



The Phone Book: The Curious History of the Book That Everyone Uses But No One Reads

Ammon Shea

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A surprising, lively, and rich history of that ubiquitous doorstep that most of us take for granted.

Ammon Shea is not your typical thirtysomething book enthusiast. After reading the *Oxford English Dictionary* from cover to cover (and living to write about it in *Reading the OED*), what classic, familiar, but little-read book would he turn to next? Yes, the phone book. With his signature combination of humor, curiosity, and passion for combing the dustbins of history, Shea offers readers a guided tour into the surprising, strange, and often hilarious history of the humble phone book.

From the first printed version in 1878 (it had fifty listings and no numbers) to the phone book's role in presidential elections, Supreme Court rulings, Senate filibusters, abstract art, subversive poetry, circus sideshows, criminal investigations, mental-health diagnoses, and much more, this surprising volume reveals a rich and colorful story that has never been told-until now.

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