
Several readers found Gladwell’s fluid style engaging, but like dark chocolates, they felt one is enough. He has a gift for presenting unusual and sometime striking evidence from social sciences research, but it elicited a shared reaction of “I wonder if it’s true.” In his absence, Chris Behr submitted a marvelous written commentary, which went like this. “His formula writing starts with a brief story, which leads to a puzzle, which in turn is resolved with the help of a judicious use of data, studies and clever contrarian insight.” Loen Kruse quipped that Gladwell “wouldn’t write a sentence where a paragraph would do.”

Some readers found occasional parallels in Gladwell’s personal stories with their own life experiences, and that these can impart an analytical approach to solving problems in one’s own life.

It was felt that his strong emphasis in Outliers upon contextual factors in achieving individual success, somewhat unfairly overshadowed the role of unique and individual talents. But it must nevertheless be recognized “that no one ever makes it alone” even after 10,000 hours of practice!

THE KOREAN WAR: A History, by Bruce Cumings
will be our next great read. Proposed by Ray Guenther, an Army veteran who served in Korea, it is a 2010 publication presenting new data and conclusions not previously known or reported about this controversial war.

We will meet in Caniglia's at 11:30 on Wednesday, September 11. We won’t have our usual room in the back, so ask for directions to the alternate meeting location as you enter the restaurant.

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