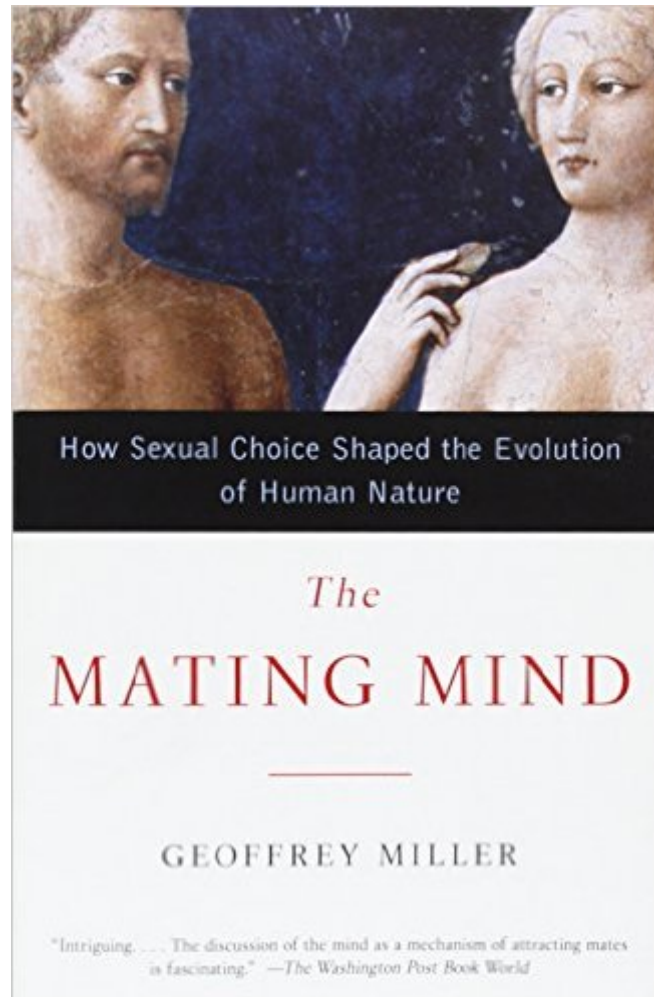


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The Mating Mind: How Sexual Choice Shaped The Evolution Of Human Nature



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When virtual reality gets cheaper than dating, society is doomed.....the title is Dogbert's succinct perspective of evolutionary psychology focusing on human sexual choice and male courtship effort. As a neophyte I was impressed with the intriguing ideas evenly sprinkled throughout the book. Principal among these was the runaway brain, fitness indicators and the handicap principle that Miller uses as a basis to explain human mind's intricate evolution. Miller tries to argue that any form of sexual selection for fitness indicators should even out genetic variation in fitness - which means if females favor tall males then all males should be tall. Yet we don't see that and the differences

remain in the species - so why does evolution allow such differences. Another interesting idea, originally proposed by Zahavi, is the handicap principle - which is advertising fitness and "sexual ornamentation" by handicapping an individual with a survival cost. It basically means fit peacocks showing off extravagant plumage to attract mates even if it means making themselves more prone to predators or simply carrying the extra load around risking their survival. Highly evolved fitness indicators means using costly signals to attract a mate. In human terms it might transform to - you buying an expensive diamond ring from Cartier for your lady-love fully aware that it's gonna make a dent in your pocket, will add no survival benefit whatsoever to you or her but yet show her that you make so much money that not only you can buy that ring but you are willing to devote tremendous personal resources to win her. Evolution of human morality - which itself is a costly indicator, may also have been selected through sexual choice.

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