

The Human Instinct How We Evolved To Have Reason Consciousness And Free Will

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Exercised - Daniel Lieberman 2021-01-05

The book tells the story of how we never evolved to exercise - to do voluntary physical activity for the sake of health. Using his own research and experiences throughout the world, the author

recounts how and why humans evolved to walk, run, dig, and do other necessary and rewarding physical activities while avoiding needless exertion. Drawing on insights from biology and anthropology, the author suggests how we can

make exercise more enjoyable, rather than shaming and blaming people for avoiding it

[The Faith Instinct](#) - Nicholas Wade 2009-11-12
Noted science writer Nicholas Wade offers for the first time a convincing case based on a broad range of scientific evidence for the evolutionary basis of religion.

Genome - Matt Ridley 2013-03-26

“Ridley leaps from chromosome to chromosome in a handy summation of our ever increasing understanding of the roles that genes play in disease, behavior, sexual differences, and even intelligence. . . . He addresses not only the ethical quandaries faced by contemporary scientists but the reductionist danger in equating inheritability with inevitability.” — The New Yorker

The genome's been mapped. But what does it mean? Matt Ridley's *Genome* is the book that explains it all: what it is, how it works, and what it portends for the future. Arguably the most significant scientific discovery of the new century, the mapping of the twenty-three pairs

of chromosomes that make up the human genome raises almost as many questions as it answers. Questions that will profoundly impact the way we think about disease, about longevity, and about free will. Questions that will affect the rest of your life. *Genome* offers extraordinary insight into the ramifications of this incredible breakthrough. By picking one newly discovered gene from each pair of chromosomes and telling its story, Matt Ridley recounts the history of our species and its ancestors from the dawn of life to the brink of future medicine. From Huntington's disease to cancer, from the applications of gene therapy to the horrors of eugenics, Ridley probes the scientific, philosophical, and moral issues arising as a result of the mapping of the genome. It will help you understand what this scientific milestone means for you, for your children, and for humankind.

The Evolution of Beauty - Richard O. Prum
2017-05-09

A FINALIST FOR THE PULITZER PRIZE

NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW, SMITHSONIAN, AND WALL STREET JOURNAL. A major reimagining of how evolutionary forces work, revealing how mating preferences—what Darwin termed "the taste for the beautiful"—create the extraordinary range of ornament in the animal world. In the great halls of science, dogma holds that Darwin's theory of natural selection explains every branch on the tree of life: which species thrive, which wither away to extinction, and what features each evolves. But can adaptation by natural selection really account for everything we see in nature? Yale University ornithologist Richard Prum—reviving Darwin's own views—thinks not. Deep in tropical jungles around the world are birds with a dizzying array of appearances and mating displays: Club-winged Manakins who sing with their wings, Great Argus Pheasants who dazzle prospective mates with a four-foot-wide cone of feathers covered in golden 3D

spheres, Red-capped Manakins who moonwalk. In thirty years of fieldwork, Prum has seen numerous display traits that seem disconnected from, if not outright contrary to, selection for individual survival. To explain this, he dusts off Darwin's long-neglected theory of sexual selection in which the act of choosing a mate for purely aesthetic reasons—for the mere pleasure of it—is an independent engine of evolutionary change. Mate choice can drive ornamental traits from the constraints of adaptive evolution, allowing them to grow ever more elaborate. It also sets the stakes for sexual conflict, in which the sexual autonomy of the female evolves in response to male sexual control. Most crucially, this framework provides important insights into the evolution of human sexuality, particularly the ways in which female preferences have changed male bodies, and even maleness itself, through evolutionary time. *The Evolution of Beauty* presents a unique scientific vision for how nature's splendor contributes to a more

complete understanding of evolution and of ourselves.

Supernormal Stimuli: How Primal Urges Overran Their Evolutionary Purpose -

Deirdre Barrett 2010-02-22

A Harvard psychologist explains how our once-helpful instincts get hijacked in our garish modern world. Our instincts—for food, sex, or territorial protection—evolved for life on the savannahs 10,000 years ago, not in today's world of densely populated cities, technological innovations, and pollution. We now have access to a glut of larger-than-life objects, from candy to pornography to atomic weapons—that gratify these gut instincts with often-dangerous results. Animal biologists coined the term “supernormal stimuli” to describe imitations that appeal to primitive instincts and exert a stronger pull than real things, such as soccer balls that geese prefer over eggs. Evolutionary psychologist Deirdre Barrett applies this concept to the alarming disconnect between human instinct

and our created environment, demonstrating how supernormal stimuli are a major cause of today's most pressing problems, including obesity and war. However, Barrett does more than show how unfettered instincts fuel dangerous excesses. She also reminds us that by exercising self-control we can rein them in, potentially saving ourselves and civilization.

The Consuming Instinct - Gad Saad

2011-06-21

In this highly informative and entertaining book, the founder of the vibrant new field of evolutionary consumption illuminates the relevance of our biological heritage to our daily lives as consumers. While culture is important, the author shows that innate evolutionary forces deeply influence the foods we eat, the gifts we offer, the cosmetics and clothing styles we choose to make ourselves more attractive to potential mates, and even the cultural products that stimulate our imaginations (such as art, music, and religion). The book demonstrates that

most acts of consumption can be mapped onto four key Darwinian drives—namely, survival (we prefer foods high in calories); reproduction (we use products as sexual signals); kin selection (we naturally exchange gifts with family members); and reciprocal altruism (we enjoy offering gifts to close friends). The author further highlights the analogous behaviors that exist between human consumers and a wide range of animals. For anyone interested in the biological basis of human behavior or simply in what makes consumers tick—marketing professionals, advertisers, psychology mavens, and consumers themselves—this is a fascinating read.

Mother Nature - Sarah Hrdy 2000-09-05

In an original study of human behavioral ecology, the author dissects the "maternal" myth in great detail hoping to learn if the mothering tendency in women is indeed an instinct.

Reprint.

The Evolution of Human Sexuality - Donald Symons 1979-08-30

Anthropology, Sexual Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Gender and Cultural Studies
Art, Aesthetics, and the Brain - Joseph P. Huston 2015

What neural processes underlie the appreciation of painting, music, and dance? How did such processes evolve? This book brings together experts in genetics, psychology, neuroimaging, neuropsychology, art history, and philosophy to explore these questions. It sets the stage for a cognitive neuroscience of art and aesthetics.

From Instinct To Identity - Breger 1974

From Instinct to Identity begins an account of personality development by tracing the legacy of the human species from its primate heritage to its present form. Findings from ethology, primate studies, linguistics, and other sources are used to construct an account of the unique features of man. The evolution of early cultures is shown through use of anthropological work. The ideas of Sigmund Freud, particularly as modified by Erik Erikson, are presented together with

the theories and findings of Jean Piaget and his collaborators in a series of chapters that follow the person from infancy to adolescence. Other chapters examine play, dreams, and fantasy; anxiety and its effects on the development of self; moral development; and identity. The emphasis throughout is on the growth of self, and its impact on social norms. The author blends together theories and findings from psychoanalysis, psychology, ethology, humanistic psychology, and child development, develops a model of human motivation in which the basic emotional systems of love, anxiety, aggression, curiosity and intelligence are traced from their primate background through the human life cycle. He brings together classic ideas on guilt and conscience with research on moral reasoning and ego development, and clarifies difficult ideas in a clear, direct prose style. This classic volume, now available in paperback with a new introduction by the author, will find a

new audience among anthropologists as well as psychologists interested in the evolution of human behavior. Louis Breger is professor of psychoanalytic studies emeritus at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. He is a practicing psychotherapist and psychoanalyst, and is the founding president of the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles. He has written other books and a number of scholarly articles on psychoanalytic topics including the acclaimed biography, *Freud: Darkness in the Midst of Vision*, and *Dostoevsky: The Author as Psychoanalyst*.

Social - Matthew D. Lieberman 2013-10-08
We are profoundly social creatures--more than we know. In *Social*, renowned psychologist Matthew Lieberman explores groundbreaking research in social neuroscience revealing that our need to connect with other people is even more fundamental, more basic, than our need for food or shelter. Because of this, our brain uses

its spare time to learn about the social world-- other people and our relation to them. It is believed that we must commit 10,000 hours to master a skill. According to Lieberman, each of us has spent 10,000 hours learning to make sense of people and groups by the time we are ten. Social argues that our need to reach out to and connect with others is a primary driver behind our behavior. We believe that pain and pleasure alone guide our actions. Yet, new research using fMRI--including a great deal of original research conducted by Lieberman and his UCLA lab--shows that our brains react to social pain and pleasure in much the same way as they do to physical pain and pleasure. Fortunately, the brain has evolved sophisticated mechanisms for securing our place in the social world. We have a unique ability to read other people's minds, to figure out their hopes, fears, and motivations, allowing us to effectively coordinate our lives with one another. And our most private sense of who we are is intimately

linked to the important people and groups in our lives. This wiring often leads us to restrain our selfish impulses for the greater good. These mechanisms lead to behavior that might seem irrational, but is really just the result of our deep social wiring and necessary for our success as a species. Based on the latest cutting edge research, the findings in Social have important real-world implications. Our schools and businesses, for example, attempt to minimize social distractions. But this is exactly the wrong thing to do to encourage engagement and learning, and literally shuts down the social brain, leaving powerful neuro-cognitive resources untapped. The insights revealed in this pioneering book suggest ways to improve learning in schools, make the workplace more productive, and improve our overall well-being.

The Language Instinct - Steven Pinker

2010-12-14

The classic book on the development of human language by the world's leading expert on

language and the mind. In this classic, the world's expert on language and mind lucidly explains everything you always wanted to know about language: how it works, how children learn it, how it changes, how the brain computes it, and how it evolved. With deft use of examples of humor and wordplay, Steven Pinker weaves our vast knowledge of language into a compelling story: language is a human instinct, wired into our brains by evolution. The Language Instinct received the William James Book Prize from the American Psychological Association and the Public Interest Award from the Linguistics Society of America. This edition includes an update on advances in the science of language since The Language Instinct was first published.

Only a Theory - Kenneth Raymond Miller 2008
Evaluates the debate between advocates for evolution and intelligent design which occurred during the 2005 Dover evolution trial, dissecting the claims of the intelligent design movement

and explaining why the conflict is compromising America's position a
The Human Instinct - Kenneth R. Miller
2019-04-23

From one of America's best-known biologists, a revolutionary new way of thinking about evolution that shows "why, in light of our origins, humans are still special" (Edward J. Larson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Evolution*). Once we had a special place in the hierarchy of life on Earth—a place confirmed by the literature and traditions of every human tribe. But then the theory of evolution arrived to shake the tree of human understanding to its roots. To many of the most passionate advocates for Darwin's theory, we are just one species among multitudes, no more significant than any other. Even our minds are not our own, they tell us, but living machines programmed for nothing but survival and reproduction. In *The Human Instinct*, Brown University biologist Kenneth R. Miller "confronts both lay and professional

misconceptions about evolution” (Publishers Weekly, starred review), showing that while evolution explains how our bodies and brains were shaped, that heritage does not limit or predetermine human behavior. In fact, Miller argues in this “highly recommended” (Forbes) work that it is only thanks to evolution that we have the power to shape our destiny. Equal parts natural science and philosophy, *The Human Instinct* makes an “absorbing, lucid, and engaging...case that it was evolution that gave us our humanity” (Ursula Goodenough, professor of biology at Washington University in St. Louis). *Cognitive Gadgets* - Cecilia Heyes 2018-04-16 How did human minds become so different from those of other animals? What accounts for our capacity to understand the way the physical world works, to think ourselves into the minds of others, to gossip, read, tell stories about the past, and imagine the future? These questions are not new: they have been debated by philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists,

evolutionists, and neurobiologists over the course of centuries. One explanation widely accepted today is that humans have special cognitive instincts. Unlike other living animal species, we are born with complicated mechanisms for reasoning about causation, reading the minds of others, copying behaviors, and using language. Cecilia Heyes agrees that adult humans have impressive pieces of cognitive equipment. In her framing, however, these cognitive gadgets are not instincts programmed in the genes but are constructed in the course of childhood through social interaction. Cognitive gadgets are products of cultural evolution, rather than genetic evolution. At birth, the minds of human babies are only subtly different from the minds of newborn chimpanzees. We are friendlier, our attention is drawn to different things, and we have a capacity to learn and remember that outstrips the abilities of newborn chimpanzees. Yet when these subtle differences are exposed to culture-

soaked human environments, they have enormous effects. They enable us to upload distinctively human ways of thinking from the social world around us. As Cognitive Gadgets makes clear, from birth our malleable human minds can learn through culture not only what to think but how to think it.

Human Instinct - Lord Robert Winston
2011-05-31

From caveman to modern man ... Few people doubt that humans are descended from the apes; fewer still consider, let alone accept, the psychological implications. But in truth, man not only looks, moves and breathes like an ape, he also thinks like one. Sexual drive, survival, competition, aggression - all of our impulses are driven by our human instincts. They explain why a happily married man will fantasize about the pretty, slim, young woman sitting across from him in the tube and why thousands of people spend their week entirely focused on whether their team will win their next crucial match. But

how well do our instincts equip us for the twenty-first century? Do they help or hinder us as we deal with large anonymous cities, stressful careers, relationships and the battle of the sexes? In this fascinating book, Robert Winston takes us on a journey deep into the human mind. Along the way he takes a very personal look at the relationship between science and religion and explores those very instincts that make us human.

The Red Queen - Matt Ridley 1994-10-06
Sex is as fascinating to scientists as it is to the rest of us. A vast pool of knowledge, therefore, has been gleaned from research into the nature of sex, from the contentious problem of why the wasteful reproductive process exists at all, to how individuals choose their mates and what traits they find attractive. This fascinating book explores those findings, and their implications for the sexual behaviour of our own species. It uses the Red Queen from 'Alice in Wonderland' - who has to run at full speed to stay where she is

- as a metaphor for a whole range of sexual behaviours. The book was shortlisted for the 1994 Rhone-Poulenc Prize for Science Books. 'Animals and plants evolved sex to fend off parasitic infection. Now look where it has got us. Men want BMWs, power and money in order to pair-bond with women who are blonde, youthful and narrow-waisted ... a brilliant examination of the scientific debates on the hows and whys of sex and evolution' Independent.

The Evolution of Cooperation - Robert Axelrod
2009-04-29

A famed political scientist's classic argument for a more cooperative world We assume that, in a world ruled by natural selection, selfishness pays. So why cooperate? In *The Evolution of Cooperation*, political scientist Robert Axelrod seeks to answer this question. In 1980, he organized the famed Computer Prisoners Dilemma Tournament, which sought to find the optimal strategy for survival in a particular game. Over and over, the simplest strategy, a

cooperative program called Tit for Tat, shut out the competition. In other words, cooperation, not unfettered competition, turns out to be our best chance for survival. A vital book for leaders and decision makers, *The Evolution of Cooperation* reveals how cooperative principles help us think better about everything from military strategy, to political elections, to family dynamics.

The Biophilia Hypothesis - Stephen R. Kellert
1995-03

This book brings together the views of some of the most creative scientists of our time, each attempting to amplify and refine the concept of biophilia. Contributors to this volume include Jared Diamond, Aaron Katcher, Richard Nelson and others.

Mothers and Others - Sarah Blaffer Hrdy
2011-04-15

Mothers and Others finds the key in the primatologically unique length of human childhood. Renowned anthropologist Sarah Hrdy

argues that if human babies were to survive in a world of scarce resources, they would need to be cared for, not only by their mothers but also by siblings, aunts, fathers, friends—and, with any luck, grandmothers. Out of this complicated and contingent form of childrearing, Hrdy argues, came the human capacity for understanding others. In essence, mothers and others teach us who will care, and who will not.

In the Light of Evolution - National Academy of Sciences 2017-01-01

Biodiversity—the genetic variety of life—is an exuberant product of the evolutionary past, a vast human-supportive resource (aesthetic, intellectual, and material) of the present, and a rich legacy to cherish and preserve for the future. Two urgent challenges, and opportunities, for 21st-century science are to gain deeper insights into the evolutionary processes that foster biotic diversity, and to translate that understanding into workable solutions for the regional and global crises that

biodiversity currently faces. A grasp of evolutionary principles and processes is important in other societal arenas as well, such as education, medicine, sociology, and other applied fields including agriculture, pharmacology, and biotechnology. The ramifications of evolutionary thought also extend into learned realms traditionally reserved for philosophy and religion. The central goal of the In the Light of Evolution (ILE) series is to promote the evolutionary sciences through state-of-the-art colloquia—in the series of Arthur M. Sackler colloquia sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences—and their published proceedings. Each installment explores evolutionary perspectives on a particular biological topic that is scientifically intriguing but also has special relevance to contemporary societal issues or challenges. This tenth and final edition of the In the Light of Evolution series focuses on recent developments in phylogeographic research and their relevance to

past accomplishments and future research directions.

The Artificial Ape - Timothy Taylor 2010-07-20

A breakthrough theory that tools and technology are the real drivers of human evolution. Although humans are one of the great apes, along with chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans, we are remarkably different from them. Unlike our cousins who subsist on raw food, spend their days and nights outdoors, and wear a thick coat of hair, humans are entirely dependent on artificial things, such as clothing, shelter, and the use of tools, and would die in nature without them. Yet, despite our status as the weakest ape, we are the masters of this planet. Given these inherent deficits, how did humans come out on top? In this fascinating new account of our origins, leading archaeologist Timothy Taylor proposes a new way of thinking about human evolution through our relationship with objects. Drawing on the latest fossil evidence, Taylor argues that at each step of our species'

development, humans made choices that caused us to assume greater control of our evolution. Our appropriation of objects allowed us to walk upright, lose our body hair, and grow significantly larger brains. As we push the frontiers of scientific technology, creating prosthetics, intelligent implants, and artificially modified genes, we continue a process that started in the prehistoric past, when we first began to extend our powers through objects. Weaving together lively discussions of major discoveries of human skeletons and artifacts with a reexamination of Darwin's theory of evolution, Taylor takes us on an exciting and challenging journey that begins to answer the fundamental question about our existence: what makes humans unique, and what does that mean for our future?

The Fairness Instinct - L. Sun 2013-10-15

Combining research from the social sciences, hard sciences, and the humanities, this accessible cross-disciplinary book offers

fascinating insights into a key component of human nature and society. What do the Arab Spring, the Robin Hood legend, Occupy Wall Street, and the American taxpayer reaction to the \$182 billion bailout of AIG have in common? All are rooted in a deeply ingrained sense of fairness. But where does this universal instinct come from? This is the driving question at the heart of L. Sun's *The Fairness Instinct*. Thinkers from Aristotle to Kant, from Augustine to John Rawls, and religions from Christianity to Confucianism, have offered great insight into the nature and origins of this basic human desire for fairness. Based on the most recent scientific discoveries in behavioral genetics, neuroscience, psychology, anthropology, economics, and evolution, Sun argues that the origins of the fairness instinct cannot be found exclusively in the philosophical, social, and political perspectives to which we so often turn; rather, they can be traced to something much deeper in our biological makeup. Taking as his starting

point Frans De Waal's seminal study showing that Capuchin monkeys revolt when they are shortchanged by receiving a less valuable reward than their peers receive for the same task, Sun synthesizes a wide range of research to explore the biological roots of the fairness instinct. He shows that fairness is much more than a moral value or ideological construct; fairness is in our DNA. Combining scientific rigor with accessible and reader-friendly language to relate fascinating stories of animal and human behavior, *The Fairness Instinct* lays out an evolutionary roadmap for how fairness emerges and thrives under natural selection and how two powerful engines—social living and social hierarchy—have fueled the evolution of this intricate and potent instinct in all of us. Probing into the motives that underlie such phenomena as envy, consumerism, anti-intellectualism, revenge, revolution, terrorism, marriage, democracy, and religion, Sun showcases the power of the fairness instinct to

make our history, shape our society, and rule our social lives.

Finding Darwin's God - Kenneth R. Miller

2007-04-03

From a leading authority on the evolution debates comes this critically acclaimed investigation into one of the most controversial topics of our times

Why We Lie - David Livingstone Smith

2007-08-07

A biological and psychological analysis of the human practice of lying reveals the role played by deception and self-deception in evolution, demonstrating how the structure of the brain is shaped by a need to deceive. Reprint. 12,500 first printing.

The Art Instinct - Denis Dutton 2009

The Dinka have a connoisseur's appreciation of the patterns and colours of the markings on their cattle. The Japanese tea ceremony is regarded as a performance art. Some cultures produce carving but no drawing; others

specialize in poetry. Yet despite the rich variety of artistic expression to be found across many cultures, we all share a deep sense of aesthetic pleasure. The need to create art of some form is found in every human society. In The Art Instinct, Denis Dutton explores the idea that this need has an evolutionary basis: how the feelings that we all share when we see a wonderful landscape or a beautiful sunset evolved as a useful adaptation in our hunter-gather ancestors, and have been passed on to us today, manifest in our artistic natures. Why do people indulge in displaying their artistic skills? How can we understand artistic genius? Why do we value art, and what is it for? These questions have long been asked by scholars in the humanities and in literature, but this is the first book to consider the biological basis of this deep human need. This sparking and intelligent book looks at these deep and fundamental questions, and combines the science of evolutionary psychology with aesthetics, to shed new light on

longstanding questions about the nature of art.

Improbable Destinies - Jonathan B. Losos

2018-08-07

A major new book overturning our assumptions about how evolution works Earth's natural history is full of fascinating instances of convergence: phenomena like eyes and wings and tree-climbing lizards that have evolved independently, multiple times. But evolutionary biologists also point out many examples of contingency, cases where the tiniest change—a random mutation or an ancient butterfly sneeze—caused evolution to take a completely different course. What role does each force really play in the constantly changing natural world? Are the plants and animals that exist today, and we humans ourselves, inevitabilities or evolutionary flukes? And what does that say about life on other planets? Jonathan Losos reveals what the latest breakthroughs in evolutionary biology can tell us about one of the greatest ongoing debates in science. He takes us

around the globe to meet the researchers who are solving the deepest mysteries of life on Earth through their work in experimental evolutionary science. Losos himself is one of the leaders in this exciting new field, and he illustrates how experiments with guppies, fruit flies, bacteria, foxes, and field mice, along with his own work with anole lizards on Caribbean islands, are rewinding the tape of life to reveal just how rapid and predictable evolution can be.

Improbable Destinies will change the way we think and talk about evolution. Losos's insights into natural selection and evolutionary change have far-reaching applications for protecting ecosystems, securing our food supply, and fighting off harmful viruses and bacteria. This compelling narrative offers a new understanding of ourselves and our role in the natural world and the cosmos.

The Compassionate Instinct: The Science of Human Goodness - Dacher Keltner 2010-01-04

Leading scientists and science writers reflect on

the life-changing, perspective-changing, new science of human goodness. In these pages you will hear from Steven Pinker, who asks, "Why is there peace?"; Robert Sapolsky, who examines violence among primates; Paul Ekman, who talks with the Dalai Lama about global compassion; Daniel Goleman, who proposes "constructive anger"; and many others. Led by renowned psychologist Dacher Keltner, the Greater Good Science Center, based at the University of California in Berkeley, has been at the forefront of the positive psychology movement, making discoveries about how and why people do good. Four times a year the center publishes its findings with essays on forgiveness, moral inspiration, and everyday ethics in Greater Good magazine. The best of these writings are collected here for the first time. A collection of personal stories and empirical research, *The Compassionate Instinct* will make you think not only about what it means to be happy and fulfilled but also about what it means to lead an

ethical and compassionate life.

The Selfish Gene - Richard Dawkins 1989

An ethologist shows man to be a gene machine whose world is one of savage competition and deceit

The Social Instinct - Nichola Raihani 2021-08-31

In the tradition of Richard Dawkins's *The Selfish Gene*, Nichola Raihani's *The Social Instinct* is a profound and engaging look at the hidden relationships underpinning human evolution, and why cooperation is key to our future survival. "Enriching" —*Publisher's Weekly*
Cooperation is the means by which life arose in the first place. It's how we progressed through scale and complexity, from free-floating strands of genetic material, to nation states. But given what we know about the mechanisms of evolution, cooperation is also something of a puzzle. How does cooperation begin, when on a Darwinian level, all that the genes in your body care about is being passed on to the next generation? Why do meerkat colonies care for

one another's children? Why do babbler birds in the Kalahari form colonies in which only a single pair breeds? And how come some coral wrasse fish actually punish each other for harming fish from another species? A biologist by training, Raihani looks at where and how collaborative behavior emerges throughout the animal kingdom, and what problems it solves. She reveals that the species that exhibit cooperative behavior—teaching, helping, grooming, and self-sacrifice—most similar to our own tend not to be other apes; they are birds, insects, and fish, occupying far more distant branches of the evolutionary tree. By understanding the problems they face, and how they cooperate to solve them, we can glimpse how human cooperation first evolved. And we can also understand what it is about the way we cooperate that has made humans so distinctive—and so successful.

Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods - E. Fuller Torrey 2017-09-05

Religions and mythologies from around the world teach that God or gods created humans. Atheist, humanist, and materialist critics, meanwhile, have attempted to turn theology on its head, claiming that religion is a human invention. In this book, E. Fuller Torrey draws on cutting-edge neuroscience research to propose a startling answer to the ultimate question. *Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods* locates the origin of gods within the human brain, arguing that religious belief is a by-product of evolution. Based on an idea originally proposed by Charles Darwin, Torrey marshals evidence that the emergence of gods was an incidental consequence of several evolutionary factors. Using data ranging from ancient skulls and artifacts to brain imaging, primatology, and child development studies, this book traces how new cognitive abilities gave rise to new behaviors. For instance, autobiographical memory, the ability to project ourselves backward and forward in time, gave Homo

sapiens a competitive advantage. However, it also led to comprehension of mortality, spurring belief in an alternative to death. Torrey details the neurobiological sequence that explains why the gods appeared when they did, connecting archaeological findings including clothing, art, farming, and urbanization to cognitive developments. This book does not dismiss belief but rather presents religious belief as an inevitable outcome of brain evolution. Providing clear and accessible explanations of evolutionary neuroscience, *Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods* will shed new light on the mechanics of our deepest mysteries.

Instinct, Environment and Behaviour (Psychology Revivals) - Stephen Lea 2015-03-27
What can the evolution of animal behaviour tell us about human behaviour? More specifically, how good an account of animal behaviour can we give in terms of evolution, and how do humans fit in with or deviate from the pattern established for other animals? The biological

approach to the study of animal behaviour has important implications for psychology, but it is distinctly different. Originally published in 1984, this book provides a basic introduction to biological theories about behaviour, from the classic ethological tradition of Lorenz and Tinbergen to the later sociobiological approach. The principles of experimentation and research involved are assessed critically, especially with regard to their implications for the study of human behaviour. Written specifically for those with little biological knowledge, this book will still be of interest to students of biology and introductory psychology alike.

The Origins of Virtue - Matt Ridley 1997-10-30
Why are people nice to each other? What are the reasons for altruism? Matt Ridley explains how the human mind has evolved a special instinct for social exchange, offering a lucid and persuasive argument about the paradox of human benevolence.

Primates and Philosophers - Frans de Waal

2016-03-22

Can virtuous behavior be explained by nature, and not by human rational choice? "It's the animal in us," we often hear when we've been bad. But why not when we're good? *Primates and Philosophers* tackles this question by exploring the biological foundations of one of humanity's most valued traits: morality. In this provocative book, renowned primatologist Frans de Waal argues that modern-day evolutionary biology takes far too dim a view of the natural world, emphasizing our "selfish" genes and reinforcing our habit of labeling ethical behavior as humane and the less civilized as animalistic. Seeking the origin of human morality not in evolution but in human culture, science insists that we are moral by choice, not by nature. Citing remarkable evidence based on his extensive research of primate behavior, de Waal attacks "Veneer Theory," which posits morality as a thin overlay on an otherwise nasty nature. He explains how we evolved from a long line of

animals that care for the weak and build cooperation with reciprocal transactions. Drawing on Darwin, recent scientific advances, and his extensive research of primate behavior, de Waal demonstrates a strong continuity between human and animal behavior. He probes issues such as anthropomorphism and human responsibilities toward animals. His compelling account of how human morality evolved out of mammalian society will fascinate anyone who has ever wondered about the origins and reach of human goodness. Based on the Tanner Lectures de Waal delivered at Princeton University's Center for Human Values in 2004, *Primates and Philosophers* includes responses by the philosophers Peter Singer, Christine M. Korsgaard, and Philip Kitcher and the science writer Robert Wright. They press de Waal to clarify the differences between humans and other animals, yielding a lively debate that will fascinate all those who wonder about the origins and reach of human goodness.

Killer Instinct - Nadine Weidman 2021-10-19

A historian of science examines key public debates about the fundamental nature of humans to ask why a polarized discourse about nature versus nurture became so entrenched in the popular sciences of animal and human behavior. Are humans innately aggressive or innately cooperative? In the 1960s, bestselling books enthralled American readers with the startling claim that humans possessed an instinct for violence inherited from primate ancestors. Critics responded that humans were inherently loving and altruistic. The resulting debate—fiercely contested and highly public—left a lasting impression on the popular science discourse surrounding what it means to be human. *Killer Instinct* traces how Konrad Lorenz, Robert Ardrey, and their followers drew on the sciences of animal behavior and paleoanthropology to argue that the aggression instinct drove human evolutionary progress. Their message, spread throughout popular

media, brought pointed ripostes. Led by the anthropologist Ashley Montagu, opponents presented a rival vision of human nature, equally based in biological evidence, that humans possessed inborn drives toward love and cooperation. Over the course of the debate, however, each side accused the other of holding an extremist position: that behavior was either determined entirely by genes or shaped solely by environment. Nadine Weidman shows that what started as a dispute over the innate tendencies of animals and humans transformed into an opposition between nature and nurture. This polarized formulation proved powerful. When E. O. Wilson introduced his sociobiology in 1975, he tried to rise above the oppositional terms of the aggression debate. But the controversy over Wilson's work—led by critics like the feminist biologist Ruth Hubbard—was ultimately absorbed back into the nature-versus-nurture formulation. *Killer Instinct* explores what happens and what gets lost when polemics

dominate discussions of the science of human nature.

Free to Learn - Peter Gray 2013-03-05

A leading expert in childhood development makes the case for why self-directed learning -- "unschooling" -- is the best way to get kids to learn. In *Free to Learn*, developmental psychologist Peter Gray argues that in order to foster children who will thrive in today's constantly changing world, we must entrust them to steer their own learning and development. Drawing on evidence from anthropology, psychology, and history, he demonstrates that free play is the primary means by which children learn to control their lives, solve problems, get along with peers, and become emotionally resilient. A brave, counterintuitive proposal for freeing our children from the shackles of the curiosity-killing institution we call school, *Free to Learn* suggests that it's time to stop asking what's wrong with our children, and start asking what's wrong with

the system. It shows how we can act -- both as parents and as members of society -- to improve children's lives and to promote their happiness and learning.

Strategic Instincts - Dominic D. P. Johnson

2022-08-30

"A very timely book."—Anne-Marie Slaughter, CEO of New America How cognitive biases can guide good decision making in politics and international relations A widespread assumption in political science and international relations is that cognitive biases—quirks of the brain we all share as human beings—are detrimental and responsible for policy failures, disasters, and wars. In *Strategic Instincts*, Dominic Johnson challenges this assumption, explaining that these nonrational behaviors can actually support favorable results in international politics and contribute to political and strategic success. By studying past examples, he considers the ways that cognitive biases act as “strategic instincts,” lending a competitive edge in policy decisions,

especially under conditions of unpredictability and imperfect information. Drawing from evolutionary theory and behavioral sciences, Johnson looks at three influential cognitive biases—overconfidence, the fundamental attribution error, and in-group/out-group bias. He then examines the advantageous as well as the detrimental effects of these biases through historical case studies of the American Revolution, the Munich Crisis, and the Pacific campaign in World War II. He acknowledges the dark side of biases—when confidence becomes hubris, when attribution errors become paranoia, and when group bias becomes prejudice. Ultimately, Johnson makes a case for a more nuanced understanding of the causes and consequences of cognitive biases and argues that in the complex world of international relations, strategic instincts can, in the right context, guide better performance. *Strategic Instincts* shows how an evolutionary perspective can offer the crucial next step in bringing

psychological insights to bear on foundational questions in international politics. *The Power of Bad* - John Tierney 2021-01-05 "The most important book at the borderland of psychology and politics that I have ever read."—Martin E. P. Seligman, Zellerbach Family Professor of Psychology at that University of Pennsylvania and author of *Learned Optimism* Why are we devastated by a word of criticism even when it's mixed with lavish praise? Because our brains are wired to focus on the bad. This negativity effect explains things great and small: why countries blunder into disastrous wars, why couples divorce, why people flub job interviews, how schools fail students, why football coaches stupidly punt on fourth down. All day long, the power of bad governs people's moods, drives marketing campaigns, and dominates news and politics. Eminent social scientist Roy F. Baumeister stumbled unexpectedly upon this fundamental aspect of human nature. To find out why

financial losses mattered more to people than financial gains, Baumeister looked for situations in which good events made a bigger impact than bad ones. But his team couldn't find any. Their research showed that bad is relentlessly stronger than good, and their paper has become one of the most-cited in the scientific literature. Our brain's negativity bias makes evolutionary sense because it kept our ancestors alert to fatal dangers, but it distorts our perspective in today's media environment. The steady barrage of bad news and crisis mongering makes us feel helpless and leaves us needlessly fearful and angry. We ignore our many blessings, preferring to heed—and vote for—the voices telling us the world is going to hell. But once we recognize our negativity bias, the rational brain can overcome the power of bad when it's harmful and employ that power when it's beneficial. In fact, bad breaks and bad feelings create the most powerful incentives to become smarter and stronger. Properly understood, bad can be put to

perfectly good use. As noted science journalist John Tierney and Baumeister show in this wide-ranging book, we can adopt proven strategies to avoid the pitfalls that doom relationships, careers, businesses, and nations. Instead of despairing at what's wrong in your life and in the world, you can see how much is going right—and how to make it still better.

Beyond Revenge - Michael McCullough
2008-03-31

Why is revenge such a pervasive and destructive problem? How can we create a future in which revenge is less common and forgiveness is more common? Psychologist Michael McCullough argues that the key to a more forgiving, less vengeful world is to understand the evolutionary forces that gave rise to these intimately human instincts and the social forces that activate them in human minds today. Drawing on exciting breakthroughs from the social and biological sciences, McCullough dispenses surprising and practical advice for making the world a more

forgiving place. Michael E. McCullough (Miami, Florida), an internationally recognized expert on forgiveness and revenge, is a professor of psychology at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, where he directs the Laboratory for Social and Clinical Psychology.

The Mating Mind - Geoffrey Miller 2011-12-21

At once a pioneering study of evolution and an accessible and lively reading experience, *The Mating Mind* marks the arrival of a prescient and provocative new science writer. Psychologist Geoffrey Miller offers the most convincing-and radical-explanation for how and why the human mind evolved. Consciousness, morality, creativity, language, and art: these are the traits

that make us human. Scientists have traditionally explained these qualities as merely a side effect of surplus brain size, but Miller argues that they were sexual attractors, not side effects. He bases his argument on Darwin's theory of sexual selection, which until now has played second fiddle to Darwin's theory of natural selection, and draws on ideas and research from a wide range of fields, including psychology, economics, history, and pop culture. Witty, powerfully argued, and continually thought-provoking, *The Mating Mind* is a landmark in our understanding of our own species.