



# Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error

By Kathryn Schulz

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“Both wise and clever, full of fun and surprise about a topic so central to our lives that we almost never even think about it.”

—Bill McKibben, author of *Earth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*

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In the tradition of *The Wisdom of Crowds* and *Predictably Irrational* comes *Being Wrong*, an illuminating exploration of what it means to be in error, and why homo sapiens tend to tacitly assume (or loudly insist) that they are right about most everything. Kathryn Schulz, editor of *Grist* magazine, argues that error is the fundamental human condition and should be celebrated as such. Guiding the reader through the history and psychology of error, from Socrates to Alan Greenspan, *Being Wrong* will change the way you perceive screw-ups, both of the mammoth and daily variety, forever.

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## Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error By Kathryn Schulz Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In the spirit of *Blink* and *Predictably Irrational* (but with a large helping of erudition), journalist Schulz casts a fresh and irreverent eye upon the profound meanings behind our most ordinary behaviors—in this instance, how we make mistakes, how we behave when we find we have been wrong, and how our errors change us. [I]t is ultimately wrongness, not rightness, that can teach us who we are, she asserts. Schulz writes with such lucidity and wit that her philosophical enquiry becomes a page-turner. She deftly incorporates Wittgenstein, Descartes, and Freud, along with an array of contemporary social scientists and even a spin with Shakespeare and Keats. There's heavy stuff here, but no heavy-handedness. Being wrong encompasses the cataclysmic (economic collapse) and the commonplace (leaving a laptop in front of the window before the storm). Being wrong may lead to fun (playing with and understanding optical illusions) or futility (the Millerite expectation of the Rapture in 1844). Being wrong can be transformative, and Schultz writes, I encourage us to see error as a gift in itself, a rich and irreplaceable source of humor, art, illumination, individuality, and change—an apt description of her engrossing study. (*June*)

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#### From [Booklist](#)

Here's a fascinating counterpoint to the notion that making a mistake somehow diminishes you as a person. We shouldn't fear error, the author says; rather, we should embrace it because it's our capacity for making mistakes that makes us who we are. ("To err is human" isn't just an empty cliché.) Schulz explores the nature of error: are big mistakes fundamentally different from small mistakes, or are they all essentially the same? How much does peer pressure, or crowd response, affect our capacity to blunder? How and why do we remember relatively insignificant mistakes for the rest of our lives, long after they have ceased to be relevant to anything? And what role does "error-blindness"—our inability to know when we are in the process of making a mistake—play in our daily lives? Schulz writes in a lively style, asks lots of compelling questions, and uses plenty of examples to illustrate her points. Put this one in the same general category as Gladwell's *Blink* (2005), LeGault's *Think!* (2006), and Shore's *Blunder* (2008): user-friendly, entertaining looks at the way our minds work. --David Pitt

#### Review

"A mirthful and wise diagnosis of what ails us: Schulz dances us through science, psychology, and literature in a sparkling history of (and ode to) human error." (Publishers Weekly)

"[A]n insightful and delightful discussion of the errors of our ways. . . . Schulz remains good company -- a warm, witty and welcome presence. . . . [S]he combines lucid prose with perfect comic timing. . . . *Being Wrong* is smart and lively." (New York Times Book Review)

"So, please take this advice: Read BEING WRONG, because it's the right thing to do." (Associated Press)

"Kathryn Schulz's brilliant, spirited, and necessary inquiry into the essential humanity of error will leave you feeling intoxicatingly wrongheaded." (Tom Vanderbilt, bestselling author of *TRAFFIC*)

"[A]n unusual examination of the virtue and peril of being wrong and of all the ways we think we know things that just ain't so." (Boston Globe)

“Engrossing.... In the spirit of *Blink* and *Predictably Irrational* (but with a large helping of erudition).... Schulz writes with such lucidity and wit that her philosophical enquiry becomes a page-turner.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

“Kathryn Schulz has given us a brilliant and remarkably upbeat account of the long history of human error. If *Being Wrong* is this smart and illuminating, I don’t want to be right!” (Steven Johnson, bestselling author of *THE GHOST MAP* and *EVERYTHING BAD IS GOOD FOR YOU*)

“Kathryn Schultz is engaging, witty and fascinating as she uses a full arsenal of academic research, colorful stories, philosophical arguments and personal anecdotes to create a riveting account of why we, mostly, have been wrong about being wrong.” (Frans Johansson, author of *THE MEDICI EFFECT*)

“Both wise and clever, full of fun and surprise...[*BEING WRONG*] could also be enormously useful—there are very few problems we face...that couldn’t be helpfully addressed if we were willing to at least entertain the idea that we might not be entirely right.” (Bill McKibben, author of *EAARTH: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*)

“A funny and philosophical meditation on why error is mostly a humane, courageous and extremely desirable human trait. [Schulz] flies high in the intellectual skies, leaving beautiful sunlit contrails....It’s lovely to watch this idea warm in Ms. Schulz’s hands.” (Dwight Garner, *New York Times*)

“Schulz possesses playfulness even as she brings the reader to tears... *Being Wrong* has a heartbeat.” (Huffington Post)

“Intellectualism made fun! . . . Schulz’s call to embrace flaws and errors as potentially beneficial will surely draw legions of followers.” (Newsweek)

“Schulz draws on philosophers, neuroscientists, psychoanalysts and bit of common sense in an erudite, playful rumination on error.” (Washington Post)

“An amazing book. . . . I don’t know when I last read a book as stimulating, as thoughtful, and as much fun to read.” (Harold S. Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*)

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Donna Jost:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them family or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent their free time just watching TV, as well as playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity this is look different you can read the book. It is really fun for you. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day long to reading a reserve. The book *Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error* it is rather good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy the e-book. You can more easily to read this book through your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book features high quality.

**Jewel Williams:**

This Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error is great guide for you because the content and that is full of information for you who else always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. That book reveal it details accurately using great arrange word or we can state no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read the idea hurriedly you can have whole details in it. Doesn't mean it only offers you straight forward sentences but challenging core information with wonderful delivering sentences. Having Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error in your hand like having the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no guide that offer you world in ten or fifteen small right but this guide already do that. So , this is certainly good reading book. Heya Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt that?

**Janice Perry:**

Reading a book to get new life style in this year; every people loves to examine a book. When you read a book you can get a lot of benefit. When you read textbooks, you can improve your knowledge, simply because book has a lot of information in it. The information that you will get depend on what sorts of book that you have read. If you want to get information about your analysis, you can read education books, but if you act like you want to entertain yourself look for a fiction books, such us novel, comics, in addition to soon. The Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error provide you with a new experience in examining a book.

**Margaret Parker:**

This Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error is completely new way for you who has interest to look for some information because it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you on it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error can be the light food in your case because the information inside this kind of book is easy to get through anyone. These books create itself in the form which is reachable by anyone, that's why I mean in the e-book contact form. People who think that in book form make them feel tired even dizzy this guide is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you actually. So , don't miss it! Just read this e-book style for your better life as well as knowledge.

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