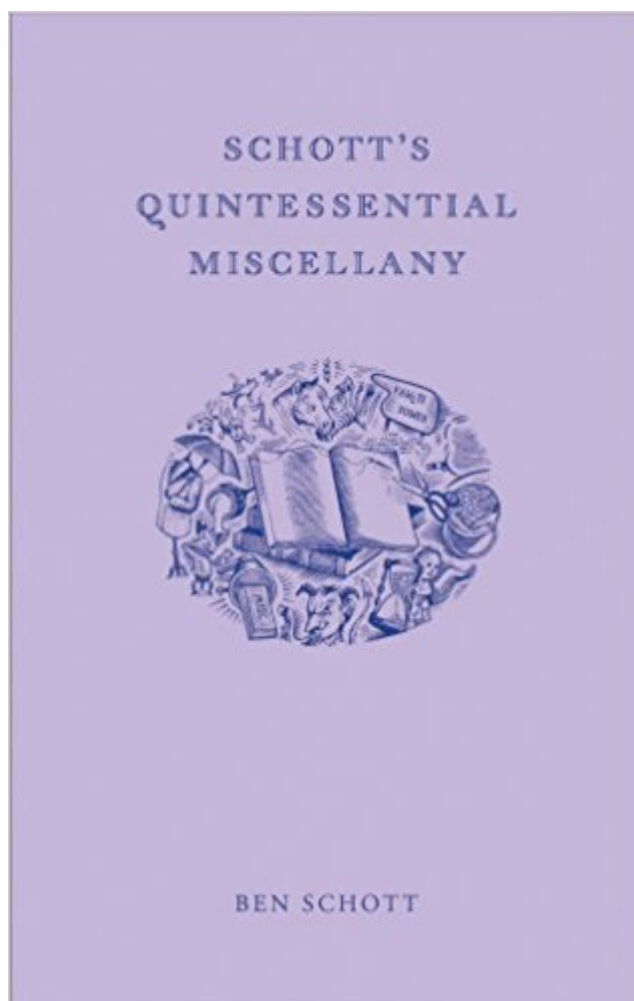


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Schott's Quintessential Miscellany (Indispensable Irrelevance)



Synopsis

In 2003, a curious, old-fashioned, pocket-size book transformed the way we look at information. Since then, Schott's Original Miscellany and its two sequel volumes have been translated into more than fifteen languages and have sold some three million copies. Now Ben Schott returns to the miscellany format with a brand-new cabinet of curiosities. Inside, you'll find fascinating facts cheek by jowl with information you can't live without. All things are considered, from footwear labeling symbols, airport runway markings, and sign-writing brush sizes to the traditional method of counting sheep and how to smoke cigars while reading the news. Nothing escapes the jeweler's eye of this curator of unconsidered trifles. An essential addition to the bookshelf of all who love life's rich tapestry, Schott's Quintessential Miscellany-equal parts encyclopedia, almanac, treasury, and lexicon-will remind you that there is only one Ben Schott. Praise for Schott's Miscellanies: "If we live in an information age, then Ben Schott has become something of a maestro, or perhaps a master chef, ranging over the whole of knowledge and seasoning his...books with a pinch of this, a drop of that." -Chicago Sun-Times "Genuine practical value...Elegantly designed...A vast empire of informational flotsam and jetsam." -New York Times "One of the oddest and most addictively readable reference books in print." -Boston Globe "Completely earnest and mischievous at the same time." -Newsday

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for Schott's Original Miscellany 'Schott's Original Miscellany is without doubt the oddest, nay

maddest, and possibly merriest, title you will come across in a long day's march through the shimmering desert of contemporary publishing' Observer 'This bizarre little book manages to be both totally useless and nearly indispensable' Daily Telegraph 'Entertaining, informative and unpredictable, Schott's Original Miscellany is a book like no other' Saga --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ben Schott studied social and political sciences at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, from where he graduated with a double First. He is a contributing columnist to the op-ed pages of the New York Times and writes for a number of other newspapers and magazines. He divides his time between London and New York.

As a fan of trivial knowledge, and a great admirer of Schott's previous books, I was eager to read this new volume of "uncommon knowledge, vital minutiae, and indispensable irrelevance." These books are not designed to be read for hours at a time, but are quite enjoyable in short bursts. A random sampling of some interesting sections:- Occupations of note (A Knockknobbler is a dog catcher)- Bortle Scale (An astronomer's scale of sky darkness)- All of Alfred Hitchcock's movie cameos- Color markings for underground utilities...and numerous others. (Be sure to not miss the "Authorial Miscellany" on the last page!) While I found this newest edition to be fun, it seemed to hold my interest a bit less than previous versions. A number of entries were simply quotes or aphorisms ("A sound faith is the best divinity; a good conscience the best law; and temperance the best physic" - Anon.), or other facts that just don't seem relevant to modern time (or even students of history). Maybe Schott is starting to run low on miscellany? In summary, I would recommend that readers start by sampling his earlier works, and then come to this one if they're longing for more.

I already owned a copy of Ben Schott's 2002 book "Schott's Original Miscellany". It lives next to the seat in the smallest room in my house, and over almost two years I have been SLOWLY savoring every page. It was a small, handsome book of about 150 pages, each of which was a trivia lover's delight and often inspired me to go on the Internet and learn more about a subject, e.g., the odds of drawing the top 9 hands in poker, or the names of all the people pictured on the album cover for Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (both on the same page)! Unfortunately, at about 3/4 of the way through it I found myself reading more and more slowly, so as not to bring the discoveries to an end. Imagine my delight then when I learned that Mr. Schott had published a 2011 sequel, Schott's Quintessential Miscellany! Also about 150 pages, PLUS this time a nice little violet ribbon

attachment to mark your place should one deem such structured behavior to be necessary for the enjoyment of what basically amounts to merry chaos. My favorite entry (so far) from the new volume is a list of 50 words beginning with "sn" that have to do with the nose (sniff, snout, snuff, snot, snore, etc., etc.)Who knew?

The reviews I had read about this book were right: Schott's Miscellany is an impossible-to-put-down collection of....well....how to explain it?....of things you might never imagine anyone would collect. Ben Schott collects information you would probably never think to look up on the Internet, but which you are nonetheless delighted to have stumbled upon; he asks questions you would never have thought to ask, but are nonetheless happy to know the answer to. Schott generously shares a vast quantity of data - which it seems to be his calling in life, perhaps his obsession, to assemble - about our language, our history, our bodies, our habits, our culture, our beliefs, our world, list after list after list of things you just can't help being interested in reading about while simultaneously being in awe of the man who has collected it all. This is great entertainment - for those of us who don't require a soundtrack, a car chase, or violence to enjoy ourselves.

Here are things you didn't know, and didn't know how interesting they can be. All in nicely numbered lists. Far more fascinating than the catalogue of incompetence and hatreds we deal with every day/

Excellent as always

great gift!

great price

This was supposed to be a gift for someone, but it's disgusting. It's filthy, covered in dirt and stains, stickers and sharpie. The pages are water-stained and bent. The entire book is covered in a film of dirt and wear, though it doesn't show up as well in pictures.

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