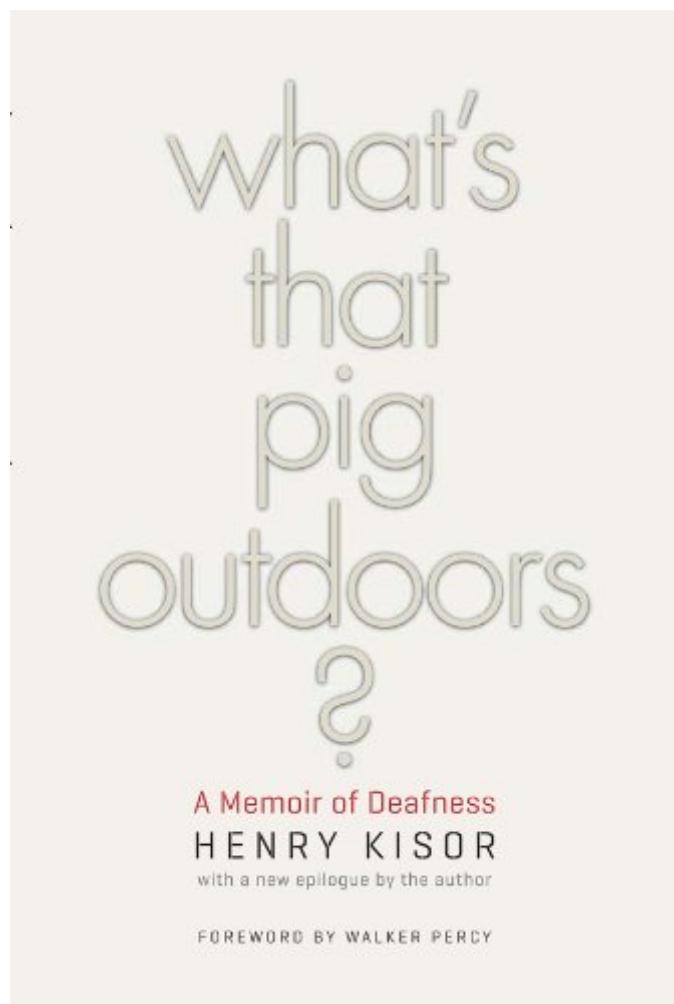


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# What's That Pig Outdoors?: A Memoir Of Deafness



## **Synopsis**

Henry Kisor lost his hearing at age three to meningitis and encephalitis but went on to excel in the most verbal of professions as a literary journalist. This new and expanded edition of Kisor's engrossing memoir recounts his life as a deaf person in a hearing world and addresses heartening changes over the last two decades due to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and advancements in cochlear implants and modes of communication.\_x000B\_\_x000B\_Kisor tells of his parents' drive to raise him as a member of the hearing and speaking world by teaching him effective lip-reading skills at a young age and encouraging him to communicate with his hearing peers. He also narrates his time as the only deaf student at Trinity College in Connecticut and then as a graduate student at Northwestern University, as well as his successful career as the book review editor at the Chicago Sun-Times and the Chicago Daily News.\_x000B\_\_x000B\_Widely praised in popular media and academic journals when it was first published in 1990, What's That Pig Outdoors? opened new conversations about the deaf. Bringing those conversations into the twenty-first century, Kisor updates the continuing disagreements between those who advocate sign language and those who practice speech and lip-reading, discusses the increased acceptance of deaf people's abilities and idiosyncrasies, and considers technological advancements such as blogging, instant messaging, and hand-held mobile devices that have enabled deaf people to communicate with the hearing world on its own terms.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book will help those of you, who are deaf, accept yourself as a deaf person. Read all the way to the end of the book, and you'll understand, for the first time in your life, that it is perfectly okay to be who you are. There will be others who will always tell you who you are, what you are supposed to do, and that you are to be ashamed of the choices that your parents made for you, or the choices that you have made for yourself. The book also shows you the extreme importance of listening to your guts, to follow your heart, and to be comfortable in your own skin, in spite of today's shame-based deaf world that likes to put labels on you. How liberating and how wonderful it is to be free, to be who you are and to move on, firmly, with your own life.

This book tells the story of a deaf man - his growing up, his college and adult years and forging a career. It is not maudlin, or sad. He writes well, and is the first book that I have read that pinpoints the problem of the deaf person learning to think in language. The chapter explaining the method for which he learned to read and to write was fascinating. Should be required reading for all teachers, because this method would be useful for teaching anyone who is having problems learning to read. The author does not sign, and has never learned to sign. He has actually never entered the subculture of the deaf, and lives only in the hearing world. This is an interesting divide, since we hearing people have no knowledge of this division. This is a short book, and easily read in an afternoon. It is not a gripping adventure story, but still I recommend it highly. We must bridge the gap between people, and not many deaf people are able to write books about their own experiences. For that reason, I feel it is an important book. Also, I recommend *Crashing Thru*, the book about Mike May. He became blind at the age of 3, and had a successful and fulfilling life without sight, and then had his vision restored as an adult. Read them both, and expand your own world.

What should our attitude be towards the deaf? Kisor gives us good insight with his memoir which is

beautifully, sensitively and humorously written. Some would term him an outcast to both the deaf culture and the hearing culture, since he lipreads and doesn't sign. Can't possibly be happy because he can't fully participate in hearing world, he's missing so much. But Kisor disagrees. He achieved more than most hearing, having accumulated great English language skills. He demonstrates with the rare book written about deafness from a deaf author. His title is fascinating, since it is from a story regarding his five-year old son and the nuances lipreading has trouble discerning. Yes, improvements have happened and will continue with behavioral psychology and deafness, but here the spirit of the human inside is spoken of, something that no program can really guarantee success, but determination, help and support will aid. This marvelous memoir contributes much to this cause. It is a most wonderful read for all interested in what a deaf person in a hearing world might be going through, especially the emotional strains deafness brings with it. Much to be gleaned here.

Love this story so much recommended to teacher of the deaf and deaf students. It is a wonderful story about a hearing impaired man who goes through life compensating his deafness through school age and in the newspaper business as a writer. He became deaf at age 3 so he already developed language.

On April 12, 2011, Henry Kisor spoke to a rapt audience at the St. Charles Public Library in St. Charles, IL. An inspiration by example, Henry showed us all who he is, a good man with many life riches who also happens to be deaf. Inspired to buy and read his memoir, *What's That Pig Outdoors?*, I finished reading "Pigs" in two days even though I lingered over the words. They were inspiring words, words to consider and think through. Henry writes without bitterness, but with joy about a world that has a lot more going for it than we give it credit for, without falling for the easy sarcasm pervading literature. The story is perhaps best described as honest, which is a characteristic far too absent from many memoirs. I am glad to have met his wife, Debby, in person, for her story is told here, too, most powerfully by Henry's description of the emotions shown during the events of their lost third child. Humor, struggle, failure, and success abound. Most of all, though, hope. Henry's story is a gracious one, giving credit where due, to his parents, teachers, colleagues, and us - society in general. For all our flaws, we're not so bad upon close examination. Thank you, Mr. Kisor, for the beautiful story that is *What's That Pig Outdoors?*, for sharing your life, and reminding us without preachiness, what we need to hear. Isn't that an irony? That Mr. Kisor, with his deaf ears, has demonstrated perhaps the best capacity to listen a person can have, throughout the

years of his life.

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