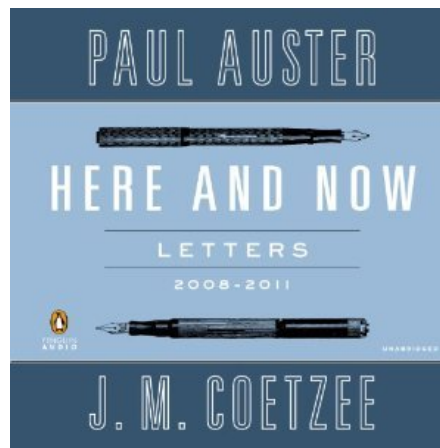




Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011)

Paul Auster , J.M. Coetzee

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011)

Paul Auster , J.M. Coetzee

Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011) Paul Auster , J.M. Coetzee

Length: 7 hrs and 1 min

Unabridged Audiobook

Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011) Details

Date : Published July 3rd 2013 by Penguin Audio (first published 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Paul Auster , J.M. Coetzee

Format : Audible Audio 256 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Writing, Essays, Biography

 [Download Here and Now: Letters \(2008-2011\) ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Here and Now: Letters \(2008-2011\) ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011) Paul Auster , J.M. Coetzee

From Reader Review Here and Now: Letters (2008-2011) for online ebook

Philipp says

What a lovely subway read. Neat little chunks of insight.

I have a special fondness for their sign-offs. Nothing special, usually "best" or "all the best" - but especially Coetzee's tend to come after some sort of bleak pronouncement.

Something like, "...all in all, humanity is vile. -- All the Best, John"

I think if you follow the "progress" of the sign-offs, they begin to approach one another. Auster's start more fawningly ("yours in friendship" or something like that, after a personal wish to meet again and hoping everything's going well).

Noor says

?? ??????!

Salvatore says

(2015) Interestingly I'm much more sympathetic to this project this time around. Perhaps because I've been re-reading Coetzee and it's much more fascinating to hear of his insecurities and his thoughts on certain subjects. Auster is too easily swayed; Coetzee per usual is more considered and cooler in his writing. I don't know if sparks fly, but their occasions sometimes exhibit such possibilities.

===

(Feb 2013) My gut reaction is, why would anyone want to publish letters when he or she is alive?

They, letters that is, are things that maybe scholars will compile years after an artist's death, due to the interest in the mundane of that person's, the artist's, life. At that point the art has become so great, so mythic that the artist becomes an object of interest. Thus, the diary entries become curious; maybe we laymen will be able to gain greater insight into the artistic process, into inspirations, into why that piece of art we cherish so much germinated. We want answers. (And, in my humble opinion, we should be refused.)

To publish something like one's own letters seems to me a bit exhibitionist, and it creates a sense for the reader that these letters were scribbled, posted, faxed for the sole purpose of being published, for others other than the intended to read. Therefore, the intimacy that one may pour into a letter - meant for a specific other's eyes - may not happen. The artist will prohibit/censor himself from writing poorly about a colleague if they know this colleague may be reading. And literature is meant to be the peering into another's personal letters *without* that person knowing. The reader overhears. That's what makes reading so devilishly taboo.

Perhaps what this book needs is someone to introduce why these letters actually exist, what the relationship between the masterful writers Paul Auster and JM Coetzee (two of my favourite living writers) actually is. Because as it currently reads, it's just random musings - mostly on sport, sometimes on theory of writing - of two men. The flap copy doesn't suggest that it would be anything otherwise. But a book like this wants to be

I randomly picked this book up. Since I have read a bit of Coetzee and Paul Auster, I felt tempted to read their letters. In the first few pages, I did not find anything particularly interesting. However, I kept reading, I got really drawn to their conversation after reading the first few pages. These letters are not too long. Usually less than 2 pages, so one can always skip the mundane letters.

Even with my very little experience of both these writers, I feel that both these writers write from a 'good place.' I understand their politics and vision. At first I thought I liked Coetzee letters more because of their content and what he has to say about a range of issues, but later I also found endearing ruminations in Paul's letters too. As I struggled to make my mind up, I finished the book.

They discuss many things from ordinary stuff to vital issues: death, life, politics, writers, books. In one of the letters, Paul reflects on the unexpected death of some of his friends;

"I have been living in a state of gloom and sorrow these past months. It has been a season of death, a time of funerals, memorial services, and condolence letters, and even as the headlines announce the disintegration of our flawed and ragged world, these private losses have touched me far more deeply than the mayhem burning in the universe at-large."

He mourns these deaths and poignantly writes "I tell myself that I should know better than to feel surprised, that such is the way of the world, that we are still mortal beings and our end can come at any time, but the long view offers not the smallest shred of consolations. The heart aches. There is simply no cure for it."

Since these letters are written by two special authors, one glimpses delightful and engaging views on books and writers. For instance, I got to know about Edward Said's book 'Of Late Style'. Since the authors discuss, among other things, matters concerning 'style', I just felt drawn to the title of Said's book. Since these letters contain interesting information on books and other artists, one might be led to other inviting pastures— other fascinating books, for example.

In some letters, they have talked a lot of sports particularly football. I often skipped those pages and hoped for themes I enjoyed most— writing, language, literature.

????? ?????? says

???? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ???
????????? ?????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ??????????...
??? ???..
??? ???..
??? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ?????????? "????? ??????" ??? ??????
????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ??? "?? ?? ??????" "????? ??????" ?????????? ?????????? "?????
?????" ?????????? ??? "????? ???".

?? ?????? ?????????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ??? "?????" ?????????? ?? ?????????? "?????" ?????? ?? ??????????
????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?????? ?? ??????
????????? ?????? ??? ?????????????? ?????????? ?????? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ??????????
?????? ??? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ??????????????.. ?????? ??
????????? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????????? ?????? ?????????? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ??? ?????? ?? ??????

????? ?????? ?????????? ??? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ??????

[4.5 stars] I was thoroughly entranced by this exchange of letters between Paul Auster and J.M. Coetze, which I listened to on audio. I am a devoted Paul Auster fan (slowly working my way through all his books) and love listening to his voice. I may even have a literary crush on him. But until now, I didn't have any particular interest in J.M. Coetze, other than liking *Disgrace*. Yet the current between them was electric - their opinions and ideas were pure fun to listen to!

There was always the chance that the letters between two literary friends wouldn't be as interesting as their novels. That hasn't happened, at least to me. On the contrary, I find their thoughts on the current state of Israel, the work of Philip Roth and Franz Kafka, and their own method of imagining fiction completely absorbing. Thoughtful men on subjects about which we may disagree...

Their letters reflect their novels; that is, Auster is so concrete, sports-minded, explicitly organizing the rooms (cities, countries) in which his characters move, sending articles, being an instigator...while Coetzee—sometimes we have difficulty figuring out which place on earth he is speaking of. And yet, his ideas are bigger, deeper, more honed. He appears to be at home on every continent, except perhaps Asia. But as he says, he sleeps better in Europe, in the time zone of his natal South Africa.

The two men are not equally intelligent, nor equal writers, but how would that work, to speak of it among friends? The joy I get at reading what Coetzee is thinking is entirely what this collection of letters is about. Though these ideas and scraps of writing are not curated, his succinctness allows me to see the care with which he marshals his thoughts, and what he worries about as he ages.

There is too much here, in this short book, to point to all that moved me, but within a page, in his first letter addressing the subject of male friendship, Coetzee has reminded us

"...of a remark by the character Christopher Tietjens in Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End*: that one goes to bed with a woman in order to be able to talk to her. Implication: that turning a women into a mistress is only a first step; the second step, turning her into a friend, is the one that matters, but being friends with a woman you haven't slept with is in practice impossible because there is too much unspoken in the air."

In a letter about male friendship, this tiny mention addresses a question I have pondered forever, it seems. Coetzee says further than unlike “love or politics, which are never what they seem to be, friendship is what it seems to be. Friendship is transparent.” Yes, this clarifying definition places this relationship where it belongs: in the light, unashamed, unembarrassed, unrehearsed. Further,

"...the most interesting reflections on friendship come from the ancient world...because in ancient times people did not regard the philosophical stance as an inherently skeptical one, therefore did not take it as given that friendship must be other than it seems to be, or conversely concluded that if friendship is what it seems to be, then it cannot be a fit subject for philosophy."

On this subject and in his first letter, Auster doesn't mesh well with Coetzee's lead. He writes at much greater length but says less—that men and women can be friends so long as no physical attraction enters the equation. His mind turned instead to "friendship is a component of marriage" and "marriage is above all a conversation, and if husband and wife do not figure out a way to become friends, the marriage has little chance of surviving." All true, but perhaps not the direction indicated. He does accurately, I think, point out that "the best and most lasting friendships are based on admiration."

Anyway, Auster proposes a topic—sport—which shows up in a lackadaisical way throughout the series of letters. One gets the sense that it is Coetzee now that will engage but has little real interest in the topic. We learn that Coetzee is an avid bicyclist who travels pretty frequently in Europe by this method, but he worries that he rarely has much to say about his trips afterward, that he is the worst travel writer and reporter ever. Auster points out that Coetzee is *not* a reporter, after all, but something far more creative.

But I think I understand that worry of Coetzee's. It is endearing, that he worries. It is why we like him. Towards the end of this book of letters, nearly four years into the experiment of letter-writing, Coetzee came back from his first trip to India with two observations, nothing about color, heat, food, or filth. First, that animals in India, the ones he saw, like pigs, cows, dogs, monkeys, were not treated cruelly but were accepted and tolerated for their habits and characteristics, even for behaviors that intrude upon the sphere of men. He contrasted that to Africa, where animals are treated with contempt and an unthinking cruelty as for a lower form of life.

The second observation he came back with was that some people in India are perilously poor, very close to subsistence living, and yet the reservoir of practical skills, sheer industriousness, and the "intelligent hands" that in any other culture would make them respected artisans, demonstrate the vast potential of only very partially tapped human resources. He says no more about it, but one does get a sense of...is it hope? I may be making his thoughts sound banal, but in their context they are anything but and are more like opening a window to a scene you never expected to see.

Coetzee is older than Auster by seven years, and both men are happily married to long-time spouses. The four seem to get along with one another and every year they would run into one another at a conference or plan to meet up when in the same country. This correspondence covers things they think about while apart.

One final remark of Coetzee's about the writing of Philip Roth which so closely parallels something I have written about Updike and Irving that I laugh to include it here:

"I don't find *Exit Ghost* a particularly notable addition to the Roth canon. I know that Roth relishes the challenge of wringing something fresh out of stock situations, but there is only so much mileage one can get out of the aging male struggle against decay to prove his virility one last time."

Edgar Trevizo says

??? .. :)

[illegible][illegible]

??? ???? ?????? "???? ??????" ??????? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ????.. ??????
 ????? ????? ???? ???? ???? ?????? ?????? ???? ????? ..

[illegible]

Michael Bryson says

When I was reading this, I found it compelling. I wanted to keep going, find out how it "ended," but it (of course) never really ended. It just ended. It had, a la Julian Barnes, the sense of an ending.

As I was reading it, I liked it. Upon reflection, not so much.

My disappointments outnumber my pleasure points. As such, dear book, I think we should break up. It's probably me, not you, but this is a review of you.

Thus, I had admiration for each of these authors before I read their correspondence, yet my admiration for them is diminished, not amplified, by seeing them all up close and personal.

Why so much discussion of sports? Why so clueless about the 2008 economic collapse? Why so little disagreement or pressing of the other into greater unknowns?

I wish now to read a similar correspondence between Carver and Barthelme, or Didion and Sontag. Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney. The genre has possibilities that have been only faintly outlined here.

Coetzee plays the pessimist to Auster's optimist. This gives them a point of conflict but it also cliché. Auster is the bubbling American, ever hopeful, and Coetzee is old-world rogue, confirmed in his near-cynicism by perpetual disaster.

These tropes play to neither author's advantage. Ultimately I felt that too many opportunities of interest were lost. Coetzee is reflecting on mortality (his own) and "late style". He makes some general observations and Auster offers a series of examples that contradict Coetzee's drift, but the topic is not run to ground.

This book is superficial! That is my conclusion, though it surprises me to say so. Neither of these men is superficial, and their work is full of complexity, but I wanted more from their interaction.

It just is what it is. Play it again, Lenny Bruce.

Jigar Brahmhatt says

Loved going through the personal letters of two very unique writers, whose work has affected and excited me at different stages. They are both very lucid letter writers. It was like sitting in a quiet corner as they engaged in interesting conversations, ranging from Kafka's eating habits, to numerical representation of games, to the future of books, to Coetzee's trip to India, to a link between creativity and monkish living, to their mutual appreciation of Samuel Beckett. It was nice to know that they share a cordial bond and are ultimately good people with usual family lives. It was amusing to read Paul Auster, the creator of isolated and often depressive narrators, cheerfully describe Christmas dinners. Interesting also was to know Coetzee's views on how the digital publishing will eventually replace bookstores. He, in his very direct manner, shattered the romanticism a lot of us slip into when talking of books:

"The fact that what we call a book can be picked up in one's hands, has a smell and a feel of its own, is an accident of its production with no relevance to what the book conveys". Accident of its production :)

Those who have read James Wood's essay on Paul Auster, stingingly titled "The Shallowness of Paul Auster", will know that it is not easy for a writer to digest such a criticism. I partly agreed with Wood.

????? ?????? ??? ???? ??????? ??? ?????? ??? ??? ????? ? ???? ????? ????????? ????????? ??:
 - ?????? ?????? ??????
 - ? ? ??????
 - ??? ?????? ???
 ??????? ? ???? ????? ?????? ??? ??????? ??????? ? ???? ????? ?????? ????????? ???? (???? ?????????) ??? ????? ???????
 ????? ????? ? ???? ????? "?? ??????? ??????????" ? "????" ??????? ? ???? ? ????.

[illegible]

????? ?????? ?????? ??? ??????? ?????????? ??? ??? 2008 ? 2011 ????? ?????????????? ??? ??????? ??? ?? ?????? ???
 ?????? ?????????? ????????? ?? ??? ?????????? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????? ????????? ?

[illegible][illegible]

??? ? ????

????? ??? ??? ?????? & ?? ?? ??????

????? ????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ??? ??????? ?? ?????? ? ?????? ... ? ??????

?????????. ??? ? ?? ?? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?? ?? ?????????? ?????? ? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?? ??????

?? ???????.

?? ? ?? ?????????? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????? ?? ??????????? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?????????? ? ????? ??????

????????? ? ????? ?????????? ? ?????? ? ?????????? ? ?????????? ? ?????? ? ?????? ? ?????????????? ???.

????????? ????? ?? ? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????????? ? ??????? ?? ?? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????????

?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?? ? ?????? ?? ?? ?? ?? ? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ?? ??????

?????? ??? ????? ?? ??? ????? ? ?????? ????? ??? ?????? ??? ??? ??????
?? ????? ????? ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?

Nino Chachava says

?????? ?????? ??? <3 ?????????? ?????????? ?????????, ??? ????????????, ??? ?????? ??????? ??????????
????????????????
