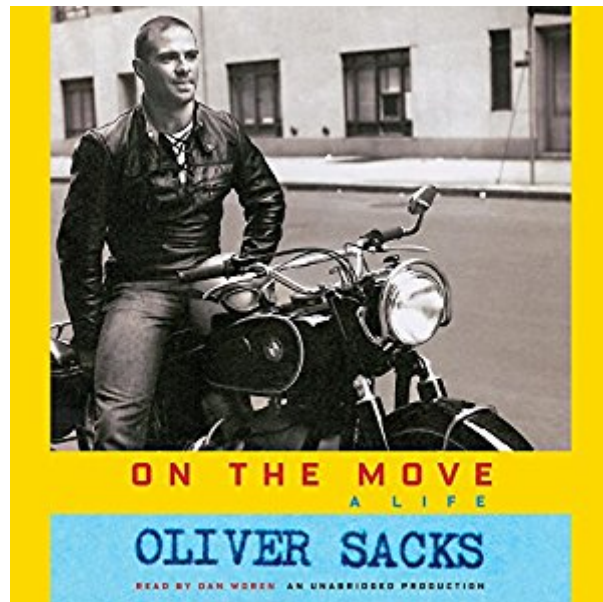


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# On The Move: A Life



## Synopsis

When Oliver Sacks was 12 years old, a perceptive schoolmaster wrote in his report: "Sacks will go far, if he does not go too far." It is now abundantly clear that Sacks has never stopped going. From its opening minutes on his youthful obsession with motorcycles and speed, *On the Move* is infused with his restless energy. As he recounts his experiences as a young neurologist in the early 1960s, first in California, where he struggled with drug addiction, and then in New York, where he discovered a long-forgotten illness in the back wards of a chronic hospital, we see how his engagement with patients comes to define his life. With unbridled honesty and humor, Sacks shows us that the same energy that drives his physical passions - weight lifting and swimming - also drives his cerebral passions. He writes about his love affairs, both romantic and intellectual; his guilt over leaving his family to come to America; his bond with his schizophrenic brother; and the writers and scientists - Thom Gunn, A. R. Luria, W. H. Auden, Gerald M. Edelman, Francis Crick - who influenced him. *On the Move* is the story of a brilliantly unconventional physician and writer - and of the man who has illuminated the many ways that the brain makes us human.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Readers whose mental image of neurologist and prolific author Oliver Sacks is defined by his avuncular, white-bearded visage may be puzzled, at first, by the photograph of the buff, leather-jacketed young man astride a motorcycle that graces the cover of his memoir, *ON THE MOVE*. If they are, it should only take a few pages of this engrossing autobiography to understand

why that image captures perfectly the spirit of his peripatetic and relentlessly curious life. Considering that both of his parents and two older brothers were physicians, it's hardly surprising that Sacks gave little thought to any career other than medicine. Almost from the beginning, that career, most of which he pursued in the United States after leaving his native England for Canada in 1960, was driven as much by the storytelling impulse as it was by an affinity for science. Admitting his frustration at the tunnel vision of his residency training at UCLA in the 1960s, because "I think in narrative and historical terms," Sacks soon abandoned the laboratory for clinical practice. Sacks ties his account of the highs and lows of that practice to many of his 12 previous books, including *AWAKENINGS*, the story of the transformation of postencephalitic patients treated with L-dopa that was made into the movie starring Robin Williams and Robert De Niro, and *THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT* (the 1985 book that brought him to prominence). Though he's never bitter in describing it, Sacks understands that his professional recognition has not matched the regard in which he's held as a popularizer of knowledge about disorders as diverse as Tourette's syndrome and color blindness.

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