



All Timelines Lead to Rome

Dale Cozort

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All Timelines Lead To Rome is an alternate history/police procedural crossover. Newly created portals lead to an alternate reality where the Roman Empire still exists, its technology and structure nearly unchanged from its peak. The Point of Divergence: humans enslaved rather than wiping out an island race of hobbit-like near-humans. Alternate history Rome rebuilt their culture around these slaves, preserving the empire but causing stagnation. As a result of that stagnation Europeans never discovered America and American Indians still control the alternate reality's New World.

Now someone from our reality is tampering with the alternate timeline and killing anyone who tries to uncover their scheme. Detective Darla Smith and Bureau of Timeline Integrity analyst Scott White pursue the case across cyberspace, through rust-belt towns of the Midwest and through a North America still dominated by Native Americans to finally discover why all timelines lead to Rome.

New York Times Best Selling author SM Stirling says, "All Timelines is an intriguing and action-packed alternate history with an unusual point of departure. I like it!"

All Timelines Lead to Rome Details

Date : Published September 30th 2012 by Stairway Press (first published September 15th 2012)

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Author : Dale Cozort

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Genre : Science Fiction, Alternate History, Fiction

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From Reader Review All Timelines Lead to Rome for online ebook

Cathy says

This review is based on winning a GoodReads giveaway.

All Timelines Lead to Rome lists itself as an alternate history/ police procedural crossover. It doesn't work well as either.

The alternate universe linked to what appears to be our world sometime in the future is not a bad premise. It isn't adequately executed. There isn't enough time spent exploring the other universe for the reader to get a sense for it. And the bits that happen there raise more questions than answers.

The police procedural aspect is even worse. The murder in the start of the book is little more than a plot device to bring characters together. There is no investigation into the murder itself. Getting rid of this storyline would actually have helped the book.

The pacing is a problem. The book starts out very slow because it takes some time to understand what is going on. This should have been dealt with by having a brief introduction setting up the history of the discovery of the portals and how our world dealt with them. It gets a little better in the middle but suddenly speeds up at the end. It seems like the author had a 300 page limit and had to try to tie everything up before he hits that limit. The ending is rushed and unsatisfactory.

The characters are all very shallowly drawn and frequently stereotypes.

The other important aspect that is missing is a discussion of the ethics of dealing with two timelines. There are several references to it being wrong to disturb the newly discovered timeline. But there is no exploration of the issue and that is very disappointing.

Jason Brown (Toastx2) says

I am a SUCKER for alternate history stories. Dale Cozort has filled this genre need for me twice now, though it is not technically alt history. Both Cozort novels I have read deal solidly with people in our world stepping into a side dimension where tandem time is running like a river, but diverted by a single, but critical change in the historical record.

In "All Timelines lead to Rome", the empire never left the European continent. Expansionism was stopped dead in its tracks. The Americas were never 'discovered', plague never overtook the Western Hemisphere. It was a mass cascade effect of changes, pretty much removing all semblance of a world we would recognize.

In our world, we have found that the membrane between our timelines is malleable, with the right science, weaker spots can be temporarily opened allowing access to Timeline X. The difficulty here is that any involvement with timeline x could devastate it. An organization has been built to keep the purity of the timeline. Said org has found evidence of a huuge breach in protocol, putting the entire timeline at risk.

Did I enjoy this book? Hell yeah I did. Would I read it twice? Unlikely. The reread value of this was low. The possibility of a sequel is also low, it was written in a way that I am unsure how it could expand. Too many loose ends conveniently tied up. I dunno.

There were a couple character elements that had me rolling my eyes, but over all they didn't diminish the novel, they simply didn't add to it.

Overall, a favorable and enjoyed read. Everything else is just me being nitpicky.

Much as with the book itself, about three quarters of the publisher description is hand fed to you with answers contained within the first quarter of the book. It introduces one character, then references a second by name with no explanation.. It is overly fluffy and confusing by proxy. I think they dropped the ball on this and made the book less accessible, by being harder to get off the shelf. The cover is interesting and a good choice.

Here is my take-
ReBlurb--

"In an alternate earth timeline, Rome never spread it's wings. The Romans never great their empire outside of Europe, they just lollygag around home and portions of Europe. Horrific Euro plagues never spread.

Native North Americans are never impacted by the bevy of terrible problems that expansionism brought our world.and thrive with the paradigm provided. A single human cold from our world will destroy theirs.

So what could justify a corporation's decision to bypass timeline quarantines and blatantly pollute the time streams? What could be worth the potential of becoming the shepherd of xenocide in someone else's history?

Government experts Darla and Scott are going to find out, and it all starts with a dead woman's cellphone."

Publisher's description:

"A dead woman's cell phone chip leads to a mystery spanning the U.S. rustbelt, a surviving Roman empire and a North America without Europeans.

A unique alternate history: Newly created portals lead to an alternate reality where prehumans survived on a Mediterranean island, enslaved by local farmers. Alternate history Rome rebuilt their culture around the slaves, preserving the empire but causing it to stagnate. As a result Europeans never discovered America and American Indians still control the alternate New World.

Intertwined mysteries: When Detective Darla Smith investigates a picture of an alternate reality Roman scroll concealed on a murder victim, she is dogged by her past and other mysteries. Why did alternate timeline Rome stop changing? How did Roman slave-raiders get to alternate reality North America? What does software giant Burgen Industries want in the alternate reality?

Powerful forces headed for a violent collision: A wealthy, idealistic business woman and her menacing security chief try to sidetrack the approaching investigation. An Indian town is attacked by raiders with modern guns. The trail leads Darla and Scott through cyberspace, decaying rustbelt towns and an Indian-controlled alternate North America toward a final confrontation."

Xposted RawBlurb.com

Peter Bradley says

Please give me a helpful vote at Amazon - <https://www.amazon.com/review/R1TLU32...>

This novel is almost a throwback to classic science fiction story-telling. It starts with a big "what if" idea, namely, what if there was a timeline where the Old World stopped developing in the first century AD and the New World was never "discovered", which can be reached from our timeline through portals. This "what if" generates immediate questions, such as: How would this alternate universe be exploited? What went differently in this new timeline - dubbed "Timeline X" - that made history go off at such a tangent?

The read gets answers to these questions through a mystery/adventure story. The story opens with Scott White meeting Darla Smith in a bar. Scott is a technician for the BTI - the Bureau of Timeline Integrity, which is the entity charged with protecting Timeline X from intrusions. The major concern of the BTI is the potential of cross-contamination of diseases unknown to each dimension from the other side. Darla Smith is a Vietnamese-American police detective from Boston, who is looking for the killer of a young woman. Darla has been led to the BTI because it seems that the woman's cell phone had a picture of a very rare latin manuscript, lost in antiquity in our time-line. Someone it seems may have a rogue portal into Timeline X.

The shoe on that rogue portal drops pretty quickly as the reader is introduced to Jeni Burgen, a very successful business woman who owns the said timeline. She has an altruistic vision for protecting the Indian population in Timeline X from their inevitable exploitation by our technologically superior timeline. She also has a spooky chief of security who seems to be guilty of eliminating the woman whose murder Darla is investigating.

The book moves slowly for the first quarter, as the stakes are slowly ratcheted for all parties. Scott and Darla and pretentious BTI Agent Pete gradually zero in on Jeni's activities and Jeni spies on them through her security chief and her corporate attorney, and periodically discovers that her security is not as secure as it should be. It seems that Jeni knew Scott when he was teaching an "immersive" course on how to live like an Indian in Timeline X, so she decides to reprise her role as Jolene Beck to get close to Scott. She watches Scott, her attorney watches her and someone mysterious is watching Darla.

The book plays off as a mashup of romance and Spy versus Spy through the halfway mark. Scott digs Darla; Darla flirts with Scott and hooks up with Peter; Jolene flirts with Scott; Darla gets jealous. Everybody watches everyone else. It is all very confusing.

Then, the story kicks into high gear with Jolene kidnapped twice, Pete and Scott fighting romance in Timeline X, and Jeni finding out that her idealism has let the snake into paradise. The last thirty percent of the book is page-turning, high adventure.

There are features I liked about author Dale Cozort's big concept. I liked how there was a limitation to portal placement that varied from place to place, which thereby limited exploitation of Timeline X. I also like the mystery of the Old World. I thought that Cozort's explanation was well-done.

I have two nits to pick with the book, however.

The first nit is Cozort's dodgy transitions. Normally, when an author shifts scenes or characters, he will start a new chapter or place a chapter break between scenes. Cozort, however, seamlessly followed a sentence dealing with Timeline X with one dealing with our timeline with no warning. This is not an insoluble

problem, but it was distracting.

The second nit was Cozort's stereotyping of the denizens of rural Ohio as racists. Scott goes back to visit his 55 year old father. He takes Pete, who is African-American, and immediately the father is channeling racism and the urban liberal elite characters treat him like an ignorant redneck. There is this, for example:

"“Most of the people who settled in flyover country were peasants and riffraff,” Peter said. “Their descendants are going back to their roots, and quality people have to protect themselves.”

There couldn't be a better summary for urban attitudes toward Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin rural voters in the 2016 election.

To his credit, Cozort balances this out by having the father and Pete bond over automobiles and Scott defends his father with this line:

"“No, but he figured that’s why we’re here. Actually, dad did. Works with his hands doesn’t equal stupid.”

Again, this is a nice synopsis of the 2016 election, but, nonetheless, the rural people as racist, gets old.

In any event, this book had high entertainment value and a fun, "big concept" element. I suspect that we will see a sequel to this.

Fangs for the Fantasy says

When the police are called in to investigate the murder of a woman, the journey doesn't just take them across middle America but into an alternate earth. This secondary earth is a world where no industrial revolution has happened, and Romans still rule Europe. To get the menial tasks done, the Romans have enslaved a group of pixies, which are humanoid creatures bred specifically to please their master in whatever fashion is needed. No colonization has occurred and this means that Indigenous people still control all of the land in North America. This is a world out of time essentially. This is a world where none of the natural resources have been tapped and untold treasures are still to be discovered. Ancient artifacts are easily available for the taking.

Someone has been accessing the alternate earth and this means the possibility of them wiping out the Indigenous population with diseases that we have long ago built immunity to, or introducing advanced weaponry and starting the project of colonization again. It also puts our current earth at danger of small pox, should someone infected with the disease return. There is also the danger that interacting with the Romans or indigenous peoples will change their culture and path of development. Do we have the will to allow these people to develop naturally without our intervention?

I think this book walks the line between sci-fi and alternate history and manages to pull it off well. When it does move to the alternate world, Cozort adds little details like being able to drink directly from streams and a lack of things like satellites and motorized vehicles to provide convenience. This alternate world quickly becomes real to the reader and one can almost smell the pollution free air.

Though the title of the book is All Timelines Lead to Rome, the book is really all about the exploitation of North American Native people. I can see that Cozort took some time investigating the various tribes and how

they lived, the problem is that the book read very much like a White saviour complex. Much of the motivations behind the characters was to save the Indigenous people from colonisation and of course exploitation. Scott, the professor, was highly aware of how the introduction of Europeans to North America not only brought diseases which the Indigenous had no immunity to but advanced weaponry. Obviously, what happened in our timeline was a genocide and it makes sense that the characters would want to avoid this, the problem is that those truly concerned where all White, making the book read like Rudyard Kipling's White Man's Burden. Jeni sought to give the Indigenous a chance by introducing them to advanced weapons in an effort to speed up their development because she believed that it was only a matter of time until our timeline began exploiting them. This approach of course does not factor in potential harm from disease. This entire book seemed to reify the ridiculous binary that Native tribes are backward and need saving. It makes absolutely no sense to me why Indigenous people from our timeline would not be concerned about their people on the other side. All we got were the opinions of White people on the issue.

The other characters of colour where equally trope laden. First we have Darla, the adopted rich girl gone bad. Though she has redeemed herself and become a cop, her past history of arson still haunts her in the form of a Vietnamese gang lord named Danny Minh. For some reason, Minh is obsessed with Darla and that is how he becomes involved in this case. His obsession makes absolutely no sense and we are given no real reason for his appearance in the book. It seems that his character's presence is only to provide another trope laden character of colour. Darla is smart and highly aware though much of her actions read like jealousy of the White female protagonist Jeni/Jolene.

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Pat says

Dale Cozort's newest novel, *All Timelines Lead to Rome*, is a work of alternate history mixed with mystery and intrigue. Portals to an alternate history have been discovered but maintaining them consumes so much power that only governments can afford them. And at least one unscrupulous corporation.

The question arises, of course, of how much interference should be allowed in a world where Rome stagnated, Europeans never expanded into the New World, and North American Indians developed without interaction with the rest of the world.

This is also something of a police procedural. A camera chip found on the body of a dead woman leads Detective Darla Smith to the Bureau of Timeline Integrity and involvement with analyst Scott White to investigate the possibility that someone has violated the "no interference" rules and is smuggling Roman artifacts from the alternate timeline. And is willing to kill to keep their secrets.

This novel is intriguing and well researched, and is eminently readable even if one is not an alternate history buff. The well done mystery and the moral and ethical questions raised kept me turning pages in this very satisfying read.

Matt Mitrovich says

If you have explored the twisted halls of online alternate history, Dale Cozort is a name you will recognize. Computer programmer, teacher and writer, Dale was an early pioneer in the alternate history community, posting his works online during the days when everyone still used websites to showcase their works (remember GeoCities). Thankfully he is still writing and his recent work of fiction is the upcoming *All Timelines Lead to Rome*.

In the universe of *All Timelines*, there are two timelines, ours and a world where the Roman Empire still exists. In fact, the Old World is in a state of stagnation. Technology and culture has not progressed in over two thousands years and New World remains free from contact with the rest of humanity...until our timeline discovered it. Portals can be used to access "Timeline X" but only in the Americas and few other remote locales. Our chrononauts are extremely careful travelling to this alternate America since there are millions of people without immunity to our diseases. Meanwhile, there are theories on why the wall between realities is weaker there or why technological advancement halted in the Old World, but nothing is known for sure.

It might have something to do with a picture of bizarre humanoid creature discovered on a dead body. This leads Bureau of Timeline Integrity analyst Scott White to team up with FBI agent Darla Smith to track down the murderer. Their investigation leads them to suspect Jeni Burgen, the young and wealthy owner of Burgen Industries. She has her own reason to avoid government intrusion into her activities because she has opened an illegal portal to Timeline X to trade with the Romans. Yet there appears to be other players in this drama and the true mystery could put an entire civilization at risk.

All Timelines was an enjoyable story and interesting take on parallel worlds fiction. Dale's use of Native Americans is a refreshing change of pace when so many alternate history focus on American or European cultures. Dale's writing style is heavily dialogue driven with little reliance on background or inner monologue. While this avoids text dumps that are prevalent in the genre (us history nerds tend to be a wordy bunch) some readers might find it to be a tad unusual. That is not say the writing is bad. Dale has created a cast of colorful and witty characters who have moments of compassion and pettiness just like us.

Having read many of Dale's counterfactuals over the years, it was a good change of pace to read one of his fictional works. If you like strong dialogue in a unique alternate history setting then I can recommend *All Timelines Lead to Rome* by Dale Cozort.

Sarah Anne says

All Timelines Lead To Rome By: Dale Cozort

Excerpt from the back of the book:

A dead woman's cell phone chip leads to a mystery spanning the U.S. rustbelt, a surviving Roman empire and a North America without Europeans.

A unique alternate history: Newly Created portals lead to an alternate reality where prehumans survived on a Mediterranean island, enslaved by local farmers. Alternate history Rome rebuilt their culture around the slaves, preserving the empire but causing it to stagnate. As a result Europeans never discovered America and American Indians still control the alternate New World.

All Timelines lead to Rome was a great book! I loved the science fiction based timeline. It was surprising

around every corner and would recommend it to any who is a fan of Science-fiction and alternate reality. It had a surprising ending. Age group is young adult to adult.

edifanob says

The book description convinced me to give All Timelines lead to Rome a try.

A mix of Alternate history, timelines and thriller sounded good to me.

I received a digital copy from the author and promised to write a review.

Unfortunately I have been disappointed. This is another example of right book wrong reader and vice versa.

I will explain that in my review on September 30th 2012.
