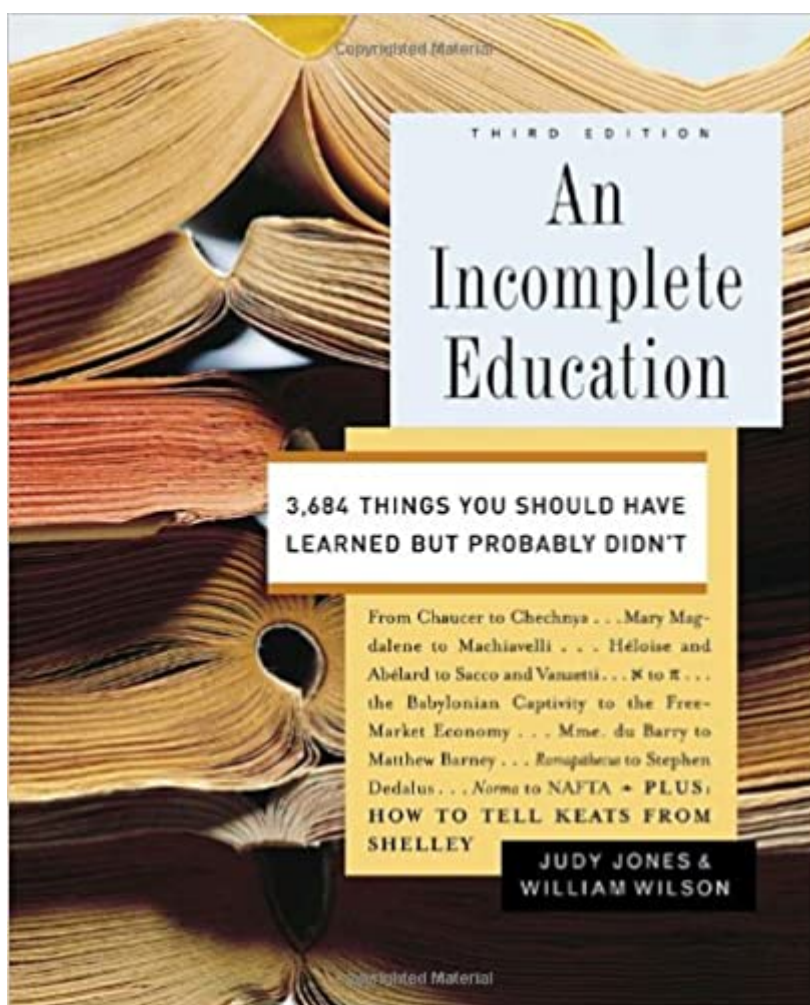


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# An Incomplete Education: 3,684 Things You Should Have Learned But Probably Didn't



## Synopsis

When it was originally published in 1987, *An Incomplete Education* became a surprise bestseller. Now this instant classic has been completely updated, outfitted with a whole new arsenal of indispensable knowledge on global affairs, popular culture, economic trends, scientific principles, and modern arts. Here's your chance to brush up on all those subjects you slept through in school, reacquaint yourself with all the facts you once knew (then promptly forgot), catch up on major developments in the world today, and become the Renaissance man or woman you always knew you could be! How do you tell the Balkans from the Caucasus? What's the difference between fission and fusion? Whigs and Tories? Shiites and Sunnis? Deduction and induction? Why aren't all Shakespearean comedies necessarily thigh-slappers? What are transcendental numbers and what are they good for? What really happened in Plato's cave? Is postmodernism dead or just having a bad hair day? And for extra credit, when should you use the adjective continual and when should you use continuous? *An Incomplete Education* answers these and thousands of other questions with incomparable wit, style, and clarity. American Studies, Art History, Economics, Film, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, Science, and World History: Here's the bottom line on each of these major disciplines, distilled to its essence and served up with consummate flair. In this revised edition you'll find a vitally expanded treatment of international issues, reflecting the seismic geopolitical upheavals of the past decade, from economic free-fall in South America to Central Africa's world war, and from violent radicalization in the Muslim world to the crucial trade agreements that are defining globalization for the twenty-first century. And don't forget to read the section *A Nervous American's Guide to Living and Loving on Five Continents* before you answer a personal ad in the *International Herald Tribune*. As delightful as it is illuminating, *An Incomplete Education* packs ten thousand years of culture into a single superbly readable volume. This is a book to celebrate, to share, to give and receive, to pore over and browse through, and to return to again and again.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for An Incomplete Education  
“AN ASTONISHING AMOUNT OF INFORMATION.”  
“The New York Times”  
“IT IS PRECISELY THE BOOK THAT I’VE ALWAYS WANTED WITHOUT KNOWING THAT I ALWAYS WANTED IT. . . . It’s for people who have huge gaps in their knowledge of specific areas of culture and intellectual history. . . . Cheerfully, subversively anti-academic.”  
Jon Carrol, San Francisco Chronicle  
“MEMORIZE THIS BOOK AND YOU CAN DROP NAMES, ALLUSIONS, AND ARCANES WITH THE BEST OF THEM, whether you (or they) know what they’re talking about. . . . The book will rekindle warm memories of your favorite courses, favorite professors, favorite books, favorite theories, favorite philosophical paradoxes.”  
Chicago Tribune  
“RUSH TO YOUR NEAREST BOOKSTORE AND BUY An Incomplete Education. . . . [It] brings you 10,000 years of information. Imagine the power of knowing where Watteau went when the lights went out!”  
New York Daily News  
“ARTICULATE AND IRREVERENT, crammed with facts, figures, drawings, definitions, and historic information sufficient to fill your every gap. . . . Judy Jones and William Wilson . . . tell you everything you should’ve learned but didn’t.”  
Esquire  
“THIS BOOK GETS AN A+.”  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Judy Jones is a freelance writer who lives in Princeton, New Jersey. William Wilson was also a freelance writer. Wilson went to Yale and Jones to Smith, but both have maintained that they got their real educations in the process of writing this book. William Wilson died in 1999.

I have given this book away as a gift more than any other. It’s a delightful, humorous romp through all the college subjects you liked or avoided. Not everyone will agree with the summaries but it’s a fun book to pick up and browse or use it for witty repartee with your friends... Just don’t get all high

and mighty about the omissions and you will enjoy the premise of this fun book.

this is a great, great book, worth owning, worth reading. my only complaint is that i somehow thought that there would be more updated stuff in it. i haven't found any difference between this version and the original which came out 20 years or more ago

I am a teacher and I buy this book for students that are graduating that I see potential in...

Everything you should have learned but didn't.... Don't expect in-depth information... but it gives you a highlight and the most important subjects...

A book of snippets about some important and some not so important things could be a jumbled mess more reflecting the authors and their tastes rather than a pocket full of miracles which is what this book is. I had my shoulder in a sling following a total replacement and needed something to read that didn't require me to remember plot elements, wasn't spiritually uplifting but yet rose above best seller list trash, memoirs of the unimportant and books aimed at self improvement; Given surgical help, I'd been as improved as, for that time, as I wished to be. Of the thousands of articles, many with illustrations, there's not one that could not be said to have value at some point in some way. Sure, you may never wander into a dinner party where the topic is the Dialogues of Plato but, should that happen, you'll be at least a leg up and not think that Plato is a Greek restaurant or a brand of yoghurt. Even subjects that have some depth are treated with a lighter touch, not dismissive or as parody, but they keep you reading just to see where it's going. Which is another great point; Nothing in here is so long that, looking at it, you're immediately persuaded that, even if it were started, it would never be finished. Think of it as the book to take to the beach when you want more than romance and triviality. It doesn't demand to be read but suggests it's a good idea. perfect gift for a teenager who thinks they know everything; this will persuade them otherwise. But, I think, its greatest gift to the reader is to inspire curiosity, to go on to find out what happened after the article ended. I have it by my bed and still, just before I turn out my light, open it randomly and always find something I didn't know but am glad to learn.

After giving this book to my daughter upon her graduation, I found I couldn't resist buying another copy for myself. Whether you're interested in a "refresher" or in a quick briefing on an academic area you never had time for--film studies, for example--or structuralist and post-structuralist criticism--you're likely to find the field treated in this lively, fascinating, edifying volume. The authors

provide definitions, canons of the essential works, profiles of major contributors to the field, and judicious evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each major thinker or artist. When an individual, text or movement is overrated or becoming passe, the authors are not afraid to say so. And unlike similar collections--the "Dummies" books, for example--this text is far more than an accumulation of trivia. The authors manage to provide narrative continuity to each academic area and, above all, a sense of perspective. Since their judgements strike me as on target in the areas with which I'm familiar, I'm inclined to trust them in those disciplines I don't know much about. The only reason not to pick up the book right away is the possibility that a new edition is just around the corner.

Interesting book with liberal arts education information. In a book this short, you expect the views to be pretty biased on what or who is most significant versus others. Reminded me of an effort to point to all "important" knowledge similar to Sophie's World in the philosophy realm - although Sophie's World is vastly more entertaining and well written. The elitist snob factor in the book is unmistakable - starting with the introduction. Basically, it is a decent reference book to reference when you want to look at a subject in order to narrow down the mass of unranked info you would get with an internet search.

Excellent! Great book.

I like the book but upon reading it - noticed some discrepancies so I can't account on the book being completely accurate. Nice book though and easy to read.

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