



Pitch Perfect: The Quest for Collegiate A Cappella Glory

By Mickey Rapkin

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High notes, high drama, and high jinks collide as elite collegiate a cappella groups compete to be the best in the nation

Journalist Mickey Rapkin follows a season in collegiate a cappella, covering the breathtaking displays of vocal talent, the groupies (yes, a cappella singers have groupies), the rock-star partying (and run-ins with the law), and all the bitter rivalries. Along the way are encounters with a cappella alums like John Legend and Diane Sawyer and fans from Prince to presidents.

Bringing a lively new twist to America's fascination with talent showdowns, *Pitch Perfect* is sure to strike a chord with readers.

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Pitch Perfect: The Quest for Collegiate A Cappella Glory By Mickey Rapkin Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

According to *GQ* senior editor Rapkin, today's lively collegiate a cappella groups boast hip-hop repertory, professional vocal arrangements, competitions at Lincoln Center and a world shrunk by the Internet. During the 2006–2007 college season, Rapkin, an alum of a Cornell all-male singing club, followed three a cappella powerhouses: Divisi, an all-girl group from the University of Oregon, the testosterone-driven Hullabahoos of the University of Virginia, and Beelzebubs, from Tufts. Each is a collective with a score to settle, a tradition to honor. Robbed of a championship in 2005, Divisi wants payback; the Hullabahoos want respect without forfeiting their frat-boy charm; and the controversial Bubs want to hone their edge. Throughout, Rapkin engages with celebrity trivia (*Heroes*' Masi Oka sang a cappella at Brown) and music criticism. He profiles the cottage recording industry built from college a cappella. Most notably, he riffs through signature events and crisis moments with a snarky humor (onstage Divisi looks like the women in that Robert Palmer video) that turns each chapter into a picaresque progression toward graduation. (*June*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Designating unaccompanied singing, a cappella literally means “like the chapel,” appropriately since the form, Rapkin says, began with Gregorian chant. In the prologue, Rapkin cheerfully clambers through a cappella's roots and varied branches, from shape-note singing and call-and-response singing to barbershop and the folk-pop hit “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” and gospel classics by the Soul Stirrers with Sam Cooke. Yet a cappella has come fully to life on college campuses. While the phenomenon's “gold standard” remains the Whiffenpoofs, founded in 1909 at Yale, there are now more than 1,200 collegiate a cappella groups in the U.S. A cappella is the opposite of cool, Rapkin concedes, yet such now-famous folk as Diane Sawyer, Art Garfunkel, and Osama bin Laden (!) once sang in a cappella groups. The bulk of the book examines three current groups—the University of Oregon's all-female Divisi, the Tufts Beelzebubs of Tufts University, and the University of Virginia's Hullabahoos—as they compete against one another in a scenario that makes American Idol look rather tame. A fascinating, behind-the-scenes look at an underappreciated musical subculture. --June Sawyers

Review

"Finally, a journalist with the courage to investigate the cutthroat world of college a cappella. . . .Rapkin has the perfectly bemused and giddy tone to tell these stories with the reverence they deserve."

-*New York Post*

"Rapkin's book reveals a world with as much discord as harmony."

-*Newsweek*

"Look out, barbershop quartets. Mickey Rapkin uncovers the dirty truth behind collegiate a cappella groups."

-*Marie Claire*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Judith Bode:

As people who live in often the modest era should be update about what going on or data even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era which can be always change and move forward. Some of you maybe may update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know which you should start with. This Pitch Perfect: The Quest for Collegiate A Cappella Glory is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Ethel Springer:

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