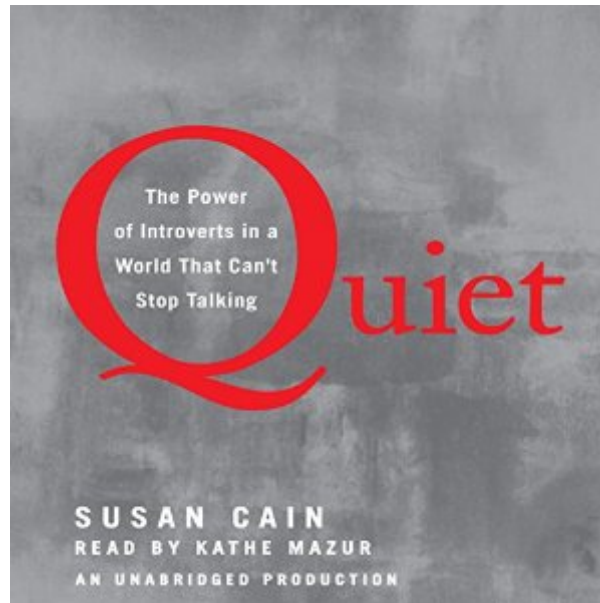


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Quiet: The Power Of Introverts In A World That Can't Stop Talking



Synopsis

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking, reading to partying; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over brainstorming in teams. Although they are often labeled "quiet," it is to introverts that we owe many of the great contributions to society--from van Gogh's sunflowers to the invention of the personal computer. Passionately argued, impressively researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* shows how dramatically we undervalue introverts, and how much we lose in doing so. Taking the reader on a journey from Dale Carnegie's birthplace to Harvard Business School, from a Tony Robbins seminar to an evangelical megachurch, Susan Cain charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal in the 20th century and explores its far-reaching effects. She talks to Asian-American students who feel alienated from the brash, backslapping atmosphere of American schools. She questions the dominant values of American business culture, where forced collaboration can stand in the way of innovation, and where the leadership potential of introverts is often overlooked. And she draws on cutting-edge research in psychology and neuroscience to reveal the surprising differences between extroverts and introverts. Perhaps most inspiring, she introduces us to successful introverts--from a witty, high-octane public speaker who recharges in solitude after his talks, to a record-breaking salesman who quietly taps into the power of questions. Finally, she offers invaluable advice on everything from how to better negotiate differences in introvert-extrovert relationships to how to empower an introverted child to when it makes sense to be a "pretend extrovert." This extraordinary book has the power to permanently change how we see introverts and, equally important, how introverts see themselves.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is hardly an impartial review. As somebody who has been called at some point or another the gamut of terms associated with introversion, from "shy" (which I don't object) to "anti-social" (which I most certainly consider unfair), I found in Susan Cain's "Quiet," the validation and appreciation many introverts have been searching for. In "Quiet," Ms. Cain explains the rise of the Extrovert Ideal in the 1920s and how it is that today we associate talkative, risk-taking, and action-oriented people with intelligence, beauty, power and success. The Extrovert Ideal is so pervasive that influences our work performance, educational policies, political choices, and even the country's financial health. But the focus of "Quiet" is on exposing the myths and misunderstandings that were born when we as a culture embraced the Extrovert Ideal and turned introversion into a malady to be avoided. To dispel the misconception that introversion is some kind of sickness or "weirdness", Ms. Cain traces both the biological and cultural basis for introversion and extroversion and their role as evolutionary survival strategies in animals and humans. She interviews scientists who have conducted hundreds of studies to test different theories in an effort to determine how much of our temperament is a result of genetics and/or of our free will. The best part of "Quiet" is that the insights gleaned from these studies can help introverts take advantage of their special traits and thrive on their own terms in an extroverted world. Since introversion and extroversion are preferences for a certain level of outside stimulation, Ms. Cain advises introverts to find their "sweet spot" --or what scientists call the optimal level of arousal.

First, look at this list from pg 5 in the introduction to this book: "Without introverts, the world would be devoid of the theory of gravity, the theory of relativity, W.B. Yeats's 'The Second Coming', Chopin's nocturnes, Proust's 'In Search of Lost Time', Peter Pan, Orwell's '1984' and 'Animal Farm', The Cat in the Hat, Charlie Brown, Schindler's List, 'E.T.', and 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind', Google, Harry Potter." Of course, that is only a tiny list of the accomplishments of introverts, and she forgot to put the Theory of Evolution in that list. Let's face it. One cannot expect people handicapped with extroversion to be able to think deeply or meditate over the serious philosophical, scientific, or supremely artistic subjects which move the deeper among us. Okay, maybe extroversion is not a handicap, but it is important to realize that introversion is no more a handicap than extroversion. So, the extroverts deserve a retaliatory jab once in a while for treating introverts as though we are

mentally and socially challenged. This book by Susan Cain is the ultimate jab, though she is sometimes overnice toward the ones that have promoted "The Extrovert Ideal" for more than a century in the U.S. I do not believe I have read any better work dealing with the issue of personality than "Quiet." There are some scientific points to be made in the book, with mention of studies that show how introversion or extroversion are biologically, genetically ingrained in us, though some of the studies (particularly the one mentioning literal "thin skin") strike me as somewhat irrelevant if not pseudoscientific.

I loved this book! It's all about introverts in a culture that celebrates extroversion. We have a personality worshiping culture and the new social media has only made it worse. Everyone on Facebook is a performer. Despite 1/3 to 1/2 of the population being introverts, everything in our culture from parenting to school to work to socializing celebrates and rewards extroversion. Some of the most creative and brilliant creators and thinkers in history were introverts. The theme of this work is that introverts have a great deal to offer the world and that we are making a mistake by not accommodating and encouraging this important personality type. This is a compelling and very well-written book. I hope it will do very well. The author is raising very important points and has done so in a well researched and thoughtful work. I highly recommend this book and don't think you will be disappointed. Two very big thumbs up! This book doesn't have the "look inside" feature so I offer the following TOC so you can get an idea what it contains.

Part One: The Extrovert Ideal

1. The Rise of the "Mighty Likeable Fellow": How Extroversion Became the Cultural Ideal
2. The Myth of Charismatic Leadership: The Culture of Personality, a Hundred Years Later
3. When Collaboration Kills Creativity: The Rise of the New Groupthink, and the Power of Working Alone

Part Two: Your Biology, Your Self?

4. Is Temperament Destiny?: Nature, Nurture, and the Orchid Hypothesis
5. Beyond Temperament: The Role of Free Will (and the Secret of Public Speaking for Introverts)
6. Franklin Was a Politician, But Eleanor Spoke out of Conscience: Why Cool Is Overrated
7. Why Did Wall Street Crash and Warren Buffet Prosper?

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