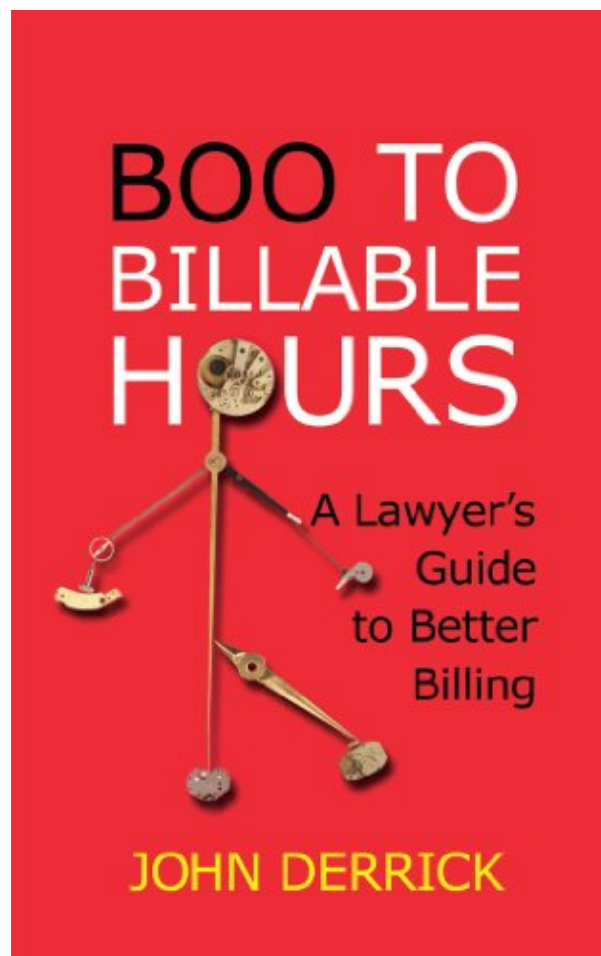


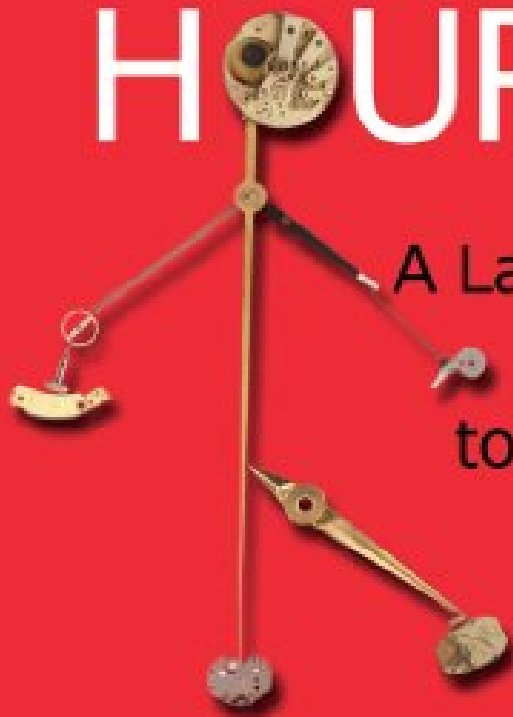
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## **About the Author**

John Derrick is a California lawyer with a practice specializing in appeals. He received his undergraduate degree in Britain at the University of Oxford and his law degree at the University of California at Berkeley, Boalt Hall School of Law. He is certified by The State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization as a Specialist in Appellate Law.

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The billable hour dominates the legal profession, but is eating away at its soul. It chills the attorney-client relationship. It penalizes efficient lawyers, while rewarding plodding ones. It leads to arbitrary, irrational, and suspect results, in which time is distorted and sometimes invented. It disconnects the amount that is charged from the value delivered. And it fails to produce what it promises, transparency. Its effects are all the worse in law-firm pyramids that impose excessive billing requirements. This straight-talking book critically dissects the practice of billing by the hour in the practice of law, examining how time is actually recorded in a variety of contexts that raise ethical as well as practical concerns. It also tracks the history of the billable hour, showing how we got to where we are today. The book is not all about criticism, however. It also advocates alternatives that shift the focus away from time expended and onto value delivered.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Any lawyer who bills by the hour should read this book

By William G. Ross

"Boo to Billable Hours" is an important and useful book. It is a "must read" for any attorney or paralegal who ever has prepared a time sheet. Any client who ever has paid a time-based bill should read it, too.

In his lively, engaging, and pithy book, John Derrick, a California attorney, explains why hourly billing often encourages inefficiency and sometimes facilitates fraud. Mr. Derrick discusses a wide range of issues and problems involving hourly fees, including record-keeping, double billing, the use of minimum billing increments, billing targets, and the quandary of how to bill for travel time. His book offers sensible and practical guidance for time-keepers on these and other issues, and it also explores the advantages of alternative forms of billing, including result-oriented fees and flat fees.

Avoiding any hint of "lawyer bashing," this book evinces a profound respect for the legal profession and seeks in a constructive manner to help lawyers formulate fees in a manner that is consistent with high ethical standards and the needs of clients.

William G. Ross

Professor of Law, Samford University

author of the book, "The Honest Hour: The Ethics of Time-Based Billing by Attorneys," and numerous articles about lawyer billing ethics

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

A Clear and Concise Introduction to Billable Hour Issues

By Litigation Limited

This book offers an excellent introduction to the billable hour, its history, and its many drawbacks, and I think this should be required reading for anyone who has to review monthly legal invoices, especially if that person is a non-lawyer. (In my professional experience, far too many small and mid-size companies and individuals are at the mercy of overbilling lawyers, who know all too well that they can get away with padding client bills with legalese that sounds impressive and disguises the excessive number of hours being billed). The hypotheticals and examples are very clear and easy to follow, and will no doubt strike a chord with any lawyer who has had to meet billable hour minimums at a "Big Law" firm -- and probably many clients who have had to pay that lawyer's bills! I'm sure I'll be recommending this book to clients who are looking for help in reducing the amount of billable hours charged by their outside counsel.

I also appreciated that the author John Derrick does not condemn the billable hour wholesale, instead offering more nuanced criticism and proposing several alternative billing methods. Admittedly, none of the suggested alternatives are novel or earth-shattering, and they aren't quite "solutions", but that's exactly the point -- the billable hour "problem" can't easily be resolved, even when lawyers charge a flat or contingency fee, since those aren't always the best way to value a lawyer's services or results either.

My only caveat is that this book is probably directed more towards the (relative) novice or non-lawyer. That's not a criticism, just an observation, since this obviously isn't supposed to be a scholarly tome or practice guide that's 90% footnotes, but rather a brief overview of the subject.

All in all, Boo to Billable Hours is a very informative book that I highly recommend.

Grant D. Stiefel, Esq.

Litigation Limited

litigationlimited.com

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

good concise treatment of subject

By Bruce\_in\_LA

Derrick provides a good concise treatment of the subject, exploring problems with "billable hours" in their ins-and-outs from most perspectives. In case you want to move on to a more detailed treatment (e.g. with numerous court cases and their positions on allowed and disallowed billing) see also Toothman, Legal Billing.

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