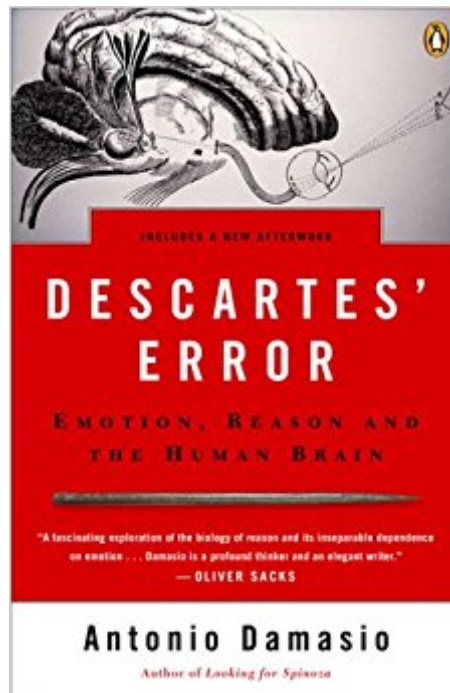


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Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, And The Human Brain



Synopsis

Since Descartes famously proclaimed, "I think, therefore I am," science has often overlooked emotions as the source of a person's true being. Even modern neuroscience has tended, until recently, to concentrate on the cognitive aspects of brain function, disregarding emotions. This attitude began to change with the publication of Descartes' Error in 1995. Antonio Damasio, "one of the world's leading neurologists" (The New York Times) challenged traditional ideas about the connection between emotions and rationality. In this wondrously engaging book, Damasio takes the reader on a journey of scientific discovery through a series of case studies, demonstrating what many of us have long suspected: emotions are not a luxury, they are essential to rational thinking and to normal social behavior.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Neurologist Damasio's refutation of the Cartesian idea of the human mind as separate from bodily processes draws on neurochemistry to support his claim that emotions play a central role in human decision making. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The idea that the mind exists as a distinct entity from the body has profoundly influenced Western culture since Descartes proclaimed, "I think, therefore I am." Damasio, head of neurology at the University of Iowa and a prominent researcher on human brain function, challenges this premise in

a fascinating and well-reasoned argument on the central role that emotion and feelings play in human rationality. According to Damasio, the same brain structures regulate both human biology and behavior and are indispensable to normal cognitive processes. Damasio demonstrates how patients (his own as well as the 19th-century railroad worker Nicholas Gage) with prefrontal cortical damage can no longer generate the emotions necessary for effective decision-making. A gifted scientist and writer, Damasio combines an Oliver Sack-like reportage with the presentation of complex, theoretical issues in neurobiology. Recommended for wide purchase. Laurie Bartolini, Legislative Research, Springfield, Ill. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Everyone should read this book. What Damasio has to tell us about the role of emotion in our reasoning process is fascinating and profoundly important, especially in our culture that wrongly teaches us that the two are separate and that engaging emotions in the reasoning process is a fault of logic. Beautifully written for the layperson without dumbing down the message.

One of the best books on neuroscience including high level and low level descriptions of the phenomena in the brain. I would recommend it to read to those who are interested in most mysterious phenomena humankind met - the human brain and mind.

Great book to understand clearly and without excessive technicalities the relationship between brain and the rest of the body, and revolutionize the way you see your mind.

Great read. I bought it as an assigned reading in my philosophy class, which ended up being very interesting. For anyone who is interested in Descartes' work, I would recommend reading this.

I wanted to know why I physically reacted when angry/in pain and felt lighter when happy. This book bridged why and how. Excellent read for PTSD and secondary trauma.

This is absolutely the book one should pick to start understanding the role of emotions in our lives. The one part that I got particularly fascinated with was regarding the differences between primary and secondary emotions from the perspective of how they get processed in the brain. For a complete perspective makes sense to follow up with the book emotional brain by Joseph Ledoux.

Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain One of the best non-fiction science book ever read This is the best non-fiction book ever read. A must read if interested in understanding the human mind. Damasio is a gifted writer and an outstanding scientist.

A must read for all and a great inspiration to the scholarly. Wonderful!

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