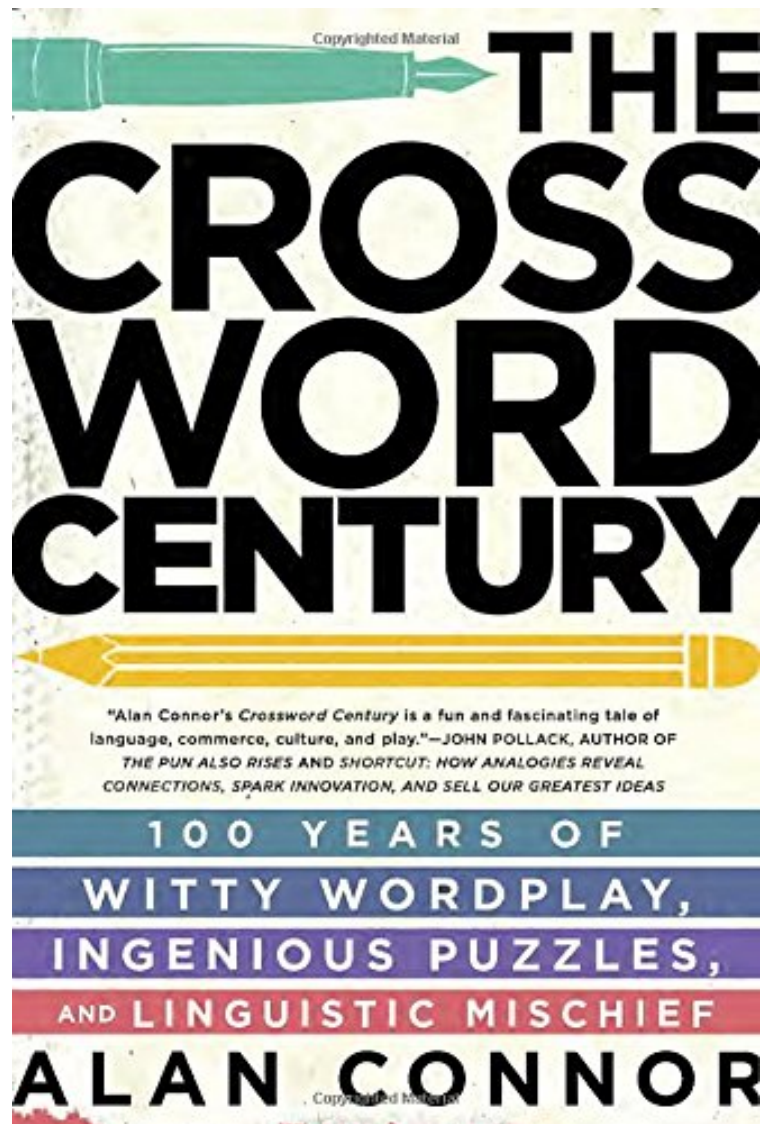


[Free and download] The Crossword Century: 100 Years of Witty Wordplay, Ingenious Puzzles, and Linguistic Mischief

The Crossword Century: 100 Years of Witty Wordplay, Ingenious Puzzles, and Linguistic Mischief

Alan Connor

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Alan Connor : **The Crossword Century: 100 Years of Witty Wordplay, Ingenious Puzzles, and Linguistic Mischief** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Crossword Century: 100 Years of Witty Wordplay, Ingenious Puzzles, and Linguistic Mischief:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Some of my best memories of spending time with my dad is passing

...By Kristine Fisher
The Crossword Century by Alan Connor is a free Goodreads FirstReads advance reader copy of a book I began reading in late, late May. Some of my best memories of spending time with my dad is passing a weekend newspaper crosswords puzzle back and forth with a leaky inky ballpoint pen, so I had looked forward eagerly to receiving this book as a kind of resource compendium. Unfortunately, this is a retrospective, overly cheerful sort of Wikipedia article in a book form. Though, yes, there are some tidbits of useful info (i.e. I knew what the concept of 'ninas' were, but not what they were formally called; that Sondheim, Sinatra, and Fry are all avid crossword fans; information about wartime codebreakers), it comes off as trying too hard and more of a punny eyeroller than a non-fiction book you'd want to read more than once.
2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not for everyone
By Granville I. Stark
This isn't what I expected. It is more about the history of cross word puzzles and other games.
2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Jane Austin fans
By Beth Cogswell
I gave this to a close friend whose husband was (he passed away) an avid crossworder. She really liked it and was going to share it with her family. Has a British connection too which was an added benefit for her because she and he are/were both avid Jane Austin fans.

A journalist and word aficionado salutes the 100-year history and pleasures of crossword puzzles Since its debut in The New York World on December 21, 1913, the crossword puzzle has enjoyed a rich and surprisingly lively existence. Alan Connor, a comic writer known for his exploration of all things crossword in The Guardian, covers every twist and turn: from the 1920s, when crosswords were considered a menace to productive society; to World War II, when they were used to recruit code breakers; to their starring role in a 2008 episode of The Simpsons. He also profiles the colorful characters who make up the interesting and bizarre subculture of crossword constructors and competitive solvers, including Will Shortz, the iconic New York Times puzzle editor who created a crafty crossword that appeared to predict the outcome of a presidential election, and the legions of competitive puzzle solvers who descend on a Connecticut hotel each year in an attempt to be crowned the American puzzle-solving champion. At a time when the printed word is in decline, Connor marvels at the crosswords seamless transition onto Kindles and iPads, keeping the puzzle one of Americas favorite pastimes. He also explores the way the human brain processes crosswords versus computers that are largely stumped by clues that require wordplay or a simple grasp of humor. A fascinating examination of our most beloved linguistic amusement and filled with tantalizing crosswords and clues embedded in the text
The Crossword Century is sure to attract the attention of the readers who made Word Freak and Just My Type bestsellers.

Alan Connor's Crossword Century is a fun and fascinating tale of language, commerce, culture and play. Before reading this book, I didn't have a clue about the crossword's checkered past. Now I can see its extraordinary future, too. John Pollack author The Pun Also Rises and Shortcut: How Analogies Reveal Connections, Spark Innovation and Sell Your Greatest Ideas
If you love language and history and marvel at the genius of puzzles, codes, and game design, Alan Connor's deep dive into the crossword will keep you smiling and eagerly turning pages. Connor playfully explores the history of the beloved, gamified fever dream of sentences, definitions, letters, and words that is the modern crossword and reveals the dance that strange invention has enjoyed with its caretakers across history. If you adore words and wordplay, if you see language as an endless mutating jungle of puzzles and experimentation, you need this book in your life. David McRaney, author of You Are Not so Smart and You Are Now Less Dumb
[Connor offers] something to entertain even the most infrequent dabbler. The Financial Times
As elegantly sprinkled with surprising gems as the most satisfying crossword...thoroughly, consistently entertaining. The Sunday Times
About the Author
Alan Connor is an Oxford-educated writer, journalist, television producer, and academic. He lives in London where he writes a biweekly column for The Guardian on crosswords.
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INTRODUCTION
This is a book about having FUN with words. And if youre wondering why that word is in capital letters, all will become clear.
And its a very particular form of fun with words: one that involves jumbling and tumbling them into eye-pleasingly symmetrical patterns and making riddles, jokes, and poetry in the form of crossword clues. A love of crosswords is also a love of language albeit a love that enjoys seeing the object of its affections toyed with, tickled, and flipped upside down.
Crossword puzzles are a silly, playful way of taking English and making it into a game. They have been doing so since December 21, 1913, when the worlds first crossword appeared although lovers of language had been deriving pleasure from wordplay long before then, of course. However, it was the crossword that came to supersede all other puzzles. It has become a cornerstone of almost all newspapers and, for many, a fondly anticipated daily appointment.
The crossword today looks quite different than that first puzzle or that should perhaps read crosswords today so as to encompass the baroque creations seen in Sunday papers, the strange mutant British form known as the cryptic, and all of the themed and jokey variants on offer on any given day. What they have in common is the pleasure of identifying what the constructor is asking for and seeing the answers mesh with one another until the puzzle is finished. For a century, the worker has whiled away journeys and parents have passed on tips and tricks in the hope that each grid tackled will be correctly filled.
In The Crossword Century, well be looking at the playfulness, the humor, and the frustration of the crossword in all its forms, and how the world of the puzzle has overlapped with espionage and humor, current affairs and literature. Well see fictional crossword

encounters, from *The West Wing* to *The Simpsons*, and we'll see crosswords from the real world: the one that seemed to predict the outcome of a presidential election and the ones that appeared to be giving away the secrets of the Second World War. We'll look at how clues tantalize those who are addicted to puzzles by sending the solver on wild-goose chases, by being sweetly silly and soberly serious, and by stubbornly withholding their real meanings until the penny drops. And we ask questions about the experience of solving: Why do some people try to finish crosswords as quickly as possible? Can computers crack clues? And does puzzling really stave off dementia? As for how to read this book, please feel free to treat it like a puzzle. That is to say, you can start at 1 across and work sequentially, or you can dive in and out and follow your instincts. The chapters are in two sections: The ACROSS entries look at the creation of puzzles and the strange things that can go on within clues and grids, while the DOWNS describe what happens to the crossword once it escapes into the world and meets its solvers. Like the British man who created the first crossword in New York, we'll be crossing the Atlantic Ocean a few times, in fact, and I humbly hope that along the way I might persuade you that the baffling-looking British cryptic is a lot more enjoyable than legend has it. Are you ready for FUN?

PART ONE
ACROSS FALL IN A GARDEN, DEPICTED? GENESIS
How the crossword first appeared in 1913 and became an overnight sensation in 1924. Newsday's crossword editor puts it best. Liverpool's two greatest gifts to the world of popular culture, writes Stanley Newman, are the Beatles and Arthur Wynne. The comparison with the Beatles is on the money, to use a more British locution, spot-on. Like the music of the Fab Four, the crossword is a global phenomenon that is at once American and British. But while the Beatles are known wherever recorded music is played, Arthur Wynne's name remains unspoken by almost all. Who was he? Well, he wasn't the Lennon or the McCartney of crosswords; we'll meet them soon enough. He was perhaps crossword's Fats Domino: a pioneer who would see his innovation taken by others to strange, often baroque mutant forms and variants. Not that this was how Wynne saw his career playing out when he became one of the forty million people who emigrated from Europe between 1830 and 1930, and one of the nine million heading from Liverpool for the New World during that same period. The son of the editor of *The Liverpool Mercury*, Wynne was at least initially, and in his own mind a journalist. He spent most of his newspaper career working for the empire of print mogul William Randolph Hearst. His legacy, though, was not a piece of reporting, and it appeared in the *New York World*, a Democrat-supporting daily published by Hearst's rival, Joseph Pulitzer. As a kind of precursor to the *New York Post*, *The World* mixed sensation with investigation, and it was Wynne's job to add puzzles to the jokes and cartoons for Fun, the Sunday magazine section. He had messed around with tried-and-tested formats: word searches, mazes, anagrams, rebuses.