

The topic of this research paper is perhaps best introduced by an excerpt from the document on which it is based. It seems to me that a few preliminary remarks and disclaimers are in order.

In the course of my electronic archival investigations, I happened upon a particularly interesting, if somewhat unbelievable, document. At this juncture, the chronology of the supposed names and events is baffling to me. I do not purport to understand the entire affair as of yet. I have enlisted the aid of my good friend, Arthur Dobie. He has agreed to peruse the 64 pages of theoretical mathematics which follow the cover letter of the supposed time machine test pilot, Crowley Severenson. The excerpt follows:

Theo,

It seems to me that this letter is unique in the annals of time-travel history. Don't mistake my intentions, I am quite certain that time travel is a reality and has been for many years. I am equally certain that because of many factors, including fear of the unknown, time travel has remained a mystery to the general public and valuable information has been lost. Those advocating time travel in the past have been deemed weirdos, witches, and lunatics. These are labels I hope to change. I hope to prove to the world that time travel has been and will be possible for the common man as well as the scientist.

There is much to learn from what has transpired in the past, both in the world of time travel and history in general. Imagine how we could rewrite the history books given actual personal experiences in the events recorded. Travel to 1776 and the signing of the Constitution; what personal vendettas were being proliferated that day? Whose political careers formed and influenced the document that the United States government is based on today, 250 years later? Why was Mozart's genius not better respected and understood at the time of his death? Did Shakespeare actually write all the works attributed to him, or are some of them written by other authors? What really happened the day Rome burned, and what was Nero doing at the time? Who is Jack the Ripper? Is Elvis alive? These are the unanswered questions of history that we can and will uncover.

Of course, there are important concerns that we need to consider. What about the very real possibility of altering history by a foreign force in a different time. What about the old adage, "live and let live"? Certainly we will discover things that are better left unknown and unexposed. How can these things be regulated?

Many of these questions remain unanswered today, both regarding the history involved and the implications of finding out the answers. Is time travel the best thing for humankind? This research paper will not only investigate the question of whether time travel is possible, but also whether it is advisable. Some would have us ignore the progress to date in this area and forget about it altogether. And perhaps they are right; "fools rush in where angels fear to tread," as they say. But if we plan ahead, examine all the issues involved, and attempt to prevent some of the potential disasters time travel might unearth, we can perhaps move into this new era and dimension with the utmost ease.