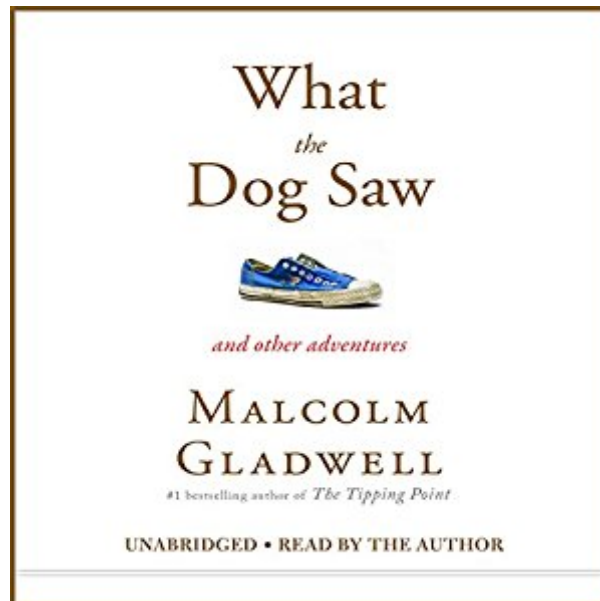




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What The Dog Saw: And Other Adventures



Synopsis

What is the difference between choking and panicking? Why are there dozens of varieties of mustard-but only one variety of ketchup? What do football players teach us about how to hire teachers? What does hair dye tell us about the history of the 20th century? In the past decade, Malcolm Gladwell has written three books that have radically changed how we understand our world and ourselves: *The Tipping Point*; *Blink*; and *Outliers*. Now, in *What the Dog Saw*, he brings together, for the first time, the best of his writing from *The New Yorker* over the same period. Here is the bittersweet tale of the inventor of the birth control pill, and the dazzling inventions of the pasta sauce pioneer Howard Moscovitz. Gladwell sits with Ron Popeil, the king of the American kitchen, as he sells rotisserie ovens, and divines the secrets of Cesar Millan, the "dog whisperer" who can calm savage animals with the touch of his hand. He explores intelligence tests and ethnic profiling and "hindsight bias" and why it was that everyone in Silicon Valley once tripped over themselves to hire the same college graduate. "Good writing," Gladwell says in his preface, "does not succeed or fail on the strength of its ability to persuade. It succeeds or fails on the strength of its ability to engage you, to make you think, to give you a glimpse into someone else's head." *What the Dog Saw* is yet another example of the buoyant spirit and unflagging curiosity that have made Malcolm Gladwell our most brilliant investigator of the hidden extraordinary. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Malcolm Gladwell has written four thought-provoking books on the human condition and related to practical subjects and topics but what has been different about his perspectives is that he has included in the equation a critical eye within a case study approach. And he himself can be topic of discussion, especially with *What the Dog Saw and Other Adventures*. The book may be a retrospective of his past writings that were published in *The New Yorker* in 1996 and to 2008. If one has not read or come across any of the articles, they are a very insightful collection. Gladwell kindly explains in the preface of the book of his purpose for offering readers a glimpse of what he has written in the past decade. And with over 400 pages of enlightening essays in the Gladwell tradition, he takes an idea and he runs with it with a slew of intellectual curiosity that moves into various directions in the process that is not locked into one particular topic; most of what he writes about spans from education, politics, social, economic, cultural, and historical frameworks. But he knows exactly where his thoughts will eventually land with his clear goals explained within the beginning of the book that focuses on: people and their efforts and not necessarily larger than life individuals but the average person that happened to make remarkable results in something they have achieved such as Ron Popeil and his Chop-O-Matic, Devoted to theories, ways of organizing experience, and Predictions we make about people. It is these main factors that relate to understanding outcomes that are not necessarily final in terms of interpretation, and many times before Gladwell has proven that fact in his previous books. And when he probes, he uses a part of his early education and skills as a lawyer and blends it with his journalistic inquiries of critical thinking. All of the chapters show the immense curiosity and a-ha or wait a minute, let me think about that moments. The chapter *Something Borrowed* is one of several examples, he discusses creativity but makes one question, was the idea original? One of the enticing part of the chapter spoke of memorable classic rock songs from bands such as Led Zeppelin versus a Muddy Waters song that may have been influenced by lyrics and chords, this topic and another topic in the chapter that held close to home for Gladwell pertaining to the Broadway play *Frozen* and the possibility that the story may have been copied from one of his early articles; purely Gladwell where he has taken what appears to be two completely different topics but he brings them congruently parallel in the conclusion. *What the Dog Saw* never disappoints for readers that have grown accustomed to Gladwell's writings. Two points that one may consider before reading the book, the interesting part about the book is that it provides first-time readers a sample of his writing, and second, it clearly shows how far he has come but continues to move forward in his perspectives that is open to new ideas. But one recommendation, if one has not already read his previous books, it is highly encouraged.

I LOVE Malcolm Gladwell's books, all of them. I am sure I have rated all the others with 5 stars. This one was completely different. Normally, his books follow an interesting, educational, think-outside-the-box, relational, and logical path. This one was different. He is one of my favorite authors of non fiction and read his books not only for the enlightenment factor, but he is also good with stories of the past and historical encounters from his unique viewpoints. I would call this one a "mulligan" but the only one. Any other book he has written I would highly recommend. Sorry Malcolm. I feel bad I could only get to a 3 star with this one.

Malcolm Gladwell is one of the most interesting writers of today. He connects diverse subjects together to make a surprising conclusion on how our minds work--and he does it in a fascinating, easy-to-understand format. I can't wait to read the rest of his books!

I've now read all of Gladwell's books over the course of several years. In the time since I first read *Blink* maybe 5+ years back, I've had countless conversations with friends who aggressively assert that Malcolm Gladwell is either the best thing since whatever topped sliced bread or a sham who re-dresses Psych 1 studies in mediocre prose (well not quite that vehement, but...). For my part, before picking this one up, I thought *Blink* was my favorite -- a really cool weaving of pop psych and interesting stories -- and that the other two suffered from the full-scale book's requirement of a coherent argument, a requirement which in their case made their contents seem artificially bound. While *Outliers*, for example, had some interesting stuff, I felt that Gladwell's attempt to stuff all those stories into a big argument seemed artificial and forced. At the end of the day, the book seemed cheapened by his rather pointless thesis that (to simplify) hard work + luck = success. *What the Dog Saw*, then -- because it is chock full of fascinating Malcolm Gladwell stories but entirely uninhibited by this annoying need to press these stories into some sort of ill-fitting form -- may be my favorite of the lot. It's just extremely thought-provoking and diverse. His stories cover a huge range of interesting material -- the difficulties of mammogram reading, the inevitability of disaster, how hair coloring slogans mimicked and shaped changing definitions of 20th-Cent feminism, the slippery definitions of plagiarism -- in a way that lends itself to your drawing your OWN opinions about the interrelations of ideas. The book really makes you think, and I've found much of what I read here applicable to much of what I've seen while and since reading it. He really is a very thoughtful and lucid writer, and he turns this varied world of ideas into a series of comprehensible and well-laid out pieces. Just a very interesting read in general. Two last notes, for those who haven't seen many

other reviews of the book. One, the articles will be hit or miss for some people; I found some things interesting that others here appear to have been bored by, and visa versa. And then two, of course, if you've faithfully read his New Yorker pieces since 1996, then you will be disappointed to find that this book represents nothing other than a reprint of some of his best. That said, though, I'd highly encourage buying it. It's just been a fascinating read.

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