



Letter Perfect: The Marvelous History of Our Alphabet From A to Z

David Sacks

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David Sacks has embarked on a fun, lively, and learned excursion into the alphabet—and into cultural history—in *Letter Perfect*. Clearly explaining the letters as symbols of precise sounds of speech, the book begins with the earliest known alphabetic inscriptions (circa 1800 b.c.), recently discovered by archaeologists in Egypt, and traces the history of our alphabet through the ancient Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans and up through medieval Europe to the present day. But the heart of the book is the twenty-six fact-filled “biographies” of letters A through Z, each one identifying the letter’s particular significance for modern readers, tracing its development from ancient forms, and discussing its noteworthy role in literature and other media. We learn, for example, why letter X may have a sinister and sexual aura, how B came to signify second best, why the word *mother* in many languages starts with M. Combining facts both odd and essential, *Letter Perfect* is cultural history at its most accessible and enjoyable.

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