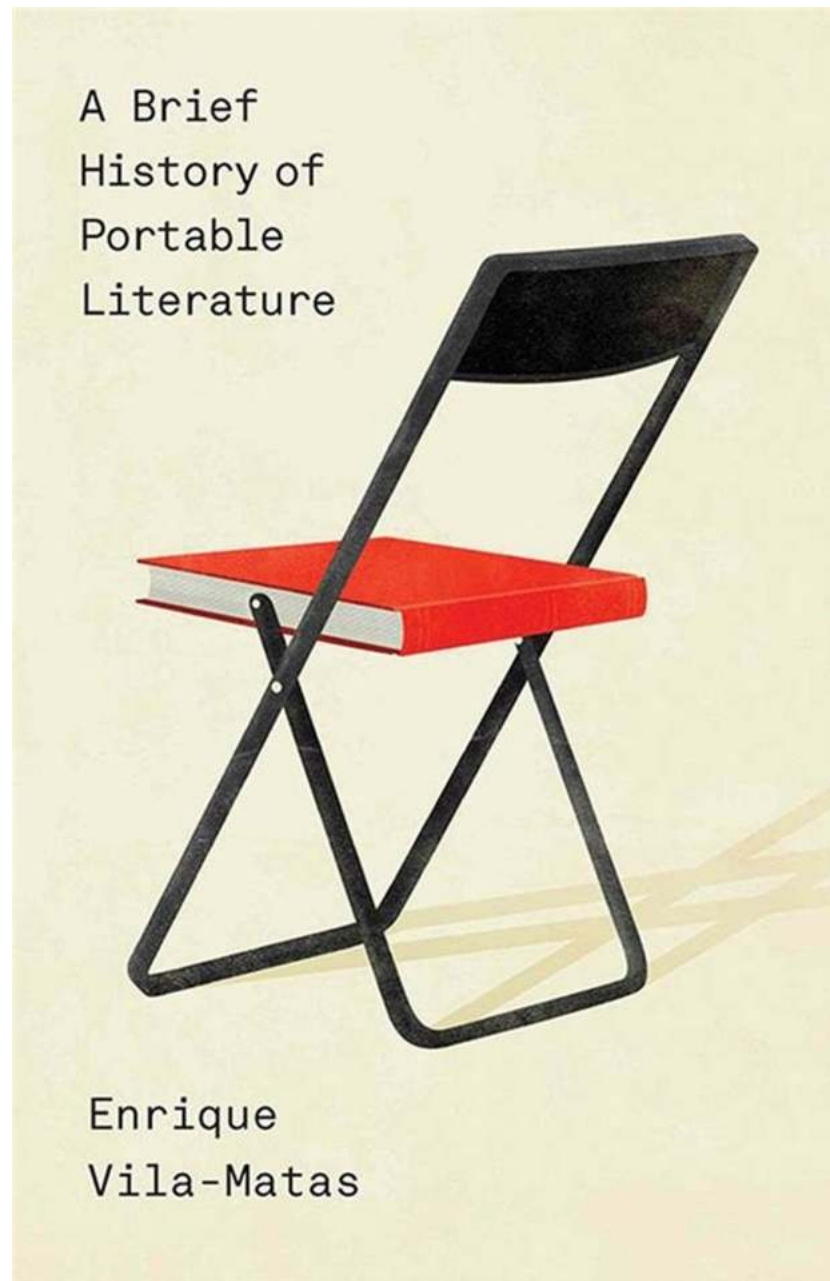


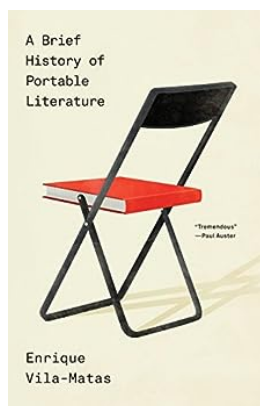
# A Brief History of Portable Literature: New Directions Paperbook



Portable literature has held a significant place in the literary world for centuries. From ancient manuscripts carried by travelers to contemporary small-sized books enjoyed by those on the go, portable literature enables readers to take their favorite stories and writings with them wherever they wander.

## The Birth of Portable Literature

The concept of portable literature emerged in the 14th century with the invention of the pocket-sized book. Prior to this, books were often large and bulky, making them impractical for frequent travel. The innovation of smaller books meant that literary works could now accompany individuals on their journeys, allowing for easier access to knowledge and entertainment.



### A Brief History of Portable Literature (New Directions Paperbook) by Thomas Bunstead (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 990 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Print length	: 98 pages



One of the earliest examples of portable literature is the Gutenberg Bible, which was first printed in the 15th century. This masterpiece of movable type printing revolutionized the way books were produced and made them more accessible to a wider audience. The availability of portable books grew rapidly, leading to the popularization of reading materials that could be conveniently carried.

### James Laughlin and New Directions Paperbook

In the mid-20th century, James Laughlin, the founder of New Directions Publishing, recognized the need for a unique form of portable literature that could showcase innovative writing to a broader audience. In 1936, he launched the

New Directions Paperbook series, a collection of pocket-sized books that emphasized experimental and avant-garde works.

The New Directions Paperbook series became a platform for many influential writers, including Tennessee Williams, Ezra Pound, and Jorge Luis Borges. These small-sized books not only allowed readers to carry their favorite literary pieces easily but also exposed them to groundbreaking works that challenged traditional storytelling techniques.

## **The Impact of New Directions Paperbook**

The New Directions Paperbook series played a pivotal role in shaping the literary landscape of the 20th century. By publishing unconventional and diverse works, it encouraged the growth of experimental literature, introducing readers to new voices and perspectives.

These pocket-sized books also helped bridge the gap between academia and the masses. Previously, avant-garde literature had been primarily associated with elitism, creating a divide between intellectuals and the general public. However, through New Directions Paperbook, complex literature was made accessible to a wider audience, allowing for greater appreciation and understanding.

## **The Evolution of Portable Literature**

As technology advanced, so did portable literature. From the emergence of e-books to the adaptability of mobile reading devices, readers now have an array of options for carrying their favorite books. However, the charm and convenience of physical pocket-sized books still endure in the reading habits of many avid bookworms.

New Directions Paperbook remains a significant contributor to portable literature, with a wide range of contemporary and classic works available in their pocket-sized format. The series continues to champion literary innovation, providing a platform for upcoming authors while also celebrating the profound impact of previous generations of writers.

The history of portable literature is a testament to human curiosity and the desire to carry knowledge and stories with us wherever we go. From ancient manuscripts to the New Directions Paperbook series, the evolution of portable literature has expanded the horizons of readers and allowed for the exploration of new literary territories.

New Directions Paperbook stands as a shining example of the power of portable literature, providing readers with a compact medium to engage with captivating works of literature. As technology continues to transform the way we consume literature, let us not forget the intimate connection we share with these pocket-sized books that have accompanied us on countless adventures.



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A reader's fictional tour of the art and lives of some of the great 20th-century Surrealists

An author (a version of Vila-Matas himself) presents a short “history” of a secret society, the Shandies, who are obsessed with the concept of “portable literature.” The society is entirely imagined, but in this rollicking, intellectually playful book, its members include writers and artists like Marcel Duchamp, Aleister Crowley, Witold Gombrowicz, Federico García Lorca, Man Ray, and Georgia O’Keefe. The Shandies meet secretly in apartments, hotels, and cafes all over Europe to discuss what great literature really is: brief, not too serious, penetrating the depths of the mysterious. We witness the Shandies having adventures in stationary submarines, underground caverns, African backwaters, and the cultural capitals of Europe.



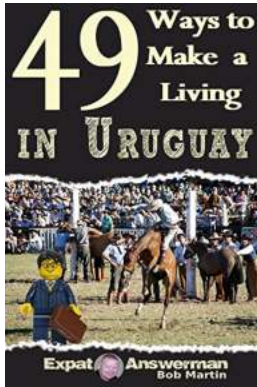
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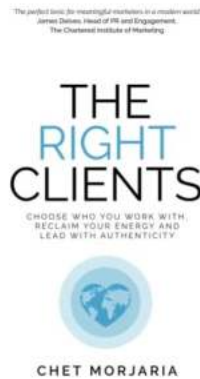
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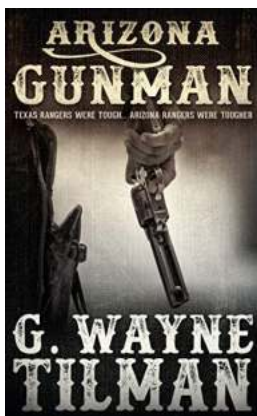
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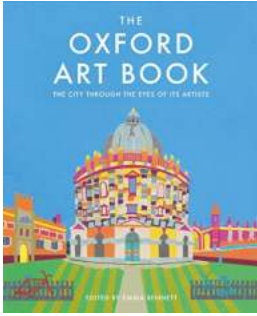
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