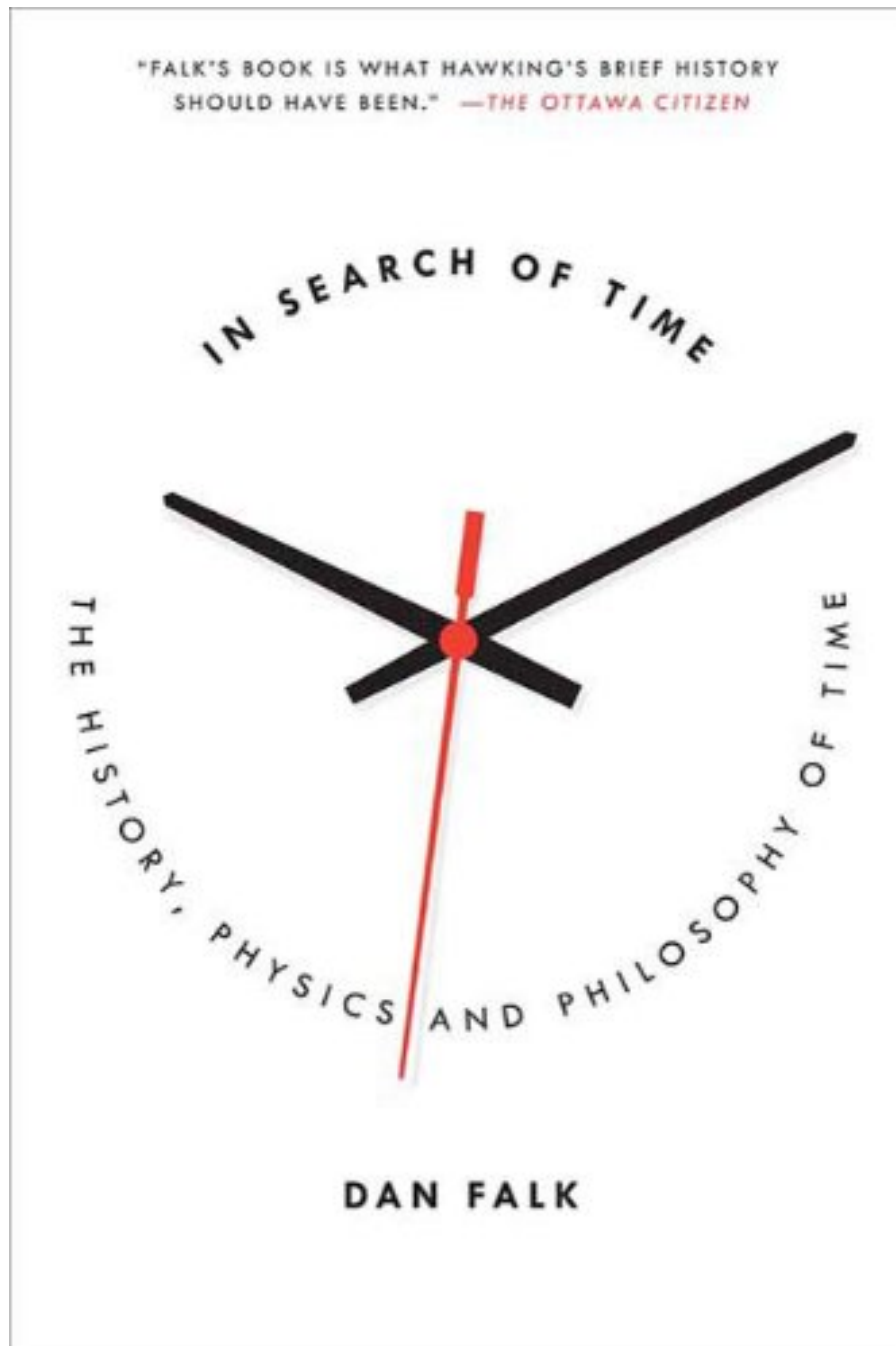


IN SEARCH OF TIME: THE HISTORY, PHYSICS, AND PHILOSOPHY OF TIME BY DAN FALK



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Time surrounds us. It defines our experience of the world; it echoes through our every waking hour. Time is the very foundation of conscious experience. Yet as familiar as it is, time is also deeply mysterious. We cannot see, hear, smell, taste, or touch it. Yet we do feel it?or at least we think we feel it. No wonder poets, writers, philosophers, and scientists have grappled with time for centuries.

In his latest book, award-winning science writer Dan Falk chronicles the story of how humans have come to understand time over the millennia, and by drawing from the latest research in physics, psychology, and other fields, Falk shows how that understanding continues to evolve. *In Search of Time* begins with our earliest ancestors' perception of time and the discoveries that led?with much effort?to the Gregorian calendar, atomic clocks, and "leap seconds." Falk examines the workings of memory, the brain's remarkable "bridge across time," and asks whether humans are unique in their ability to recall the past and imagine the future. He explores the possibility of time travel, and the paradoxes it seems to entail. Falk looks at the quest to comprehend the beginning of time and how time?and the universe?may end. Finally, he examines the puzzle of time's "flow," and the remarkable possibility that the passage of time may be an illusion.

Entertaining, illuminating, and ultimately thought provoking, *In Search of Time* reveals what some of our most insightful thinkers have had to say about time, from Aristotle to Kant, from Newton to Einstein, and continuing with the brightest minds of today.

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Not at All What I Was Hoping For

By David Swan

Way back in 1995 I read a fascinating book by Paul Davies called 'About Time'. What makes the topic of time so interesting is that most people believe that they intuitively understand time and yet our perception and reality can be at odds. Unlike most things in nature science cannot stand outside of time and study it. We also have a very limited understanding of time based on that fact that we have no personal experiences with the very fast, the very distant and the very massive. This is why from our perspective Newtonian physics, which fundamentally misinterprets time, works perfectly fine in everyday life. My expectation for the book was to read more about the science of time possibly updated with research done within the past decade and a half. I don't think my expectation was unreasonable given the subtitle of the book, 'The SCIENCE of a curious DIMENSION'. Note the prominence of the word 'science'. To say I was disappointed would be a great understatement.

The first half of the book is about the history of timekeeping going back thousands of years. It's mildly interesting but certainly not why I purchased the book. About halfway through we finally get to Einstein's Theory of Relativity and the book briefly became intriguing although it never expands on ideas I've already read in many other books. In fact the second half of the book was sort of a primer on modern physics in general with the author touching on the big bang, black holes, dark matter, the smoothness of background radiation, grand unified theory, string theory (including m-branes), paradoxes of time travel and so on and so forth. What he doesn't do is ever delve into any one topic long enough to do anything more than scratch the surface. Quite frankly this book could have been written by a layman like me and why would I want to read a book I could have written. You can argue that the aforementioned topics are all related to time but you can also argue that paint drying is related to time but I don't want to read a book about drying paint.

In the end this book appears to be little more than a beginner's physics book along with some history of keeping time. For me it ended up being a waste of time (how ironic) and quite frankly was a chore to get through. Paul Davies' book delved far far deeper into the physics of time and was much more fascinating and better written. The author even refers back to Paul Davies book several times and inspired me to reread it. After just a few pages I could immediately recognize it as a far superior book. 'In Search of Time' might be interesting to someone who hasn't spent much or any time reading popular science books but if you really want to get into the subject go with Davies.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

An accessible entry into the world of Time

By vr

This is an excellent book for regular people that have some interest in the subject of Time. The author covers several aspects involving Time, from historical evidence of when civilizations first started understanding and taking advantage of time, to the philosophical Time, to the latest scientific concepts and theories around Time.

The book is excellently written. The first part of the book takes us through the evolution of time in history and in different cultures/civilizations and is written in such a way that the reader is always excited to find out what the next page will tell us about Time. The second part of the book, more focused in the scientific aspect

of Time, explains how Time has been dealt with in the major breakthroughs of science, from Newton to Einstein and Hawking. Having tried to read other science books and gotten lost along the technical concepts, the author did a very good job in shielding the reader from the deepness of such concepts and theories and explained them in a very accessible manner.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

What is time?

By M. Shepherd

What is time? That is the central question of this book. The author goes after this question from several different angles.

Historical and modern, scientific and philosophical. Actually the book goes after a number of closely related questions. Not only

What is time, but how does it work, why do we perceive it the way we do, does it exist in reality or is it an invention of the

human mind, ect. If you are looking for definitive answers, as you probably expect, there are none as yet. But this book will

give you insights and much food for thought on these subjects.

The book is well written, interesting, and easy to understand.

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