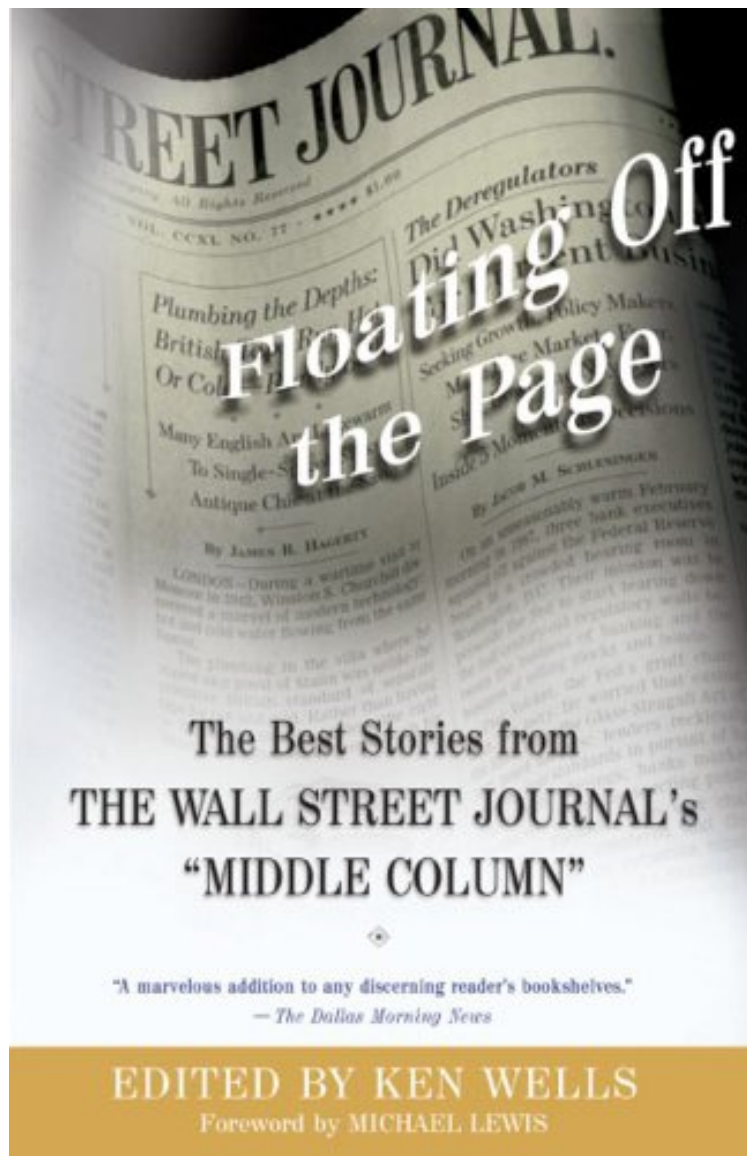


(Download) Floating Off the Page: The Best Stories from The Wall Street Journal's quot;M (Wall Street Journal Book)

Floating Off the Page: The Best Stories from The Wall Street Journal's quot;M (Wall Street Journal Book)

Ken Wells

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Ken Wells : Floating Off the Page: The Best Stories from The Wall Street Journal's quot;M (Wall Street Journal Book) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Floating Off the Page: The Best Stories from The Wall Street Journal's quot;M (Wall Street Journal Book):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. OutdatedBy Paul GillinThe content didn't age very well. I've always

enjoyed the Journal's center column, but this collection makes it obvious that immediacy is part of the experience. It would be great to see an updated version with stories from the past five years. 18 of 19 people found the following review helpful. A Gift from The Wall Street Journal - That's My Tip By dennis wentraub The middle column on The Wall Street Journal's front page has always been a refreshing break from the general seriousness and deluge of information throughout the paper. As such it has always been a repository of wit, quirky facts, humanity, and general eccentricity. As an adjunct instructor for Investments at a local college, I like to refer to the existence of the column to alter preconceptions about this otherwise serious newspaper. On occasion I have cut out the stories to leave on our kitchen table for family members. So, a collection of these wonderful stories is very welcome. I immediately think of the loopy Brit who has constructed a medieval "siege engine" for lobbing dead horses (it was medieval thing) or soon-to-be-dead pianos a hundred yards down range. Many of us can relate to the social perils of inadvertently making a cell phone call by hitting a re-dial button and having our conversations unknowingly monitored. And I fret for the fellow who protects the Stanley Cup as it makes its appointed party rounds among ice hockey's winning athletes. A very different tone is struck in the "struggles of [sea] otter 76" to survive the toxic effects of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. It is a moving story that sticks to the reader's mind like petroleum goo. A vignette about Serbian snipers is both disturbing and memorable in its grimy banality. I do miss in this collection the oddity of a giant blue anatomically proportioned bug crouching on the roof of a Providence, RI exterminator. I also miss the WSJ's distinctive pixel illustrations of the people and things that are the subject of these columns. Their absence is an unfortunate editorial lapse since so many of the stories are memorable human interest sketches of ordinary people in unusual roles. But readers should not be too disappointed. This is a worthy, reasonably priced gift book and recommended vacation read! 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Beans and dingoes By Suyong Min It's always been my favorite column in the paper every morning. Snippets about the Sapinta, Romania town with their last tart words ("I was a mechanic. I always worked hard. As long as I lived, I hated the Communists. And I loved the schnapps. Drink one for me."), the wild wallabies in NY ("and they probably were seen by several natives who figured it would be best just to keep quiet - and quit drinking"), the Alaskan otters, and the mailrooms of WTC come to mind. I can't wait for another volume. A story that I particularly enjoyed was too recent to be included in this volume - the one about a reporter with a cubicle in the Pentagon who was last published before I was born. The first reviewer here who gave a low rating based on "dryness" because of the story's "informational" focus rather missed the point didn't she? Sheesh. If you appreciate your daily dose of life's interesting nooks and crannies, you'll enjoy this volume.

On any given day, millions of Wall Street Journal readers put aside the serious business and economic news of the day to focus first on the paper's middle column (a.k.a. the A-hed), a virtual sound-bubble for light literary fare -- a short story, a tall tale, an old yarn, a series of vignettes, and other unexpected delights that seem to "float off the page." In this first-ever compendium of middle-column pieces, you'll find an eclectic selection of writings, from the outlandish to the oddly enlightening. Read about: bull; one man's attempt to translate the Bible into Klingon; sheep orthodontics, pet-freezing, and toad-smoking; being hip in Cairo, modeling at auto shows, piano-throwing; the fate of mail destined for the World Trade Center after 9/11; the plight of oiled otters in Prince William Sound...and much, much more. Edited by 20-year Journal veteran Ken Wells, and with a foreword by Liar's Poker author Michael Lewis, *Floating Off the Page* is the perfect elixir for fans of innovative prose in all its forms and function.

From Publishers Weekly Wells, a senior editor at the Wall Street Journal, has put together a terrific collection of the most memorable stories from the off-beat front-page column that covers singular topics like toad-licking and the Miss Agriculture pageant, and leads with irresistible opening lines like "First, pretend that you are a sheep." Wells, who is also a novelist (Meely LaBaue), includes stories of unconventional inventions such as braces for sheep teeth, a low-flatulence bean and underwear for the incarcerated. There are profiles of the unglamorous and overlooked, such as a professional fish-sniffer and the world's most prolific, and unknown, novelist. Readers receive an education in Greek banana policy, the national sewer-fat crisis and what it's like to be a Serbian sniper. Stories also involve reporters trying on new careers, from belly-dancing to auto-show modeling. Although there is a heavy emphasis on humor here, readers can still expect to find a smattering of serious subjects, like rescuing otters after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989 or the fate of the mail destined for the World Trade Center after 9/11. For regular WSJ readers, who have loved the middle column, this collection, with pieces largely from the 1970s forward (the column dates back 50 years), is a must. Those who think WSJ stories are only for the business-minded are in for an unexpected treat. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From School Library Journal Adult/High School-The column from which this collection derives debuted in December, 1941, and from its 6-decade history Wells has selected 67 engaging examples of journalistic creativity and caprice. Each entry of approximately 1500 words is signed and dated, and tackles an offbeat topic of the staff writer's choice, designed to leaven the daily news offerings and to entertain by wresting readers' eyes from serious matters. For example, one may read about cutting-edge technology in sheep orthodontics, record-breaking distances in piano flinging by trebuchet, and fantasy styling excesses at hair fashion shows. This is a book to be valued equally for the composition lessons inherent in its polished prose and for its appeal to readers. Lynn

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When most people think of the Wall Street Journal, words like quirky and whimsical don't spring readily to mind. That's because most people don't spend enough time reading the "middle column" of the paper, that part of the front page devoted each day to an offbeat feature story. Veteran Journal staffer Wells has collected 67 of those stories, with topics ranging from silly (people who strive to use only one-syllable words) to heart-rending (the fate of oiled otters in Prince William Sound) to enlightening (an afternoon with Serbian snipers) to downright disgusting (coagulated fat in sewers). Wells has arranged the stories in nine broad categories, rather than chronologically; the reader must flip to the end of each piece to see both the date and the author. He also rejected the original headlines in favor of breezy and occasionally anachronistic titles like "Y2K Alert! (But It's 1980)." Not every piece is brilliant, or even captivating, but the collection features enough top-notch writing to make it a worthwhile purchase for journalism collections. Susan M. Colowick, North Olympic Lib. Syst., Port Angeles, WA Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.