



# The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think

By Douglas T. Kenrick, Vlasdas Griskevicius

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**The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think** By Douglas T. Kenrick, Vlasdas Griskevicius

Why do three out of four professional football players go bankrupt? How can illiterate jungle dwellers pass a test that tricks Harvard philosophers? And why do billionaires work so hard—only to give their hard-earned money away?

When it comes to making decisions, the classic view is that humans are eminently rational. But growing evidence suggests instead that our choices are often irrational, biased, and occasionally even moronic. Which view is right—or is there another possibility?

In this animated tour of the inner workings of the mind, psychologist Douglas T. Kenrick and business professor Vlasdas Griskevicius challenge the prevailing views of decision making, and present a new alternative grounded in evolutionary science. By connecting our modern behaviors to their ancestral roots, they reveal that underneath our seemingly foolish tendencies is an exceptionally wise system of decision making.

From investing money to choosing a job, from buying a car to choosing a romantic partner, our choices are driven by deep-seated evolutionary goals. Because each of us has multiple evolutionary goals, though, new research reveals something radical—there's more than one “you” making decisions. Although it feels as if there is just one single “self” inside your head, your mind actually contains several different *subselves*, each one steering you in a different direction when it takes its turn at the controls.

*The Rational Animal* will transform the way you think about decision making. And along the way, you'll discover the intimate connections between ovulating strippers, Wall Street financiers, testosterone-crazed skateboarders, Steve Jobs, Elvis Presley, and you.

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### Editorial Review

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Sheer stupidity is what economic rationalists see when Elvis Presley buys 100 glitzy Cadillacs, when New York governor Eliot Spitzer pays as much as \$80,000 for escort services, and when Steven Spielberg invests with Bernie Madoff. But Kenrick and Griskevicius see something more complex. In these apparently stupid decisions, they discern the results of an evolutionary history that impels men and women to ignore their own immediate self-interest in ways that ultimately foster the biological success of the species. That biological success, the authors argue, depends on a human identity that evolution has partitioned into seven separate subselves, each serving a different fundamental human need: self-protection, disease avoidance, affiliation, status, mate acquisition, mate retention, and kin care. When the environment triggers behaviors inscribed in any of these subselves, economic rationality may go out the window. Some readers may protest that the authors are offering biological justifications for foolishness. But the authors actually provide readers with helpful strategies for managing their evolutionary subselves prudently. A persuasive—and entertaining—look at the Darwinian dynamics of decision making. --Bryce Christensen

Review

“Kenrick is one of evolutionary psychology's alpha males, a grizzled veteran of many battles against the Blank Slate dogma. Griskevicius is the field's most brilliant and productive young star, whose ingenious research proved the transformative power of Darwinism for understanding business and marketing. Together, they make a fascinating, compelling, and fun case that people's decision-making embodies a deep evolutionary rationality rather than a superficial economic rationality. If you want to take the Red Pill and really understand what is going on in modern consumerist capitalism—if you want to dive deeper into our paleo-rationality than Dan Ariely or Daniel Kahneman have dared to go, you must read this book.”

—**Geoffrey Miller, University of New Mexico, and author of *The Mating Mind and Spent***

“Do you want to understand all kinds of human judgment errors that seemed inexplicable before? And do you want to be able to profit handsomely from that new and deep form of understanding? Then don't miss the profound insights of this groundbreaking book.”

—**Robert B. Cialdini, author of *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion***

“*The Rational Animal* is a fun romp through the comedy of human errors. Again and again, the authors find, evolutionary urges and hardwired brains explain behaviors rational economists cannot. Humans just don't make sense, it seems, unless you expect them not to.”

—**Mother Jones**

“[An] entertaining and informative book.”

—**Minneapolis Star-Tribune**

“A persuasive—and entertaining—look at the Darwinian dynamics of decision making.”

—**Booklist**

“Vigorously investigated.... Sharp, piquant science/behavioral-economics writing.”

—**Kirkus Reviews**

“Why do we overspend, underinvest, and make seemingly poor decisions? *The Rational Animal* shows that the answer comes from a simple, but often overlooked place: Our animal ancestors. Whether we like it or not, evolution has shaped who we are today. But rather than making us foolishly irrational, looking deeper inside ourselves reveals a surprisingly brilliant beast.”

—Jonah Berger, author of *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*

About the Author

**Douglas T. Kenrick** is a professor of psychology at Arizona State University and the author of *Sex, Murder, and the Meaning of Life*. He lives in Tempe, Arizona.

**Vladas Griskevicius** is McKnight Professor of Marketing and Psychology at the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. He lives in Edina, Minnesota.

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**Angela Heller:**

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This *The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think* is great publication for you because the content and that is full of information for you who all always deal with world and still have to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it data accurately using great coordinate word or we can declare no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read it hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but hard core information with splendid delivering sentences. Having *The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think* in your hand like keeping the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous a single. We can say that no reserve that offer you world throughout ten or fifteen second right but this publication already do that. So , this really is good reading book. Heya Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt which?

**James Drake:**

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can see that now, a lot of publisher which print many kinds of book. The book that recommended for your requirements is *The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think* this publication consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented how does the world has grown up. The dialect styles that writer require to explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some research when he makes this book. That is why this book suited all of you.

**Diane Joiner:**

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