



For the Love of Letters: The Joy of Slow Communication

John O'Connell

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For the Love of Letters: The Joy of Slow Communication John O'Connell Richly entertaining and beautifully written, here is a passionate case for the value of old-fashioned letter writing in a technology-obsessed world, along with a collection of some of history's greatest letters.

Remember letters? They were good, weren't they? The thrill of receiving that battered envelope, all the better for the wait... In this richly entertaining book, paper geek John O'Connell puts forward a passionate case for the value of letter-writing in a distracted, technology-obsessed world. Drawing on great examples from the past, he shows that the best letters have much to teach us – Samuel Richardson's 'familiar letters'; Wilfred Owen's outpourings to his mother; the sly observational charms of Jane Austen. And in doing so he reminds us of the kind of letters we would all write if we had the time – the perfect thank-you letter, a truly empathetic condolence letter, and of course the heartfelt declaration of love. Was there a Golden Age of Letters? Why is handwriting so important? Can we ever regain the hallowed slowness of the pre-Twitter era? In answering these questions O'Connell shows how a proper letter is an object to be cherished, its crafting an act of exposure which gives shape and meaning to the chaos of life.

'The nib touches the paper. And instinctively I follow the old formula: address in top right-hand corner; date just beneath it on the left-hand side. My writing looks weird. I hand-write so infrequently these days that I've developed a graphic stammer - my brain's way of registering its impatience and bemusement. What are you doing? Just send an email! I haven't got all night . . . '



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Robert Schneck:

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