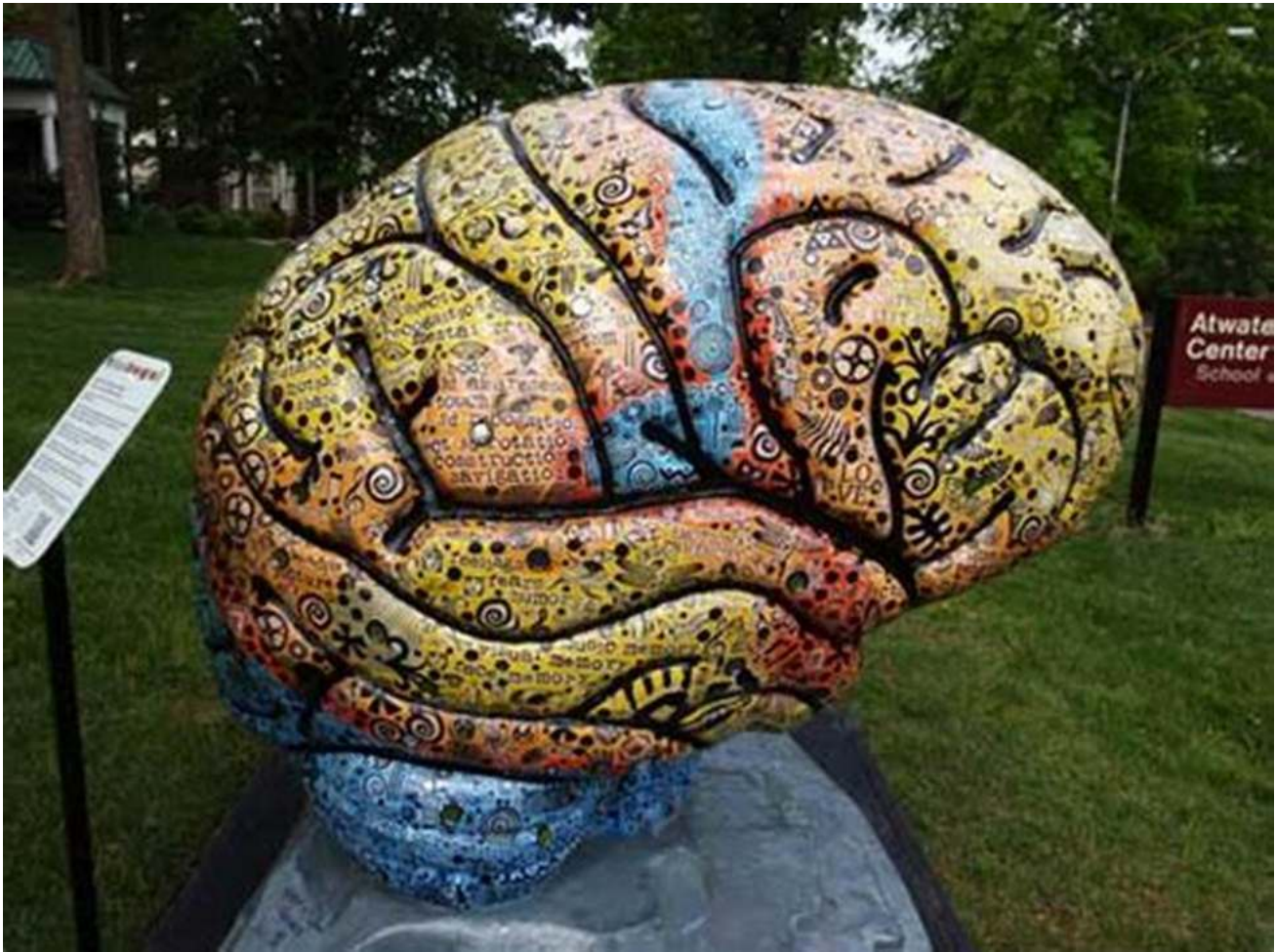


Unveiling the Tricks of Our Stone Age Brain: How it Deceives Us Every Day and How to Outsmart It



Have you ever wondered why we, as modern humans, sometimes make poor decisions or act in ways that are contrary to our long-term goals? The answer may lie in our ancient evolutionary past. Our brains, developed during the Stone Age, were molded to deal with the challenges and opportunities of that time. While our environment has drastically changed since then, our brain's structure and function have remained relatively unchanged. This can lead to unexpected

biases and cognitive errors that influence our decisions and actions without us even realizing it.

The Tricks of Our Stone Age Brain

First, let's delve into some of the ways our Stone Age brain deceives us on a daily basis:



Mismatch: How Our Stone Age Brain Deceives Us Every Day (And What We Can Do About It)

by Adelle Jameson Tilton (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1381 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 416 pages



Confirmation Bias: Stuck in Our Comfort Zone

Our brain tends to favor information that confirms our existing beliefs while disregarding or downplaying contradictory evidence. This confirmation bias can prevent us from considering alternative perspectives and limit our ability to make well-informed decisions.

For example, imagine you hold a strong belief about a particular political ideology. You may find yourself seeking out news sources and opinions that align with your views while dismissing or rationalizing counterarguments. Before you know it, you're trapped in an echo chamber that reinforces your preconceived notions.

Emotional Hijacking: Feeling First, Thinking Second

Our Stone Age brain is wired to prioritize emotions over rational thinking. This can lead to impulsive decisions driven by immediate feelings rather than careful analysis. Advertisers and marketers have long exploited this vulnerability by appealing to our emotions to drive purchasing decisions.

Think about those tempting product advertisements that evoke desire or tap into our insecurities. They aim to bypass our rational thinking and tap into our emotional centers, influencing us to make impulsive purchases that we may later regret.

Availability Heuristic: Judging Based on What's Easily Remembered

Our brain often relies on vivid or recent examples when assessing the likelihood or importance of an event. This availability heuristic bias can cause us to overestimate the probability of rare events or underestimate the significance of more frequent occurrences.

For instance, if we hear about a plane crash on the news, we may perceive flying as a dangerous mode of transportation, disregarding statistical evidence that proves it to be safer than driving. Our brain prioritizes the recent and emotionally salient information, leading to irrational fears and misjudgments.

Outsmarting Our Ancient Biology

Now that we understand the tricks our Stone Age brain plays on us, how can we overcome these biases and make better choices? Here are some strategies to outsmart our ancient biology:

Be Aware: Recognize Your Cognitive Biases

The first step in overcoming these biases is to be aware of them. Pause and reflect on your decision-making process, and question whether you may be falling victim to any of the tricks your brain plays. By developing mindfulness and self-awareness, you can identify your biases and take steps to mitigate their influence.

Seek Diverse Perspectives: Challenge Your Beliefs

Make a conscious effort to expose yourself to diverse perspectives and opinions. Engage in discussions with people who hold different viewpoints, read articles or books that challenge your established beliefs, and question your own assumptions. This will help broaden your understanding and reduce the influence of confirmation bias.

Engage Your Rational Brain: Think Before You Act

When faced with important decisions, try to prioritize rational thinking over immediate emotions. Take a step back, gather relevant information, weigh the pros and cons, and evaluate the potential long-term consequences. By engaging your prefrontal cortex - the seat of rationality in the brain - you can make more informed choices and avoid impulsive decisions driven solely by emotions.

Seek Out Evidence: Fact-Check Before Accepting

In the era of disinformation and fake news, it is crucial to fact-check information before accepting it as truth. Be skeptical of claims that align too well with your existing beliefs, and take the time to verify them from reliable sources. By seeking evidence and relying on accurate information, you can prevent the spread of misinformation and make better-informed decisions.

Embracing Cognitive Evolution

While our Stone Age brain may deceive us at times, it's important to recognize that our cognitive abilities also allow us to overcome these innate biases. By understanding the tricks our brain plays and consciously working to outsmart them, we can make better-informed choices and lead more fulfilling lives in the modern world. Our ancient biology may influence us, but it does not have to define us.

Take Control of Your Mind

Now armed with the knowledge of our brain's evolutionary legacy, it's up to you to take control of your mind. By embracing our cognitive evolution and actively working to outsmart the deceptive tendencies of our Stone Age brain, you can make wiser decisions, live more authentically, and thrive in our complex modern society.



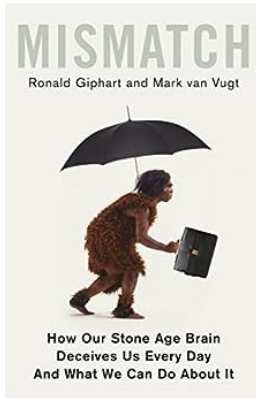
Let's not be slaves to our evolutionary past but instead harness the power of our cognitive evolution to shape a better future for ourselves and the world around us.

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Our brains evolved to solve the survival problems of our Stone Age ancestors, so when faced with modern day situations that are less extreme, they often encounter a mismatch. Our primitive brains put us on the wrong foot by responding to stimuli that - in prehistoric times - would have prompted behaviour that was beneficial. If you've ever felt an anxious fight or flight response to a presenting at a board meeting, equivalent to facing imminent death by sabretoothed tiger, then you have experienced a mismatch.

Mismatch is about the clash between our biology and our culture. It is about the dramatic contrast between the first few million years of human history - when humans lived as hunters and gatherers in small-scale societies - and the past twelve thousand years following the agricultural revolution which have led us to comfortable lives in a very different social structure. Has this rapid transition been good for us? How do we, using our primitive minds, try to survive in a modern information society that radically changes every ten years or so?

Ronald Giphart and Mark van Vugt show that humans have changed their environment so drastically that the chances for mismatch have significantly increased, and these conflicts can have profound consequences.

Reviewed through mismatch glasses, social, societal, and technological trends can be better understood, ranging from the popularity of Facebook and internet porn, to the desire for cosmetic surgery, to our attitudes towards refugees.

Mismatches can also affect our physical and psychological well-being, in terms of our attitudes to happiness, physical exercise, choosing good leaders, or finding ways to feel better at home or work.

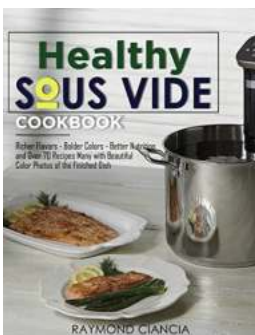
Finally, Mismatch gives us an insight into politics and policy which could enable governments, institutions and businesses to create an environment better suited to human nature, its potential and its constraints.

This book is about converting mismatches into matches. The better your life is matched to how your mind operates, the greater your chances of leading a happy, healthy and productive life.



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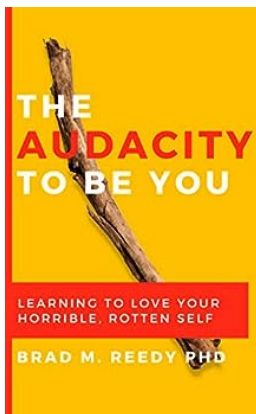
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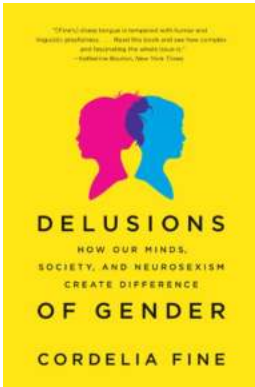
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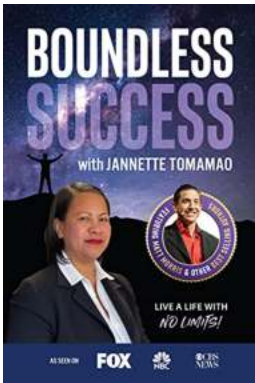
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