



## The Continuum

*Wendy Nikel*

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## **The Continuum** Wendy Nikel

Elise Morley is an expert on the past who's about to get a crash course in the future.

For years, Elise has been donning corsets, sneaking into castles, and lying through her teeth to enforce the Place in Time Travel Agency's ten essential rules of time travel. Someone has to ensure that travel to the past isn't abused, and most days she welcomes the challenge of tracking down and retrieving clients who have run into trouble on their historical vacations.

But when a dangerous secret organization kidnaps her and coerces her into jumping to the future on a high-stakes assignment, she's got more to worry about than just the time-space continuum. For the first time ever, she's the one out-of-date, out of place, and quickly running out of time.

## **The Continuum Details**

Date : Published January 23rd 2018 by World Weaver Press

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Author : Wendy Nikel

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Genre : Science Fiction, Time Travel, Fiction

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## From Reader Review The Continuum for online ebook

### **Hollow Well says**

This was a nice, tight action tale of a woman who works for a Time Travel tourism company extracting clients who overstay their visits into the past. A mysterious organization forces her to perform one of her retrievals, however, this time it is from the future. As she is no longer visiting historical events, she finds that she no longer has the insight to know how the events around her will evolve and she must decide how much of a role she should take in shaping the future.

Smart and enjoyable from start to finish.

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### **NiMo says**

I've read many stories by Wendy Nikel, and I'm constantly amazed by her work. This novella is no different. It's a fun, fast-paced trip through three time periods, each well cultivated. The premise was interesting, and the plot twists were clever. A very satisfying, quick read. I only wished it was longer! Actually, I'd love to see some follow-ups to this--perhaps a sequel or stories from other members of the time travel agency.

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### **GinnyP says**

An eARC from LibraryThing in return for an honest review.

In the 'about the author' blurb, she is described as an author of "speculative fiction" - a new genre category for me. It is an interesting premise, and I enjoy time travel books. I also find the Titanic disaster fascinating; if readers do not, then this book may not hold their interest. Elise is employed as a Retriever for a time-travel agency that offers its customers a trip to 100 years in the past. Marie, in 2012, travels to 1912 and is so taken with the idea she decides to stay. Enter Elise, who uses a mechanical wormhole device to travel back to Southampton, get Marie alone, and whoosh her back to the present. This is made difficult because Marie is engaged to Allen, a 1900s successful young man with a flair for science. The first part of this book is so much about the Titanic, and the retrieval, that when the second sub-plot is revealed and Elise is enlisted by a government agency to jump to the future (which she had been told was impossible) and finds herself assigned to retrieve another government agent who decided he wanted to stay... yes, it got a bit confusing. But the author – while the writing needs some editing – moves the story quickly. There is another plot twist that brings Allen not only from 1912 but ahead to 2112. I can't reveal too much without spoiling several surprises which raised my opinion of this book from a not-terribly-creative first part. I did tire a bit of being beaten over the head with comparisons, references, and parallels that show history will repeat itself. One of my editing suggestions is to rethink the names Butcher, Baker, Chandler (no, not candlestick maker, as Elise questions) who work for T.U.B. ; either make this tongue in cheek or make it a serious sci-fi adventure and not a humorous play on words. Another too-convenient and quick solution was Marie's disappearance from the hotel room; she was a client who broke the rules and.... She just leaves? This ARC needs a few tweaks to be made. But overall, this novella was a quick, enjoyable read with a bit of suspense and a couple of surprises. 3.5 stars.

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## **Stacey says**

I really enjoyed this quick and easy time travel read. The story kept me interested and I liked the ending. I have never read Wendy Nikel before but now I look for more of her works.

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## **Bandit says**

Finally, time traveling story that won't send your brain spinning out. Or at least my brain, which still tends to get confused with predetermination paradoxes and all that. Continuum actually followed a fairly reasonable line of logistics and then, of course, the why not factor. This was just an enjoyable quick read set partially in 1912, partially in 2012 and partially in the future. Likeable characters, fast paced, well written...this ended up being a very nice way to spend the morning, always a nice surprise, particularly from an unknown (to me) author. Thanks Netgalley.

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## **Catherine Schaff-Stump says**

Like Wendy Nikel herself, I am a sucker for almost any time travel story, so Continuum was a good fit for me as a reader. Time travel as vacation meets the problem solving of Quantum Leap in a satisfying package.

The story begins in the past when Elise Morley retrieves a client who has forgotten herself and almost takes a voyage on the Titanic with her fiancee. Elise saves the client, but the rather inelegant Extraction causes fallout which ripples through the book. Meanwhile, it turns out that the travel agency where Elise works is not the only entity to have access to this technology, and a government agency has been sending people to the future. Elise is sent to retrieve a rogue agent.

While I wish we could have spent more time in the heads of a couple of the characters who were relevant to the past, I found the story that focused on the future well-paced and interesting I wanted just a bit more to explain what Allen was doing and why, although his ultimate motivation was a solid payoff. Chandler charmed me a great deal. And while Elise strikes me as world weary at first, she has a noble turn of character and a surprise plot twist which work pretty well.

Nikel is a solid writer with vivid description, an imaginative future, and a command of accurate historical speech. Check out that purse snatcher in 1912. Her characters manifest their time stream's habits and inflections brilliantly, which is a real value add for this reader.

Nikel creates a rich world in which she could easily weave a tapestry of other time travel adventures. While Elise seems like she ends up in a place from which she cannot return, well, it is time travel after all, and whose to say continuity has to be linear?

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## **Devann says**

*I received a free copy of this book from LibraryThing in exchange for an honest review*

This was a quick, fun time-travel sci-fi read. I'm usually very picky about time-travel because in my opinion it's very hard to do 'right' i.e. make it make sense, but this novella has a pretty solid plot, even if it is pretty standard. I mean you've got time travel and government agencies and the Titanic, so it's definitely hitting all of the standard tropes, but I really liked Elise and I liked how the author used the Titanic as a parallel to what was happening when she traveled to the future rather than just 'here I've randomly picked a famous date in history'. The ending was a bit meh for me because it was just SUCH a cliche, but I understand why the author would want to throw it in to create a kind of 'closed loop' as it were. Also it's literally just the last few pages of the novel so I'm going to choose to ignore it ...unless she writes a sequel in which I will probably read it because like I said she does have a really fun and fast paced writing style.

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### **S.L. Saboviec says**

I've been a fan of Wendy Nikel for a while now: she's published a ton of short stories (and if this novella isn't enough, go to her website to find links). I'm so excited she's finally got a longer work out, and I gobbled it up as fast as I could.

If time travel is your thing, you want to pick this up. We get to go to the past and see off the ill-fated Titanic awaiting its maiden voyage in the harbor. Then we get to go to the future (my FAVORITE part of time travel books) and... well, I won't spoil it. Anyway, the premise, a time travel agency, is fantastic even without all the government intrigue surrounding it. In a short few pages, the world is painted vividly and the plot keeps the pages turning. Fans of Jodi Taylor (or Back to the Future II, haha) will LOVE this.

Please note that I was given a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Beth Cato says**

I received this book along with the sequel courtesy of the publisher, via the LibraryThing Early Reviewer's Program.

Nikel's fun novella adds some new twists to the time travel genre. Elise's day job is by no means a normal one--she's sent back in time to retrieve clients whose time travel vacations have gone on too long or become outright meddlesome to the space-time continuum. After a close call regarding the Titanic, she returns to the present only to be ambushed by rogues who force her to travel again--into the future. She thinks she's there to retrieve a man who has gone missing on a new technological marvel called the Continuum, but the situation is considerably more complicated than that. The Continuum/continuum is not at all what what it seems...

This was really the perfect read to suit my mood. I needed a fun, thoughtful escape, and this provided that. I do love a good time travel story. I was left wanting to know more about Elise's background and perhaps more development with some of the side characters. I tend to be very good at predicting book endings, but this one left me gobsmacked. Such nice surprises, and they worked! I'm glad I have the sequel lined up to read next.

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## Ben Babcock says

Loves me some time travel, so of course when I saw this on NetGalley, I jumped on it. Thanks NetGalley and World Weaver Press for the eARC. *The Continuum* is a quick jaunt, if you will, into both past and future. Wendy Nikel keeps us guessing with numerous twists and turns, though I wish I were more interested in both the protagonist and the overall plot.

*The Continuum* opens with Elise Morley in 1912. She is there to Extract a wayward temporal tourist; that's her job. When she succeeds, she returns to 2012, only for her boss, the enigmatic Dr. Wells, to whisk her away to a top-secret facility. Turns out he has been dealing with some black-ops type people on the side, and that contrary to what he told Elise, the technology they use can also take them into their future. Soon she's in 2112, attempting to retrieve wayward agent sent to investigate the future and report back. Of course, that's not all she was lied to about, and she soon finds herself trapped, with no real options. And some dude originally from 1912 is there, somehow, with knowledge and technology far beyond what he should have....

As far as time travel mechanics go, Nikel keeps this pretty simple. The timelines are “synced” in that “Meanwhile, In the Present...” kind of way; you can only travel to the current date, just certain years in the past or future. The technology is crude: for the most part, you have to use a specific machine to get you where you need to go. And there isn't much in the way of advanced technology beyond that—even in the 2112 setting, Nikel doesn't invest too much time trying to establish that technology has advanced all that much. Everyone has some suped-up Google Glasses and retinal scans, and that's about it.

Taken altogether, this means your mileage may vary here. As a SF nerd, I was loving the travel but a little tired of the set-pieces. There is little here in terms of whizz-bang, gee-wow, that's-new SF territory. A more casual SF reader, or someone just dipping their toes into this subgenre, won't be as bothered by that. They might prefer the clean-cut action-paced nature of this novel. And I'll give it that: *The Continuum* does not linger or waste any *time* (no pun intended).

I actually really like the situation Elise finds herself in. Cut off from allies, she basically discovers that she can't return to her present and expect to live, nor can she stay in this future, because reasons. So for a good chunk of the book, she seems to have zero options. This kind of pressure on a protagonist always appeals to me, because it's when their back is to a wall that you can really see their mettle.

I also like that there doesn't seem to be any sexual or romantic tension between Elise and her target, Agent Chandler. It would have been very easy for Nikel to go down that route. I'm glad she didn't—I love reading books where romance, especially with a female protagonist, isn't on the agenda. Elise and Chandler develop a grudging respect for one another, and they work well enough together.

Ultimately, though, the plot just seems to lose steam. After the climax, the denouement drops a predestination paradox on us that seems to put Elise on a bus, even as it hints that this is not the end of this story arc. And so, I'm just left with a sense of ... mehhhhh. Like, what was the point? It doesn't help that the character development is practically nonexistent: I didn't learn much about Elise outside of this immediate job, nor did I ever get attached to any of the other named characters, most of whom we saw for about 2 pages, if that. We spend almost all of this book in Elise's head, yet at the end of all this, I feel like I hardly know her.

*The Continuum* has its moments and isn't half-bad, but it doesn't measure up to my standards. I'm not saying you won't enjoy it (and wouldn't judge you if you do), but there is nothing here that grabs me and says, “this

is a series you need to be following". And that's a shame, because I do love me some time travel.

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## **Koeur says**

<https://koeur.wordpress.com/2017/11/1...>

Publisher: World Weaver Press

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Genre: SciFi

Rating: 3.3/5

**Publishers Description:** For years, Elise has been donning corsets, sneaking into castles, and lying through her teeth to enforce the Place in Time Travel Agency's ten essential rules of time travel. Someone has to ensure that travel to the past isn't abused, and most days she welcomes the challenge of tracking down and retrieving clients who have run into trouble on their historical vacations.

**Review:** This was really good writing compacted into a fast moving novella. This story line begs for expansion but the ending dictates a different outcome. Too bad really that this was not a full length novel. As it is a novella it can only score a max of 3 stars due to the truncated nature of the work.

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## **Kate Heartfield says**

Effortless, imaginative, funny and warm. reminded me of Connie Willis.

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## **Cécile C. says**

This was a very fun, short read. Elise's story weaves back and forth between the past, present and future at a pace fast enough to be entertaining, yet leisurely enough to develop interesting points of view on the ethics of time travel (is it okay to change time for the greater good?). I was thoroughly caught up in her story, and finished it in two sittings. Although time travel is not a particularly new subject, this novella managed to look at it from a fresh perspective.

In fact, the one thing that bothered me was that I wished there was a little more of it... There were great secondary characters, for instance, that the story only seemed to explore in passing. It was a shame, because while I had tons of fun with the plot, I was left a little frustrated by the relationships between the characters. I usually enjoy stories that dedicate a little time to developing how the characters interact together, and how the events affect them, from an emotional standpoint; this was not one of them, hence the completely

subjective 3.

Nonetheless, if you're a fan of fast-moving, clever and surprising plots, you'll certainly enjoy this novella.

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### Rhonda says

I edited this book so I'm biased, but Publisher's Weekly said, "Nikel's debut takes the reader on an exciting journey through time with Elise Morley, an agent with the Place in Time Travel Agency, who rescues clients who have stayed too long on their vacations to the past. When she is kidnapped by a secret U.S. government organization, she is forced on a mission to rescue an agent who has jumped into the future. Meanwhile, an errant passenger from the *Titanic* leaps forward in time, desperate to find his fiancée, a tourist from 2012 whom Elise had retrieved from her sojourn in 1912. Nikel's inventive spin on time travel and eye for sumptuous detail make her writing a treat to read."

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### Rachel Daniels says

*The Continuum* really surprised/impressed me! This is a good example of how a successful novella should be done: there was just the right amount of plot for the length of the book, which made the story fast-paced without feeling rushed or incomplete. It didn't negatively draw attention to the fact that it's a shorter book, and the story kept me hooked the entire time.

First of all, this is a book about time travel, which is awesome enough - but it was also done in a refreshing way. Rather than having characters who travel back in time in order to change something in the past or prevent something from happening in the present/future, *The Continuum* involves a travel agency that arranges vacations to the past and specifically **prohibits** their clients from altering the past. Jumps in time are strictly regulated by a careful set of rules.

But, of course, rules are broken and complications arise. Elise, the protagonist whose job is to retrieve people who don't come back to the present when they're supposed to, ends up getting sent to the future... which as far as she knew was not possible. The story takes place in three main settings: 1912 England, just as the *Titanic* is about to begin its voyage; 2012 New York, Elise's present-day life as an agent; and 2112, where Elise jumps to a futuristic settlement... in space.

Despite the time travel and space aspects, this story was **not** overly sci-fi or techy. I was also able to easily follow the 'rules' of time travel (i.e., How does going to the past affect the present/future? What happens if you run into yourself in the past? Answer: you don't, because the agency only allows you to jump to before you were born.) without feeling like my mind was melting. I really enjoyed the parallels between 1912 and 2112, which could've been tacky or cliché, but which I thought were handled elegantly and created a nice cyclical, history-repeats-itself effect.

My only complaint, if I had to come up with one, would be that I didn't really get to know Elise very well (although I was so caught up in the plot that I didn't notice this **too** much). I learned her values and who she was on some level based on her choices and actions, of course... but I would've loved to see more of her personal life, her past, and her more routine jumps to the historical past! Maybe Wendy Nikel will write some side stories about some of Elise's other adventures.

