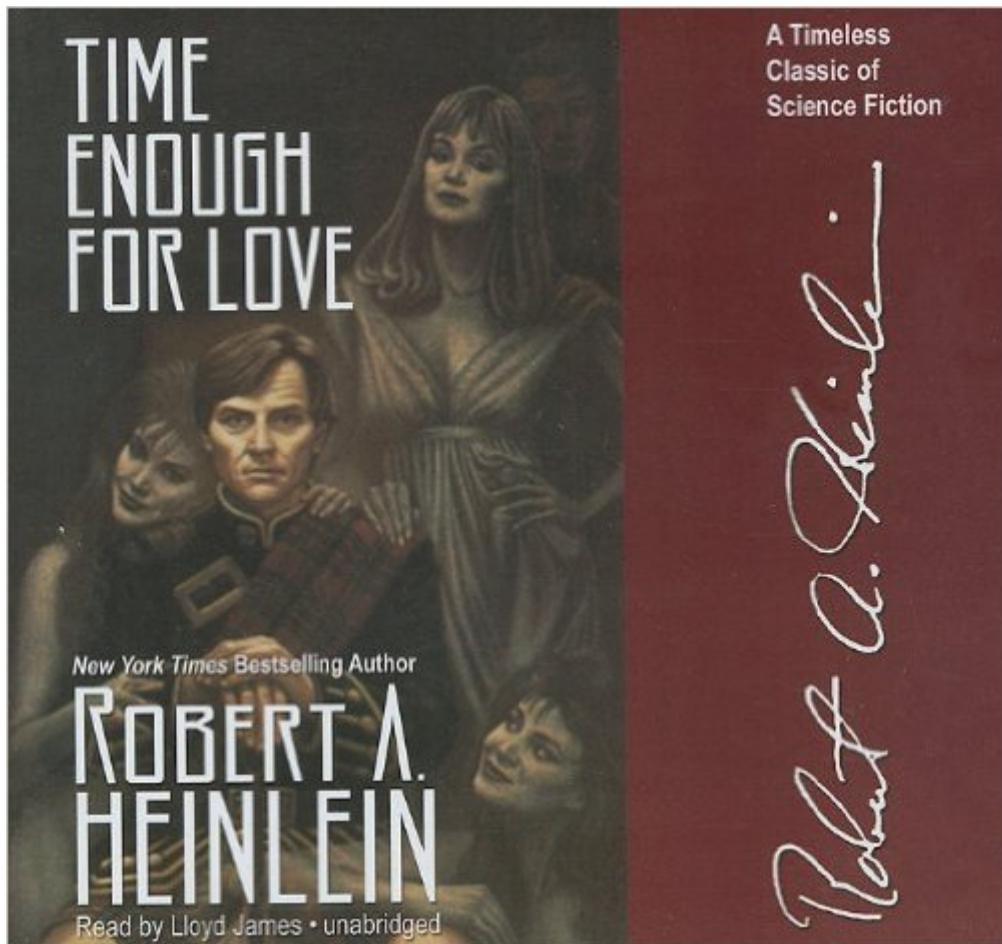


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Time Enough For Love



Synopsis

[MP3-CD audiobook format in Vinyl case. *NOTE: The MP3-CD format requires a compatible audio CD player.][Read by Tom Weiner]Time Enough for Love is the capstone and crowning achievement of Heinlein's famous 'Future History' series. -- Lazarus Long is so in love with life that he simply refuses to die. Born in the early 1900s, he lives through multiple centuries, his love for time ultimately causing him to become his own ancestor. Time Enough for Love is his lovingly detailed account of his journey through a vast and magnificent timescape of centuries and worlds. Using the voice of Lazarus, Heinlein expounds his own philosophies, including his radical ideas on sexual freedom. His use of slang, technical jargon, sharp wit, and clever understatement lend this story a texture and authority that seems the very tone of things to come. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Time Enough For Love is science fiction of the old school -- sci fi as an exploration and extrapolation of ideas, rather than a western with space ships and ray guns. Almost every review of this book gives it either 5 stars or 1, so be aware that you'll either love this book or you'll hate it. If you understand what Heinlein is doing, you'll give it 5 stars, and if you don't you'll get caught up in the incest, prostitution, group marriage, etc. and give it 1. Heinlein takes a 4000 year old man who has done EVERYTHING that there is to do in this world -- the challenge is to find something that will make him want to keep living. In the end, the thing that keeps him alive is the same thing that has

kept him going for 40 centuries: love. Heinlein's examination of love in all of its forms and the return of Lazarus Long's desire to live are the backbones of the story. Many reviewers have exposed their own hangups by focusing on the sex in the book. Yes, there is sex, including prostitution and incest, but these reviewers aren't seeing the forest for the trees. Sex is examined as one component of love, but Heinlein makes very clear early in the book that sex and love aren't at all the same thing. He also makes it clear that he wants to discuss love, not sex. Along the way Heinlein discusses maternal love, paternal love, love of self, love among groups (no, *not* group sex -- group love), intellectual/spiritual love (Minerva and Ira), platonic love...I could go on, but you get the idea. Heinlein even gives Lazarus a female clone so that love of self/narcissism/solipsism can get a real philosophical workout!

Way back at the beginning of Heinlein's writing career his editor at Astounding, John W. Campbell, published the 'Future History', a two page listing of Heinlein's projection of the significant individuals and scientific, economic, and political events of the next 700+ years, along with a list of story titles that brought each of these events to life. At that time, most of those stories hadn't been written, and from some of the notes and statements in interviews that Heinlein made in the fifties and sixties, it looked like some of those originally projected stories would never be written, most significantly the final entry, "Da Capo". Finally, in 1973, when everyone had given up hope, this book appeared, a book that put the finishing touches on the Future History, a book that closes with that final story. But before reaching that final story, we are given a cornucopia of other stories, as Lazarus Long, now some 2300 years old, is induced to reminisce about his life as part of a complex deal to preserve the 'wisdom' of the oldest man alive. Each of the stories that Lazarus relates are fairly complete by themselves, and many authors would have chosen to publish each of them separately, but Heinlein chose to keep them all as one piece, as each story helps to illuminate his overriding theme, on just what is love in all of its myriad aspects and why it is so important to man's survival as a species. The first of the tales, "The Man Who Was Too Lazy to Fail", may be the weakest of any of the stories, but for those who know something about Heinlein's life, this story is very clearly autobiographical in nature, with some changes in names and places to protect the innocent.

This book was on my nightstand in 1974 (when it was first published in paperback), and it's still there now. (Same copy, too; the old dollar-ninety-five Putnam edition has held up amazingly well. Different nightstand, though.) I was born in 1963 and learned to read very early. Like Spider Robinson, I lost my literary virginity to Heinlein (in my case, to Stranger in a Strange Land and

The Moon is a Harsh Mistress). To this day I think that Mistress is one of his three absolutely magisterial novels (the other two being Double Star and The Door into Summer). Heinlein also wrote a number of novels that were very close to magisterial, and some of them have been (in my case, at least) more profoundly influential than his Three Greatest. Stranger is one of these, and so is Time Enough for Love. Heinlein published this one after bouncing back from major surgery (having been somewhat incapacitated while writing I Will Fear No Evil, which his wife Virginia helped to edit). The old master had his off days, but he's at the top of his form here. As you're probably aware, this lengthy work is a future history of Lazarus Long (born Woodrow Wilson Smith), the Senior of the Howard Families and the oldest human being alive (well over two thousand years old at the time of this tale). Lazarus is one of Heinlein's best realized characters; I'd recognize his red hair, bulbous nose, disarming grin, and wild grey-green eyes if I passed him on the street. And I'd immediately put my hand over my wallet. Lazarus is an unsavory character -- a raconteur, swindler, adventurer, sybarite, pragmatist . . . and, above all, survivor.

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