

Why we do what we do

Darwin in the Supermarket

MARK NELISSEN

What is the function of pain? Is everybody homosexual? Do we discriminate against our children? Why are young prostitutes more successful than older ones? Why do appreciative audiences all over the world clap their hands? And were we once all black?

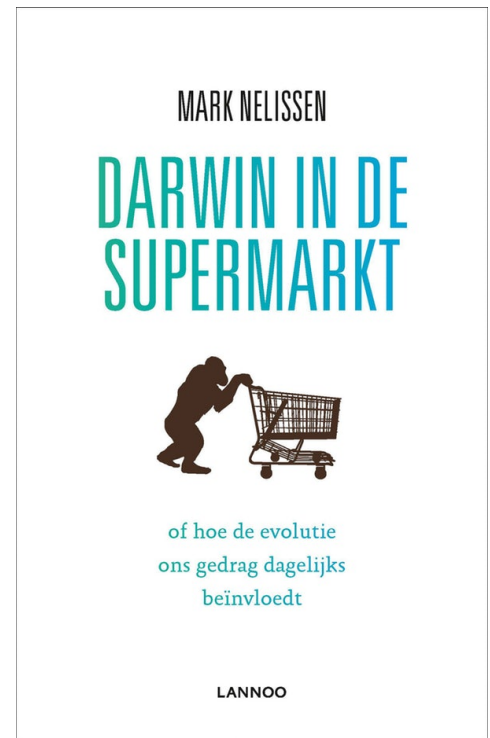
A serious study tempered with humour and self-effacement, this book makes the connection between insights from Darwin's theory of evolution and our everyday behaviour. Nelissen's starting points are observations on the street, in the train, during meetings or family gatherings, or gleaned from newspapers and other media. After posing leading questions and finding apposite answers he goes on to make clear and credible the idea that our distant ancestors' genes still lie at the root of the decisions we make and the things we do.

Fluid and clear, the author's approach is didactic yet never pedantic.

DE STANDAARD

'Darwin in the Supermarket or how evolution influences our behaviour daily' is made up of short texts, distilling the science into manageable portions. The author continually speaks to his readers and integrates their responses into his text by concurring with or contradicting them. This rhetorical strategy makes what he writes all the more convincing.

A book in the best tradition of Desmond Morris and Oliver Sacks.



AUTHOR



Mark Nelissen (b. 1950) is a professor at the University of Antwerp and a member of several scientific societies. Behavioural biology and evolutionary psychology are relatively young fundamental sciences that have rapidly and drastically changed our view of what it means to be human. Nelissen's aim is to make the academic insights they offer comprehensible and captivating to a broad readership.

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