



2500 Random Things About Me Too

Matias Viegner

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On February 6 2009, Matias Viegner logged into Facebook and wrote a short list of random things about himself. He had been tagged in a friend's meme, "25 Random Things About Me," and though it irked him, he decided to respond. The meme's premise was simple: Write 25 unrelated facts about yourself, then ask 25 friends to compose their own list. The next day, Matias composed a second list, despite remarking in the first, "I don't want to tell people things they don't know about me." Two days later, he wrote a third. Then a fourth. The question became: Is it possible, given our love of stories and human proclivity toward habit, to make a long and truly random list from one's life? The 100 lists assembled in 2500 Random Things About Me Too set out to do just that, exploring along the way the relationships between family, memory, sexuality, social networks, and randomness—on and offline.

Viegner limited himself to a single day for each list, leaving his topics unlimited while aiming to avoid repetitions. His reflections wander through past and present—the writing and art scenes of New York and Los Angeles in the 80s and 90s, his sexual adventures, his friendship with Kathy Acker, and his current art practice as a co-founder of the Fallen Fruit collaborative. Neither memoir nor diary but with aspects of each, 2500 Random Things About Me Too recalls the work of Joe Brainard and John Cage. It is an experiment in the construction of identity in a Facebook-drenched world of self-manufacturing and short attention spans. Possibly the first book to have been composed entirely on Facebook, 2500 Random Things About Me Too is a text-cloud raining art, dogs, sex, death and fruit.

2500 Random Things About Me Too Details

Date : Published 2012 by Les Figs Press

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Author : Matias Viegner

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From Reader Review 2500 Random Things About Me Too for online ebook

Alex says

A page turning, thrillingly intellectual accomplishment that started with an apparently ludic Facebook meme.

Sara says

I tried not to read this too quickly. I didn't want to rush the time I spent with the author. The writing is so tender and evocative that it sort of hurt me. How can a writer be so indulgent and yet seem so aware of me-the reader? The intimacy of this is undeniable. It is the opposite of pretentious, or maybe it just makes pretension more palatable. Maybe it softens pretension. Maybe this list is like a ripe piece of fruit. The mush is unintentional, a natural result. The sweetness is inherent.

Jacob Wren says

My review at Lemon Hound:

<http://lemonhound.com/2013/02/14/2500...>

Anna Springer says

Elegant, Hilarious, Tender book about BOTH the CONCEPT and the PRACTICE of relationship.

Ok I'm only on page 19 so I should wait to give the stars but, duh, I think this is already my favorite book in the world. Also it's making me feel remorseful for not being honest enough in my own writing. A little embarrassed. But with a new true north.

Now I'm more than 2/3 through. I am SUCH a slow reader, and this book is SUCH a force, I keep staying up way too late reading "just one more section."

This is a book that explores what the idea "relationship" means now - in the art world, between friends and "frenz," and between parallelisms within figurative constructions, esp. as relates to poetics, but also other art forms. I'm really loving the way Viegner gently, though not timidly, and with the twinkling elegance of The Baroness, critiques simple statements about allegory and conceptual art, especially when he nods toward Acker's history of friendships and Hejinian's essay "On Closure" (Acker and Hejinian were my two earliest writing mentors, and that makes Viegner a close literary relative, but that doesn't mean I'm being hyperbolic in my praise here.) I will post again, as I finish.

Abby says

This feels like the book where one guy learns how to write a book. He makes rules and breaks them. He has ideas about narrative, randomness, not wanting people to form ideas about him, what people like to read, repetition, and the role of the sentence. He creates form and then fights it constantly. He decides what the constraint is good for and what makes it impossible. He gets constant feedback and responds to it.

But the brain is pattern-seeking, and that's at least one of the biggest appeals of language. We search for the verb in a sentence. We search for the story. The experiment is maybe whether this structure is enough of a pattern to keep us happy, and I doubt that it is for most people. But me, I just like a good sentence. To play within a pattern and bump against the walls is enough to entertain me for quite a while. So it could be a bit of a slog, but I'm looking back on this fondly.

J.I. says

Unique, thoughtful, brutal and striking, this book is a really great collection of semi-random things that ultimately feels flat. It never really succeeds at being anything other than a memoir, only formally challenging, and the formal choice (lists of 25 "random" facts) tends to strip some of the stories of depth, and while there are times when the sparsity fuels the imagination, mostly what happens is that we are given all of the facts, but none of the imaginative details. Interesting, but ultimately only a light snack.

Fredrik says

/ EXPLANATION / I wrote down the name of every person mentioned in this book. It was an idea I had when reading Patti Smith's book, but it never materialized. To be honest, I was 90-some pages in to Viegner's book before I resolved to do this project, so I backtracked. I realize now that I forgot to include names from the front matter. If people were mentioned multiple times, they were only listed once. My reading was sporadic, however, so sometimes names are listed more than once. I'd simply forget what I recorded in my previous reading. Sometimes these names would be unfamiliar to me (Pipilloti Rist, James McHugh) and sometimes they'd be very familiar (Carolee Schneemann, Christ). I'd lay on the couch, pillow propping me up (and feeling a bit Proustian). One person per line (mostly) with a black Sharpie in a russell+hazel notebook. Getting ink on my hands was a concern. And I felt bad when I put two short names on one line, as if these people weren't important enough to be on a line of their own. The order becomes interesting: "Anne Sexton, Rupert Everett, Paul Eluard." Or "Dennis Cooper, Fonz, Tennessee Williams." I noticed that my sloppy handwriting got sloppier as I got to the bottom of each page. Somebody on a bus once asked me how long I'd been "writing in Chinese." I ran out of notebook pages, so I crudely bound the notebook with extra pages. I stitched together photos of each page of names and tweeted it.

Vincent Scarpa says

An extremely singular project in which form and content are sometimes at odds, sometimes harmonious in their disharmony, and then at other times exactly suited for one another. A study in repetition, arrangement, order, the (im)possibility of "randomness." This is the first book of Viegner's I've read, and I'll surely read

more. So many moments of brutal tenderness. (Only small complaint: it really feels like he goes out of his way to make sure we know he was **very close** with Kathy Acker, which, cool, but it approaches a feeling of exploitation here and there.)

Glen Retief says

Pretentious.

Deonne Kahler says

If you don't go into this thinking it'll be a memoir (which is how I heard it described), you won't be disappointed. It definitely feels "random," but there's also an interesting cohesiveness that carries you through to the end. Sort of like reading the diary of a smart, funny, insightful person. (I was surprised to see someone I know referenced in the book, which I have to admit made me like it even more.) Recommended, especially if you're interested in innovative forms.

Cheryl Klein says

1. This book will make you think in lists.
2. In a good way.
3. Lists are not the opposite of narrative. More like a way to braid narrative without getting bogged down by transitions.
4. So, more like life? Except sometimes in life I get bogged down by transitions.
5. If you feel highly suspicious of a book that began as a Facebook meme and is now being sold as experimental literature, you are not alone. If you tend to seek the opposite of these things when you read, you are not alone.
6. BUT this book is proof that fragmentation is not the death of warmth. Not on Facebook, not in academia.
7. Sometimes this book feels like a hug.
8. Death stalks the lists.
9. This book feels like the freshest representation of the Holocaust that I've read in a long time, because it performs the ripple effect. How the Holocaust lives in a torn-down jail in Germany, in the odd habits of parents and grandparents, in Argentina, in our minds.
10. It doesn't seem fair that the Holocaust has to be made fresh. Why is the realness of a thing never enough in literature?
11. But it's not.
12. My name is on page 126.
13. But that's not why I love this book. It's not!
14. I might love it a little, though, because I know Matias as a person, and I know that he sometimes seems like a hug.
15. I remember Peggy, the dying dalmatian who forms the thing most closely resembling a narrative frame, which is a charming way for this particular dog to defy her master, in addition to rooting through the trash.
16. What I remember about Peggy: Matias once said he liked to wear spectator shoes when he walked her, for the alternating flashes of black and white.
17. Also that when she was a puppy he would never chase after her, so she learned to return to him on her

own.

18. Here is a list item I like: "You need to hold onto the idea that accidents are possible. And that they have no purpose so that you, we, or I can spend time making sense of them and filling them with meaning."

19. Here's another: "I am using the most obvious devices here: mixing genres or styles, for example pairing the sentimental with the obscene."

20. The self-referential nature of this book feels honest and immediate, not gimmicky.

21. I was only going to say ten things about this book, but now I feel like I've got to go all the way to twenty-five.

22. I like how Matias writes about Erik Snyder: "He wrote about parking lots, tennis courts, water sprinklers going off at night and getting him wet." There was something about Erik's work that was so vivid and quiet at the same time.

23. I can imagine the name-checking seeming confusing or snobby, but I actually think it creates intimacy, the way that Facebook does on a good day. Like, hey everybody, welcome to the party!

24. Sometimes I imagined how easy this book must have been to write. It's just a bunch of lists!

25. Other times it's so poetic, I would believe it took years to write if I hadn't seen it unfold in real time.

What takes years is the thinking and the living and the living of the thinking.
