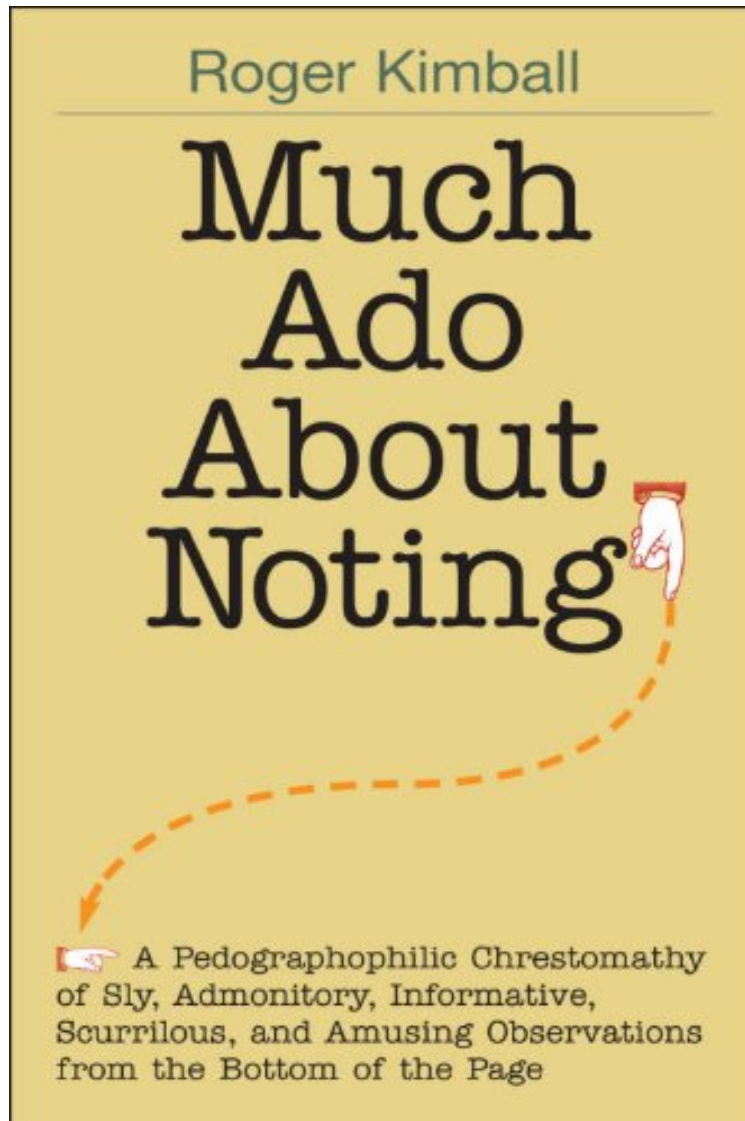


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# Much Ado About Noting: A Pedpgraphophilic Crestomathy of Sly, Admonitory, Informative, Scurrilous, and Amusing Observations from the Bottom of the Page

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## Admonitory, Informative, Scurrilous, and Amusing Observations from the Bottom of the Page:

"There are books," wrote the philosopher George Santayana, "in which the footnotes or comments scrawled by some reader's hand in the margin are more interesting than the text." In *Much Ado About Noting*, the distinguished cultural critic Roger Kimball shows that Santayana was right. Mr. Kimball offers a supremely diverting trip through the world of digressive observation. Did you know that Karl Marx had a sense of humor? You can see it on view in his footnotes. Mrs. Beeton, the nineteenth-century English doyenne of *Household Management*, consigned a terrifying story about mackerel to a footnote, while some of the best bits of *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* occur at the bottom of the page. "Apollonius of Tyana," Gibbon observed, "was born about the same time as Jesus Christ. His life (that of the former) is related in so fabulous a manner by his disciples, that we are at a loss to discover whether he was a sage, an imposter, or a fanatic." In this charming and memorable compilation, Mr. Kimball ranges across centuries and along the trail of multifarious disciplines to assemble a delectable confection of literary curiosity. He marshals a trove of witty, scabrous, ironical, melancholy, illuminating, and otherwise engaging literary divagation with which to brighten an unclaimed hour. Noel Coward once said that coming across a footnote was like going downstairs to answer the doorbell while making love. But Coward did not have an opportunity to peruse *Much Ado About Noting*. If he had, he would have added that the doorbell is often worth answering.

About the Author Roger Kimball is co-editor and publisher of *The New Criterion*. He contributes widely to periodicals in Britain and America and is a regular columnist for the blog, *Pajamas Media*. He lives in South Norwalk, Connecticut.