

PROLOGUE

"Generally speaking, it is quite right if great things - things of much sense for men of rare sense - are expressed but briefly and (hence) darkly, so that barren minds will declare it to be nonsense, rather than translate it into a nonsense that they can comprehend. For mean, vulgar minds have an ugly facility for seeing in the profoundest and most pregnant utterance only their own everyday opinion." Jean Paul, as quoted by Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, 1872.

Dear reader, you normaloid idiot!

Well, maybe you deserve an explanation for that greeting.

A perceptive alien visitor to Earth might report home that humans are the dumbest and most despicable creatures on the planet!

At least the other animals don't claim to know things which, in fact, are absurd nonsense. Only humans believe in such imaginary things as heaven, hell, guardian angels, telepathy and all kinds of gods. Only humans maintain that the world was created by some imagined godly entity just for them and that this God continues to watch everything and tests humans so that He may reward or punish them in accordance with how pleased He is by their behavior. Only humans believe that they are so different from non-living things that their "consciousness" exempts them from the laws of physics. But the most incriminating human trait is that *homo sapiens* is the only species that has itself for its most dangerous enemy, and a revealing irony is that most killing is done on behalf of this thing they call "religion."

Human conceit and imagination is so poor that people cannot imagine themselves as automatons that are assembled by genes. Even those few humans who do accept that they were assembled by genes seem unable to imagine that these genes have achieved longevity in the species gene pool by assembling automatons that serve those very genes instead of the individual. This saves them from the indignity of realizing that they are foolish slaves to tiny lifeless molecules that use them for aimless ends.

The humans, these aliens might conclude, are hopeless!

So now, dear reader, we must have a delicate conversation about you in relation to this book. If you are like that clueless 99% of humans, those I call "normaloids," then let me suggest that you abandon this book and resume your pathetic, unthinking life! You may do so now! Please do so now!

Are you still reading? Are you a normaloid pretending to be one of that 1% of thinking humans? I give you one last chance to feel the guilt of reading something not meant for you.

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Cognoscenti

The following was written for the diminishing numbers of “the cognoscenti.” And to the cognoscenti who may be holding this book, I apologize for writing things that are inherently self-evident. You may have already thought of them yourself, and gone beyond my modest collection of thoughts. But if, by chance, you have not already discovered the self-evident ideas in this book then I hope you enjoy the following.

Reductionism and Hypocrisy

I'm a robot! So are you! This book views people as robots assembled by genes for the "purpose" of serving them by behaving in ways that have led to genetic prosperity in the ancestral environment. Only this “reductionist” viewpoint provides insight into the many bizarre aspects of human nature.

Every thinking person should be disappointed in humanity! Indeed, every thinking person should become a “misanthrope.” In youth it is easy to idealize human nature, to believe what people say about themselves. Later, perhaps in the teen years, human hypocrisy is discovered. The so-called “pursuit of Truth” becomes a hollow promise. Adults who continue to believe in childish notions of human nature look foolish.

I'm more disappointed than bitter. I can say that with each year's accumulation of disappointment in human nature my interest in writing this book wanes. Among the plethora of book publications there are only a handful for the reader who knows how to think. Even most of those intended for serious reading are fundamentally flawed. Why, I keep asking, are so many people incapable of thinking!

Alas, there is an explanation; an explanation, indeed, for all the flaws in human nature! We are the way we are because the genes have constructed us this way because it serves them!

The genes that assemble us were survivors in the "ancestral environment" (AE). Not only did they make fools of us in the AE, but in the modern environment our inherited tendencies make new fools of us in ways that were not even anticipated by the genes.

Anyone who occasionally glimpses humans this way has the opportunity of choosing a path leading to a belief that humans are victims of **genetic enslavement**. Life takes on new meaning for the person who then wishes for liberation from that enslavement. This book is dedicated to that rare person already on such a journey of liberation.

The mind is a terrible thing to trust

Humans are severely handicapped at comprehending such things as sub-atomic strings vibrating in 11 dimensions, a universe that will expand forever and cause all matter to "evaporate" in 10^{100} seconds, or even the everyday experience of seeing a

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commercial jet airplane that appears to be 35 degrees ahead of where the sound is coming from. The list of things we are ill-equipped to understand is immense!

We cannot readily understand these things because they never affected the survival of our ancestor's genes. How many more aspects of our world are inherently elusive because they never mattered to genetic survival? Or worse, how many things are hidden from us because they belong to a category of knowledge that would have adversely affected the survival of the genes our ancestors carried, even though this insight might have enlightened the individual?

The layman seems stubbornly committed to the belief that our minds can be trusted to have an intuitive understanding of all things. Both the layman and professional alike will instinctively object to any suggestion that our genes construct brains that "intentionally" handicap our ability to comprehend the way the genes have enslaved us. To put it bluntly, I am suggesting that our minds are designed to steer us away from Truth when alternative false beliefs safeguard genetic enslavement of the individual, even when this blinded vision diminishes individual well-being.

Humanities versus Physical Sciences

Don't expect humility from humans. Just as every serious thinker must become exasperated with others, so should he become exasperated with himself (I use "him" instead of "him/her"). Even within the physical sciences, where I earned a living for 43 years, it is necessary to consciously maintain vigilance against well-meaning, intruding intuitions. Imagine how difficult the task must be within the humanities, which are blatantly undisciplined compared to the physical sciences. Physical scientists deal with quantifiable predictions which can be tested by observations. In the humanities, on the other hand, practitioners seem more concerned with loyalty to charismatic leaders, and their beliefs, than to the pursuit of objective truth. Imagine, then, how easily investigations in the humanities can go astray.

And gone astray they have! The long endeavor to understand "human nature" has had more false leads from well-meaning professionals with social agendas than probably any other field. For example, some people contend that "human nature" doesn't exist, believing instead that our minds are "blank slates" at birth, ready to be written upon for the creation of whatever mental structures conform to the external world. Others state that "human races" don't exist, yet insist on affirmative action preferences for non-existent minority races. Such beliefs are congenial to those who secretly wish to fiddle with the social environment for the purpose of correcting social injustices. Marxist minds are naturally attracted to the humanities, and have tried for nearly a century to hijack anthropology and distort it for their purposes.

In spite of the odds against progress, and in spite of energetic people who seem bent on leading others astray, there are achievements to be proud of in the study of human nature. Anthropology and psychology may have a sordid record of undisciplined meddling by people with political agendas, yet uphill progress in these fields has surely occurred.

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Academic Quarrels

I recognize that most readers will object to this misanthropic portrayal of human nature and my cynical description of "human behavioral scientists." They may be inclined to agree with some of it, but they will quibble with specifics, or insist on different ways of approaching the subject. Just as tribes need to fission when they become too big, major subject areas within academe need to splinter to form "schools of thought" that go their separate ways by maintaining petty quarrels. For example, evolutionary psychologists complain about sociobiologists not having the proper "nuance" concerning adaptation versus optimization, and they use this minor complaint to build a wall of separation when as a practical matter the two fields are essentially one.

I am mindful of the need for petty carping by academics, or the inevitability of it, but I deplore the loss of vision that it inflicts upon those caught-up in it. Sometimes a professional becomes so involved with argument over petty differences, and concern over whose grant request will be funded, that he forgets to stand back from day-to-day controversies in his field to see it in the larger perspective. The preoccupation with professional details may render the professional practitioner blind to bigger visions that can only be seen from a distance. An outsider, looking in, will occasionally be worth listening to, for he brings with him that distant "big picture" perspective. I claim to bring a "big picture" perspective to the subject of sociobiology, and this should interest the serious lay reader as well as the professional sociobiologist.

This book asks a lot from the reader without a background in sociobiology, and I realize that few, if any, will read it through. The professional sociobiologist will readily understand most of my message, but he will be troubled by the fact that he does not recall reading other articles by me in sociobiology journals. The lay reader will not be bothered that my publications are in a totally unrelated field, but he will find much of the material unfamiliar and will be repelled by it.

I will not be disappointed if neither the sociobiologist nor the lay person reads what follows. My life-long romp in the realm of ideas, and my writing of essays that appear in this book, has been more fun than what I imagine it would be like to have positive reader feedback or book sales. Indeed, as of this Fourth Edition writing (2011 April 25), fewer than a dozen of the first edition, and none of the Second and Third Editions have been sold.

When I'm optimistic I recall Henri Beyle (Stendhal), who believed that his writings would escape notice until a century after his death. His forecast was amazingly accurate. Such a fate could in theory happen to this little book, but I now realize that the process of creating it was reward enough. I had more fun writing it than any reader could possibly experience in its reading. Like any creation, this book was written for the author.