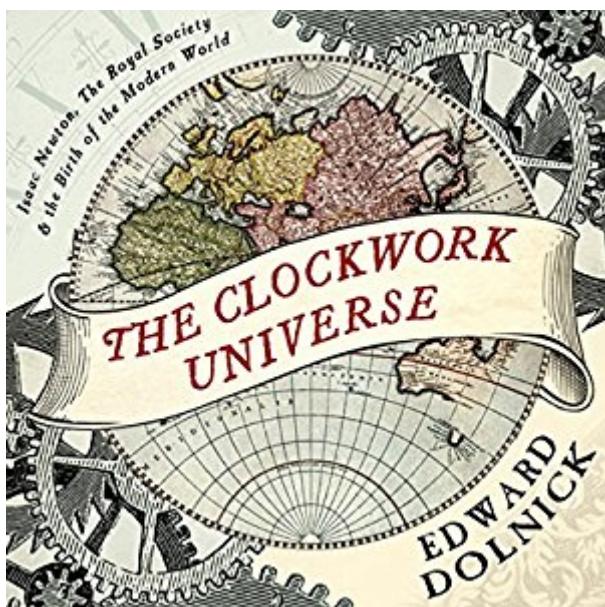


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# The Clockwork Universe: Isaac Newton, The Royal Society, And The Birth Of The Modern World



## **Synopsis**

The Clockwork Universe is the story of a band of men who lived in a world of dirt and disease but pictured a universe that ran like a perfect machine. A meld of history and science, this book is a group portrait of some of the greatest minds who ever lived as they wrestled with natures most sweeping mysteries. The answers they uncovered still hold the key to how we understand the world. At the end of the 17th century, an age of religious wars, plague, and the Great Fire of London when most people saw the world as falling apart, these earliest scientists saw a world of perfect order. They declared that, chaotic as it looked, the universe was in fact as intricate and perfectly regulated as a clock. This was the tail end of Shakespeare's century, when the natural and the supernatural still twined around each other. Disease was a punishment ordained by God, astronomy had not yet broken free from astrology, and the sky was filled with omens. It was a time when little was known and everything was new. These brilliant, ambitious, curious men believed in angels, alchemy, and the devil, and they also believed that the universe followed precise, mathematical laws, a contradiction that tormented them and changed the course of history. The Clockwork Universe is the fascinating and compelling story of the bewildered geniuses of the Royal Society, the men who made the modern world.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

There was a time when London was a filthy town, a smelly feces-ridden place filled with people who thought the Great Fire of 1666 was God's wrath. It was a time when the majority of the population in Europe were dying fast due to the Plague, when medicine was still experimental and even

worsening the conditions, when life expectancy was ridiculously low. It was a time when freaky autopsies on rabbits, dogs and even dead fetuses were conducted, while prosecuting and torturing criminals were the highly anticipated public attractions. Curiosity was a sin, and proof-testing God's creation was almost considered as an insult to our Creator. In the middle of this chaos exist a group of men who think differently. Who think that God is a mathematician, and the universe operates in precise mathematical codes and moves like a clockwork. These men conducted experiments, made many breakthroughs in human knowledge, and challenged the bleak perception of the world they used to live in. This group of men was called the Royal Society, and one of their superstar members was Isaac Newton. This book is the history of science, an incredible story of several brilliant minds "cracking the codes" that God has created masterfully. It is the evolution of scientific knowledge from the times of Aristotle, Copernicus, Pascal, Kepler, and Galileo, which have paved the theoretical background for the brilliant story of our protagonist Isaac Newton. It is the story of the long struggle to proof, for instance, that the world is round, that it is spinning on its own axis and it is rotating the sun. About how the planets in our solar system were discovered. It is about the origins of many mathematical tools, such as how Descartes came to create the X and Y graph we frequently use today. And it is also about the true account of the discoveries, instead of the myth, of the famous eureka moments like Newton's apple tree and Archimedes' bath that was actually untrue. The theoretical debates were intense, the rivalries were bitter, the struggles were human, and the failed experiments even the public reactions were all narrated into an intriguing story of origins for every physics laws. Ultimately, this book is the journey about how humanity came out from the dark ages, and how these gifted men sparked the beginning of the modern world that evolves around scientific discoveries, which last till this day.

This riveting and entertaining book tells the story of a group of odd but brilliant characters, most notably Isaac Newton, who essentially gave birth to the age of modern science. The author sets the scene in the mid seventeenth century England where superstitions, death and destruction dominate the day. The western world was still very much defined by mythical forces of good and evil. For fifteen hundred years, since the classical Greeks discovered math and pondered form, purpose, symmetry and function, science was rather stagnant until the early sixteenth century when Copernicus posed that we  $\text{we} \rightarrow \text{are}$  not the center of our universe. A few decades later, Galileo discovered physics and established the rules for observational science. In the seventeenth century, Newton and his contemporaries took Galileo's ideas and built a whole new system of scientific method. New optical devices opened up whole worlds of observation in

both the "heavens" and the microscopic. Newton's calculus changed the way we understood motion, change and planetary movement, which lead to his masterpiece *The Principia* and his famous scientific laws. The author portrays the competitiveness of these geniuses who both shared and sheltered their discoveries and data. Rivalry fueled much of the big breakthroughs in the period and the author does a good job describing the lively relationships. But the giant of the period was by far Newton and everyone knew it at the time. He was an extraordinary thinker who brought insight about much of the workings of the natural universe. Overall, a truly terrific book!

I purchased this book in December of 2015 but didn't start it until this week. Boy, have I been kicking myself! This was an excellent book, entertaining from start to finish, with amazing insight into what took place in the 17th century. If you at all enjoyed either Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*, or the Neil DeGrasse Tyson television production of the same name, you will absolutely love this book. I don't want to be too effusive, but this book made me excited about the beginnings of the scientific revolution as David McCullough's *1776* made me feel about the American Revolution. I highly recommend this book!!!

A great synopsis of the times, the beliefs, the innovations, and how they all fit together. This book is a very interesting read, it is not cut and dry like many science or history books seem to be. It is great for a professional with a high degree in science to understand the contemporary history, but also very attainable for an intermediate or even high school level reader to grasp at the conceptual applications. This is one of my favorite reads and I could see it helping to get many younger generations interested in science.

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