

Blink Summary (Chapter by Chapter)

blink

By the author of THE TIPPING POINT



The Power of Thinking
Without Thinking

Malcolm Gladwell

Background

- Written by Malcolm Gladwell
 - Writer from Canada
 - Blink is his second book after Tipping Point
- Published in 2005
- Writing Style: have a unique argument in each chapter



Introduction: The Statue that Didn't Look Right

- Ex 1: Getty Museum bought a Greek Kouros and thought it was scientifically correct but experts, with snap judgement, said it was fake
- Ex 2: University of Iowa study used gamblers to detect more profitable cards from two stacks. Gamblers' sweat glands reacted faster before own conscious
- Introduce the importance of snap judgement throughout the book



Ch 1 - Theory of Thin Slices

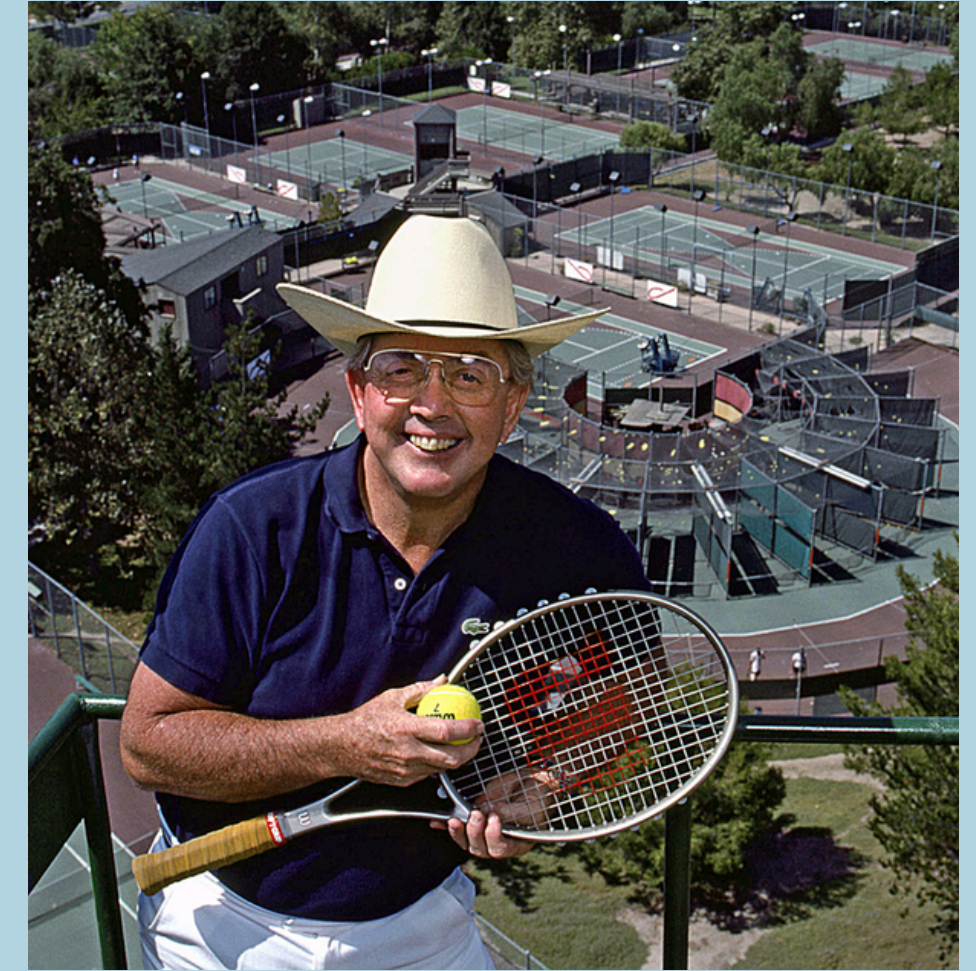
- Main Idea: The Ability to make accurate guesses based on very limited time and information, called thin slicing, is used by everyone
- Ex 1: Study at University of Washington. Researchers watch couples' conversations for 15 min/1 hour and accurately predict which couples will divorce by observing specific traits in that time period
- Ex 2: Have friends or strangers of 80 college students guess their extraversion. Friends filled out a survey and strangers filled out a survey after observing the subject's room for 30 min
- Ex 3: Short conversations between doctors and patients and guess the higher probability of a doctor being sued

Positive Affects		Negative Affects	
Joy	+ 4	Contempt	- 4
Humor	+ 4	Disgust	- 3
Affection	+ 4	Defensiveness	- 2
Validation	+ 4	Belligerence	- 2
Interest	+ 2	Stonewalling	- 2
		Domineering	- 1
		Anger	- 1
		Whining	- 1
		Sadness	- 1
		Fear / Tension	- 1
		Neutral	+ 0.1



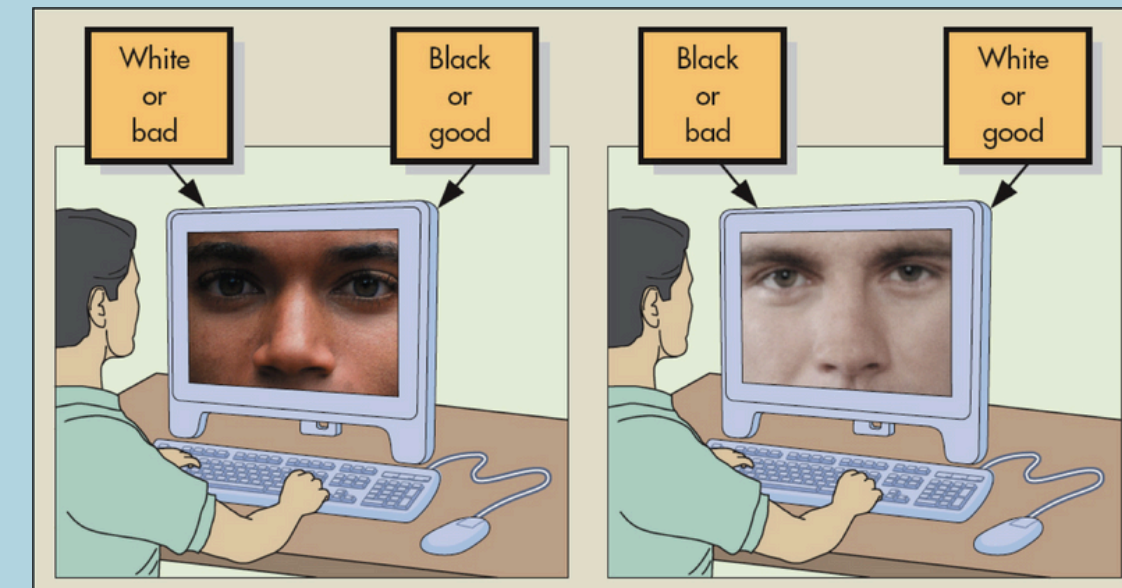
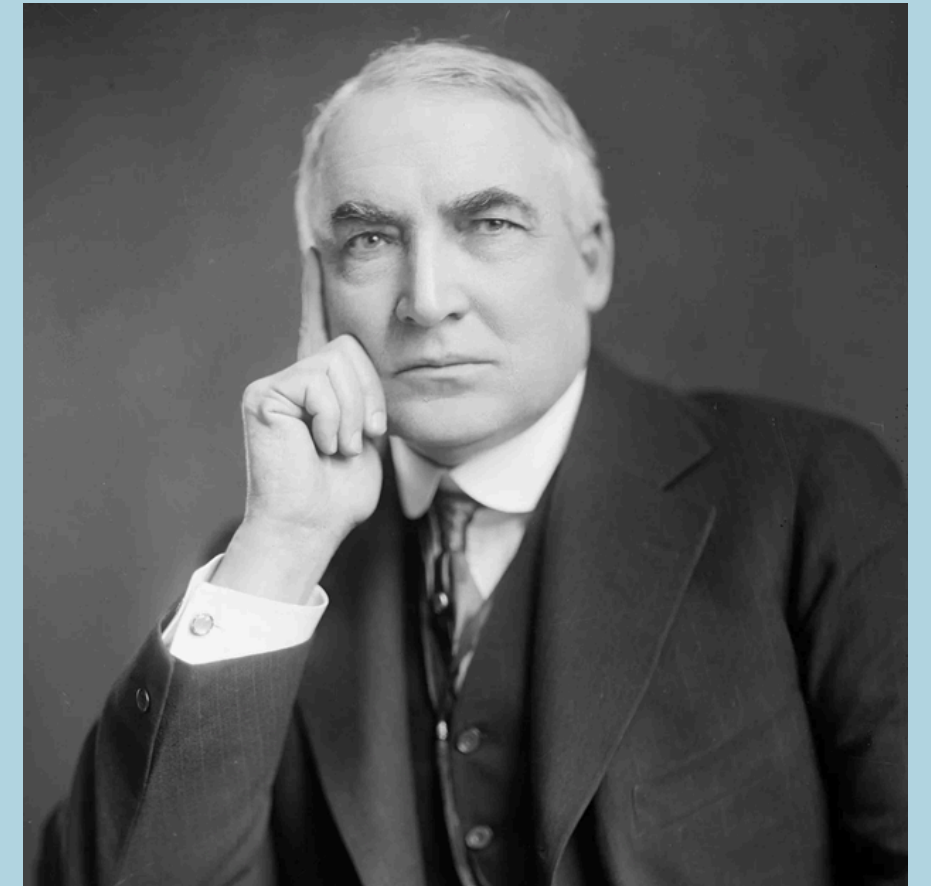
Ch 2 - The Locked Door

- Main Idea: People can make instant and accurate decisions in their unconsciousness.
- Ex 1: When Vic Braden (famed tennis coach) was watching serves, he could instantly tell when someone was going to double fault (make two serve errors and give a point to the other team).
- Ex 2: Being exposed to certain cues and words can directly influence the unconsciousness and our actions (being exposed to polite words act more polite after, being exposed to the race question immediately decreased academic performance of Black students)
- Ex 3: Speed dating scenarios show that people make instant decisions of who they are attracted to in a short time, but can have a harder time explaining their choices



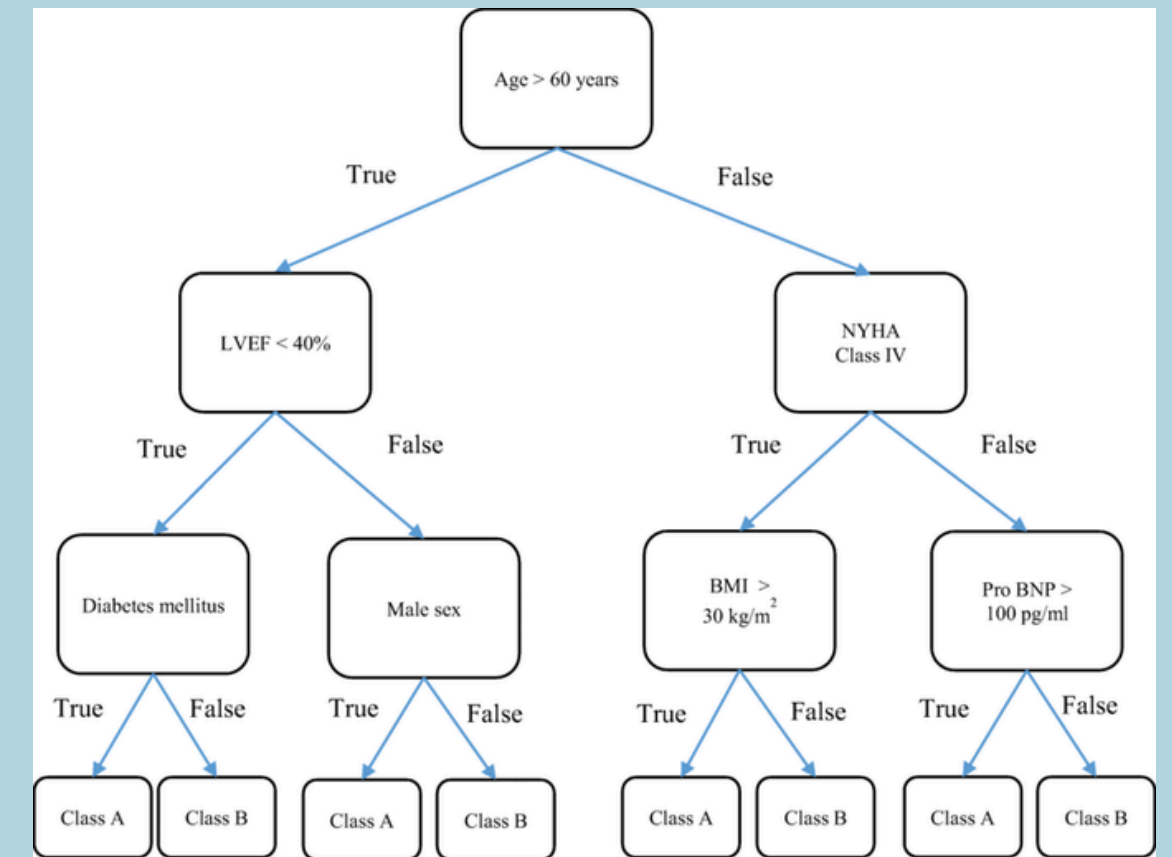
Ch 3 - The Warren Harding Error

- Main Idea: There can be downsides to snap judgements because people can perpetuate stereotypes or wrong first impressions
- Ex 1: Warren Harding looked like a president (considered handsome or Roman), but was considered one of the worst presidents in US history for his scandals.
- Ex 2: Implicit Association Test (IAT). Test where subjects have to sort objects into categories (for ex: white and good compared to Black and bad, white and bad compared Black and good). People struggled with the “white and bad” category more than the “white and good.” Shows our implicit biases.
- Ex 3: Car salesman Bob Golomb makes thin-slice decisions but never on appearance. Usually, car salesmen change prices based on appearance, but Golomb doesn't and is more successful.



Ch 4 - Paul Van Riper's Big Victory

- Main Idea: Making snap judgement decisions with less info may have more effective decisions than making decisions with a lot of info
- Ex 1: Paul Van Riper, retired lieutenant general, played the “rogue commander” in the US military game, the Millennium Challenge. Making quick decision under pressure with limited information, the rebels (Red Team) won while the US gov. with piles of info took a long time to process and decide
- Ex 2: Improvisation comedy also requires quick decisions with limited information (actors don't know what others are thinking and must act directly on those decisions).
- Ex 3: In Cook County Hospital, they were overflooded with heart attack concerns. Instead of overloading info, Dr. Brendan Reilly created the heart attack tree (simple and accurate)



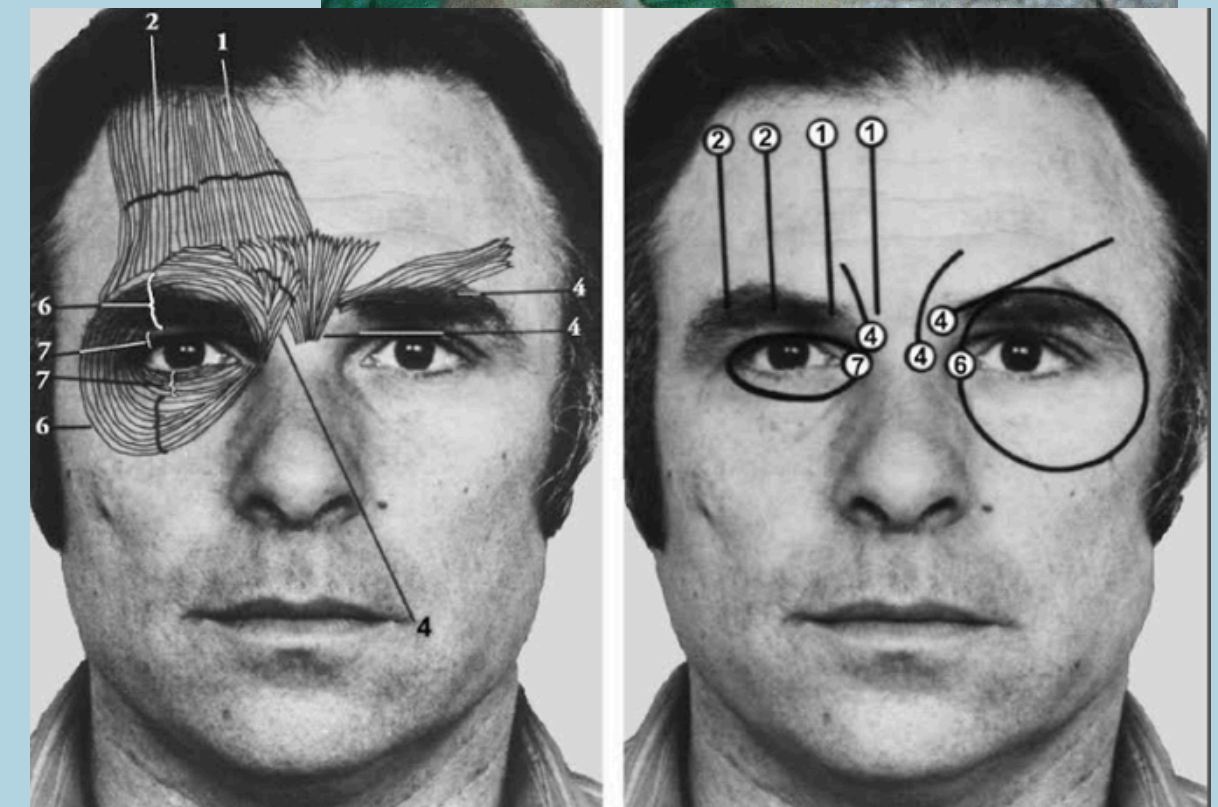
Ch 5 - Kenna's Dilemma

- Main Idea: Our initial instincts can easily reject ideas that do not fall under mainstream or conventional categories.
- Ex 1: Kenna, a musical artist, created music that did not fit in conventional music categories, such as jazz, pop, or reggae. But because people couldn't really define the music, Kenna couldn't attract music or radio executives
- Ex 2: When the Aeron chair was first made, it was highly criticized for its "ugly" design. Yet, after time passed, the Aeron chair was accepted as a good design and people began to enjoy it.
- Ex 3: When the shows *All in the Family* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* were first released on CBS, they were rejected because they were so unconventional from normal TV. But after people began watching it, they began to enjoy the shows more and more.



Ch 6 - Seven Seconds in the Bronx

- Main Idea: Examining the reasoning behind the death of Amadou Diallo (who was killed by police officers), snap judgements can lead to both positive and negative consequences.
- Ex 1: “Affect Theory” by Silvan Tomkins and Paul Ekman studies the power of subtle facial expression to show certain emotions but also that certain facial expressions induce emotions.
- Ex 2: Those with autism struggle with observing and recognizing subtle facial expressions and gestures. Gladwell uses the phrase “temporary autism” to show the blindness of certain emotions in certain moments.
- Ex 3: Malcolm argues that the police officers who killed Diallo are not racist, but were in a state of “temporary autism” and could not read Diallo’s emotions



Conclusion - Listening with Your Eyes

- Main Idea: Instead of snap judgements hindered by bias on identity and appearance, using snap judgements solely focusing on one aspect can show true abilities not hindered by other factors.
- Ex 1: Abbie Conant, who is a female trombonist, won first trombone in the Munich Philharmonic due to screen auditions (blind auditions), but was demoted because she was a woman. She sued the Philharmonic and won her seat back first chair.
- Ex 2: Julie Landsman was chosen first horn in New York Metropolitan Opera in snap judgement after her audition behind the screen.



Thank you
for listening