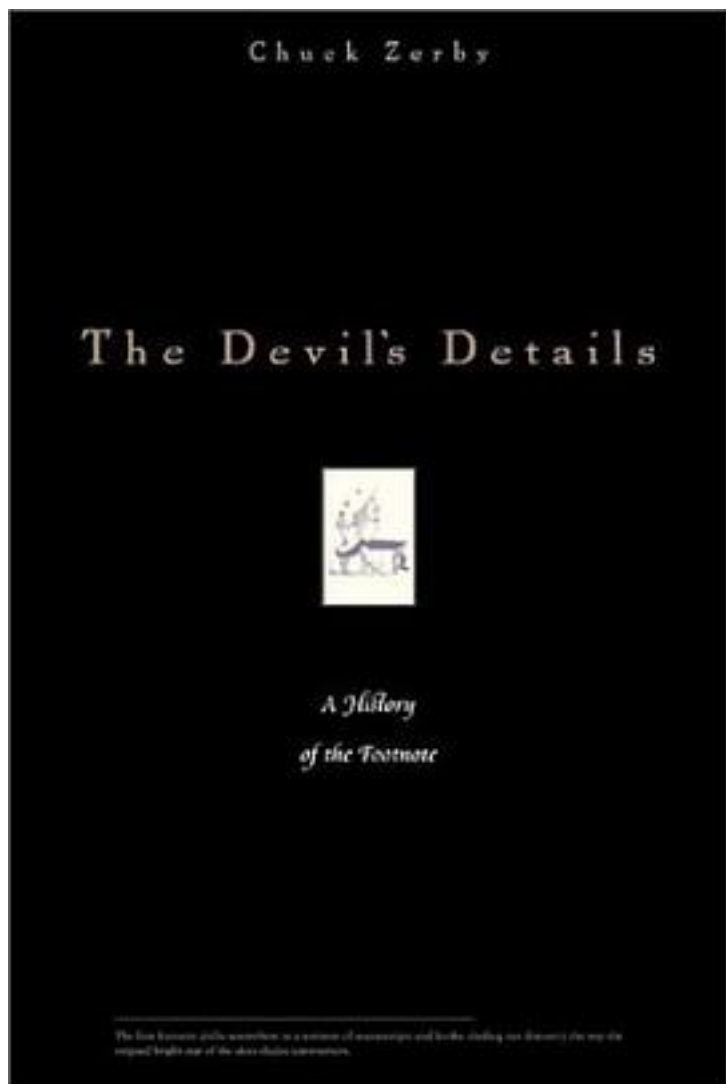


The Devil's Details



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著者:Chuck Zerby

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Footnotes, in *The Devil's Details*, are people, characters, heroes, and sexual beings. These heroes' adventures are followed from the early years of struggle in the seventeenth century through their triumphant dominance of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature and scholarship, to the harsh, undeserved belittlement they have received in the twentieth century. *The Devil's Details* ends with twenty-first-century footnotes facing a new world of Internet and hypertext, and makes a clarion call to preserve footnotes from the black hole of virtual reality. This is the first book to examine footnotes in their less buttoned-down incarnations as well as their traditional ones: scholars have employed them, of course, but also poets, novelists, memorialists, and pornographers.

The Devil's Details is full of surprises. It hunts down the first genuine, fully functioning footnote (in the early sixteenth century), and makes bold speculations as it pieces together a rough scenario of the first genuinely dramatic use of a footnote, an annotation in a seventeenth-century poem by England's first female poet. A multivolume history of Northumberland County (England) that uses one entire volume for a single footnote is located. Footnotes to footnotes to footnotes are peered at as if they were receding images in mirrors; extraordinarily frank discussions of sex and finances are uncovered, and a murder plot, perhaps occasioned by a scholarly dispute, is recorded.

Carefully researched and strongly opinionated, *The Devil's Details* is bound to be as controversial as it is entertaining. The history of the footnote has a marvelous plot with eccentric heroes and black-hearted villains, and the rogues' gallery of figures who play parts in *The Devil's Details* includes Alexander Pope, Herman Melville, Captain Richard Burton, Edward Gibbon, Norman Mailer, Hilaire Belloc, John Updike, Martin Amis, and Dave Eggers. Scholars, Ph.D. candidates, and lovers of the book everywhere will find in *The Devil's Details* that delight in reading can come in unexpected places—even right at the bottom of the page.

Chuck Zerby developed *The Devil's Details* from an article he originally published in the *New York Times*. A former columnist for the *Amherst Record* and former dean of campus and director of admissions, Zerby lives in Hadley, Massachusetts.

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