



Parallel

Lauren Miller

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Abby Barnes had a plan. The Plan. She'd go to Northwestern, major in journalism, and land a job at a national newspaper, all before she turned twenty-two. But one tiny choice—taking a drama class her senior year of high school—changed all that. Now, on the eve of her eighteenth birthday, Abby is stuck on a Hollywood movie set, miles from where she wants to be, wishing she could rewind her life. The next morning, she's in a dorm room at Yale, with no memory of how she got there. Overnight, it's as if her past has been rewritten.

With the help of Caitlin, her science-savvy BFF, Abby discovers that this new reality is the result of a cosmic collision of parallel universes that has Abby living an alternate version of her life. And not only that: Abby's life changes every time her parallel self makes a new choice. Meanwhile, her parallel is living out Abby's senior year of high school and falling for someone Abby's never even met.

As she struggles to navigate her ever-shifting existence, forced to live out the consequences of a path she didn't choose, Abby must let go of the Plan and learn to focus on the present, without losing sight of who she is, the boy who might just be her soul mate, and the destiny that's finally within reach.

Parallel Details

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From Reader Review Parallel for online ebook

Andi (Andi's ABCs) says

This review was originally posted on Andi's ABCs

I kept hearing how amazing this book was so when a friend got an advanced copy and sent it to me I was siked! Jumping in I didn't really know what to expect. Was it paranormal? Was it a contemporary? Would it be too much science and universe talk? The more I read the more I realized that it didn't matter what category it fell into. It didn't matter if there was science talk and if the concept seemed out there on the surface. All that mattered was how fantastic this book was and how it got me thinking. You see I have always been a fan of what I call 'The Sliding Doors Effect'(after the movie which this book reminded me of) where one small choice/decision/incident can completely alter the life you live. That by taking a taxi two feet instead of walking in the rain can change how things play out. One small thing that you don't even realize has happened can make a huge effect on everything, and Miller played that effect to perfection, hitting on everything I have ever thought about it. My thoughts are going to be hard to get down on paper as I don't want to give anything away in regards to the story, but I will try.

Parallel is the story of Abby, a girl with a plan. She has known exactly what she was supposed to do her whole life. She was going to be a journalist after graduating from Northwestern and get a job at a huge newspaper. It was her plan, her calling, her goal. And then drama class happened and suddenly Abby was living in LA filming a movie and missing out on everything she dreamed. Resigned to her new life, but not necessarily happy about it, Abby celebrates the eve of her 18th birthday with her cast mates, but the next morning she wakes up in a Yale dorm with a completely different life like her past had been rewritten and she doesn't remember anything. Stuck in this new life with memories of her old life, Abby has to navigate the constant changes and surprises and learn that sometimes life gets in the way of plans.

Did I mention that this book was fantastic? I mean really really really fantastic. Miller wrote this book in a pretty genius way that kept the story fresh and interesting. Knowing the background of Abby's life and seeing the small changes that lead to her parallel life and everything different about it was done amazingly well. As you got further into the book and Abby started to remember more of her "life" it was easier as a reader to see the moment that changed things and created the situations Abby found herself in. With every turn of the page I felt like I was reading a new kind of book and I liked that.

I found Abby to be such a likable character as was her friend Caitlin. Watching them both navigate through the confusion that was Abby's life was truly a joy given the fact that Abby had no idea what was going to happen to her on any given day. And watching as Josh, who I totally swooned over, was folded into the story was awesome. For a character that played such a minor role in the book, he was huge to the story, but in a way that you don't really understand until you are a good chunk into the book. His presence and lack of, is one of the most important parts of the story and I loved how Miller dealt with that. It wasn't in your face but on the surface and it worked for this story.

Honestly I can't say enough how much I enjoyed this debut novel by Lauren Miller. It touched on everything I love about a good story and kept you thinking the whole time. So much can change the outcome of your life but lead you right where you belong even if it is the last place you expect. Just because that butterfly flaps its wings in New York doesn't mean the rain will never stop in China. You just might have to take the long way to get there. I can say without a doubt Lauren Miller has just become one of those authors that "if she writes it, I'm buying it". Thanks Ms. Miller for awesomeness.

Neil (or bleed) says

“That's the funny thing about life. We're rarely aware of the bullets we dodge. The just-misses. The almost-never-happeneds. We spend so much time worrying about how the future is going to play out and not nearly enough time admiring the precious perfection of the present.”

Parallel was a twisted life story of Abby, the main character. Abby was really confused of what is happening to the world, to her life. The good news was she has an idea at least, because she almost took-up Astronomy and her bestfriend Caitlin is fond of quantum physics which really helped her (and ME!) to understand what is happening to her life.

If not for the quantum physics in this book, as I way to explain the concept of parallel universe, I will give up reading this and read it next time but the urge to know more about parallel universe kept me on the track. Seriously, I care less about the first chapter but when the second chapter came and Abby was trying to seek for answers, that's my interest grows.

The explanation about parallel universe, shared reality, etc. really piqued my attention and I think I've read it thrice or more because I can't absorb that fast the complexity of this interesting topic. I'm a person who really love science so this was really bugging me in a good way until the next uninteresting chapters arrived and the rest became history.

I almost skipped the other chapters so I can go to the "science" stuff already but I persisted and read (or skimmed) it as long as I can. I also didn't care that much about Abby anymore but what she do and her parallel do made sense sometimes. How her parallel thinks and how their lives affect each other. It was somehow complicated and irritating as well. Anyway, at least the ending was unexpected, in my opinion. Hehe.

Dayla says

Review first appeared on my blog: [Book Addict 24-7](#)

I received a copy from Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review

Parallel by Lauren Miller is a young adult sci-fi debut that explores the “what-if” theme. It is a very unassuming novel that begins like many other young adult novels with fluffy story lines. But when we get accustomed to Miller’s fictional world and begin to guess at what will happen next, we are literally lifted from one place to another, which is quite mind-bending—and oh, so, so brilliant!

Okay, I admit that this plot change came more of a surprise because I didn’t read the synopsis again before reading *Parallel* (which I strongly recommend!). But hey, it paid off. I was happily surprised and very intrigued as to what would happen next. Miller’s protagonist is relatable, goes through terrific character growth, and finds that sometimes the most obvious path isn’t always for us.

Perhaps one of the best messages that Abby, the protagonist, can ever share with her reader is that things

happen for a reason, and while one choice may work for someone else, it doesn't necessarily have to work for you.

And of course: You can't escape/outrun/evade the past. That's the tricky part.

Oddly enough, *Parallel* reminded me of *Pivot Point* by Kasie West—another novel that I simply adored. What makes these two novels so successful? Well, for starters, they both challenge the norms of young adult literature. Whereas other novels who blatantly showcase love triangles, both Miller and West give us two separate stories that show the protagonists becoming closer and closer to both love interests. So, rather than having two guys fighting it out, or one telling the other to back off, we have one girl experiencing multiple lives with both guys. But even so, when it comes down to choice, we see what one version of the protagonist picks, while we guess what the other version does.

I just really love that we're given two love stories, rather than having to choose sides. *Parallel*, however, has its own delicious twist, which will tie everything in neatly together.

Abby's character growth is gradual as she comes to terms with the idea that the past is literally deciding her present. We don't get a protagonist who immediately knows what to do (unrealistic), but someone who makes errors and learns from her mistakes, someone who stands up for what s/he wants, and dares to do something from outside her norm.

Abby's inability to accept that her *parallel* self is just an extension of herself shows that perhaps there are two stories, and not just one continuous story, being told. We feel Abby's worry for an unstable present, but much like how Abby treats her past self as someone wholly separate from herself, we too see the two girls as two different characters we can't help but connect with—which side should we take? Or, should we view both sides as a means to a common end—occasionally alluded to as “destiny”?

Parallel is an addicting read that makes you question whether we live in a *parallel* world and how the choices we didn't make would have affected us. It is a cautionary tale of how sometimes we take for granted what is given to us, and how we don't realize everything we have until we lose it all.

I recommend *Parallel* to readers of young adult romance and low-key sci-fi. Miller's debut is an intelligent mystery/adventure waiting to be read.

We often wonder if there are other worlds, but what if our choices are not only ours to make?

Alicia says

Parallel blew my mind.

I went into this book thinking it would be young adult science fiction, which is a genre I love. It was. But it was also a romance novel that was both heart-breaking and heart-mending. I stayed up all night to finish this book because I had to know that Abby would find her soulmate in the end.

The primary complication to Abby's love life is the fact that her world collided with a parallel one a year ago. As a result, her present state is determined by choices her parallel self made in the past. Unfortunately, Abby suspects that her parallel self isn't exactly like her, so her parallel's choices don't always land Abby where she wants to be. She fears that one day she'll wake up and her love life will have been rewritten, and she'll be the only one who remembers how things are supposed to be. In the end, will she find her soulmate

regardless of the path she's on?

It was 1:00 in the morning, and I was just about to put this book down after promising myself I would do so an hour earlier. Then this happened:

Yep, Parallel ripped my heart out and crushed it. So I had to keep reading until I finished the book, fighting with myself not to flip to the end to make sure everything was going to be okay.

Luckily, at the the conclusion, I was here:

Otherwise . . . well, let's just say I had a plan to hunt down and harass author Lauren Miller until she rewrote the ending. Lucky for her, I was more than satisfied.

I don't think all readers will enjoy the science babble explaining the entanglement of two parallel worlds. Personally, I thought this was a pretty cool aspect of the book. But even those who get a giant headache from the science babble can still enjoy the intensity of feelings that Abby has for her boyfriend—and that Abby's parallel has for *her* boyfriend.

The one thing I didn't absolutely love love love about Parallel is that I think I found a small glitch in the rubber science. If Abby and everyone in her world are getting the memories of their parallels, as theorized, then their parallels shouldn't be able to affect their physical properties. Abby shouldn't have scars from her parallel's injuries, and she shouldn't be in Connecticut just because her parallel went there instead of moving to California. This little glitch bothered me a bit. But you know what, Parallel? I still love you.

Most of my favorite books are action-heavy fantasy and science fiction novels. Parallel is now added to my favorites as one of the few romance novels I absolutely adored. I wholeheartedly recommend this book to young adult science fiction readers who like romance, as well as to contemporary romance readers. Just be prepared to put your heart on the line.

Thanks to HarperCollins for the free ARC of this title, provided through Edelweiss.

This review also appears on my blog: <http://www.fantasyfloozy.com/2013/0...>

Willa David says

My friend who's a book blogger got an ARC of this and let me read it. OMG. This book is amazing. I usually read non-fiction with some YA thrown in, but nothing I've read recently even comes close to the awesomeness of this book. Abby Barnes is basically me -- a girl who likes to plan, who likes to be in control of everything. When her parallel self starts re-writing her past, Abby's plans for the future go out the window, forcing Abby to learn to live in the present. It's so cool to see how little decisions can have such a huge impact on your life. I would recommend Parallel to anyone who likes books about soulmates and decision making and the power of your destiny. Seriously, people, this book rocks. And it's so well written, too. I can't wait for the movie!!

Faye, la Patata says

Check out my interview with Lauren Miller over at The Social Potato! Get a chance to WIN a FINISHED COPY of PARALLEL, too! Open INTERNATIONALLY!

An ARC was provided in exchange for a review. This did not influence my thoughts in any way.

When I read the synopsis the second time after requesting the galley, I thought to myself that it sounded really similar to Pivot Point's premise, a YA book about parallel realities but that which I couldn't bring myself to appreciate. I was dismayed, of course. To be honest, I wasn't in the mood to read something like that again, especially since I had this feeling it'll be the same old formula once more. After reading the first fifty or so pages, in a way, I thought I was right. The heroine and her best friend are your typical Mary Sues - the good-in-everything, insanely-beautiful-and-always-compared-to-models, loved-by-everyone, gets-the-hot-guys-effortlessly types. Been there, done that. I thought my hunch was right.

But there are times it's wrong. If you just stick around for a while longer and go past your pre-conceived notions, you may find yourself reading a gem - a book with so much things to learn from and stuff to philosophize as you lay on your bed, staring at the dark. *Parallel* is one of those times.

True, the two best friends can be annoying sometimes with all their perfectness. There were instances when they said nasty things to this particular girl named Ilana, hating her for who-knows-why. But after 20%, that was where the story became significantly interesting, especially with talks of science, of parallel worlds, of shared realities, of subatomic particles from two dimensions being linked beyond time and space, of the fact how our lives could be different right now if we simply followed a different path back then. Get my drift?

Imagine this: it's lunchtime and you're insanely hungry. Your stomach is growling. You need to eat. Now, now, now. You go to a street, and find yourself staring at two restaurants. There's Burger King to the right, and McDonalds to the left. You ask yourself, *Me needs food now. Where to munch my nom noms?!* You then decide to go to Burger King. On your way there, you bump into this super hot guy, causing you to fall to the ground. Thankfully, he saves you just at the nick of time. You gaze at each other's eyes, and then there's chemistry. With a shy, but knowing smile, you say, "Wanna grab a burger? My treat." And there goes the beginning of your love story.

BUT WAIT!!

What if you didn't go to the left? What if, for some odd, otherworldly reason, you decided to go for some McNuggets instead? You'd then go to the right, eat your Nuggets, then live the same mundane routine as always. You would have never bumped into that guy, and your love story would only have become a could-have-been. Your life may or may not (but most likely may) have turned out differently.

That's what we tackle here in *Parallel* - the possibilities of certain actions, big or little as they are, as well as the consequences of it. Thanks to a certain event, Abby's life makes a 180 degree turn, as her reality and the reality of another world becomes linked. She wakes up with a different version of reality each and every time, thanks to the choices her parallel self is making, where her present is Abby's past - one year and a day ago.

The plot is extremely intriguing. It definitely takes a unique turn in the sci-fi element. Although it's not entirely new, as Pivot Point has somehow dived into this subject as well, although not as fascinating as this

one, it still felt like one big emotional ride from 20% to the end. I have lost count of how many times I felt for the character every time she woke up knowing something has gone different for the day, but even though you feel that, you look forward to it, too. What happens now, now that the other Abby did this and that? How is our Abby going to react? **There are a lot of twists, a great deal of events that would make your jaw drop, a number of instances that would make you want to stalk the author and demand "Why did you make that happen?!?! Whyyyyyy!! *sob*"** At this point, the story was just too good that the heroine simply grew on me! She became more endearing, more vulnerable, and more determined. I can't say the same towards the Parallel self, though. She definitely made a lot of things harder for our version of Abby! :P

The side characters are very captivating, too. Catilin, the best friend, may have annoyed me in the beginning, but like Abby, I found myself gradually liking her - her spunk, her wit, her sheer intellectual brilliance. I think it were her moments that gave this book a lot of depth - a friendship between two people that stands firmly on the ground no matter what circumstances may come to obstruct it. By the time I finished the book, I don't think there were any character that I vehemently disliked. All of them were well-rounded, and despite the unconventional love triangle (which isn't really one, if you think about it), the author wrote it nicely with closures for both of them. Needless to say, I rooted for neither team; I simply cheered for Abby all the way!

But what I appreciated the most from this story was this sense of knowing I felt in the end. The way the plot was structured was just amazing that it made me actually ponder about the meaning of life. You're probably thinking, "*Psshaw, this chick is being too sentimental about this.*" Maybe I am, but if there's one thing I'm sure of myself, it's that I believe we make our own lives, as per the lines "*I am the master of my fate, the captain of my soul*", but it is no secret that I oftentimes wonder about destiny and its appeal, its greatness. It doesn't matter what choices we make along the way, the destination does not change. We will get there whatever detours we take.

Overall, this book touched on a fascinating topic and made it work. If the first 20% annoy you, let it go. It *will* get better. Insanely, significantly better. This is a fantastic chic lit that was able to successfully incorporate sci-fi elements (quantum physics for the win), resulting to a captivating tale of love, friendship, and finding yourself in the grander scale of things. **LOVE** this book!

Read this and other reviews at [The Social Potato!](#)

Lisa says

I cannot remember when I last read a novel. It is not that I am NOT READING. I tend to read biography, histories, "religious" books. I don't read contemporary novels because I really REALLY don't like coming upon graphic sex or profanity in the middle of a good story. Often novels that do not include the above are not very engaging.

My daughter recommended this book as said, "You can handle this, Mom, it's teen fiction."

She was right. Not only could I handle it, I loved it. Granted, I love science fiction and have often pondered the idea of parallel universes. (Wouldn't it be cool to wake up in my life in a parallel universe?) Well, the young lady in the story does!

The book is a fast read. The author is a VERY GOOD writer. The author impressed me with her humor, intellect, research on this sci fi subject and her tidy and fun ending. I spend some enjoyable hours in her universe or actually two universes!

Christy LoveOfBooks says

4.5

It's no secret that time travel is my favorite thing to read about, but I would include parallel universes as a subcategory to that. So of course I was pretty excited to get *Parallel*, but wasn't going to go into it with too high expectations. Oh boy, even if I had gone it with high expectations, they would have been met. I loved *Parallel*!

Abby is in Hollywood making a movie, but that's not where she is supposed to be. At least not in her eyes. She had her life planned out, all the way down to the perfect high school class schedule that would get her into the one and only college she wants to go to. Her plan got thrown off course, and now she just wishes she could be where she wanted to be, instead of where she is. Then everything changes on her eighteenth birthday.

I only read the blurb once when I first got *Parallel*, which was a month or more before I actually read it. So I knew nothing of what it was specifically about when I started it. I've been doing that more lately and really enjoy the experience it brings, because there's no preconceived notions. This was the perfect book to that with.

Admittedly, the very beginning of the book was a tiny bit rough for me. It was a lot of background information about her friends, family, and how she got to where she is at that point, so I found myself getting a little bored. However, it's all important information and it doesn't go on for very long at all. Once the shift happens, though, it is so on! This is a great example of what I love in a book. It's not told in a straightforward manner. Instead, there is some complexity as it alternates between an unfamiliar past and the present in a parallel universe. Even though there is some complexity, I found it very easy to follow.

I absolutely loved not knowing how it was going to play out, not only overall, but chapter to chapter. One chapter would end, and my stomach would be in knots from anticipation of how what happened in it would change what was going on in the next chapter. I appreciate a book so much more when it keeps me on my toes and has me needing to know what's going to happen.

The story is told from Abby's point-of-view when she's both seventeen and eighteen. I really liked her, especially as the story went on. She's not the most popular girl, but she's not an outcast either. Abby has great friends, she's smart, funny, an athlete, and is close with her family. In fact, her relationships with family and friends was one of my favorite thing about this book. The incredible bond she has with her best friend Caitlin had me in massive tears at one point. Caitlin is gorgeous, but she's not just a pretty face. The girl is a super science geek, which comes in handy for what Abby goes through. Their other best friend Tyler was a crack up! I loved his character so much. I really liked that even though they were best friends since elementary school, he had a lot of guy friends and did his own stuff. The three of them together was absolutely great.

The romance in *Parallel* was done wonderfully. There is Michael and Josh, but believe me when I say that this isn't a love-triangle. And yes, there is science talk in this, but I found it fascinating and easy to follow. The author did a great job with connection everything. I even tried finding holes and inconsistencies, but failed.

Overall, I thought *Parallel* was smart and engaging. The whole thing unfolded beautifully. I did not want the book to end, but at the same time I was dying to know what happens. I'm telling you to read this book! I

think it's safe to say that it will be a strong 2013 Top Ten contender for me, and I will not hesitate to buy Miller's next book.

Celeste_pewter says

Two-minute recap: Lauren Miller takes the the idea of parallel universes, and completely turns the concept on its head. *Parallel* incorporates the themes of self-identity, love, friendship, and cosmic entanglement, all into a stunner of a debut novel.

Full review:

I've always been fascinated with the idea of parallel universes. The idea that there's another me, existing in another dimension, making choices and taking a path that I wouldn't have taken myself, generally makes for a lot of fun what-ifs scenarios.

In *Parallel*, Lauren Miller takes the question of the what-if, and brings it one step further. What if, instead of a simply having a protagonist jump between two universes (e.g. *Me Vs. Me* because of magic/wishing/pure chance/the unexplained, the protagonist's parallel-existence is the result of something scientific?

What if it's the result of a cosmic entanglement? And what if, instead of set parallel universes, one universe is constantly impacting the other one?

That's the fascinating idea explored in her debut novel *Parallel*, and it's something you're not going to want to miss.

On her eighteenth birthday, reality comes crashing into Abby Barnes - literally.

After a series of serendipitous accidents involving high school play, Abby is now working on a major Hollywood film. She should enjoy it - she's being pursued by the hottest guy in Hollywood, and is a budding starlet.

However, all Abby can think about is how she would much rather be at Northwestern getting ready to study journalism, like she always planned.

But after a night out with her group of Hollywood acting friends, Abby goes home, expecting to wake up to more of the same in the morning. Instead, a collision of parallel worlds, ends up with her waking up at Yale, with no memory of how she got there.

Now, with her younger, parallel self constantly making decisions that may impact her present, Abby's left to figure out this new-found future, and what part she wants in it.

What worked:

* The characters. All of Miller's characters are wonderfully written, and delightful to read.

From the very first page, we understand the range of Abby's talents and thoughts. She's smart, clever and funny. She's prone to doing stupid things - I winced at a certain scene involving nails - but she's also not afraid to pick herself up, after making those mistakes. She's willing to try new things, conquer old fears, and also admit when she's wrong.

Caitlin is the type of best friend that any girl would be lucky to have. She's loyal, willing to have Abby's back no matter what, and she's gorgeous *and* loves science.

Even all of the secondary characters are wonderful. Miller just has a gift for fleshing people out, in as little as one sentence.

* The plotting/pacing. Miller's decision to turn the concept of string theory and cosmic entanglement into fiction, is an incredibly unique one. I've read several parallel universe novels, and most of them generally focused on the idea of a protagonist existing in two separate universes.

The fact that she has one version of the protagonist constantly influencing the other version, keeps the reader guessing, and keeps the stakes growing higher and higher.

* World-building/the details. Miller is excellent at incorporating the small, minute details into her text. The details may seem inconsequential at first - e.g. the fact that the parallel version of Abby only likes Gap clothing, but does a lot in building the parallel worlds/the two versions of Abby.

* The science. It's not that often that you have a YA book which unabashedly discusses complex scientific theories which would confuse your average person. Miller writes and explains these theories like a pro, and also makes them incredibly entertaining and fascinating.

* The writing. Miller writes in an incredibly engaging way, and has a distinct voice and clear understanding of both the high school and the college experience.

What didn't work/what could have been different:

I've thought about it for a good ten minutes, and I can honestly find nothing wrong with this book. It's just that darned good.

Some readers *may* be initially confused by the science that's discussed in this book. However, I think that the YA-reading crowd is a smart one, and they'll just be more motivated to look up the terms discussed.

(And hey, hopefully they'll become more interested in science as a result, like Caitlin!)

Final verdict: *Parallel* is a thoughtful examination on the choices that we make, and how they impact our lives in unique ways. It's also a study of friendship and love, and how we can find ourselves in the most unexpected ways.

I absolutely loved this book, and only wish that it was longer. However, I'm definitely looking forward to

anything Lauren Miller may write in the future.

Recommended for fans of Emily Hainsworth, Tiffany Schmidt, Erin Bowman and Kasie West.

Disclaimer: I obtained an arc of Parallel from HarperCollins via Edelweiss, in exchange for an honest review. Thank you! :D

Jasprit says

4.5 stars

“Your path will change. Your destiny doesn’t”

Parallel is a book which has been receiving the most conflicting reviews from my friends, with a few not finishing it, some two star ratings and a few four star ratings. Books with mixed rating are ones which often intrigue me the most. I also tend to have a weird track record with these books, with my last couple of one’s ending up as memorable reads. Also I’ve noticed that parallel worlds seems to be the new trend in YA, this is another concept I’ve been hugely intrigued by especially when it’s done well and the book leaves you all frazzled.

Parallel was a book which ticked off a lot of boxes for me, despite the initial slow start, I’m not the most patient reader. But I’m glad I stuck out the sluggish start, as I was just left mind blown afterwards. Miller took a really unique concept and really flipped it on its head. Due to a cosmic entanglement, the world Abby lived in ends up colliding with a parallel world. The Parallel world is set a year and a day behind the current world, with the parallel self creating new memories for the current self and erasing all the memories the current self may have created. The only person that could remember this had happened was Abby. This concept is a lot to take in but Abby was lucky that her best friend had been studying under one of the professors, who established and believed this theory in the first place. Caitlin was a great best friend despite things not being great in the past year due to Abby in the parallel world. Caitlin was the friend Abby needed the most in the most confusing situation ever. Abby in the parallel world was causing a ruckus, with things being completely blown off course and endless dreams and happily ever afters being destroyed. Because of this I was quick to side with our current Abby. She found herself in a mess with no control over what could happen. I truly hoped that she could get back to things the way they used to be. But as the story progressed I began to hugely appreciate parallel Abby and her world. Miller did a great job in toying with my feelings, there were so many end results possible through the course of the book, and I was up for nearly all of them.

I immensely enjoyed how just one little decision could change Abby’s current world in an instance. It truly had me thinking about all the decisions I had made in the past and if I had decided something else would things have ended completely different? Parallel was such a thought evoking story, never have I found myself so caught up in the two worlds at the same time. Abby’s world was everything to me for the five days that I read this book, I hated all the normal day activities that I had to do such as going to work because it cut in to my crucial reading time. Another thing which made Parallel stand out for me as a brilliant read was its characters; I seriously loved them all even when parallel Abby screwed things over. Even with a potential love triangle (view spoiler) couldn’t ruin this story for me because I found myself totally invested and totally torn with who I wanted Abby to be with. Both guys were really different to one another and definitely brought the swoon factor in their own respective ways. With all the chaotic things happening I really looked forward to these sweet and tender moments (view spoiler)

Okay I'm totally digressing; this is what these guys do to me. As you can tell from my mini-novella of a review I absolutely loved *Parallel*, Miller in my eyes has written one of the best debuts of this year. It had crazy twists and turns which were totally unexpected, it had some truly heartbreaking scenes, moments which had me frightened that everything would be screwed over in Abby's world and some really dreamy scenes. If this year you are on the lookout for a brilliant debut which truly takes the concept of *Parallel* worlds up a whole another notch I highly recommended *Parallel*, you seriously won't regret giving the wonderful story a go.

Lindsay Hall says

I am a fan of YA novels, so it wasn't difficult for me to enjoy this sophisticated teenage love triangle. Miller presents a sci-fi-esque reality of changing timelines within the life of the protagonist, Abby Barnes. The concept of the parallel reality was simple enough that it didn't muddle the plot yet complex enough to create intrigue. Some of the twists were predictable, but that didn't stop me from anticipating how the details would unfold, and for the most part, I was greatly surprised by the changing turn of events. I loved Miller's characterization both in the realistic yet savvy dialogue and in the descriptions told through the eyes of the relatable protagonist, Abby Barnes. And as an LA native and Yale alum, I was impressed by Miller's accuracy of detail with both settings. *Parallel* is a enjoyable, quick read--if you like YA novels, I definitely recommend it!

Susan says

Parallel is one of the years best young adult science fiction reads, without a doubt! You will definitely not want to miss out on the awesomeness of this book. Amazingly compelling, the story Lauren Miller pens is extraordinary in so many wibbly-wobbly-timey-whimey ways. It is intensely rich with atmospheric chemistry and bursting to life with incredible amounts of excitement. Such a brilliant saucy little read, I was entranced from the beginning.

The characters are truly engaging and wonderfully developed. It is super easy to fall in love with them and to connect with them. In many ways, they are the heart of the story, what makes it tick and work for me, personally. The creativity put into dividing the parallel worlds and distinctly telling them apart is just absolutely fantastic in so many ways! Miller has definitely hit out of the park with this one.

From the moment that I picked it up, I never wanted to put it down. It was that engaging and filled with awesomely unexpected twists and turns around every corner. If you're a fan of sci-fi and fantasy, then this is definitely a thrillingly epic young adult novel that you definitely will not want to miss out. Trust me, the excitement and buzz about this one, is rightly just. I would definitely urge you to pick this one up!

Nancy says

4.75 Stars

You will notice that I took .25 stars from 5 stars. That's for my own inability to completely conceptualize string theory, space time continuum, and anything having to do with the brilliance of Albert Einstein. That's

right. My pride.

This is a similar concept as a book I recently read called *Pivot Point*. Also, a movie I saw from the Sundance Film Festival called *Sliding Doors*. Essentially, one decision or event alters the trajectory of a life. This would be an easy enough concept to write about. Safe, tried and true. Instead, the author includes a theory basically based on String Theory. For every decision, parallel lives are lived out on different planes or possibly the past is changed based on the changes made and everybody's memory is rewritten. That's where my comprehension suffered. Because I don't get String Theory. Not that the book is written in a difficult form. It's pretty straight forward and I actually really liked the idea of introducing physicists or astronomy science with Dr. Mann and Wagner.

So Abby falls asleep the night before her 18th birthday and feels some kind of collision occur in her sleep. She wakes up and it's the day before her 17th birthday and her senior year is being rewritten because there was some sort of tremor that knocked out the power and she's late for school. This changed her elective class and the trajectory of her life. In her "real" time, which starts on her 18th birthday, everybody's history has been rewritten and they remember it in the rewritten form. Abby only remembers it one day at a time which is exactly one year and one day behind today.

So Abby senior year is significantly different than the one she lived a year ago. Every day is just a little bit different and more information is added. She is introduced to different people at different times in her parallel lives. Although the book is not touted as a religious book, and it isn't, there are Deity undertones that add a nice stabilizing effect to the story. There is some discussion of fate vs. chaos and chance. Does the collision of parallel lives and Abby's subsequent memories cause events to occur? How much free will does she have?

The characters are well written and multi-layered. The first chapter sets up Abby's whirlwind senior year and the events leading to her current circumstances. It's a nice life and the reader would be drawn to that reality. The next chapters leap frog between the new reality caused by the collision that reset events a year ago and the events from a year ago. Unlike other books I've read with alternate realities, this one paints both with pros and cons. The ending is a little abrupt for my taste but succinctly answers the questions of free will, fate and parallels.

Altogether, a very enjoyable read.

Henrietta says

A story that explores free will and destiny, *Parallel* offers interesting insight to the meaning of "staying present". I like that even when the story has to give us some explanation on the cosmic collision of parallel universes, the plot is not dense. With the spotlight focusing on the life of Abby and her relationship with those who are close and dear to her, I enjoy reading about the subtle changes that are going on in Abby's as well as her parallel self's lives and how these changes affect her view on life values, beliefs and priorities. The implication of numerology is lightly touched upon and I especially like the scene where Abby talks with her grandpa and her grandpa reveals to her what he saw at the time when Abby was born. I like this story a lot and I look forward to reading more novels by Miller as they're published.

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Originally posted on Leisure Reads.

A copy of the book was provided by publisher for review purposes.

Natalie says

"Do you believe in soulmates?"

"Ask me tomorrow," he says.

This book was so, so perfect. I loved absolutely every minute of it, and have no hesitation whatsoever in adding it to my favourites shelf. It had a good mixture of romance, drama, science, friendship, destiny - the works. I knew that I was hooked from the very first chapter, when I found myself just sitting there smiling at the pajama top/boots fiasco.

Because that's what this book was like for me. I got attached very, very quickly, and found myself smiling, laughing, covering my face with my hands, and, on one occasion, wanting to scream "noooo!" at my kindle screen. It was, undoubtedly, a fantastic debut, and, if Miller writes another novel, I will be desperate to get my hands on it.

The plot was very complex, and, at times, I had to stop reading for a few moments, just to go over things in my head and make sure that I was understanding everything correctly. Once you understand, however, and can link everything together in your mind, the plot is very enjoyable and engaging. At times (particularly at the beginning), the plot is fairly physics heavy, but that's only for a couple of paragraphs before the plot continues. Still, I would recommend taking a break every now and then, just to think things over - the novel is so much more gripping that way!

The characters were easy to relate to, and I loved Abby. She was amusing, fearless, and I admired the way that she just accepted things as they came, almost always appearing level-headed; Miller did an amazing job of transferring the teenage mind onto paper - as an eighteen-year-old girl myself, it is often difficult to find a protagonist that seems *real*, and Abby most definitely was. It's also rare that, when there is a "triangle" (I'm using that term loosely, considering Abby was in love with them in two different parallel worlds), I don't pick a side and root for that guy. But, for what is probably the first time ever, I loved them both. And I didn't want her to have to give one of them up (which is ridiculous, I know). Having said that, however, I think that the way Miller made a compromise at the end (so that both Team Josh and Team Michael fans won) was very clever, and unexpected.

Which brings me to the ending. *Woah*. Again, it was perfect (and completely unpredictable), and rounded off the story well. It not only makes the book a brilliant standalone, but also leaves the possibility of a sequel open, since I, personally, would love to read about where Abby goes from here. The fact that Abby would be at that football game, no matter what had happened, was a very beautiful concept, regarding destiny and soul mates. It really made me think; the message was very strong, and I loved the philosophy behind it.

In conclusion, I literally cannot fault this book (which, believe me, is rare). The tension that was created kept me on the edge of my seat, particularly during the "There" chapters, since I was constantly trying to make links and figure out how parallel Abby's actions were going to affect Abby herself; consequently, I was dying to get to the next chapter. The book took on a "Sliding Doors" concept, which, in my opinion, was incredible; I've never read a book like that before (in one world, she takes drama; in the other, astronomy - it really is remarkable how different her two lives are). I didn't expect the romance to be such a big part of the novel, but it was a very pleasant surprise, and I adored it. So, so much. I didn't want it to end, and thus would recommend it to women of all ages. Unputdownable!

Thank you to Harper for providing this book for free; it was a truly fantastic read

Emily May says

1 1/2 stars

Parallel is a great example of how to take a fascinating subject and completely massacre it with slut-shaming and petty mean girl feuds.

Personally, I love fringe science (and the TV show, for that matter). It's that strange area that sits somewhere between fantasy and science, fiction and reality... an area with increasingly blurry lines the more you investigate it. It's also kind of hard to define and encompasses the study of many concepts that sit just outside of mainstream scientific study: the pursuit of eternal life, time travel, lunar effects, astrology, psychokinesis, channelling, extra-sensory perception and, as is the case here, the existence of parallel universes. These are subjects that seriously get my nerd senses tingling.

I don't know about you but I love science fiction that is explained well. The kind where the explanations are realistic and tie into real life facts enough that you can believe it as a reality. Whether it's a dark and disturbing dystopian future that has evolved from very real problems in our current society; or some exciting technological discovery with a whole world of problematic implications. And I believe that is how Parallel started out. When Abby Barnes awakens to find herself in a life that is hers but not hers, completely unaware of how she got there, she is forced to confront the likely possibility that she has been the victim of cosmic entanglement. In other words, that an earthquake caused two different dimensions to collide and now she has memories of two different lives.

Dr Mann's scientific explanation of parallel universes is complicated but equally fascinating. It might take you three reads to understand it (as it did me) but I really appreciated the thought and research that had obviously gone into this idea. I was enthralled, excited and couldn't wait to see where the story would lead... and then the first fifty (approx) pages came to an end. What came after that was little more than a story of high school/university drama, filled with bitchiness, mean girls, slut-shaming and obsessions with the "perfect shape of his bottom lip". What an awful waste of a great idea. It also turned into one of those cases where I hated the protagonist and her friend and found myself almost sympathising with the "mean girl" - she might have even been my favourite person in the book if that hadn't been the extent of her characterisation.

What had started out as some sophisticated science fiction quickly turned into something far less mature, phrases like this were thrown around: "self-appointed queen bee of the drama crowd and my nemesis since kindergarten". Nemesis. Really??? This is Ilana, the mean girl, who Abby is talking about here. Ilana is the evil school slut who Tyler is dating while he waits for Caitlin (Abby's BFF) to see he is in love with her. Frequent comparisons are made between Caitlin and Ilana who are said to look alike; but where Caitlin is naturally beautiful with her naturally blonde hair, Ilana is a "barbie doll" with bleached locks. That evil, hair-bleaching slut! We are supposed to accept it as natural that Caitlin will end up with Tyler and the evil Ilana will get dumped and deserve everything she gets.

I find it really quite amazing that Ilana is supposed to be the bitch here when all the evidence points towards the fact that Abby and Caitlin are the nasty ones. They sit around casually insulting Ilana in really bitchy ways like saying she is "shaped like a lollipop" and it just made me grow more and more annoyed at them as the story progressed. However, perhaps Tyler and Caitlin are perfect for each other as both of them are

equally prepared to insult Ilana who is barely a human being because she's such a slut. Give me a break from this shit, please. Here's another great quote: "'She's fun,' Tyler replies, his euphemism for slutty." *big sigh*

I rounded it up to two because I really did enjoy the science in those first fifty pages but I certainly won't be recommending this anytime soon.

Gabrielle (TheYoungFolks.com) says

I love this book! It's complex, without being confusing. I love how it tackles its concept, in particular "destiny." It's just a smart, satisfying read with a ton of heart. Definitely lives up to its premise. Full review at TheYoungFolks.com: <http://bit.ly/14WBZ1P>

Jen says

Parallel by Lauren Miller comes out on May 14, but a friend with impeccable taste lent me her advance reading copy to review. This is my first advance review, and I'm pretty darn chuffed about it! I hate to say this, but Parallel didn't make a good first impression on me. The first thirty or so pages seemed like insipid chick-lit. The main characters are effortlessly, superlatively perfect, and I kind of hated them all for it. Especially when they made fun of a girl who has to work out to stay slim!

Just when I was ready to put the book down, it started to explore free will, parallel dimensions and parallel selves, and the impact of even our smallest choices. I was hooked. This is good sci-fi dressed up to look like Sweet Valley High. And the author knows exactly what she's doing; she calls it sci-chic. She takes all the best elements of a genre that isn't exactly known for being popular with women, and creates something smart that girly-girls can call their own.

Have you ever wondered how your life might be different if you'd made just one different choice? For three years, I was obsessed with becoming an attorney. I was in love with a guy who showed no sign of ever being able to support himself, and I figured that going to law school would give this English major a shot at being a good breadwinner. So I lived and breathed LSAT practice tests and Princeton Review law school reviews. The day after I broke up with that guy, I woke up and thought *Now I don't have to be an attorney. I can be a librarian!* Y'all, I didn't even know I'd wanted to be a librarian until that moment. That morning changed my life, and I have no regrets. But sometimes I wonder how I'd be different if I'd gone to law school instead of library school. Imagining myself carrying a briefcase and wearing a power suit is pretty hilarious. If I think about it too hard, I start to wonder *Who is that girl?*

This book asks the same question: If you made choices that led you down a different path in life, who would you be? Would you still be the same person? And if your reality and the reality in which the "parallel" version of you existed were to somehow collide, what would happen? That's what happens to Abby Barnes in Parallel. The two realities literally collide, and one overtakes the other. But the realities don't exist on the same timeline; one is happening a year ahead of the other. So when Abby goes to bed at night, she might wake up to a completely different life the next day. It all depends on what sort of choices her Parallel made a year before.

It all starts on Abby's 18th birthday. She goes to bed in Hollywood, where she is filming an action movie opposite the Sexiest Man Alive. Yeah, it sounds cheesy, but bear with me. The next morning, she wakes up in a dorm room at Yale, with no clue how she got there. But she has memories from both realities. With the

help of Caitlin, her physics geek best friend, and a kooky professor who has wacky theories about parallel realities, Abby realizes what's happened. Abby remembers that her Parallel fell deeply in love with a guy named Josh during her senior year of high school. Abby is casually dating Michael, a cute Yalie, but their relationship isn't nearly as special as the bond she remembers sharing with Josh. Abby scrambles to make sense of it all, and eventually she tries to manipulate the situation to create the best romantic outcome.

If you've seen the movie *Sliding Doors* (hands down my favorite chick flick of all time), the premise will be familiar. But Miller takes it a step further by making Abby aware of her two parallel lives. When Abby sees both options and takes action to create the life she wants, she becomes a much stronger character than Helen in *Sliding Doors*.

So I like the strength of Abby's character, but mostly I like *Parallel* because it builds a story upon a philosophical framework that I hold dear. Have you ever shared such a profound connection with someone that you knew they were meant to be part of your life, no matter what? Yeah, me too. I believe that destiny and free will are not mutually exclusive: Certain events and people are destined to be part of our lives, but we choose the path we take to get there.

And that doesn't just apply to romance! Abby's soulmates are the touchstones that keep her grounded as she sorts through her parallel lives. In one parallel life, Abby's friendship with Caitlin falls apart. Abby can't get back on track until she's made things right with Caitlin; Caitlin is one of Abby's soulmates. Men aren't our only soulmates! That's one of my favorite things about this book. Lauren Miller shows that friendships with women have just as much value as romance.

Do you believe in destiny, free will, or some combination of both?

Ashley says

BookNook — Young Adult book reviews

Let me paint a picture for you. You're crying yourself to sleep at night because you just finished reading *Pivot Point* and you're afraid that nothing will ever live up to the awesomeness that is that book. Well, allow me to introduce *PARALLEL!* **This book is the perfect follow-up to *Pivot Point*; they're very similar in nature, but also vastly different.** And I promise you that *Parallel* will rock your universe (the parallel ones too!).

***Parallel* is so much more rooted in science than I ever imagined.** I have no idea how much the science aspects of *Parallel* are actually connected to real scientific theories/speculation, but I don't care, because Lauren Miller makes it sound 100% believable. This book isn't just about the fantastical idea of parallel universes. Lauren Miller creates an entire scientific reason behind them. You won't sit there thinking, "*Oh, what a cool fantasy idea!*" Instead, you will imagine this actually happening happening in the world! It's both fascinating and terrifying at the same time.

Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.

At first, *Parallel* might be a bit of a mindfuck. I had to re-read the parallel world explanation like 3 times before I finally got it. Basically, there are two parallel worlds, but they're not running at the same time. One (the 'main' one) takes place in 2009, and the other one takes place exactly a year earlier in 2008. When the Abby in the earlier parallel world makes course-altering decisions, they affect the other Abby a year later. So you can see how teeny tiny decisions, choices, lies, exaggerations of the truth, and mistakes affect Abby's path and course of life an entire year later. **It's absolutely insane to see how such tiny things can have such huge impacts in the long run!**

Abby basically has no control over her life because the decisions that her parallel makes ultimately affect where she ends up. For example, maybe in the 'normal' world, Abby is currently in university. In the 'earlier' parallel world, Abby is still in high school. But maybe, today, the earlier Abby drops out of high school for whatever reason. Then, when the 'normal' Abby wakes up tomorrow, she will no longer be at university because the decisions the 'earlier' Abby made suddenly set the 'normal' Abby on a different path. I know, it's a little confusing at first, but when it makes sense (which it will as you read the book, I promise!) it becomes this huge fantastical scientific web of awesomeness.

Who knew fate was so fragile?

Parallel deals with a lot of ideas like fate and destiny. Because of the nature of the book, the 'normal' Abby feels powerless. It's as if the 'earlier' parallel Abby is controlling everything, and the 'normal' Abby has no say! This raises a lot of questions like: can we control our destiny? Are our lives predetermined? These questions are addressed by an awesome scientist character, Dr. Mann. He's a really interesting character, because he's a scientist who has written theories about parallel worlds and how they might collide.

The characters in *Parallel* are just as awesome as the plot! You will love every single one of them for different reasons. Abby is a perfect main character. She's interesting, she's smart, but sometimes she does make stupid decisions, and you can see how those decisions affect her long-term. And I LOVE her best friend Caitlin! Caitlin is a total science nerd, but she's also awesome, gorgeous, and an amazing best friend! **I love her relationship with Abby and it completely broke my heart when they had a fight about halfway through.** I don't think I'd ever actually cried over a best friend type relationship before reading *Parallel*, but that moment actually got me teary-eyed!

We're all just a decision or two away from destroying the relationships that are most important to us and to the people we love. And most of the time, we never even know it.

Even the side characters are amazing and hilarious. This one—Fiona—is only in the book for like two seconds, but I don't care, because she's amazing.

"Fiona!" a male voice calls. A hulk of a guy in a shirt that could double as a bedsheet is waving from across the courtyard. His forearm is the size of my thigh.
"Be right there!" Fiona shouts. "My boyfriend," she explains. "And yes, the size thing is an issue in bed. I once tried to straddle him and pulled my hamstring."

There is a romance in *Parallel* and it's actually quite similar to *Pivot Point* in its approach. There are two different love interests: one for each parallel world. So yes, there is a bit of a love triangle, but it's so interesting how it's done! We have Josh in the 'earlier' parallel world, and Michael in the 'normal' world. **At first, I actually wasn't crazy about either of the guys.** I think I felt the same way about Michael that Abby's parents do. If you asked me to describe him, I'd use words like "Confident". And I don't mean that in the best way. He's so confident that he comes off as cocky. He's also just not my type at all. He's a party guy, a little closed off, and I just didn't click with him. And then there's Josh. I thought Josh was a little too corny for me, and for the longest time I had no idea where their relationship was going, if anywhere. But by the end of the book, Josh definitely did grow on me!

"I invited Josh to go with us Ilana's party."

"Who's Josh?"

"Josh Wagner. Astronomy Boy."

"You invited Astronomy Boy to go with us to a party we're not actually attending. Interesting strategy. Shall I bring the boyfriend I don't actually have?"

To be honest, I'm not completely sure how I feel about the end of the book. I loved it, up until the very last second. It's still good, but it almost had me wanting more! (view spoiler)

Ultimately, this is a fabulous book. It's hilarious, it's fun, and it's so freaking interesting. **The ideas in this book and the way they are presented are genius!** This book is so carefully crafted and I loved seeing how tiny things can have huge ripples in Abby's life. I can't recommend this book enough!

Kara-karina says

Well, I refuse to call this book anything less than amazing. At the same time it's so convoluted, Lauren Miller must have had a room full of charts on the walls so she won't get confused. I certainly felt like I needed charts.

Abby's life as we know it is split on her 18th birthday. One night she goes to sleep with her head full of her fellow actor and her movie lines in L.A., the next thing she knows she wakes up in a dorm room in Yale with no recollection of the last year's version of her friends.

I don't even know how to explain it, but by a series of earthquakes around the world which happened in a parallel world to ours, that world collides with us, and the lives of our doubles and their decisions which may vary from ours super imposed on our memories. So we essentially became them.

Only Abby is a fluke. She remembers her life one way, but one slight different decision making of her parallel self in this world in her senior year in school turns her life as it is now in a completely different direction.

Now her double's actions from the last year slowly drip into her dreams and every decision her parallel self makes introduces a completely different present for Abby when she wakes up. It's terrifying, heart-breaking and most of the time Abby feels like the universe conspires against her, and only her best friend Caitlin knows what's happening.

This is a gripping and fascinating book, which for once ended so abruptly I was bemoaning the fact the it is a

standalone. Fabulous read, very much recommended!
