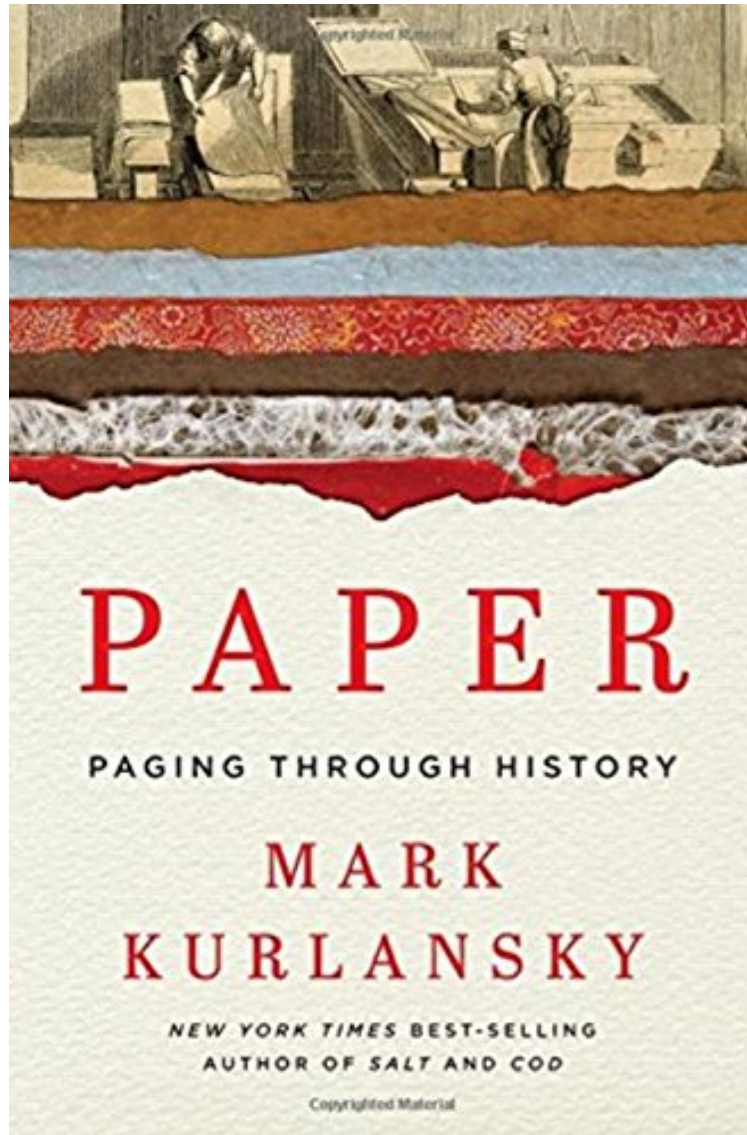


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Mark Kurlansky : Paper: Paging Through History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Paper: Paging Through History:

157 of 167 people found the following review helpful. Wild factual inaccuraciesBy Jill ZerkleWhile I have loved other Mark Kurlansky books, this one comes closer to fields I have studied and I was horrified to discover that neither he nor his editors bother to fact check before publishing. I further discovered there is no way to contact the author directly

to let him know of his errors. He claims that "linguists regard Greek...to be...the grandparent of all modern European languages." (page 64 of 897 ebook version) My degree from UC Berkeley in linguistics disagrees with him. Modern European languages come from a number of different language families, most NOT descended from Greek. He claims that silk contains cellulose. (page 91 of 897 ebook version). This is a gross misstatement. Cellulose is a polysaccharide: silk is a protein. These are distinctly different polymers. The idea that you can make something paper-like out of either does not make them the same thing. At that point, I had to stop reading. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars! Not Kurlansky's Best But Still Fun! By VA 6 "Salt" is one of my all-time favorites, and I enjoyed Cod and Basques as well. I was overjoyed to see Kurlansky getting back into the history game with "Paper". Let me say that I enjoyed the book. Not as much as the other three, but it was enjoyable to read. There were a few questionable "facts", and I see why some reviewers have jumped on them, but none of these take away from the overall message in my mind. The only addition I'd like to make is that "less is more" would have been helpful in parts. The section of his trip to Japan really managed to weigh down the whole book and came across to me as him trying to justify a free trip to Japan, as was his sudden appearance in Basque country which was also out of place for the subject. All that being said, this book is a fun read. It is a delight to see Kurlansky back into the game, and I assure you I'll still give his next book a look. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An OK read By Laurence J. Bloom Maybe it is just the nature of the subject, but this book was very repetitious. I would have settled for a journal article-length piece. It also did a lot of hair-splitting on the topic of who did what first.

From the New York Times best-selling author of Cod and Salt, a definitive history of paper and the astonishing ways it has shaped today's world. Paper is one of the simplest and most essential pieces of human technology. For the past two millennia, the ability to produce it in ever more efficient ways has supported the proliferation of literacy, media, religion, education, commerce, and art; it has formed the foundation of civilizations, promoting revolutions and restoring stability. One has only to look at history's greatest press run, which produced 6.5 billion copies of Mo zhux yulu, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung (Zedong) which doesn't include editions in 37 foreign languages and in braille to appreciate the range and influence of a single publication, in paper. Or take the fact that one of history's most revered artists, Leonardo da Vinci, left behind only 15 paintings but 4,000 works on paper. And though the colonies were at the time calling for a boycott of all British goods, the one exception they made speaks to the essentiality of the material; they penned the Declaration of Independence on British paper. Now, amid discussion of going paperless and as speculation about the effects of a digitally dependent society grows rampant, we've come to a world-historic juncture. Thousands of years ago, Socrates and Plato warned that written language would be the end of true knowledge, replacing the need to exercise memory and think through complex questions. Similar arguments were made about the switch from handwritten to printed books, and today about the role of computer technology. By tracing paper's evolution from antiquity to the present, with an emphasis on the contributions made in Asia and the Middle East, Mark Kurlansky challenges common assumptions about technology's influence, affirming that paper is here to stay. Paper will be the commodity history that guides us forward in the twenty-first century and illuminates our times. 24 illustrations

Kurlansky's telling of this history...is swift, crisp, and deft. - Reid Mitenbuler, The Atlantic An historical journey well worth the ride. [Kurlansky] has a deep instinct for telling detail, which he combines with a disarmingly fun narrative style. Kurlansky makes a compelling case that paper has always been a revolutionary force a foundation for expression of every sort and that it is certainly not dead yet. - Elizabeth Taylor, The National Book Kurlansky tells [the history of paper] vividly in this compact and well-illustrated book. He has a sharp eye for curious details. [and] offers a versatile introduction to this long and complicated history. - Anthony Grafton, New York Times Book A beautiful thing to hold and feel, and it presents a fine argument for the retention of paper as an aesthetically lusty object. - Simon Garfield, The Observer One learns an awful lot from [Paper], all packaged in Kurlansky's whipsmart prose. - John Sutherland, The Times (London) Littered with amazing facts. - Lily Rothman, Time magazine Curious, vital, prolific, and witty. Kurlansky's work makes brilliant use of paper as a key to civilization. - Booklist Illuminating.... Kurlansky is a graceful writer and an industrious researcher. - Library Journal About the Author Mark Kurlansky is the New York Times best-selling author of twenty-eight books and a former foreign correspondent for The International Herald Tribune, The Chicago Tribune, The Miami Herald, and The Philadelphia Inquirer. He lives in New York City.