



Timekeepers: How the World Became Obsessed With Time

By Simon Garfield

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Timekeepers: How the World Became Obsessed With Time By Simon Garfield

Not so long ago we timed our lives by the movement of the sun. These days our time arrives atomically and insistently, and our lives are propelled by the notion that we will never have enough of the one thing we crave the most. How have we come to be dominated by something so arbitrary?

The compelling stories in this book explore our obsessions with time. An Englishman arrives back from Calcutta but refuses to adjust his watch. Beethoven has his symphonic wishes ignored. A moment of war is frozen forever. The timetable arrives by steam train. A woman designs a ten-hour clock and reinvents the calendar. Roger Bannister becomes stuck in the same four minutes forever. A British watchmaker competes with mighty Switzerland. And a prince attempts to stop time in its tracks.

Timekeepers is a vivid exploration of the ways we have perceived, contained and saved time over the last 250 years, narrated in the highly inventive and entertaining style that bestselling author Simon Garfield is fast making his own. As managing time becomes the greatest challenge we face in our lives, this multi-layered history helps us tackle it in a sparkling new light.

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Editorial Review

Review

Digressive, gossipy, thoughtful and thoroughly entertaining ... Simon Garfield is an exuberant truffle-hound of the recondite and delightful factoid * The Sunday Times * Thoroughly enjoyable and illuminating ... Stuffed with fascinating material * Observer * A sort of museum between hard covers. Timekeepers is as good as pop history gets * Sunday Express * Time well spent ... Simon Garfield has made his name as an author who can spin fascinating narratives out of subjects that seem, on the face of it, narrow to the point of being dull * Financial Times * Scholarly but jokey, with a magpie's appetite for glittering trivia, Garfield is as eager to amuse as to inform, and achieves both * Telegraph * An eclectic collection of explorations of our relationships with time ... Very readable * The Times * Delightful * Sunday Telegraph * Delightful ... Gloriously funny ... Garfield has an astonishing capacity for meticulous research and a wonderful ability to select the best stories to entertain us * Daily Express * Engaging ... Engrossing * Mail on Sunday * In this book, brilliant cultural historian Simon Garfield assembles a host of intriguing characters who have tried to bend time to their own rules, and questions how we came to be ruled by something so arbitrary * Elle * Garfield's anecdotal, science-friendly book explores the tyranny of time and our desire to control it * Saga * There could be no better guide than Simon Garfield for this journey into time and its meaning for our lives. From the assembly line to the French Revolution, he covers the quirks of the clock with insight and wry enthusiasm. A riveting, educational read -- DANIEL PINK, author of Drive

About the Author

Simon Garfield is the author of seventeen acclaimed books of non-fiction including A Notable Woman (as editor), To the Letter, On the Map, Just My Type and Mauve. His study of AIDS in Britain, The End of Innocence, won the Somerset Maugham prize. www.simongarfield.com

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