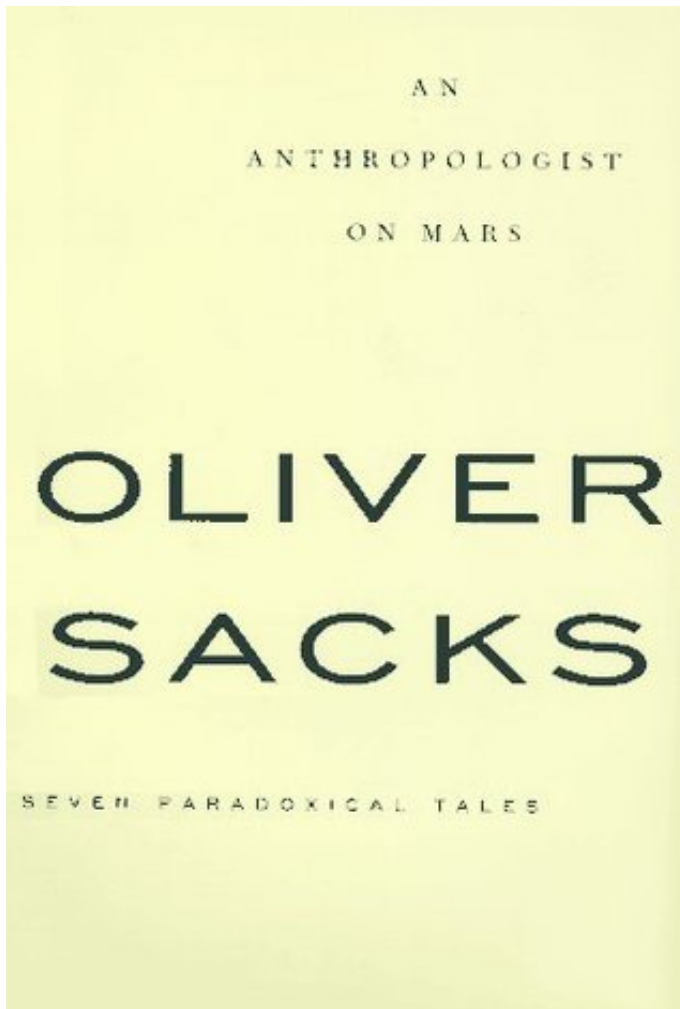


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## Oliver Sacks

### An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales



Title: An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales

Author: Oliver Sacks

Format: Hardcover

Language: English

Pages: 328

Publisher: , 0

ISBN: 0679437851

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 8.1 MB

Download: allowed

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## Description

Paradoxical portraits of seven neurological patients, including a surgeon consumed by the compulsive tics of Tourette's syndrome unless he is operating; an artist who loses all sense of color in a car accident, but finds new creative power in black & white; & others.

## Insightful reviews

Kathrina: If this book ended after the first five case studies, I would have given this four stars, but the last two studies really seemed to drag for me. Actually, I really enjoyed reading about Stephen Wiltshire, as well, and I wish Sacks had confined that study to just him. In fact, I highly recommend googling Stephen Wiltshire, and catching a glimpse of him and his work on the documentary tv show *Extraordinary People*. Sacks is good at describing Wiltshire's extraordinary talent, but not as good at illustrating Wiltshire's charming personality. The first few case studies really opened up some new ideas for me, ideas that broaden my understanding of art and memory, and it's pairing well with my other current read, [Memory Wall: Stories](#) as the title story's main character struggles with memory in interesting ways. The last study on Temple Grandin was really rather dull, maybe because Grandin has done so well speaking for herself, his study seems redundant. Plus, his telling never really gave me a good feel for her, though I surmise Sacks never had a real understanding of her, either.

lori: This book is truly fascinating in its exploration of the human mind and how it deals with (and deals with the lack of) visual and cognitive perception and memory. The author delves into case studies of individuals with such conditions as Tourette's, autism, as well as various losses and/or impairments and how the brain re-wires and adapts itself in order to succeed in life. I like Oliver Sacks' ability to recognize the 'loss' in the impairment, but focus instead on what the individual GAINS from the condition that makes them 'different'. The book is heavily laden with scientific jargon and references to other cases and scientists and most of the time reads like a textbook or scientific/medical journal, but if you stick with it you can come away with some interesting and unique perspectives, as well as expand your general knowledge of the brain, how it works, and of the specific conditions discussed in the book.

Sophia Diggs-galligan: This book is much like a lot of Oliver Sacks' work: it tells scintillating story that piques your interest, and has more than enough content. However, while it does reach more personal and philosophical feel at times, this always seems a bit contrived.

For the most part though, this book was plenty fascinating.

I especially enjoyed such chapters like "Prodigies", those dealing with autistic savants, because they really illustrate the idea of a deficit becoming a strength, you are blind, so your auditory sense is heightened. The idea of the brains plasticity is fun to toy with.

My only real issue here is the way some of the paragraphs sort of don't go down well: it seems that he wrote the stories from a purely scientific standpoint and then added a veneer of emotion, thoughtfulness, and insight afterwards.

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Now, I'm not complaining, the books would be rather dry without this aspect. However, if this sense of the book had been paid more attention to, I feel as though Oliver Sacks might have dug much deeper.

Cheng: this can be a interesting booklet for scientists and non-scientists alike. Dr. Sacks is a truly fascinating essayist and whereas he does use scientific phrases from time to time, he retains it quite uncomplicated lots of the time, even if conversing approximately advanced procedures of the brain. you can be so surprised in any respect the issues we take with no consideration simply because our mind strategies the knowledge prior to we even discovered what we understand as fact has already been processed by way of our brains, however the sufferers in those 7 paradoxical instances study the not easy manner how an important all the pieces of the mind fairly is. and do not bypass the footnotes!! essentially the most fascinating anecdotes are within the footnotes.

Selena: sturdy riddance, I say. except pressured opposed to my will, i will by no means learn one other booklet by means of this man again. You see, he had the nasty habit of concerning his different books, yet no longer announcing a observe approximately how they have been particularly comparable or how they helped his argument. It appeared extra to me that he used to be advertisements his books and anticipated you both to have already learn his different books or to expire and purchase them to appreciate why it used to be important. I overlooked so much of his footnotes after the 1st chapter. i discovered that almost all of them have been both a unnecessary connection with a prior book, to different sufferers no longer written approximately yet, or each so often, to somebody else's research. i did not leave out whatever by means of now not interpreting them. They by no means had whatever to do with what the ebook was once truly conversing approximately on the moment. Sacks might additionally burst off on tangents. It used to be very difficult to maintain song of who or what he used to be speaking approximately due to those tangents, or even extra usually it distracted from what he used to be really attempting to get at. Also, for somebody who is presupposed to be very medical and feature scientific knowledge, he used "seemed" a long way to occasionally to sound so. This use of "seemed" truly got here off as sounding like he had no thought what he used to be particularly speaking about. Over all, i assumed it was once a awful book. i might by no means suggest it to somebody else to learn except they want aid falling asleep. I hated it.

Marjorie: This Oliver Sachs e-book depicts the lives of genuine humans whose brains paintings another way from the norm. instead of concentrating on the restrictions they face, Sachs highlights human adaptability to an alien reality. the tale that truly inspired me used to be the artist inquisitive about a site visitors twist of fate that left him not able to work out color. instead of hampering him, he became it into an advantage. Blacks, whites and grays turned a brand new approach of seeing and his paintings richer and extra nuanced. those tales illustrate how truth is a construction of our brains and the way it colours (or not) what we predict is true.

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