An Introduction to Reddit

“The Front Page of the Internet”
What is Reddit?

• A content-sharing online community
• Good content is “upvoted” by the community to the front pages of the site, weak content is “downvoted” and not widely seen
• Organized into user-created “subreddits” devoted to specific topics. Examples of popular subreddits include politics, world news, technology, photography, gaming, and science
Noam Chomsky: The US would be recognized as a top terrorist state if international law was applied.

AlterNet: Big Banks Are Knee-Deep in the Dirty Money-Laundering Business: U.S. and UK financial firms are pretending they haven't been deeply involved in the dark side of banking.

"How do Fortune 500 companies pay zero in taxes while college loans go up to 6 percent?" Elizabeth Warren asked. "This game is rigged."

No single financial institution should be so large that its failure would cause catastrophic risk to millions of American jobs or to our nation's economic wellbeing. If an institution is too big to fail, it is too big to exist.

The place for U.S. politics.
For non-U.S. politics and news please consider:

Politics


"We would already be fully recovered out of this recession if it was not for Republican obstructionists blocking every single thing that could help the economy." - Alabama man who confronted his congressman at a town hall meeting talks to Sam Seder about how austerity has crippled his business.

South Carolina Christian School Is The Source Of The Crazy 4th Grade 'Science' Test: This school gave an A+ to a student who answered that the Earth and dinosaurs were not billions of years old, that God created dinosaurs on the 6th day, and that dinosaurs live together with humans in the past.

US suicide rates surge, surpass road fatalities.

Los Angeles Times: Time to wake from the American Dream and face retirement reality.

The New York Times: House of Un-Representatives -- "...we have an insular, aggressively ignorant House of Representatives that is not at all representative of the public will, let alone the makeup of the country."

Principal fires security guards to hire art teachers — and transforms elementary school.
Discussion is as central as content

Noam Chomsky: The US would be recognized as a top terrorist state if international law was applied.

I love the U.S. but I recently looked into the FAA (Foreign Aid Administration), and how it alone would disqualify the U.S. from receiving U.S. foreign aid. America, one with normal people that just want to work and another America in charge of foreign policy that operates over ideals, parameters.

You're not connecting the dots enough. The "regular" America is not the "harsh" America. Now increasingly the actions of "harsh" America tend to be the way we pretend like our actions around the world don't have a mutual whole.

It's interesting that we Americans get lots of cheap goods from these policies. I personally remember back in the 80's when the whole "Made in the USA" ... let's call it a fad. Hit. Seems to me, that spending a few extra bucks for something made in the states could help us financially, while also lessening the need for such a harsh foreign policy.

I came to this decision years ago and have been trying to buy everything I could as local as possible, and not too surprising... it hasn't been THAT bad financially on me. Even started doing it with my food. Buying meat from a local farm, and being part of a vegetable co-op.

I'm hoping more and more Americans start to do this and realize that keeping your money circulating locally instead of giving it to companies who hold a lot of their money overseas... probably the better decision overall.
Discussion can be the content itself
Discussion can be the content itself

Who is alive today that will still be remembered 2000 years from now? (self.AskReddit)
submitted 21 hours ago by JmfJu
9834 comments  share
top 200 comments show 500

sorted by: top ▼

Not alive but Neil Armstrong is a relatively modern person who won't be forgotten
permalink

[-] acesoed 2845 points 21 hours ago
Not alive but Neil Armstrong is a relatively modern person who won't be forgotten

[-] rawbamic 1148 points 21 hours ago
I want to believe this but how many people know the name of the first man in space? Eventually it will become unimportant and forgotten.
EDIT: Just because you might know who Yuri Gagarin is, doesn't mean the average person does. You are all guilty of the curse of knowledge. Read up on the false-consensus effect, and stop thinking that the average person knows what you know (they do not).
permalink  parent

[-] FreckleyFace 2272 points 20 hours ago
Yuri Gagarin? That's very well known.
permalink  parent

[-] rawbamic 1357 points 20 hours ago
Among the more educated, yes. Ask the common person and they will have no idea. Give it a couple hundred years and likely only a select few will know that, let alone two millennia.
permalink  parent

[-] neglect_your_dad 696 points 19 hours ago
I think the common Russian would know. Don't know about 2000 years though
permalink  parent

[-] Vimsefreet 395 points 18 hours ago
If we're going to go by the least common demonination, then probably Hitler and Stalin/Lenin. Maybe Neil Armstrong. Or whomever is the first settler on Mars.
Why should we care?

**last month**, reddit had **169,026,326** unique visitors hailing from over **209** different countries viewing a total of **7,553,570,911** pages

**yesterday**, reddit powered **9,415** active communities consisting of over **3,819,488** logged in redditors casting over **26,436,078** votes
Why should we care?

• Reddit is the 25th most visited site in the world, with 5x more visitors than nytimes.com
• Engagement on the site is extremely high
• One of the internet’s largest public forums, Reddit is a breeding ground for “viral” content
• Because Reddit content isn’t thought of as belonging to any single media outlet, many outlets claim and repost content
How can we use it?

• Visit reddit.com/r/berkeley for story ideas and to keep a pulse on the community
• Use the Berkeley subreddit to publicize on-campus happenings, conduct customer service, or counter misinformation
• Post stories – especially research – in subreddits relevant to your work area
• Consider how professors could become authorities in various subreddits
• Facilitate an “Ask me Anything” interview
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[New question thread] New and old admits, ask your questions here! (self.berkeley)
submitted 16 hours ago by lulzcakes | call me daddy | [M] - stickied post

The Last Late Night Freshman and Senior Year (imgur.com)
submitted 14 hours ago by mikeyelvis92 | EPhysics '15
2 comments | share

How hard is it for transfers to make friends? (self.berkeley)
submitted 4 hours ago by cshat
5 comments | share

Reentry students: how difficult was admission for you? (self.berkeley)
submitted 3 hours ago by poeticnerd1990
2 comments | share

Good alternative majors to CS? (self.berkeley)
submitted 3 hours ago by dawgisyounadornaw
9 comments | share

ASTRONOMY W12 WBL (self.berkeley)
submitted 3 hours ago by wilpro24
comment | share

Is anon con even happening anymore? (self.berkeley)
submitted 14 minutes ago by guyfierilives
comment | share

What happens when you can't find a sublet for the summer? (self.berkeley)
submitted 4 hours ago by ilovetolurk
2 comments | share
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
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<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Llamas on Sproul right now, belonging to the man in the second picture</td>
<td>imgur.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Cal lost another student. :( RIP senior Paul Hansen, 26.</td>
<td>dailycal.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>to whoever played &quot;one summer's day&quot; at the campanile today</td>
<td>self.berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Couple sitting in car at dirt turn-out on Grizzly Peak Blvd overlook early Friday morning robbed at gunpoint, kidnapped</td>
<td>abc7news.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>I'm running a fundraiser for Doctors without Borders on Dec 6th at Games of Berkeley - I'm calling it a success if I can get 5 players.. but so far I have 2. Anyone up for a game of Pandemic?</td>
<td>facebook.com</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Professor's Unethical Behavior &amp; Violation of Faculty Code of Conduct</td>
<td>self.berkeley</td>
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Power outage (self.berkeley)
submitted 3 hours ago by laprastranform
20 comments share save hide report

Any good books specifically ABOUT UC Berkeley? (self.berkeley)
submitted 13 hours ago by Frauenarrrttt
17 comments share save hide report

On Saturday, Berkeley community activists attempted to raise balloons almost 200 feet high to visualize the impact of a proposed 18-story mixed-use building in Downtown Berkeley, which is currently in the process of receiving approval for construction. (dailycal.org)
submitted 15 hours ago by Samses94
30 comments share save hide report

How soon after graduation do library privileges end? (self.berkeley)
submitted 4 hours ago by hohohomyyy
2 comments share save hide report

Diet advice for muscle building at Berkeley? (self.berkeley)
submitted 21 hours ago by BerkeleyNooob
4 comments share save hide report

Just before the December 2014 Black Lives Matter protests in Berkeley began, police planned to "Get'um (the protesters) running!" and, on the first night of demonstrations, used the bulk of their tear gas and less-than-lethal ammo, according to police documents. (dailycal.org)
submitted 2 hours ago by Samses94
3 comments share save hide report

Q & A and video w/ UC Berkeley urban foraging researcher Philip Stark (ucfodobserver.com)
submitted 10 hours ago by platyvo
comment share save hide report
What is Tang Center doing about Measles? (self.berkeley)
submitted 3 months ago * by pubbless

With current outbreak of Measles I'm a bit upset that neither the university nor Tang Center has addressed what it is doing to limit potential exposure. Some students here are immune compromised, and Measles is highly contagious. I went to Tang Center website and there was an info link for "Ebola and Measles" but the information was only for Ebola. Really? Measles is much more of a threat to public health than Ebola. Edit: of course it's possible I missed some information that was given out, in which case someone please point that out to me.

[-] MichaelDirda  UC Staff: Executive Communications  4 points 3 months ago

here ya go: http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/home/news/measles.shtml

looks like the ebola and measles link is actually two link button (though I can see how it looks like one) - one goes to ebola, one to measles
As much as ELI5 is a fun concept, it's not right for some topics; inherently you lose the necessary nuance embedded within issues that sometimes have enormous complexity. But with that said, here's my shot at at least simplifying and summarizing (and in case it's not clear, I do work for UC Berkeley - for Dirks, not Napolitano):

On the most fundamental level, the funding battles are about whether or not higher education should be a public good - paid for by the state through taxpayer money - or a private one, paid for by the people who attend the school. This is a difficult issue tied up in political ideology and questions of who should attend college (everyone? those who can afford it?), who benefits from it (the attendee, or the state via economic contributions/increased spending power/more intelligent and productive workforce) and what it's for (forming character, teaching how to be a learner, expanding human knowledge, developing a workforce?).

For a long time, it was taken as a given that public education was a public good, and that's why your grandpa went to Berkeley for $12 a semester - taxpayers essentially paid his real bill. For reasons political, economic, and cultural - from recession cuts to mistrust of public institutions to political maneuvering to concerns (valid or not) about the value of college - the state of California has steadily lessened the amount of tax dollars that it provides the UC system in the last twenty years. Less central but still important to note has been an expansion in the role of college - aside from simple classroom learning, we now we have, say, entrepreneurship competitions and rec sports and a career center. So we have less public money, and a higher cost of college.

Napolitano sees the university's financial situation as precarious, and in an effort to make up the budget shortfall, is proposing to raise student tuition if the state doesn't reinvest public money in UC - she feels the university has to get money somehow to stay elite, and if not through the state then it'll have to be through tuition. This is essentially a threat; she doesn't want to have to do it, and if Governor Brown gives UC more money, she pulls back the tuition increases. Students are dismayed both that they may have to pay more for school next year and also that they're a bargaining chip of sorts - this is what's causing protests (although they are sometimes conflated with other issues).

Governor Brown, for his part, feels that UC has a third option: that the university doesn't actually need all the money in its budget. If it adopted more online courses, shifted to offering three-year degrees, and let the private universities be the elite ones, then UC would do fine with the state allocation it gets and still not have to raise tuition. He and Napolitano are now hammering out their differences and we'll know this summer where things end up.

I've left out a number of things here so Chloee please don't quote me =) For what it's worth, in my view it's Brown's position that I wish students would get up in arms about. What would it mean for us, California, the world if UC made the changes he has proposed, and lost its status as the model for public higher education? What it would mean for UC to be another Ohio State?
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Scientists bred extremely sexually attractive male mosquitoes whose offspring are unable to breed. So these mosquitoes will hopefully dominate the mosquito gene pool, and in a generation or two, billions of mosquito larvae will be reproductive dead-ends.

Science AMA Series: We are Dr. Bharat Bhushan and Dr. Philip Brown of The Ohio State University and we study nature’s surfaces to create solutions to human problems, from oil spills like Deepwater Horizon to fogged up glasses. AUA!

Double blind study finds no evidence for aspartame sensitivity. "Acute ingestion of aspartame does not have any detectable psychological or metabolic effects in humans." 

Facebook Says You Filter News More Than Its Algorithm Does: A Facebook study of 10 million users shows that your selection of friends holds more sway than filtering algorithms when it comes to seeing news from opposing political viewpoints.

Scientists have found evidence of a four billion year old ancient magnetic field on Mercury, according to new data from NASA’s Messenger mission. The discovery means Mercury has the oldest confirmed magnetic field of any terrestrial world in the inner solar system.
The War On Drugs Is Over (If You Want It): Want to end the war on drugs? Don't lobby Congress. Lobby your local police department. They've quietly had the power to end the whole thing this entire time—and some are doing just that. thedailybeast.com

Florida Struggles to Pay the Tab for Rejecting Obamacare Governor Rick Scott and conservative state lawmakers are finding that it's not so easy to cover the poor without expanding Medicaid. theatlantic.com

The Draft Warren movement needs to end. With Sanders running, it's time for progressives to embrace the populist candidate who's actually running for president. amarina.aljazera.com

U.S. economy adds 223,000 jobs; Unemployment rate drops to 5.4% money.cnn.com

Bring on the Class War: Bernie Sanders Dreams of a Revolution in 2016 - In his view, the electoral system is set up to deter those outside the political process from getting involved, insulating those inside the process from any inconvenient consequences of democracy. vice.com

You are not a subscribed member of this community. Please respect that by not downvoting.
Found the /r/cfb brick at Doak Campbell Stadium! (self.CFB)

CBS Sports Network to Carry MAC Football and Basketball (muredhawks.com)

Awful Announcing: "Mark May Flew Too Close to the Sun on the Wings of Jackass Trolling Punditry" (awfulannouncing.com)

Article on the likelihood of EA's NCAA College Football returning (httpnpass.com)

Joe Schad says Greyson Lambert from UVA to UGA a done deal (self.CFB)

Max Wittek named starting QB at Hawaii (self.CFB)
Heart rate (bpm) during marriage proposal [OC]

100m sprints over the last 118 years

The gap between male and female literacy in India is closing fast [OC]

Jews Are Returning To Germany [OC]

62% of US Cut Christmas Trees Come from Oregon and North Carolina [OC]

World Population Will Soar Higher Than Predicted

Russia's economy has grown by 800% since Putin took power.
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IF sound could travel through space, how loud would the Sun be?

Do creatures such as cuttlefish and octopuses get "tired" from using their camouflage?

Do human beings make noises/sounds that are either too low/high frequency for humans to hear?

Why does the Human body reject transplanted organs/tissue and proceed to destroy them but it doesn't kill parasites like worms?

If the Universe were shrunk to something akin to the size of Earth, what would the scale for stars, planets, etc. be?

Is it theoretically possible for a nuclear reaction to happen randomly on Earth (i.e. in nature)?
Do creatures such as cuttlefish and octopuses get "tired" from using their camouflage? If not, why don't they just always use their camouflage?

Camouflage is mediated through two channels: i) hormonal and ii) neuronal. Hormonal pathways operate on the order of hours-days, whereas neuronal pathways are rapid (8 seconds in the fish I observe). I am not familiar with octopus in general, but with flatfish, the mechanisms driving their camouflage remain persistent over time given a stable environment. Octopus are capable of adding a three dimensional component to their *Crypsis* (mimicking seaweed texture, etc.) which is muscular, and I imagine would experience fatigue like any other muscle.
Why does Turkey still deny the Armenian genocide?

Between the Prophet Muhammad's time and Jesus Christ's time, where there other people in nearby areas who were treated as Prophets but their religion did not last?

Why has Russia historically maintained roughly the same borders and not disintegrated into various states?

How serious a loss was the burning of the Library of Alexandria to human knowledge?

Did people smoke anything in Europe before tobacco was brought from America?

My German Meteorologist Grandfather Saved Hitler's Life. Or did he?

How did the maturity age came to be 18 years old in so many parts of the world?

Julius Caesar wrote an autobiography while conquering Gaul. Is there a recommended or 'standard' English translation?
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• Facilitate an “Ask me Anything” interview
The AMA Interview
I am __________________________. Ask me anything.

a plumber
a male model
Steven Levitt
a google engineer
Snoop Dogg
a US park ranger
a WWII veteran
a Supermax prison guard
Barack Obama
a citizen of North Korea
a cab driver
living with albinism
Nate Silver
Arrested Development's "Catalina Island" is on redditgifts. (redditgifts.com)

I am a Tim Schafer, AMA! (self.IAmA)
submitted 4 hours ago by TimOfLegend
2079 comments share

I am Logic, a new hip hop artist signed to Def Jam, AMA!! (self.IAmA)
submitted 3 hours ago by WelcomeToForever
811 comments share

IAMA high stakes Blackjack player that got banned from 47 casinos at once. They call me Dr. Blackjack. My name is Sam Barrington, author of Ask Dr. Blackjack. Ask Me Anything!
(self.IAmA)
submitted 3 hours ago by SamBarrington
1306 comments share

I was in Guantanamo last month. Ask me anything. (self.IAmA)
submitted 3 hours ago by ryanfreillyHP
113 comments share

I Am Tim "Livewire" Shieff I live 'Life in a Handstand' Parkour/Freerunning is my art - Ask Me Anything (self.IAmA)
submitted 3 hours ago by LondonRealt
172 comments share

Justin Lee AKA Anyonyg Bluth from Arrested Development - Ask Me Anything :) (self.IAmA)
submitted 23 hours ago by JustinSlee
1403 comments share

I am Christine Ha, MasterChef Season 3 Winner. Ask me anything! (self.IAmA)
submitted 21 hours ago by theblindcook
479 comments share

IAMA US Navy veteran that took all the belongings I could fit in my seabag, and moved to Rural Finland. AMA. (self.IAmA)
submitted 5 hours ago by ThatDamnSteve
61 comments share
One Example
An AMA with the other Michael Dirda
I am a book critic. Ask me anything.

- a plumber
- a male model
- Steven Levitt
- a google engineer
- Snoop Dogg
- a US park ranger
- a WWII veteran
- a Supermax prison guard
- Barack Obama
- a citizen of North Korea
- a cab driver
- living with albinism
- Nate Silver
Hi reddit,

Dirda's son here. My dad's not the redditor type, but in spite of that he's still a pretty interesting guy—he's a longtime book reviewer and columnist for the Washington Post and an author of many books about reading and writers—so I'm having him sit down for the next few hours to answer questions about book reviewing, tell stories about his author friends (including, yes, Neil Gaiman), and offer book recommendations on any topic. He's not a big braggart so I'll brag for him: He's been called the most well-read man in America (most notably by Michael Kinsley), he's an expert on Arthur Conan Doyle and his most recent book on the guy won an Edgar Award, and he once almost bought a thumb from a gypsy in France.

I'm really here to help him navigate the site and coach him on how to respond to questions about things like baconing narwhal. I won't influence the content of his answers—I'll be typing up exactly what he says. I'll also post a picture of his Pulitzer on top of our cat.

Edit: Cat and Pulitzer: http://i.imgur.com/d26Yb.jpg

Edit 2: 3:45PM - We've been at it for a few hours now, so we're taking a break and will be back to answer more later this afternoon. Thanks guys!

Edit 3: We're back now (6pm) and will do a few now, and another run later this evening!

Edit 4: Taking another break—we'll try to do one more sweep in an hour or so. Thanks for all the questions, guys!

Edit 5: Ok guys, calling it quits since I think the papa is a bit fried from hours of doing this. Thanks to all who asked questions, and apologies to those whose questions we missed. My dad really wanted to dethrone Stoya as the top post of the subreddit, so maybe we'll do another sometime.
I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America. (self.IAmA) submitted 11 months ago* by MichaelDirda

[-] Pack041 58 points 11 months ago
How do you feel about the trend of reading books electronically? Do you think this takes away from the mystique of reading hard copies, or is it a positive trend if people begin to read more?

[permalink]

[[-] MichaelDirda 277 points 11 months ago
Of course, anything that encourages people to read more--and, better yet--more widely is all to the good. But your point about "mystique" is an important one. I think e-book readers tend to slightly flatten the reading experience, making all books look roughly alike. I think books should be different in look and feel. Raymond Chandler ought to be read in a cheap paperback with a leggy blonde on the cover; Henry James demands some stately format like the New York Edition. I also like to read first editions, or editions close to when a book first appeared, because this adds what Walter Benjamin called a certain "aura." I also worry that reading on screens invites quick reading, almost scanning, rather than the slow immersion that serious reading requires. But I don't want to make too much of this. People probably complained when the codex first appeared and said "What was wrong with scrolls?"

[permalink] parent

[[-] strixxvaria 67 points 11 months ago
I work for a library, and being privy to many discussions on this topic, I just want to say that this is the best response I've ever heard someone give to this question. Wonderfully stated.

[permalink] parent

[[-] Rainymood_XI 16 points 11 months ago
People probably complained when the codex first appeared and said "What was wrong with scrolls?"

Haha, terrific quote!

[permalink] parent

[[-] Sirhossington 29 points 11 months ago
At some point (and apologies if I've missed this), but I feel like e-books will offer the opportunity for an author to work with an artist to embellish the books in a digital format that may not be possible in a traditional book format. We can now add shading, footnotes, outside references, and other add-ons with little to no cost. A thriller write like Brown could add easter eggs to his e-books that lead you on a digital world scavenger hunt. A writer like Gaiman can add length to his books that had to be cut form earlier versions.

E-books may not have the weight and gravity of a real book, but they may offer more than just a one size fits all format.
At least I hope.
I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America. (self.IAmA)

submitted 11 months ago* by MichaelDirda

[-] Ambivalent_Fanatic 44 points 11 months ago

There's been a very popular thread in /r/books today saying that people who self-publish their own books or e-books have no right to call themselves published, and that they are attempting to glorify themselves by doing so. Other people say that traditional publishers have acted as they gatekeeper for too long, and have an inflated sense of their own importance. Do you think that the publishing industry is actually changing because of the self-publishing and e-books revolutions, or do you think that we are just seeing a lot more dreck?

permalink

[-] MichaelDirda [S] 48 points 11 months ago

There are certainly arguments to be made for self-publishing— A teacher of mine wrote a memoir that was brought out by the old vanity press Vantage and I wrote an introduction to it. Gertrude Stein self-published the Plain Edition, etc etc. Still, I basically feel that if you've written something that people actually want to read a reputable publisher—small or big, university press or trade house—will want to publish it. I do worry that the avalanche of self-publishing functions a bit like Gresham's Law—bad money drives out good. But, as you say, publishing is very much in flux and who knows what the industry will look like in another 20 years.

permalink  parent

load more comments (1 reply)

load more comments (2 replies)

[-] adrianh 40 points 11 months ago

Let's talk logistics: How do you manage to read so many books, so often? Is it just that you make reading your top priority and spend every waking moment doing it, or do you read particularly quickly? Or both?

permalink

[-] MichaelDirda [S] 92 points 11 months ago

I'm not at all a speed reader—I move my lips while I read. But I am dogged and I do like to read. I even like to write, which probably sounds even more unlikely. And you're right: I don't do a lot that other people do. Very few movies. Almost no television. I try to keep my interactions with computers restricted to writing and emails. Hence, no Facebook or social networking, which I regard as time-sinks. I come from a working class family and as a kid I really wanted to feel at home in the world, and through reading books I gained something of that sense of being educated, even—dread word—cosmopolitan. But mostly I like learning things and books to me are still the primary way of doing that.
I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America.

Are you a fan of Hunter S Thompson?

My copy of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas is inscribed: "To Mike, with thanks for getting me the crack cocaine in Boston, Your friend, Hunter." The inscription is genuine. We won't look into what I did for Hunter in Boston.

Edit--Here you go: http://i.imgur.com/VF2W1.jpg

That is awesome. Best. Answer. Ever.
I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America. (self.IAmA)

submitted 11 months ago* by MichaelDirda
Michael Dirda’s AMA on reddit:

130,000 pageviews

4,845 upvotes

461 questions or comments
Renowned literary critic Michael Dirda, egged on by his son, opened up for an "ask me anything" session on the community website Reddit. If you like Dirda, or books, you'll probably enjoy the thread: "I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America."

My favorite exchange:

**Kiwiwastingtime**: Are you a fan of Hunter S Thompson?

**MichaelDirda**: My copy of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas is inscribed: "To Mike, with thanks for getting me the crack cocaine in Boston, Your friend, Hunter." The inscription is genuine. We won't look into what I did for Hunter in Boston. *Edit*—Here you go: http://i.imgur.com/VF2W1.jpg.

Read on at Reddit, and note that you'll have to click "Show more comments" at the bottom of the page repeatedly in order to see the whole exchange.
Michael Dirda Answers Questions on Reddit

By Jason Boog on May 16, 2012 1:23 PM

What is the worst book you've ever read?

Pulitzer Prize-winning book critic and author Michael Dirda held an epic “Ask Me Anything” interview at Reddit, fielding questions online from readers about self-publishing, Amazon and the worst books he ever reviewed.

At one point, he talked about the worst book he'd ever read. Check it out: “Judith Krantz’s Dazzle. Even the sex in the book was boilerplate, a totally meretricious work. John Sutherland—a distinguished English authority on the novel and the best seller—once included Dazzle in his list of the 25 worst novels of the century.”

The critic also talked about Amazon reviews: “I find that the amazon comments often are exceptionally shrewd and insightful, so I'm not going to diss them. But you don't really have any guarantees that what you're reading wasn't written out of friendship or spite. Critics for established venues are vetted by editors; they usually demonstrate a certain objectivity; and they come with known backgrounds and specialized knowledge. People who've read my reviews know my tastes, know how I approach a book, know my background. I can write with believable authority. It doesn't mean I'm always right. Ultimately, of course, the writing is what counts. We read certain critics because we like their style, their enthusiasm, their minds. I think of my own work as part of a decades long conversation about books and reading with people I will mainly never meet.”

He shared thoughts on self-publishing: “There are certainly arguments to be made for self-publishing—A teacher of mine wrote a memoir that was brought out by the old vanity press Vantage and I wrote an introduction to it. Gertrude Stein self-published the Plain Edition, etc etc. Still, I basically feel that if you've written something that people actually want to read, a reputable
Ask Me Anything: Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning Book Reviewer

Take a moment to read this exchange from the AMA Reddit with Norton author Michael Dirda. Not since Here We Go Magic picked up the hitchhiking John Waters have we been so delightfully surprised by the internet:

Redditor Question: Are you a fan of Hunter S. Thompson?

Michael Dirda: My copy of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas is inscribed: “To Mike, with thanks for getting me the crack in Boston, Your friend, Hunter.” The inscription is genuine. We won’t look into what I did for Hunter in Boston.

Don’t worry, there’s a photo. Check out the entire Reddit discussion here.

TAGS  michael dirda
Social

LitRelish.com Everything about the love of literature

IAmA Famous Book Critic
Matthew Schantz | May 17, 2012

Pulitzer prize winning book critic Michael Dirda joined Reddit and invited the internet to ask him anything, among the highlights—the worst book he’s ever read, an allusion to a scoring crack for Hunter S. Thompson, and a picture of Dirda’s

Michael Dirda | Pulitzer Prize | Hunter S. Thompson | Dirda | Book by Book: Notes on Reading and Life | Arthur Conan Doyle | Mystery Writers of America | Sherlock Holmes

bookshelves of doom
Book news, reviews, my life, and anything else I think is interesting.

10 MAY 2012
AMA with Michael Dirda, superstar of the literary criticism world.

At Reddit:

I'm not at all a speed reader—I move my lips while I read. But I am dogged and I do love to read. I even like to write, which probably sounds even more unlikely. And you're right. I don't do a lot that other people do. Very few movies. Almost no television. I try to keep my interactions with computers restricted to writing and emails. Hence, no Facebook or social networking, which I regard as time-sinks. I come from a working class family and as a kid I really wanted to feel at home in the world, and through reading books I gained something of that sense of being educated, even—dread word—cosmopolitan. But mostly I like learning things and books to me are still the primary way of doing that.

(via GalleyCat)
Social

David John Gutowski • 194 followers
May 12, 2012 at 6:38pm

Michael Dirda, literary critic, is doing an IAmA interview at Reddit.

I am Michael Dirda, Pulitzer-Prize winning book critic who has been called the best-read man in America
www.reddit.com
Hi reddit, Dirda's son here. My dad's not the redditor type, but in spite of that he's still a pretty interesting guy— he's a longtime book reviewer...

tremulationsupontheether likes this

ruff-draft likes this

rugglespygge reblogged this from wwnorton

rugglespygge likes this

k4r1ss4 likes this

bookavore likes this

prefer-not-to likes this

laughterkey reblogged this from peterwknox

oldmanandtheblog likes this

peterwknox reblogged this from wwnorton and added
A successful AMA will:

• Feature a subject that appeals to reddit’s audience of predominantly male, college-educated 18-35 year olds
• Not be overly promotional, but allow the community to drive the conversation
• Use candor, openness, honesty, and thoughtfulness in responding to questions
• Be an investment of at least one to two hours, and answer 30+ questions
I am a planet hunter. Ask me anything.
I am an expert on Mark Twain. Ask me anything.

a plumber
a male model
Steven Levitt
a google engineer
Snoop Dogg
a US park ranger
a WWII veteran
a Supermax prison guard
Barack Obama
a citizen of North Korea
a cab driver
living with albinism
Nate Silver
I am a former US poet laureate. Ask me anything.

a plumber
a male model
Steven Levitt
a google engineer
Snoop Dogg
a US park ranger
a WWII veteran
a Supermax prison guard
Barack Obama
a citizen of North Korea
a cab driver
living with albinism
Nate Silver
I am studying invisibility cloaks. Ask me anything.

- a plumber
- a male model
- Steven Levitt
- a google engineer
- Snoop Dogg
- a US park ranger
- studying invisibility cloaks
- a WWII veteran
- a Supermax prison guard
- Barack Obama
- a citizen of North Korea
- a cab driver
- living with albinism
- Nate Silver
I am a world-leading sleep expert. Ask me anything.
I am a biographer of Richard Pryor. Ask me anything.

a plumber
a male model
Steven Levitt
a google engineer
Snoop Dogg
a US park ranger
a WWII veteran
a Supermax prison guard
Barack Obama
a citizen of North Korea
a cab driver
living with albinism
Nate Silver
I am Missy Franklin. Ask me anything.
I am a college residential director. Ask me anything.

a plumber
a male model
Steven Levitt
a google engineer
Snoop Dogg
a US park ranger
a WWII veteran
a Supermax prison guard
Barack Obama
a citizen of North Korea
a cab driver
living with albinism
Nate Silver
I am _______________________. Ask me anything.

- a plumber
- a male model
- Steven Levitt
- a google engineer
- Snoop Dogg
- a US park ranger
- Steve Wozniak
- a WWII veteran
- a Supermax prison guard
- Barack Obama
- a citizen of North Korea
- a cab driver
- living with albinism
- Nate Silver
I am _______________.

Ask me anything.

- a plumber
- a male model
- Steven Levitt
- a google engineer
- Snoop Dogg
- a US park ranger
- Chancellor of UC Berkeley
- a WWII veteran
- a Supermax prison guard
- Barack Obama
- a citizen of North Korea
- a cab driver
- living with albinism
- Nate Silver
How can we use Reddit?

• Visit reddit.com/r/berkeley for story ideas and to keep a pulse on the community
• Use the Berkeley subreddit to publicize on-campus happenings, conduct customer service, or counter misinformation
• Post stories – especially research – in subreddits relevant to your work area
• Consider how professors could become authorities in various subreddits
• Facilitate an “Ask me Anything” interview
Done!
Go forth and reddit!