



Dave Gorman's Googlewhack! Adventure

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If someone called you a 'googlehack' what would you do? Would you end up playing table tennis with a nine year-old boy in Boston? Would you find yourself in Los Angeles wrangling snakes, or would you go to China to be licked by a performance artist?

If your name is Dave Gorman, then all of these things could be true.

Fuelled by a lust for life and a desperate desire to do anything except what he's supposed to be doing (writing that novel and growing up), Dave falls under the spell of an obscure internet word game - Googlehacking. Addicted to the game, and gripped by obsession, Dave travels three times round the world, visiting four continents and the unlikeliest cast of real life eccentrics you'll ever meet in what becomes an epic challenge, a life-changing, globe-trotting Googlehack adventure.

Dave Gorman's Googlehack! Adventure Details

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From Reader Review Dave Gorman's Googlewhack! Adventure for online ebook

Christine says

Just plain fun!

Dane Cobain says

Dave Gorman is back again with another bizarre adventure – he’s the comedian who also found 54 other people called Dave Gorman and who followed his horoscope exactly for forty days and forty nights. The only difference with this challenge is that he didn’t set out to do it – he almost stumbled in to the challenge by accident, in stark contrast to his other journeys.

In fact, Gorman’s reluctance to embark on the adventure is almost annoying – he repeatedly talks about how he doesn’t want to do it, and yet we all know that he did or the book wouldn’t exist. As a reader, you want to tell him to man up and get going, as he eventually and inevitably does.

The premise is a little complicated, but I’ll do my best to explain it – a Googlewhack is a term that’s used to refer to the results of a Google search for two different words when there’s only one result, like ‘spatula denoument’ or ‘Francophile namesakes’. Of course, now that those Googlewhacks have been featured in Dave’s show, they’re no longer Googlewhacks – in fact, if you search for them now, this web page will be included, and so will dozens of others that have since been released.

Dave’s mission was to meet the people whose websites included these Googlewhacks, and to ask them to find two further Googlewhacks of their own – he’d then continue the chain until he’d met ten people in a row via a Googlewhack. Along the way, Dave Gorman meets an old friend called Dave Gorman (see Are You Dave Gorman? for an explanation on that), gets a drunken tattoo in Texas, has a nervous breakdown and ends up in the middle of a storm. I’ve probably made it sound easier than it is, because it turned out to be an emotional journey spanning multiple continents, but you’ll have to read the book to find out all about that.

Allen Kwan says

It's hard to divorce the book from the show, but Gorman's tale of his descent into the insanity of a Googlewhacking rabbit hole is enjoyable to read and helps to fill in the gaps that he has omitted from his show.

Pablo says

Well, that's some funny story to tell your grandchildren. It started a bit inconsequentially, with Gorman just going to places, meeting pretty normal people, and being generally immature himself. It's towards the second half of the book that the actual weird situations start to crop up and some really funny moments take place,

all this punctuated with some more immaturity. Finally, I really didn't like the interaction with the last person. Some really selfish behaviour right there, to top all the general immaturity theme.

A good £1 charity shop buy for Gorman's completionists, which works as a light commute read after a long work day. Don't expect much more.

Rachel says

A story about procrastination at its finest!

Dave is supposed to be writing a novel but gets distracted when he discovers "google whacking" - the art of finding word combos that generate only one hit on Google.

An offhand comment becomes a challenge to get 10 Google whacks in a row before his 32nd birthday and Dave sets off to meet those behind the websites of his google whacks and rope them into giving him 2 more google whacks for his adventure.

It's charming and fun, and listening to the audiobook was a joy. Not too long and really made me smile.

Amy says

If you're about to run to google and google what exactly a "googlewhack" is, then this book is for you. A google whack is when two dictionary words produce one and only one google hit. Dave accidentally starts off on an adventure to meet with the people that run these strange and unique sites. At times this novel is literally laugh-out-loud funny. Recommended.

Leanne Shirtliffe says

I enjoyed the first third of this book, but as I progressed I found my interest waned. I like his style, but it felt a bit flat after a while. He is definitely funny and I admire his adventure. The arc of each chapter (find new guy - have assumptions - meet them and shatter stereotypes) became a little monotonous.

Craig says

I don't like how much I relate to this insane man.

Dale says

(Yes, Dave Gorman was a Daily Show correspondent. For like a week or so.)

This book came into my house when my lovely wife (at the time my lovely girlfriend) moved in with me, and it amused the heck out of me. I'm adding it alongside The Areas of My Expertise because both books celebrate the random, even though Gorman's tale is almost completely true and Hodgman's book is

completely fabricated.

Here's the premise: Gorman discovers a 'game' called Googlewhack, which involves opening up the Google search engine and entering two seemingly unconnectable words. Like "cephalopod" and "bluegrass". If Google returns multiple search results on those two terms, or zero, you lose, but if it returns one and only one hit, you win. Gorman takes the game to a whole new level when he decides to physically meet the people who have created these Googlewhack websites, like the marine biologist who also plays Kentucky banjo. (I may be misremembering the exact terms/details but you get the idea.) Furthermore, Gorman constructs a grand quest for himself - to meet someone whose website he discovers via Googlewhack, and then ask them to play Googlewhack until they win (twice), and then track down the creator of the new site, and have them play, and track down that creator, until he has formed an unbroken chain of ten Googlewhacks. (He has everyone he finds play twice so that if one branch of the chain fizzles out, he can try pursuing the others rather than starting from Googlewhack One.) He ends up traveling the globe in his quest (funded by an expense account from a publisher who thinks he is working on a novel) and creates something part travelogue, part near-existential-crisis, and part celebration of the bizarre all around us.

The sad thing about the Googlewhack Adventure is that you really can't have your own. In the time since Gorman had his, the world wide web has proliferated to such an extent that getting a single hit off two words is virtually impossible. But as a look back at a time when the web was practically virgin territory full of mystery and wonder, this book is endearing and entertaining.

Plum-crazy says

Well I happily sniggered & smirked my way through Dave's adventures. As you would expect, he meets some quirky & eccentric characters most of whom are happy to welcome him into their lives & become part of his googlewhack chain.

Rebecca says

Dave Gorman is a real person, a comedian. He gets an email saying he has a googlewack on his webpage. A googlewack is when you enter two words into google and only one website comes up. The words must be in dictionary.com, which I guess underlines what you search. I don't use google, so i didn't know this. Or care. He starts trying to find googlewacks himself and contacting them and he finds an old friend, also named David Gorman (Dave also wrote a book on this search as well, which is in my queue) and David dares him to find 10 googlewacks in a row. Before his 32nd birthday.

The book is just about his adventures. He originally started the book telling the editors that he was going to write a work of fiction and they gave him a huge advance, which I assume is how he has the money to travel everywhere, meeting his googlewacks. Most of them end up being in the US, of course.

I don't know if it's the mood I have been in lately, but I didn't feel for the protag at all. When he failed or the search came to a dead end (like when the googlewack would no write back) I didn't feel sorry for him at all. He gets to travel all over for something stupid and as trivial as this! And I felt that the reason was so so stupid. googlewack? Who has time for this! This book did not make me want to find one at all.

What is it with british comics who write books based on bets, usually made while drunk at a pub? Tony Hawkes, an author I found when I was in London back in 2003, all his books where about stupid bar bets and where he traveled and what he did to complete them. funny, but when really thought about, very very stupid. This book was kind of too long.

grade: C+

Lynn says

Fun read.

Alex Boon says

A rather good laugh once I got past the shock of someone travelling by air quite so much over a short period of time. Random meetings with random people based on a random game actually makes for an interesting story. I think I was more into the descriptions of the people and their websites than rooting for Dave to complete the actual game.

Tony says

Immense silliness in typical DG style as he attempts to fulfil another bet, this time to get 10 googlewhacks in a row (two words which when googled get a single outcome page)

Isabel (kittiwake) says

'So, Dave, tell me more about these ...googlewhacks?'

I told him everything. Everything I've told you.

'So I'm number two in a chain?' said David.

'What do you mean?'

*'Well, you didn't find **my** googlewhack, did you? You found Dork Turnspit and he found Unconstructive Superegos so I'm number two in a chain, said David, drawing a little diagram on the back of an envelope.*

'I see what you mean.'

*'Every link in the chain takes you one step further from your own imagination,' said David. **Your** imagination conjures up two words. Those two words lead you to someone and **their** imagination conjures up two new words ... it would be interesting to see how long a chain you could get, eh?'*

'Yeah, I guess so, I said, guessing so.

Dave Gorman is meant to be writing a novel but is finding it hard to get started, so when he receives an email from a stranger in Australia telling him that he is a googlewhack, it comes as a welcome distractions. But he soon finds himself embroiled in a new challenge when a googlewhack takes him to someone he already knows, one of the 54 other Dave Gormen he met on a previous challenge.

This is a very amusing book, and it includes photos of a lot of the people he met along the way which is good, as I always like to be able to put a face to a name. I enjoy Dave Gorman's television programmes and have read the equally funny "Are You Dave Gorman?", so I grabbed this one straightaway when I saw it at a BookCrossing meeting.
