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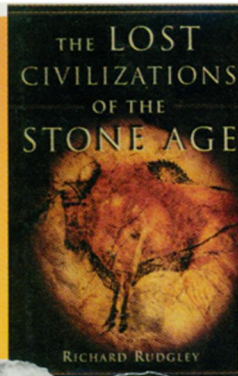
Avoiding Meaty Risks

Our long-held myths are exploding. Recent discoveries of astonishing accomplishments from the Neolithic Age—in art, technology, writing, math, science, religion, medicine, and exploration—demand a fundamental rethinking of human history before the dawn of civilization. As Richard Rüdgly puts it, “The prehistory of mankind is no mere prelude to history, rather history is a colorful and eventful afterword to the Stone Age.”

In this fascinating book, Rüdgly describes how the intrepid explorers of the Stone Age discovered all of the world’s major land masses long before the so-called Age of Discovery. Stone Age people made precisely sized tools and used proto-abacuses to count and measure. They performed medical operations including amputations and delicate cranial surgeries. Neandertals not only domesticated fire for heat and light but experimented with lichen and moss fuels. In the visual arts, the Paleolithic cave artists of western Europe used techniques forgotten until the Renaissance. Picasso himself is said to have remarked after visiting Lascaux, “We have invented nothing!”

If prehistory makes up 95 percent of humanity’s time on the planet, then it stands to reason that early Homo sapiens would have slowly developed the building blocks of culture and

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civilization. But the astonishing richness of Stone Age life is in fact a sudden eruption, so powerful that it forces us to wonder whether people have made any real progress since then. Rüdgly reminds us just how savage so-called civilized peoples can be and shows us how civilized the cultures were that have been reviled as savage. Warfare seems to have been less prevalent in prehistoric days than today. *THE LOST CIVILIZATIONS OF THE STONE AGE* shows the greatness of the debt that contemporary society owes to its prehistoric predecessors. —from Free Press

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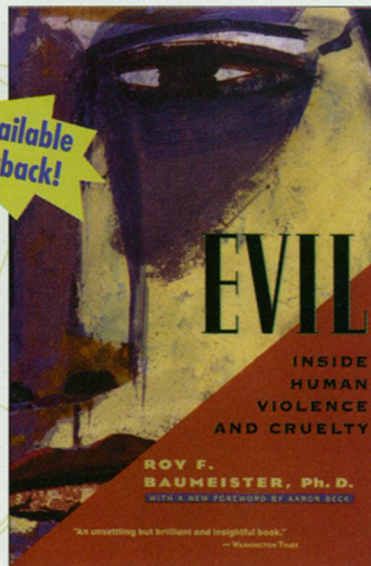
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In our modern era of moral relativism, we might think that the term “evil” is old-fashioned. In *Evil*, we realize quickly that it is not, as we follow Roy Baumeister’s strikingly original approach to the questions: Why is there evil? and What can scientific research tell us about the origins and persistence of evil behavior?

Integrating evidence from psychology, criminology, sociology, history, anthropology, and other disciplines to provide insight into the roots of cruelty and violence, Baumeister finds vivid examples, both historical and modern, that address compelling human issues: How do “ordinary” people find themselves beating their wives? Murdering rival gang members? Torturing political prisoners? Betraying their colleagues to the secret police? Why do cycles of revenge so often escalate? With an examination of our culture’s myths about evil, the book progresses through the whys of evil toward a discussion of a paradox in human psychology—our tendency toward guilt, a natural mechanism that suppresses evil, and our inclination toward ambivalence, a feeling that enables evil to flourish.

Baumeister casts new light on these issues as he examines the gap between the victim’s viewpoint and that of the perpetrator and explores various elements behind evil, from egotism and revenge to idealism and sadism. A fascinating study of humankind’s oldest problems, *Evil* has profound implications for the way we conduct our lives and govern our society.

—from W.H. Freeman



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