuse to waffle on ad nauseum for the next, literally, 600 pages - way way way too long. And what a fruitcake this dude is! He seems to spend most of his life adopting baby girls and then sleeping with them once they reach puberty. Written in 1973, the book is full of the "Shut up woman or I'll paddle your fanny" seventies sentiment, as well as being a vehicle for Heinlein's obsession with nudity and cats. Its only saving graces are his amusingly outrageous aphorisms and a readable last 100 pages - where he goes back in time to WWI... and sleeps with his own mother (there is a LOT of incest in this book). At least it counteracted the signs on many of the Nepali buses I see here: 'No time for love'.

Monica says

‘QUE VIVA TANTO COMO DESEE Y AME TANTO COMO VIVA’. CON ESTA MAGNÍFICA FRASE, QUE ES LA CLAVE DE LA EXISTENCIA DEL SER HUMANO, BIEN PUEDE RESUMIRSE UNA DE

LAS NOVELAS MÁS SINGULARES DEL MAESTRO HEINLEIN, QUE HABLA DE LA VIDA Y LA MUERTE ;EL SIGNIFICADO DE AMBAS CON SUS VARIANTES.

‘TIEMPO PARA AMAR’ RESULTA SER UNA LECTURA NO ‘AL USO’ NI DENTRO DE LA CIENCIA FICCIÓN, E INCLUSO ME ATREVO A DECIR, NI DENTRO DE LA NARRATIVA EN GENERAL, TANTO POR SU ESTRUCTURA COMO POR SU TEMÁTICA Y DESARROLLO NARRATIVO.

LA OBRA ESTÁ CONSTRUIDA A MODO DE SINFONÍA, con seis diferentes secciones a modo de movimiento y especificadas a lo largo de una partitura , que divide la novela por partes significativas, alternándose en tiempo y narración:

Prólogo:

Narrado por el archivista jefe la familia Howard, que nos sitúa en la actualidad presente, habla acerca de la Gran Diáspora que llevó a la emigración masiva de los habitantes de la Tierra a otras galaxias, nos introduce en el trayecto de vida de Long, hace un pequeño resumen de la iniciación de la longevidad genética en la Tierra así como una concisa explicación sobre el primer viaje Inter Planetario llevado a cabo por los Longevos; los primeros en ocupar masivamente otro planeta, del cual Long es el único superviviente en la actualidad (narrado en la novela ‘Los hijos de matusalem’).El archivista nos prepara con ello, para la posterior edición Popular de la vida de Long (‘Tiempo para amar’), publicada para nosotros, los humanos, descendientes de él y con el que tenemos una deuda genética.

Preludio:

Se nos sitúa en la clínica de rejuvenecimiento Howard, en Secundus, dónde Long ha sido rescatado de un burdel en Nueva Roma en el que estaba dejándose morir. El presidente interino de la familia Howard, Ira, le insta a vivir y le solicita ayuda con el relato de las memorias de Long, para bien de los longevos actuales, ya que se está preparando una tercera emigración masiva a otro planeta a causa de las condiciones insostenibles en Secundus. El presidente le buscará una nueva motivación para que desee estar vivo.

Brillante preludio, rico en reflexiones muy certeras acerca de la dignidad de la vejez y la muerte, los ciclos de la vida, la imposibilidad de los gobiernos y los vericuetos legales.

Contrapunto:

Se nos introduce a dos técnicos de rejuvenecimiento a cargo de Long en la clínica, los cuales cobran mucha importancia en el desarrollo de los acontecimientos de la trama posteriormente.

Aquí se plantea la dignidad de la Eutenasia, la ética moral en la práctica médica y el eterno dilema de la guerra de sexos.

Variaciones sobre el tema:

Es la parte central de la obra y la más extensa, plagada de vastos diálogos a modo de interludio en el relato de las aventuras vitales de Long, y que además sirve de vía para la reflexión y filosofías en varios ámbitos, y el desarrollo del presente en la obra: se desarrolla en proceso de rejuvenecimiento de Long, la creación de una nueva familia para él, que irá creciendo a lo largo de sus páginas, un golpe de estado en Secundus y el establecimiento de los Long- Howard en un tercer planeta llamado Tertius.

Aquí cobra mucha importancia el tema genético (clones gemelos in vitro, fecundación controlada y con múltiple patrones genéticos, transplante de cerebro un ordenador inteligente a un cuerpo humano..) y sexual, con las particulares teorías de Heinlein.

Aparte de las minis aventuras biográficas, hay tres amplios relatos, todos escritos con la mejor pluma del autor; son como mini novelas dentro de otra novela:

1/ 'La historia del hombre que era demasiado vago para fracasar':

Relato dinámico, ácido e irónico con críticas en donde se critica: los militares, los deportes, las guerras, el obsoleto progreso humano, la ética y nobleza humana y las desigualdades.

MAGNÍFICO, EL HEINLEIN CLÁSICO Y DENUNCIANTE.

2/ La historia de los hermanos gemelos que no lo eran:

Un relato con una importante base acerca de la genética y la importancia de minimizar los riesgos en los cruces biológicos. Además, nos habla acerca de los valores de la libertad del individuo, el desarrollo de su personalidad de libre pensador a través del conocimiento, critica la esclavitud, las leyes, los tabúes sociales y el sentimiento de rencor y venganza. Y por último, es una guía de cómo hacer viable un negocio.

HISTORIA DIVERTIDA DE AVENTURAS Y DESVENTURAS, CON PARTES PICANTES Y CRÍTICAS.

3/ La historia de la hija adoptada:

El Heinlein más sentimental y sexual, en una equilibrada narración de aventuras, costumbrismo y colonización, con una bonita historia acerca del amor y el deseo de una pareja de pioneros en un planeta salvaje y desconocido. Con Carga dramática y tensa es preciso.

HISTORIA MUY BIEN NARRADA, QUE CONSIGUE SU PROPÓSITO.

Intermedio:

Son básicamente anotaciones y citas de Lazarus, la mayoría muy lúcidas.

Crítica la política, la religión, las desigualdades, las formas de gobierno, los científicos y los ricos.

Habla acerca del valor, las motivaciones, la paz, la superioridad de las mujeres, las claves del matrimonio, la belleza intangible, el verdadero pecado, los tabúes, la sustancia de la vida y lo efímero, entre otras.

Da Capo:

En la penúltima parte, somos testigos del viaje en el tiempo de Long a el hogar de su infancia en dónde quiere visitar y saborear la esencia de aquella época y sus recuerdos con su mirada retrospectiva además de conocer mejor a su Mentor ' el Abu' y su querida madre, Maureen.

Aquí vuelve a estar patente la maestría del autor, con éste pasaje largo, entre costumbrista en su vertiente más clásica y erótico de alto voltaje, especialmente con la patente tensión y desarrollo sensual y sexual de alguno de sus protagonistas. Aún así y con todo, adictivo de leer.

Coda:

Nos remite a los días de Long en las trincheras de la primera guerra mundial, una vez ha marchado de la casa de su infancia como invitado y amigo. Con un final ' casi perfecto' de novela y conmovedor, pero comprensible en su giro para prolongar la saga de libros de los longevos: ' El mundo como mito' que consta de cuatro novelas.

ACERCA DEL INCESTO PREDOMINANTE EN LA OBRA

Lo más polémico, sin duda, de Tiempo para amar es el tema recurrente a lo largo de sus páginas sobre la práctica de la endogamia.

La teoría de la familia Howard: es el primer grupo que rechaza el acercamiento biológico y define el incesto sólo en termino de peligro genético. Ellos se van cruzando y multiplicando por generaciones, si bien no de manera parental directa, con el propósito de fecundar, ya que puede generar un patrón genético pernicioso. Su reserva genética se va limpiando.

No obstante, y como no tiene tabúes culturales ni religiosos, disfrutaban del sexo entre ellos a varios niveles parentales: entre hermanos, primos, padre e hija, madre e hijo (complejo de Edipo y Electra), etc...

Algunos casos parecen rozar ciertas y poco éticas filias, pero siempre están descritas en sus pasajes de manera

consentida y aquí, es también como el autor demuestra su valía una vez más, porqué a pesar que no podamos aceptar ciertas actitudes, la llegamos a tolerar en la lectura con el enfoque que otorga a éste peliagudo y delicado tema.

Pero no sólo se ‘fantasea’ entre parientes sino que hay otras obsesiones entre hombre y ‘no humanos’, ahí lo dejo, pero todo muy bien llevado aunque sorprendente.

Con ésta ESCLARECEDORA FRASE DE LONG, QUIZÁ SE RESUMA BIEN EL ENFOQUE DE HEINLEIN EN LA OBRA:

‘ El pecado se encuentra solo en hacer daño a otras personas sin necesidad. Todo los demás pecados son tonterías inventadas (hacerte daño a ti mismo no es un pecado, solo una estupidez)’

¿prolongación de la teoría hippy de amor libre de’ Forastero en tierra extraña? ¿pura provocación por parte del autor o su ideal sobre las futuras generaciones? ¿ desvaríos de una mente anciana a ratos?..nunca lo sabremos.

Así pues, UNA NOVELA CON LO MEJOR Y PEOR DE HEINLEN... un Heinlein MAGNIFICADO PARA BIEN Y PARA MAL (como los ordenadores inteligentes que ocupan parte del protagonismo en la obra).

Está claro que LONG ES EL ALTER EGO DEL AUTOR. MEDIANTE EL PERSONAJE DA UN DISCURSO DE LAS INQUIETUDES, PREOCUPACIONES Y OBSESIONES QUE SIEMPRE HA TENIDO:

- EL SER LIBRE PENSADOR y LIBRE ALBEDRÍO
- LA CORRUPCIÓN POLÍTICA
- LOS MILITARES
- LOS ABOGADOS
- LA IGUALDAD Y TOLERANCIA
- EL PROPÓSITO DE LA VIDA Y EL VACÍO DEL FINAL
- LA IMPORTANCIA DEL AMOR Y DEL SEXO
- LOS MATRIMONIOS MÚLTIPLES
- LA REPRODUCCIÓN GENÉTICA COMO CAUSA VITAL DEL HOMBRE
- LA ABOLICIÓN DE TABÚES CULTURALES ARRAIGADOS
- LA IMPORTANCIA DE LA PAZ
- LA VUELTA A LA ÉPOCA ‘RURAL’, MÁS BIEN LA SIMPLEZA DE VIVIR POR LOS PLACERES, SIN LA PRESIÓN DE LA MODERNIDAD
- PRO DEL LIBERALISMO
- PRO DEL ‘CARPE DIEM’

ES UN HEINLEIN CON MOMENTOS REALMENTE GENIALES, LLENOS DE PRECISAS Y EXCELENTES REFLEXIONES MEDIANTE DEMOLEDORAS FRASES, PERO POR CONTRA, DRÁSTICO EN CIERTOS PENSAMIENTOS QUE LLEGAN INCLUSO A HORRORIZAR, CON UN LÍMITE MORAL QUE CRUZA LA RAYA.

YO LO COMPARO CON EL SER QUE DELIRA ENTRE LA VIDA Y LA MUERTE, QUE ES CAPAZ DE TENER UNA LUCIDEZ EXCEPCIONAL Y EN UN SEGUNDO CAMBIAR A UN DISCURSO TOTALMENTE ALUCINATORIO. Sin embargo, LA OBRA NO RESULTA INCOHERENTE DEBIDO AL BUEN OFICIO Y LA MAESTRÍA DE LA PLUMA DEL MEJOR ESCRITOR DE SCI FI DE TODOS LOS TIEMPOS (y esto me lo ratifica, precisamente).

Por el 1973 que salió al mercado, el escritor había estado a punto de morir y sus problemas de salud crónica

eran ya severos. Con esto no quiero excusarle, sino dar una explicación del porqué del resultado significativo de tal obra; y ahí lo dejo para que el futuro lector saque sus propias conclusiones.

NO APTO PARA PRINCIPIANTES DEL AUTOR DEBIDO A QUE PUEDAN COGER ‘UNA MALA IDEA’ DE SU OBRA (es mejor empezar a leerlo desde su primera época hasta su segunda y más radical etapa, post ‘ Forastero en tierra extraña’) , NO ACABEN DE CAPTAR CIERTAS LECTURAS MÚLTIPLES QUE SIEMPRE ESTÁN PRESENTES EN SUS NOVELAS Y CIERTOS GUIÑOS A ANTERIORES OBRAS SUYAS COMO LA SOBERBIA’ HISTORIAS DEL FUTURO’, MUY BIEN HILVANADOS AQUÍ.

Además, ES MUY IMPORTANTE Y BASTANTE RECOMENDABLE QUE LEÁIS PRIMERO ‘ LOS HIJOS DE MATUSALEM’ PARA ENTENDER Y ATAR CABOS DE LA HISTORIA DE LA FAMILIA HOWARD.

Una lectura algo DENSA Y INTENSA, EN LOS INTERLUDIOS, EN EL SENTIDO QUE NO HAY QUE COGERLA CON PRISA, SINO MÁS BIEN LEERLA, DIGIRIENDOLA POCO A POCO, Y ÁGIL Y ADICTIVA EN LOS RELATOS DE LONG.

En resumen, UN HEINLEIN NO DEL TODO EQUILIBRADO, ALGO BIZARRO Y EXTREMO, PERO CON PARTES REALMENTE BRILLANTES Y UN CONJUNTO DE NOVELA BIEN RESUELTO Y CONVINCENTE. OFICIO LE SOBRABA Y SE NOTA.

LO MEJOR: EL PERSONAJE DE LAZARUS LONG (AQUÍ RADICA, EN PARTE ,QUE ENTRES O NO EN LA NOVELA), CIERTOS PLANTEAMIENTOS VITALES Y SUS REFLEXIONES DEMOLEDORAS.

LO PEOR: LA DESMESURA AL TRATAR EL TEMA REFERENTE AL SEXO, CON PROLONGACIONES INTERMINABLES DE LAS CONTIENDAS PLACENTERAS DE CUERPO Y MENTE DE LOS HOWARD Y CIERTAS FILIAS MUY SOSPECHOSAS, AUNQUE LA MAESTRÍA DEL AUTOR HACE QUE SALGA AIROSO Y TODO.

‘ VIVE Y APRENDE O NO VIVIRÁS MUCHO’
