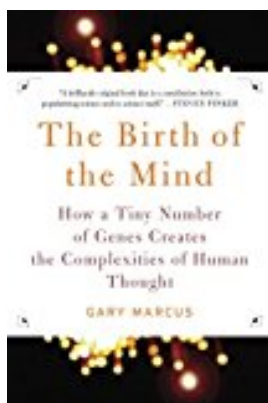


[PDF] The Birth Of The Mind: How A Tiny Number Of Genes Creates The Complexities Of Human Thought

Gary Marcus - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Birth of the Mind: How a
Author: Gary Marcus
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Description:

The Human Genome Project has revealed that we possess a surprisingly small number of genes, especially in light of our fairly complex bodies. In *The Birth of the Mind*, NYU psychology professor

Gary Marcus brings together current research on how our genetic code assembles that most mysterious physiological structure, the brain. Readers fascinated by the works of Steven Pinker and other mind theorists will be fascinated by Marcus' descriptions of strange--and sometimes disturbing--sensory experiments carried out on chimps, ferrets, and kittens that show how the brain organizes itself in the presence or absence of external stimuli. Further, Marcus writes that there's nothing particularly special about how the brain is built and maintained.

What's amazing is how little of the overall scheme for embryonic development is special to the brain. Although thousands of genes are involved in brain development, a large number of them are shared with (or have close counterparts in) genes that guide the development of the rest of the body.

With plenty of evidence supporting the notion of multi-function "housekeeping genes," Marcus concludes that our hopes for finding single genes responsible for various brain disorders are likely unfounded. *The Birth of the Mind* offers an engaging and often witty look at how our genetic code can be simple enough to make basic proteins and complicated enough to help us learn languages. --*Therese Littleton* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly NYU psychologist Marcus strikes a rare and delicate balance of scientific detail and layperson accessibility in this overview of an exploding field of inquiry. He traces a compelling story through the classic genetics and brain experiments of the past century up to present-day research, intriguingly illustrating how the human genome is intertwined with brain development, showing how the mechanisms that build brains are extensions of the mechanisms that build the body. Marcus dispels popular misconceptions of genes, showing, for instance, that most behaviors and disorders are much more complicated than headlines such as "gene for obesity discovered" would have us believe. Heavy explanations of complex results and abstract concepts are leavened by Marcus' upbeat, friendly writing style, which makes even the most arcane genetics principles a joy to read. Experiments with vision and language are particularly well-represented, with vivid descriptions adding color to the technical prose. If there is a fault here, it is that the book jumps around a bit too much, attempting to collect several decades of research and many threads of thought into a single slim volume. A lengthy glossary and bibliography, along with meticulous footnoting throughout, are helpful for those wishing to educate themselves further on the subject, but Marcus gives most readers more than enough to think about here.

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