



NANCY: John Hodgman, the deranged billionaire. What a guy. I started reading this book blind, wondering who is this author and on what TV show did he get rich? Half way through, I discovered I do know the man from the Daily Show. Duh! I felt like the blonde pony-tailed lady at the yacht club (but without a hedge fund husband!) Fun to meet the real person behind the billionaire façade. His dry wit grew me on me as the book developed into hilarity through this inside look at rural Massachusetts and Maine from a very humble, down-to earth writer. An enjoyable read!



PRISCILLA: Oh my! What stories he told. So cool that he kept praying the Lord's Prayer, even after his mom told him she was an atheist while dying of cancer. And he bought a boat for \$3700 at a church auction! But does this guy believe? I'm not sure, he didn't really talk about his faith.



SALLIE: Loved the cemetery scene with his daughter. Also loved the cemetery guard, protecting children. Seems like he's a good father, too. He tried to respect his children's privacy, to a certain extent, but also realized that just writing the book exposed him. On the other hand, he kept most of his family life private, which was good. Loved how he stood up to the blonde in the pony tail whose children bullied his son. Way to go, Dad!



ABIGAIL: I found it very peculiar the way he kept certain things secret. Like the famous author's name. Who was that anyway? Did you figure it out. And he gave us his PO Box, but not the name of the town. And why didn't he explain anything about the TV show?. Very quirky, and added to the humor.



MOLLY: Well, he's obviously in Jon Stewart's camp. His social justice orientation oozed out between the lines, as he decried the unjust economic system. We definitely see what motivated his deranged billionaire character. Then I went on line and watched some of the old clips. Loved the last one when he said he was going to live in space. And the final quip about the "trickle down" economics... "The only thing that trickles down is bullshit." Awesome job.



KATHARINE: He may be from Masaachusetts, but he has that dry Minnesotan humor I know so well. Very funny. I read this to my husband and we laughed out loud together. The intellectuals approach to humor. Well done, John Hodgman. A lot of fun.



JANE: I liked him as a billionaire. Just kidding. I never watched the Daily Show. Everybody's got to earn money. He did good. Maybe he just sort of happened into it, but I also saw him working pretty hard as an editor, writer, TV personality and now he's written three books and has his own show. He's an entrepreneur, not just a lucky guy, although he's that, too.



Discussion Guide



About the Book

Book Title: Vacationland

Author: John Hodgman

Published: Viking, 2017

Author Website: <https://www.johnhodgman.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hodgmania/>

Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. What made you laugh in this book? Do you like Hodgman's sense of humor? Why or why not?
3. What do you think is Hodgman's attitude toward his own wealth or lack of it and toward his own success or lack of it?
4. What did Hodgman like and dislike about living in New York, Massachusetts and Maine? If you have you lived there or visited those places, how your experiences compare?
5. In what ways did Hodgman take pains to protect privacy? Where did he apologetically expose others? How did you feel about this as a reader?
6. If you never watched John Hodgman on the Daily Show, watch a clip of him as the Billionaire and then Discuss how that character compares with his real self?
7. If you wrote your own autobiography, what would you call it and what would you write about?
8. Read over the MAMs comments on the book. Which of them do you most agree with and why?
9. In what ways, if any, will this change your life or perspective?

Watch these videos of John on YouTube:

John Hodgman drops his fake expert act in 'Vacationland'

The Daily Show - 2015: A Space Gated Community

John Hodgman, "Vacationland"