
The Book of Lists

David Wallechinsky
The Book Of Lists and Amy Wallace

This book is dedicated to the memory of our father,
Irving Wallace, who was 1 OF A KIND

Contents

[Introduction](#)

[1. PEOPLE](#)

[2. MOVIES](#)

[3. THE ARTS](#)

[4. FOOD AND HEALTH](#)

[5. ANIMALS](#)

[6. WORK AND MONEY](#)

[7. SEX, LOVE AND MARRIAGE](#)

[8. CRIME](#)

[9. WAR, POLITICS AND WORLD AFFAIRS](#)

[10. TRAVEL](#)

[11. LITERATURE](#)

[12. WORDS](#)

[13. SPORTS](#)

[14. DEATH](#)

[15. MISCELLANEOUS](#)

[INDEX](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Introduction](#)

As Oscar Wilde observed, the only sin is to be bored. We believe it is an equal sin to be boring, and if the great wit was correct, then the authors and millions of *Book of Lists* readers are quite unblemished by sin: for we place a high value on curiosity.

The original 1977 volume of the *Book of Lists*, and its *The Book Of Lists* all-new sequels, inspired nearly 200 *The Book Of Lists* imitation volumes. These have included books of lists about movies, rock'n'roll, Judaism, the Bible, general sports, and countless other subjects. The books spawned games, toilet paper with lists on it, CD-Roms, calendars and *The Book Of Lists* television shows. We had no idea that *The Book of Lists* would become a bestseller, let alone a phenomenon. We thought we were just *The Book Of Lists* having fun.

The *Book of Lists* rose to number 1 on the bestseller lists, and was published all over the world. Young readers wrote to tell us they'd *The Book Of Lists* bought our book for fun, and were using it to spice up their schoolwork. Older readers locked themselves in bathrooms, curled up in bed, took the book to parties and demanded more editions. We invited their contributions, which came pouring in, and we featured many of them in the editions that followed.

Although we are pleased to have popularised a genre that so many people enjoy, we do not pretend to have been its founders. That honour goes to the Reverend Nathaniel Wanley, author of *Wonders of the Little World*, a book of lists first published in 1678. We didn't know about the Reverend *The Book Of Lists* Wanley when we wrote our own *Book of Lists*, but a glance through his table of contents shows striking similarities: 'Of such People and Nations as have been scourged and afflicted by small and contemptible things', 'Of such as having been extremely Wild, and Prodigal, or Debauched in their Youth, have afterwards proved excellent Persons', 'Of such as have been seized with an extraordinary joy, at what hath followed there-upon'.

The trend never died down, and *The Book Of Lists* in recent years has had a dazzling renaissance. We appear to live in an age in which the volume of information available to us is far too overwhelming for our minds to process. The everyday lists we all make are a balm to a cluttered mind; list-making puts things in order, it clarifies, it helps coax truth from the cracks of the universe, and it invites our favourite question: 'What if...?'

In the present volume, we have updated our readers' favourite lists, prepared an array of new material, and included lists from a wide variety of notables and celebrities, such as Ian Rankin, Philip Pullman, Johnny Cash, Brian Eno, Elmore Leonard and Ben *The Book Of Lists* Schott, to name only a few.

We owe much of The Book Of Lists the inspiration for this volume to our father, Irving Wallace, who always hoped we'd continue to compile new editions. Whenever possible, we have concentrated on lists that cause readers to laugh out loud, gasp, shake their heads in wonder, or call out 'Wait until you hear this!' To quote Mark Twain's introduction to *The Adventures The Book Of Lists of Huckleberry Finn*: 'Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.'

Chapter 1

AGES OF 25 PEOPLE HAD THEY LIVED TO 2005

10 MEN WHO CRIED IN PUBLIC

IF 27 FAMOUS MEN WERE KNOWN BY THEIR MOTHERS' MAIDEN NAMES

9 PEOPLE WITH EXTRA LIMBS AND DIGITS

10 FAMOUS NOSES

10 MEETINGS BETWEEN FAMOUS PEOPLE AND PEOPLE NOT YET FAMOUS

17 FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO WERE EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL

9 TATTOOED CELEBRITIES

10 PEOPLE WITH THE MOST SQUARE MILES OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE NAMED
AFTER THEM

8 UNNAMED WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

6 PEOPLE WHOSE NAMES WERE CHANGED BY ACCIDENT

8 ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE PEOPLE

13 MOTHERS OF INFAMOUS MEN

People

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FRANCESCO LENTINI, THE THREE-LEGGED
MAN – WITH ONE OF HIS FIVE CHILDREN

Ages of 25 People Had They Lived to 2005

1. Dylan Thomas, (1914–53), 91 The Book Of Lists
poet
2. John F. Kennedy (1917–63), 88
president
3. Rocky Marciano (1923–69), 82
boxer
4. Malcolm X (1925–65), civil 80
rights activist
5. Marilyn Monroe (1926–62), 79
actress