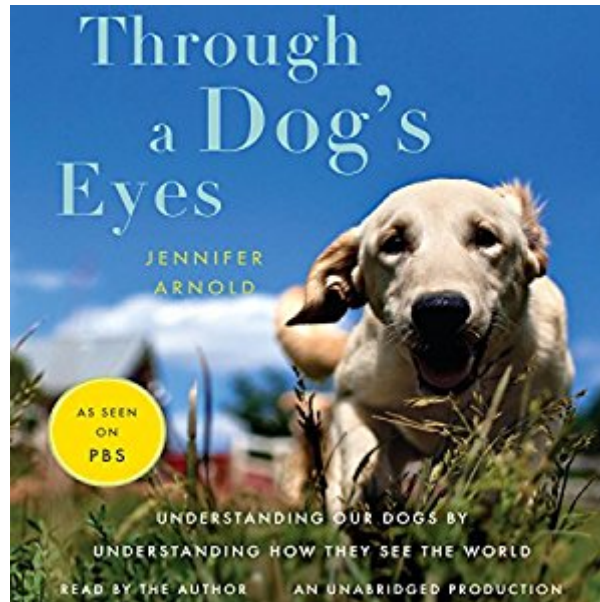




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Through A Dog's Eyes



Synopsis

Few people are more qualified to speak about the abilities and potential of dogs than Jennifer Arnold, who for the past 20 years has trained service dogs for people with physical disabilities and special needs. Arnold has developed a unique understanding of dogs' capabilities, intelligence, sensitivity, and extra-sensory skills. Her training method is based on teaching dogs to make choices-as opposed to following commands-through kindness and encouragement rather than fear and submission, and her results are extraordinary. To Arnold, dogs are neither wolves in need of a pack leader nor babies in need of coddling; rather, they are extremely trusting beings attuned to their owners' needs and they aim to please. Relationships between dogs and humans go awry when we fail to understand our dogs and when we send them confusing, mixed signals. Arnold's firsthand experience-from what moved her to start her exemplary nonprofit and how she developed her methodology-guides this book and gives it a powerful emotional heft. Stories drawn from Arnold's life and the lives of the dogs who were her greatest teachers are convincing, unforgettable, and compelling testimony and make this book a heart-warming, captivating listen that will forever change the way you see your dog by showing you the way your dog sees the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One thought I really appreciated was the author's perspective on teaching and discipline - that we "Holland" do not need to be dominant over a dog, to be a pack leader. She effectively conveys how much trust is built in the dogs being raised and trained for special needs owners through praise and respect. I gained an even deeper appreciation for my dog and best friend through this book. A must

read for the dog lovers!!

This is the loveliest book about dogs I have ever read. I learned some things but most of all I now understand why the loss of our beloved little Yorkie rescue hit us so profoundly. She was my soul mate in doggy form and not only mine but my husbands. We were blessed with her for six years but her memory will be with us always. She will always be our little angel.

Through a Dog's Eyes is the title of both this book and a companion DVD. The DVD features a documentary about the placement of service dogs, focusing on twin boys with cerebral palsy. The book is written by the founder and director of the service dog organization that placed the dogs and describes several closely bonded human-dog teams. The author, Jennifer Arnold, does a wonderful job of weaving delightful anecdotes into her book and drawing lessons about dogs from them. Though it is not a training manual, Arnold does describe some common dog "behavior" problems -- from the dog's perspective. She does so in a way that will help owners see why the traditional methods of "correcting" these behaviors don't work, which is helpful and very dog-friendly. Arnold's view of dogs might be astounding to some readers, however: she states, for example, that dogs demonstrate "theory of mind," providing several examples. In this, she's willing to go farther toward recognizing dogs as thinking decision makers than most dogs experts -- but I don't think she goes far enough. She clings to a common but, I think, incorrect view that dogs cannot make "moral" choices, dismissing the idea that dogs can "know better," that is, that a dog can make "the right" choice, even if it goes against his training, instinct, or even self-interest. She cites as one example dogs who take food from countertops, stating that "nothing that hunts for a living will leave available food untouched unless they are not hungry, and even then they may take what's available." This not only echoes the familiar, if incorrect and outdated, view of "dogs as wolves" (after all, how many domestic dogs hunt for a living?) -- it's simply not true. Dogs can be taught not to take what's not theirs; all of the dogs I have trained have learned that lesson in early puppyhood. Another area where I hesitantly venture to disagree with Arnold is that I think she over-idealizes dogs, sometimes making them sound too much like the "good wives" described in 1950s marriage manuals: eager to please, living only to serve, selfless, and heroic. I do not mean to detract from dogs' many good qualities -- I find dogs to be the most interesting and pleasant companions around -- but I have certainly encountered in all dogs individual preferences and agendas that don't always mesh with the ideas of the humans around them. Their individuality and complexity is what makes them interesting to be with, and I think painting them broadly as helpful and eager to do our bidding

shortchanges them. Arnold and her organization (Canine Assistants, a top service dog organization located in Georgia) are strongly opposed to the use of force in training and she presents her viewpoint articulately. Since she and I studied with the same mentor (Bonnie Bergin of the Bergin University of Canine Studies), we advocate nearly identical approaches to educating dogs. Arnold strongly emphasizes the bond between the human and the dog in her methods of raising and educating dogs, and this comes across strongly in her book. Overall, the book is a fun and heartwarming read and will give readers not only a new appreciation for the wonderful abilities of dogs but a great insight into the ways service dogs transform people's lives as well.

It's not a training book, it's not a biography, it doesn't delve very deeply at all into canine behavior. It's one of the few books that I've read regarding how to better understand our dogs that fell flat for me. It's not a bad book, it just falls short compared to many other books if you read extensively about canine behavior and actually want to better understand YOUR dog or somewhat grasp what the world may look like through YOUR dog's eyes. Having said all of that, there were a few passages that I highlighted because they made me smile.

I'm a huge dog lover. I began training my own dog at 10ys/o, and I now train professionally. I use positive reinforcement, and when I saw the PBS special on Jennifer Arnold's facility in Georgia for training a variety of service dogs, I really wanted to read more about it. The methods there seem very positive, and I knew she even used rescue dogs in her program. This book has some training, but what's truly life altering are the stories Mrs. Arnold shares of her life and the creation of Canine Assistants. Her approach to dog training has already greatly benefited my relationship with my hyperactive border collie puppy and I hadn't even gotten to the training chapter yet! If you want to read a helpful, heartwarming, inspiring book, this is it. Mrs. Arnold's writing style is very enjoyable to read, and this book is full of scientific facts -- not popular hype. Any gripes Mrs. Arnold has with what science has found or determined, she offers well-reasoned arguments that absolutely give the reader no pressure, but certainly make a lot of sense. I highly recommended this book to all my friends and dog training colleagues after reading just the first 25 pages. I immediately ordered her second book, a followup with more information on her training style, and can't wait to start that next.

This book has helped me better understand my dog's mental needs. I think most everyone understands a dog's physical needs. But this book helped me better know what a dog thinks about and how they do it. A MUST READ FOR EVERY DOG OWNER.

She had me by the second page. Lots of good facts here and told in an interesting manner. As a dog lover I was not necessarily a dog know-er -- now I am. I found her contrary view on the current 'Alpha Male' theory well stated and interesting. I recommend buying a box of tissues along with the book.

This is an informative and inspiring book about dogs, dog training and service dogs. A delightful read. The author sounds like a truly wonderful person. By training service dogs she is providing an enhanced life for those lucky enough to receive them. What a gift.

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