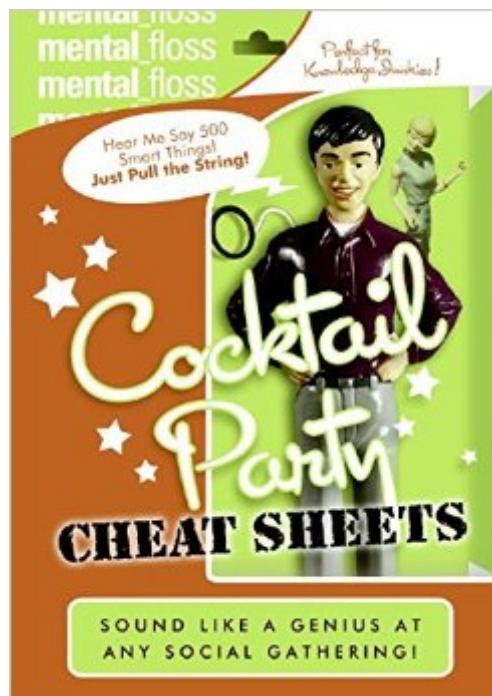


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# Mental Floss: Cocktail Party Cheat Sheets



## Synopsis

Friends? Romans? Countrymen? You never know whom you'll have to impress at your next corporate shindig or keg party. Whatever the target audience, *mental\_floss* knows staring facedown into the punch bowl isn't the trick. In fact, that's exactly why we're handing you *Cocktail Party Cheat Sheets*—a totally effective, foolproof guide to starting and sustaining conversations on every topic under the sun. Want to wax wise about barbarians, socialist theory, and jazz musicians? What about Keynesian economics, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and James Joyce's *Ulysses*? Well, it's all right here in front of you. We've jam-packed this book with jaw-dropping facts and hysterical anecdotes that are sure to please. So go ahead and stock up for your next soiree. We're not guaranteeing it will make you the most knowledgeable person in the room . . . just the most interesting.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For some reason, this slim volume reminds me of the old TV commercial for Silly String which featured a room of yawning guests as a naval officer showed off his ribbons and said, "This is from the Boer War." It's always a good idea to have something up your sleeve to break the ice with strangers that doesn't have to do with the latest edition of People Magazine. After all, you want to have some semblance of an intellect on display to make that right impression. This is yet another quick-read book from the editors of *Mental Floss Magazine*, a bimonthly launched in 2001 and targeted to aspiring Trivial Pursuit masters. This particular one, "Cocktail Party Cheat Sheets", is a clever series of possible conversation-starters that will hopefully make one's deep well of knowledge seem impressive without being intrusive. There are 44 topics, a chapter a piece, somewhat random

in variety except a certain level of erudition. Each has a brief summary of what it is, an appropriate context in which to bring the topic up, some intriguing trivia facts to boost your interest, and actual suggestions for starting the conversation. Topics are all over the map though there seems to be a predominance of historical figures covered from Attila the Hun to Miles Davis to Samuel Johnson to the Brontë sisters. The Rosetta Stone, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Magna Carta are included here, and so are the Dutch East India Company and the martini. Of particular interest to me are much-needed snapshots of James Joyce's "Ulysses" and the Qu'ran (Koran). I think it would have been more helpful had there been a better sense of organization about the information, for example, the creative way the editors used school subjects to divide the topics in another of their books, "What's the Difference?". Nonetheless, this is a fun read and well worth it for the hidden facts some of us actually crave.

If you do not know mental\_floss the magazine, you are in for a treat with this little book. Not only is the information fun and fascinating, it is very well organized and you could almost actually use it at a cocktail party! No mere catalogue of trivia, the editors and contributors engage you while they dispel common myths and give you the actual facts. Finally, if you are a loyal reader of mental\_floss, this book is for you as well, while you may remember some sections from magazine articles, it sure gives you your mental\_floss fix until the next mag comes out. Perfect to take to the beach!

This was such a fun book. I actually just read one or two subjects right before bed or when I had five minutes to kill. The authors have a great sense of humor while teaching you interesting facts about people in history, or literature, etc. I would buy more of these.

My husband likes this for the bathroom. I like it for the waiting room at the doctor's office, standing in line at the DMV, etc. There was so much stuff I didn't know! I bought it because I really wanted some fodder for conversations at events and fundraisers. I think it will come in very handy!

Somehow they really hit the nail on the head with this one---there are limited topics covered, but they seem to be exactly the topics you think you SHOULD know about but really don't---the Hundred Years War, Samuel Johnson, Virginia Wolff and other like that! The coverage of the topics is light but not just fluff---you really do learn some history, but also learn tasty little facts that really would be fun to use at a party. I read straight through the book and enjoyed it all.

I bought this as a gift, and of course, started to thumb through it. The trivia is interesting and humorous. It is a good leisurely dipping book. I didn't read the whole thing, but enjoyed the excerpts that I did. Hopefully my friend enjoys it as much as I would have!

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