

Talks Malcolm Gladwell: What we can learn from spaghetti sauce

Filmed Feb 2004; Posted Sep 2006



About this talk

Tipping Point author Malcolm Gladwell gets inside the food industry's pursuit of the perfect spaghetti sauce -- and makes a larger argument about the nature of choice and happiness.

About Malcolm Gladwell

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Deft lateral thinker, detective of fads and emerging subcultures, chronicler of jobs-you-never-knew-existed, Malcolm Gladwell's work is toppling the popular understanding of bias, crime, food, marketing, race, consumers and intelligence.

Why you should listen to him:

Deep in the pages of uncanny social psychology, secret culinary science, the shocking results of experimental justice, Malcolm Gladwell's thumbprints are conspicuous. A *New Yorker* staff writer since 1996, he's fashioned a career distinct from other reporters, going well off the beaten path. **Pop-R&D gumshoe, wily scout of world-flipping factoids**, Gladwell's dogged search for counterintuitive truth takes him into obscure laboratories and infomercial set kitchens as often as the hangouts of freelance cool-hunters. For that, he's become a star lecturer and worldwide bestselling author.

The counterintuitive is Gladwell's stock in trade: sparkling with curiosity, undaunted by research into esoteric vocations and yet an eloquent, accessible writer for a mass audience, **his work illuminates the truths hidden in strange data**. His always-delightful blog tackles topics from serial killers to steroids in sports, while provocative recent work in the *New Yorker* sheds new light on the Flynn effect -- the startling rise of I.Q. scores over the span of decades.

Gladwell has written two books. *The Tipping Point*, which began as a *New Yorker* piece, applies the principles of epidemiology to crime (and sneaker sales), while *Blink* examines the unconscious processes that allow the mind to "thin slice" reality -- and formulate decisions in the blink of an eye. A third book is forthcoming.

"Pure Gladwell: cutting through conventional wisdom to define a new way of understanding how something works."

Washingtonian