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Signs of Civilization

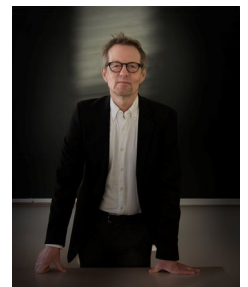
With the art of printing, reading books moved from being an act meant to be performed by priests and other authorities into an individual, even private, activity. This change helped spark the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. And punctuation played an important role: As long as texts were read out loud by experts only there was no use for punctuation to mark pauses, full stops or questions.

And thus, the author holds, punctuation – the period, the comma, the exclamation mark, the question mark and the semicolon – helped shape modern day Europe as we know it.

Signs of Civilization tells this rich cultural history of punctuation. It also provides a practical introduction to the rules of punctuation, adapted to our digital age. (The author will happily adjust this part of the book to suit other languages where necessary.)

Bård Borch Michalsen

Bård Borch Michalsen (b. 1958) has worked as a journalist and editor in several Norwegian newspapers. He now teaches professional communication at UiT / The Arctic University of Norway.



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