

The Politics of Time

Gaining Control in the Age of Uncertainty

Guy Standing

Time has always been political. Throughout history, how most people use their time has been defined and controlled by the powerful. Today is no exception. But we can reclaim control, and in this book, the pioneering economist Guy Standing shows us how.

The ancient Greeks organised time into five categories: work, labour, recreation, leisure and contemplation. Labour was onerous, while the keys to a good life were self-chosen work and leisure (*scholē*), which included participation in public life and lifelong education. Yet now our jobs are supposed to provide all meaning in life; our time outside labour is considered simply 'time off', and politicians prioritise jobs above all else.

Today, we are experiencing the age of chronic uncertainty. Stress and mental illness are on the rise as more and more time is being stolen from us in myriad ways, particularly from the vulnerable and those in the precariat.

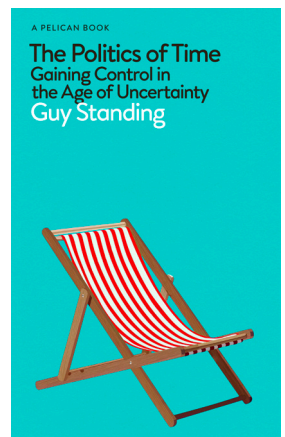
But there is a way forward. We can create a new politics of time, one that liberates us and helps save the planet, through strengthening real leisure and working on shared endeavours through commoning. We can retake control of our time, but we must do it together.

'Urgent and forensic, this examination of our relationship with time is a not just an historical tour de force but a passionate call to action. This is required reading for anyone concerned with how to build a better future' Caroline Lucas

'A thrilling and radical manifesto which seeks to rehabilitate the ancient Greek concept of *scholē* (or purposeful leisure) for a new age' Tom Hodgkinson, *The Idler*

'Innovative and thought-provoking as always, Guy Standing's insights into how time is a deeply politicized and unequally distributed resource make compelling reading' Kate Pickett

'*Politics of Time* is a splendid and timely addition to Guy Standing's body of important work' Yanis Varoufakis



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