
In Defence Of Selfish Genes Richard Dawkins Philosophy

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WALSH KANE

Science as a Way of Knowing Random House

Metaphorically, our genes might chuckle at how we humans unwittingly define our morality to serve their interests, even above our own. By our dearly sacrificing for our children, we clearly show that our moral intuitions serve the interests of our genes. While we each seem to willfully pursue different methods for getting the things we want, the fundamental things we want - fit sexual partners, and well-being for ourselves and our children - are not defined by our wills, but rather, by our genes. From a unique, irreverent, yet fully scientific perspective, this book clearly explains the philosophical mysteries of life, God, intellectual creativity, feelings of consciousness, the meaning of responsibility in a world full of deterministic minds, and especially, morality.

Selfish Genes, Errors of Heredity and Other Fables of Evolution

Universitätsverlag Göttingen

David Sloan Wilson, one of the world's leading evolutionists, addresses a question that has puzzled philosophers, psychologists, and evolutionary biologists for centuries: Does altruism exist naturally among the Earth's creatures? The key to understanding the existence of altruism, Wilson argues, is by understanding the role it plays in the social organization of groups. Groups that function like organisms indubitably exist, and organisms evolved from groups. Evolutionists largely agree on how functionally organized groups evolve, ending decades of controversy,

but the resolution casts altruism in a new light: altruism exists but shouldn't necessarily occupy center stage in our understanding of social behavior. After laying a general theoretical foundation, Wilson surveys altruism and group-level functional organization in our own species—in religion, in economics, and in the rest of everyday life. He shows that altruism is not categorically good and can have pathological consequences. Finally, he shows how a social theory that goes beyond altruism by focusing on group function can help to improve the human condition in a practical sense. *Does Altruism Exist?* puts old controversies to rest and will become the center of debate for decades to come.

How Evolution Helps Us Understand and Treat Cancer Princeton University Press

How the meaningless process of natural selection produces purposeful beings who find meaning in the world. In *From Darwin to Derrida*, evolutionary biologist David Haig explains how a physical world of matter in motion gave rise to a living world of purpose and meaning. Natural selection, a process without purpose, gives rise to purposeful beings who find meaning in the world. The key to this, Haig proposes, is the origin of mutable "texts"—genes—that preserve a record of what has worked in the world. These texts become the specifications for the intricate mechanisms of living beings. Haig draws on a wide range of sources—from Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* to Immanuel Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* to the work of Jacques Derrida to the latest findings on gene transmission, duplication, and expression—to make his argument. Genes and their effects, he explains, are like eggs and chickens.

Eggs exist for the sake of becoming chickens and chickens for the sake of laying eggs. A gene's effects have a causal role in determining which genes are copied. A gene (considered as a lineage of material copies) persists if its lineage has been consistently associated with survival and reproduction.

Organisms can be understood as interpreters that link information from the environment to meaningful action in the environment. Meaning, Haig argues, is the output of a process of interpretation; there is a continuum from the very simplest forms of interpretation, instantiated in single RNA molecules near the origins of life, to the most sophisticated. Life is interpretation—the use of information in choice.

Human Nature and the Limits of Science

HarperCollins

For all the discussion in the media about creationism and 'Intelligent Design', virtually nothing has been said about the evidence in question - the evidence for evolution by natural selection. Yet, as this succinct and important book shows, that evidence is vast, varied, and magnificent, and drawn from many disparate fields of science. The very latest research is uncovering a stream of evidence revealing evolution in action - from the actual observation of a species splitting into two, to new fossil discoveries, to the deciphering of the evidence stored in our genome. *Why Evolution is True* weaves together the many threads of modern work in genetics, palaeontology, geology, molecular biology, anatomy, and development to demonstrate the 'indelible stamp' of the processes first proposed by Darwin. It is a crisp, lucid, and accessible statement that will leave no one with an open mind in any doubt about the truth of evolution.

A Scientific Perspective on Ethics and Morality Turtleback

John Dupre warns that our understanding of human nature is being distorted by two faulty and harmful forms of pseudo-scientific thinking. Not just in the academic world but increasingly in everyday life, we find one set of experts seeking to explain the ends at which humans aim in terms of evolutionary theory, and another set of experts using economic models to give rules of how we act to achieve those ends. Dupre charges this unholy alliance of evolutionary psychologists and rational-choice theorists with scientific imperialism: they use methods and ideas developed for one domain of inquiry in others where they are inappropriate. He demonstrates that these theorists' explanations do not work, and furthermore that if taken seriously their theories tend to have dangerous social and political consequences. For these reasons, it is important to resist scientism - an exaggerated conception of what science can be expected to do for us. To say this is in no way to be against science - just against bad science. Dupre restores sanity to the study of human nature by pointing the way to a proper understanding of humans in the societies that are our natural and necessary environments. He shows how our distinctively human capacities are shaped by the social contexts in which we are embedded. And he concludes with a bold challenge to one of the intellectual touchstones of modern science: the idea of the universe as causally complete and deterministic. In an impressive rehabilitation of the idea of free human agency, he argues that far from being helpless cogs in a mechanistic universe, humans are rare concentrations of causal power in a

largely indeterministic world. *Human Nature and the Limits of Science* is a provocative, witty, and persuasive corrective to scientism. In its place, Dupre commends a pluralistic approach to science, as the appropriate way to investigate a universe that is not unified in form. Anyone interested in science and human nature will enjoy this book, unless they are its targets.

Altruism and Christian Ethics OUP Oxford

What is Life? Decades of research have resulted in the full mapping of the human genome - three billion pairs of code whose functions are only now being understood. The gene's eye view of life, advocated by evolutionary biology, sees living bodies as mere vehicles for the replication of the genetic codes. But for a physiologist, working with the living organism, the view is a very different one. Denis Noble is a world renowned physiologist, and sets out an alternative view to the question - one that becomes deeply significant in terms of the living, breathing organism. The genome is not life itself. Noble argues that far from genes building organisms, they should be seen as prisoners of the organism. The view of life presented in this little, modern, post-genome project reflection on the nature of life, is that of the systems biologist: to understand what life is, we must view it at a variety of different levels, all interacting with each other in a complex web. It is that emergent web, full of feedback between levels, from the gene to the wider environment, that is life. It is a kind of music. Including stories from Noble's own research experience, his work on the heartbeat, musical metaphors, and elements of linguistics and Chinese culture, this very personal and at times deeply lyrical book sets out the systems biology view of life.

The Gene's-Eye View of Evolution

MIT Press

An evolutionary biologist argues against the belief that sexual behavior is governed by genes, identifying an intricate interplay among humans that involves day-to-day survival, reproduction, and learned cultural factors.

Holistic Darwinism Oxford University Press

This book makes Moore's wisdom available to students in a lively, richly illustrated account of the history and workings of life. Employing rhetoric strategies including case histories, hypotheses and deductions, and chronological narrative, it provides both a cultural history of biology and an introduction to the procedures and values of science.

The Web of Meaning Academic Press

The central aim of this accessible book is to show how the gene's-eye view differs from the traditional organismal account of evolution, trace its historical origins, clarify typical misunderstandings and, by using examples from contemporary experimental work, show why so many evolutionary biologists still consider it an indispensable heuristic.

Selected Papers of Robert Trivers

The Selfish Gene

In recent years, evolutionary theorists have come to recognize that the reductionist, individualist, gene-centered approach to evolution cannot sufficiently account for the emergence of complex biological systems over time. Peter A. Corning has been at the forefront of a new generation of complexity theorists who have been working to reshape the foundations of evolutionary theory. Well known for his Synergism Hypothesis—a theory of complexity in evolution that assigns a key causal role to various

forms of functional synergy—Corning puts this theory into a much broader framework in *Holistic Darwinism*, addressing many of the issues and concepts associated with the evolution of complex systems. Corning's paradigm embraces and integrates many related theoretical developments of recent years, from multilevel selection theory to niche construction theory, gene-culture coevolution theory, and theories of self-organization. Offering new approaches to thermodynamics, information theory, and economic analysis, Corning suggests how all of these domains can be brought firmly within what he characterizes as a post-neo-Darwinian evolutionary synthesis.

A Cooperative Species The National Academies Press

The *God Delusion* caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types. His argument could hardly be more topical. While Europe is becoming increasingly secularized, the rise of religious fundamentalism, whether in the Middle East or Middle America, is dramatically and dangerously dividing opinion around the world. In America, and elsewhere, a vigorous dispute between 'intelligent design' and Darwinism is seriously undermining and restricting the teaching of science. In many countries religious dogma from medieval times still serves to abuse basic human rights such as women's and gay rights. And all from a belief in a God whose existence lacks evidence of any kind. Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability

of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children. The *God Delusion* is a brilliantly argued, fascinating polemic that will be required reading for anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.

The Selfish Genius Cambridge University Press

Whatever your opinion of 'Intelligent Design,' you'll find Stove's criticism of what he calls 'Darwinism' difficult to stop reading. Stove's blistering attack on Richard Dawkins' 'selfish genes' and 'memes' is unparalleled and unrelenting. A discussion of spiders who mimic bird droppings is alone worth the price of the book. *Darwinian Fairytales* should be read and pondered by anyone interested in sociobiology, the origin of altruism, and the awesome process of evolution. -- Martin Gardner, author of *Did Adam and Eve Have Navels?: Debunking Pseudoscience*

The Blind Watchmaker U of Minnesota Press

Considers why humans consider themselves superior to all other animals, and whether they are right to do so.

Darwinian Fairytales OUP Oxford

This book is intended to help transform epistemology - the traditional study of knowledge - into a rigorous discipline by removing conceptual roadblocks and developing formal tools required for a fully naturalized epistemology. The evolutionary approach which Harms favours begins with the common observation that if our senses and reasoning were not reliable, then natural selection would have eliminated them long ago. The challenge for some time has been how to transform these informal musings about evolutionary epistemology into a rigorous theoretical discipline capable of complementing

current scientific studies of the evolution of cognition with a philosophically defensible account of meaning and justification.

Genes in Conflict OUP Oxford

The Selfish Gene Oxford University Press, USA

Selfish Genes, Social Selves, and the Meanings of Life Oxford University Press

A fundamental and groundbreaking reassessment of how we view and manage cancer When we think of the forces driving cancer, we don't necessarily think of evolution. But evolution and cancer are closely linked because the historical processes that created life also created cancer. The Cheating Cell delves into this extraordinary relationship, and shows that by understanding cancer's evolutionary origins, researchers can come up with more effective, revolutionary treatments. Athena Aktipis goes back billions of years to explore when unicellular forms became multicellular organisms. Within these bodies of cooperating cells, cheating ones arose, overusing resources and replicating out of control, giving rise to cancer. Aktipis illustrates how evolution has paved the way for cancer's ubiquity, and why it will exist as long as multicellular life does. Even so, she argues, this doesn't mean we should give up on treating cancer—in fact, evolutionary approaches offer new and promising options for the disease's prevention and treatments that aim at long-term management rather than simple eradication. Looking across species—from sponges and cacti to dogs and elephants—we are discovering new mechanisms of tumor suppression and the many ways that multicellular life-forms have evolved to keep cancer under control. By accepting that cancer

is a part of our biological past, present, and future—and that we cannot win a war against evolution—treatments can become smarter, more strategic, and more humane. Unifying the latest research from biology, ecology, medicine, and social science, The Cheating Cell challenges us to rethink cancer's fundamental nature and our relationship to it.

Does Altruism Exist? Princeton University Press

Covering all species from yeast to humans, this is the first book to tell the story of selfish genetic elements that act narrowly to advance their own replication at the expense of the larger organism.

Culture, Genes, and the Welfare of Others Cambridge University Press

Integrating modern science with traditional wisdom, *The Web of Meaning* investigates humanity's age-old questions--Who am I? Why am I? How should I live?--from a fresh perspective, laying down the foundation for a new worldview of interconnectedness that could foster sustainable flourishing on a thriving Earth.

The Meme Machine Oxford University Press

This critical collection of essays represents the best of the best when it comes to philosophy of biology. Many chapters treat evolution as a biological phenomenon, but the author is more generally concerned with science itself. Present-day science, particularly current views on systematics and biological evolution are investigated. The aspects of these sciences that are relevant to the general analysis of selection processes are presented, and they also serve to exemplify the general characteristics exhibited by science since its inception.

Synergy, Cybernetics, and the

Bioeconomics of Evolution Cambridge University Press

National Bestseller “One of those rare nonfiction books that transcends the genre. ... Extraordinary.” —Douglas Preston, New York Times bestselling author of *The Lost City of the Monkey God* A grand tour of the human immune system and the secrets of health, by the Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times journalist A terminal cancer patient rises from the grave. A medical marvel defies HIV. Two women with autoimmunity discover their own bodies have turned against them. Matt Richtel's *An Elegant Defense* uniquely entwines these intimate stories with science's centuries-long quest to unlock the mysteries of sickness and health, and illuminates the immune system as never before. The immune system is our body's essential defense network, a guardian vigilantly fighting illness, healing wounds, maintaining order and balance, and keeping us alive. Its legion of microscopic foot soldiers—from T cells to “natural killers”—patrols our body, linked by a nearly instantaneous communications grid. It has been honed by evolution over millennia to face an almost infinite array of threats. For all its astonishing complexity, however, the immune system can be easily compromised by fatigue, stress, toxins, advanced age, and poor nutrition—hallmarks of modern life—and even by excessive hygiene.

Paradoxically, it is a fragile wonder weapon that can turn on our own bodies with startling results, leading today to epidemic levels of autoimmune disorders. Richtel effortlessly guides readers on a scientific detective tale winding from the Black Plague to twentieth-century breakthroughs in vaccination and antibiotics, to the cutting-edge laboratories that are revolutionizing immunology—perhaps the most extraordinary and consequential medical story of our time. The foundation that Richtel builds makes accessible revelations about cancer immunotherapy, the microbiome, and autoimmune treatments that are changing millions of lives. *An Elegant Defense* also captures in vivid detail how these powerful therapies, along with our behavior and environment, interact with the immune system, often for the good but always on a razor's edge that can throw this remarkable system out of balance. Drawing on his groundbreaking reporting for the New York Times and based on extensive new interviews with dozens of world-renowned scientists, Matt Richtel has produced a landmark book, equally an investigation into the deepest riddles of survival and a profoundly human tale that is movingly brought to life through the eyes of his four main characters, each of whom illuminates an essential facet of our “elegant defense.”

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