



What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs

Cat Warren

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs

Cat Warren

What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs Cat Warren

A firsthand exploration of the fascinating world of “working dogs”—who seek out missing persons, sniff for explosives in war zones, and locate long-dead remains—through the experiences of a journalist and her canine companion, an incorrigible pup named Solo.

Cat Warren is a university professor and former journalist with an admittedly odd hobby: She and her German shepherd have spent the last seven years searching for the dead. Solo is a cadaver dog. What started as a way to harness Solo’s unruly energy and enthusiasm soon became a calling that introduced Warren to the hidden and fascinating universe of working dogs, their handlers, and their trainers.

Solo has a fine nose and knows how to use it, but he’s only one of many thousands of working dogs all over the United States and beyond. In *What the Dog Knows*, Warren uses her ongoing work with Solo as a way to explore a captivating field that includes cadaver dogs, drug- and bomb-detecting K9s, tracking and apprehension dogs—even dogs who can locate unmarked graves of Civil War soldiers and help find drowning victims more than two hundred feet below the surface of a lake. Working dogs’ abilities may seem magical or mysterious, but Warren shows the multifaceted science, the rigorous training, and the skilled handling that underlie the amazing abilities of dogs who work with their noses.

Warren interviews cognitive psychologists, historians, medical examiners, epidemiologists, and forensic anthropologists, as well as the breeders, trainers, and handlers who work with and rely on these remarkable and adaptable animals daily. Along the way, she discovers story after story that proves the impressive capabilities—as well as the very real limits—of working dogs and their human partners. Clear-eyed and unsentimental, Warren explains why our partnership with dogs is woven into the fabric of society and why we keep finding new uses for their wonderful noses.

What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs Details

Date : Published October 1st 2013 by Touchstone

ISBN : 9781451667318

Author : Cat Warren

Format : Hardcover 352 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Animals, Dogs, Science

 [Download What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working D ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs

Cat Warren

From Reader Review What the Dog Knows: The Science and Wonder of Working Dogs for online ebook

Tracy Kaufman says

I am an HRD/cadaver handler and this book was like reading my journey while I was training my own dog. Brought back wonderful memories and even the low points you have in training a dog for search and rescue. She gives you the history of some of the roles dogs have had with dealing with our dead. Which I was unaware of.

If you have an interest in the world of search and rescue this is the book for you. It is heart warming and has an honest approach you rarely see.

Jen says

Not at all the subject matter I expected to be reading when I requested it for Christmas, but excellent and enjoyable, all the same- probably even more so! I'm completely fascinated with cadaver dog work/training and am so glad to have this book and to have read it! The author does great work and writes well without being overly sentimental. Very pleased and impressed with this book!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

This is a very good book if you want to learn about working dogs, mostly cadaver dogs since this is what the author worked in at her current time writing the book. She did write about other working dogs which was very interesting to know as well. I enjoyed some of the parts she added about her home life as well.

Lindsey says

Really enjoyed this book! Although when I picked it up there was a photo of a chocolate Labrador on the front that seemed inappropriate but this cover seems far more suitable and related to the content. I enjoyed the research and firsthand experience throughout this book on a topic I knew nothing about. I've trained dogs before but had never thought about this unique perspective and training to be cadaver dogs. I didn't relate to some of the quotes at the start of the chapters (a few went over my head but I understand the author is an associate professor so they would have been carefully chosen) but this book and Solo's adventures will stay with me for a long time!

Lisa Sipe says

Fun story about raising, training and loving a cadaver dog. Most gratifying part of the story for me (attempting to raise mild-mannered service dogs and failing with Sundance) was that some people highly

value the male jack asses and female bitches from hell of the dog world. That's my little high drive flunkie;-)

Maryann says

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in dogs, especially working dogs. I couldn't put this book down! Very well written, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the author's training and adventures with her dog, Solo. This book sheds some light on an otherwise unknown subject. I'm crossing my fingers that there will be a sequel!

Victoria says

Loved this for the insights into working dogs and their world, and for the clear writing. Prompted me to look at my dogs in a new light - watching how they work a scent in the back yard or in the fields where we walk them.

Marcie says

This book about Solo the cadaver dog mistakenly has a photo of my German Sherpherd dog Sam on it! Just kidding, but my glorious, high-drive, smart, insistent, vigilant dog could be his twin. Mine is not trained to do any important work except make me exercise and laugh at his expressions, though.

So it was terrific fun for me to read about Solo's training and working and imagine Sam in the same scenarios. The stories about the actual call-outs of Solo and all the other working dogs in the book are really dramatic and wonderful.

Yeah, I'm guilty of Hero Dog Worship, as the author calls it. So what. My life is so much richer with my own "macho jackass" of a dog in it.

The book is a nice balance between academic discussion of the science behind dogs working death scent and real-life anecdotes of Solo's development. It's also a very thorough exploration of the past, future, and present-day world of detection dogs, involving dogs and their handlers from all aspects -- police K9, military, volunteer hobbyists, breeders, scientists doing research, etc.

I share the author's joy and curiosity when I watch my Sam lift his big head into the wind, nose twitching like mad, eyes focused afar. What does it mean? I wish he could tell me.

Jo Perry says

When a nervous, self-focused singleton German shepherd puppy enters journalist Cat Warren's life, the usual doggy activities are not enough to challenge or focus her new dog's prodigious energy. That's when Warren discovers that nosing out the missing dead is a perfect match for her dog's talents and

temperament—and also congenial to her sharp eye and lively intelligence.

Dogs. Death. Murder. Mystery. Decomposition. Trust. Error. Life. Loss. Love. Discovery.

They're all here—which is why WTDK can be read, among other things, as an extended meditation on human mortality and self-consciousness—two topics I'm personally drawn to. Warren has enlarged my sense of the possible ways to die: There are so so many ways to go (Get murdered and left to rot along a highway; get knocked off and then buried under a dead animal to throw off searchers, or simply to succumb to being alone, confused and lost.) And once one has departed, there are many ways, some slow, some fast, to fade from the earth—beer-bloated and submerged, or reduced to a years' old oily smudge broadcasting a sweet, acidic scent through the godforsaken woods. As Warren explains, “we cease to exist,” but we also “stubbornly stick around.”

But cadaver dogs like Solo and handlers like Warren are important and incredibly interesting just because of who they are—solvers of mysteries, assuagers of grief, providers of endings to tragic stories of accidents or murder, and bringers of justice.

Of course, Solo, Warren's canine partner, isn't thinking about any of the above. He's fully engaged in the here and now, focused finding and following death's sweet scent—not its implications. He's an expert in what Wallace Stevens called the “the.” Stuff. Running through it, around it, sensing it, sniffing it out, muscling through it. And as Solo's partner, Warren must tune into this powerful canine mindfulness, too—or as she puts it—she must trust her dog:

“If the drugs or the gunpowder or the bone is actually there and a handler tries to move on? The dog learns how to “commit,” to plant himself stubbornly and ignore the handler's prevarications or even a slight jerk on the lead to come off the scent, a pull that a less-evolved working dog might respond to. It's not mystifying. It's not eerie. It is a beautiful sight, a dog trusting his nose, ignoring his handler's efforts to get him to unstuck himself from the flypaper scent that he's stuck to. The dog who ignores the handler's gaze, which is irrelevant to the task at hand. This is what real faith should look like--hard and unwavering. This is what the co-evolution of a working dog and handler should look like. The dog's commitment to the truth in the face of your moving away. That's real teamwork—the dog pointing his nose or paw or entire body at the scent, telling his handler. You bloody idiot! It's here!”

Do you think you see where this is going? Well you can't. Cat Warren is much too smart, has too much heart, and is too fine a writer to include any of the “My Dog Saved Me” or “My Dog Taught Me To Really Embrace Life” saccharine bullshit. Instead we see the hard work, the misunderstandings, the errors in attention or translation that inform the dog-human partnership—or as Cat Warren would call it, the work. She even includes stories of notoriously fraudulent handlers just to remind us of the human predilection for lying—to ourselves and others.

Warren demonstrates that training a dog and one's own head to find the occult dead is hard. That dogs work to the point of exhaustion and beyond to find the missing. The “work” for both handler and dog is difficult and slippery. Important. Scary. Dangerous work. And I'm so grateful that Cat Warren and Solo (and Coda)—and people and dogs like her and them have taken on the job. It's an honor to get to know them and to read Warren's very fine and brilliant book.

Melissa says

Love this book! The style is similar to Mary Roach's *Stiff*, in that it is a memoir filled with research, history, and science. Warren really did her research for this book; I learned so much about the history of dogs and their place in our workforce. Her personal part in this long history is touching. A wonderful read.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Jen Blood says

Academic-turned-SAR dog handler Cat Warren delves into her experiences training Solo, a headstrong German shepherd pup who finds his way and comes into his own through search and rescue. This is hardly just another heartwarming story about *People With Dogs*, however... Warren has done exhaustive research into the world of search and rescue, conducted interviews, gone through countless hours of hands-on training, and has plenty of anecdotes taken directly from her time in the field. From the science to the philosophy to the practical applications of working dogs in our world today, Warren has provided an excellent treatise for anyone interested in canine behavior and training. Highly, highly recommended.

Susan Beuerlein says

Surprisingly, pigs, cats, and vultures have all been studied for cadaver tracking, according to journalist Cat Warren. All three can find the scent, but pigs get too big and heavy; cats aren't interested; and vultures tend to sample the findings!

Who knew that the perfect cadaver dog would be the wild and crazy Solo, an ebullient German Shepherd with energy to spare? His owner, the author, maintains that handlers don't want an obedient, docile pet that just sits and stares lovingly at them. The trail beckons, and the ideal scent dog must lead the way.

This is a perfect book dog lovers and those interested in tracking. As the subtitle indicates, *What the Dog Knows* is filled with both science and wonder, conducting an absorbing journey through the world of forensics, and where dogs—and their human partners—fit in.

Jessica says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book from front to back cover. My dog and I attend classes and compete in scent work so I was able to relate to so much in this book...as an aside we compete for fun and this book was about a much more serious type of scent work.

I would highly recommend this book to dog lovers and especially those who participate in scent work with their pups. And, of course, including those that share their homes and lives with a German shepherd.

Stuart Smith says

A Dog book by a Cat? This is a very strong non-fiction. Well researched by a science writer with a great talent for weaving together her personal narrative with interesting and fascinating facts about the anatomy of the dog and the history of the cadaver dog trade. For fans spanning Lassie all the way to CSI shows. Dog owner or not, you'll be glad you picked this books up.

Lara Torgesen says

Just finished reading a fabulous book about a dog... written by a Cat. This book is part science/part memoir/part history of the training and utilization of cadaver dogs. I loved Cat's vivid descriptions of their many adventures. Cat found a comrade in a seemingly misfit, litter-of-one German Shepherd pup. They were both restless and in need of purpose and direction, and they found it together. Especially meaningful to me was the author's own grappling with the illness and death of her father while training her pup that finding death in the woods is a fun game to play--rewarded with doggie treats and tug-of-war games. A great read--not just for dog lovers! This would be a terrific book club selection, with lots of topics for discussion.
