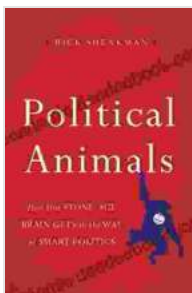


How Our Stone Age Brain Gets In The Way Of Smart Politics

Our Stone Age brains are wired to respond to threats and rewards in a way that can make it difficult to make rational decisions about politics. This can lead to us making decisions that are based on fear or anger, rather than on reason.



Political Animals: How Our Stone-Age Brain Gets in the Way of Smart Politics by Rick Shenkman

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4126 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 337 pages
X-Ray for textbooks	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



In the Stone Age, our ancestors lived in small, close-knit groups. They had to be constantly on the lookout for danger, and they had to be able to make quick decisions about whether to fight or flee. This fight-or-flight response is still hardwired into our brains today, and it can make it difficult for us to make rational decisions about politics.

For example, when we see a political ad that attacks our opponents, our brains may react as if we are being threatened. This can lead us to become

angry or fearful, and it can make it difficult for us to think clearly about the issues.

Similarly, when we see a political ad that promises us rewards, our brains may react as if we are being offered a reward. This can lead us to become hopeful or excited, and it can make it difficult for us to think critically about the ad's claims.

The fight-or-flight response can also lead us to make decisions based on our emotions, rather than on reason. For example, if we are feeling angry, we may be more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to punish our enemies. Or, if we are feeling hopeful, we may be more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to make our lives better.

Making decisions based on our emotions can be dangerous, because it can lead us to make decisions that are not in our best interests. For example, we may vote for a candidate who promises to make our lives better, but who actually has policies that will make our lives worse.

So, what can we do to overcome the influence of our Stone Age brains on our political decision-making?

One thing we can do is to be aware of how our brains are wired. When we see a political ad, we should try to be aware of how it is making us feel. Are we feeling angry? Fearful? Hopeful? Excited?

Once we are aware of how we are feeling, we can try to step back and think more rationally about the ad's claims. We can ask ourselves:

* Is this ad trying to trigger my fight-or-flight response? * Is this ad promising me rewards that I am unlikely to receive? * Is this ad playing on my emotions rather than my reason?

Once we have thought more rationally about the ad, we can make a more informed decision about whether or not to vote for the candidate who is running the ad.

Another thing we can do to overcome the influence of our Stone Age brains on our political decision-making is to educate ourselves about the issues. When we are well-informed about the issues, we are more likely to make decisions based on reason, rather than on emotion.

We can educate ourselves by reading books, articles, and news stories about the issues. We can also talk to experts about the issues. The more we know about the issues, the more likely we are to make informed decisions about who to vote for.

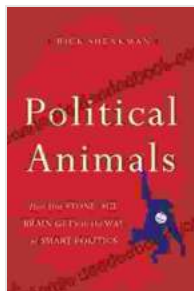
Finally, we can try to be more mindful of our own biases. All of us have biases, and it is important to be aware of them so that we can avoid letting them influence our political decision-making.

We can try to be more mindful of our biases by:

* Paying attention to our own thoughts and feelings * Asking ourselves why we believe the things we do * Being open to new information that challenges our beliefs

The more mindful we are of our own biases, the less likely we are to let them influence our political decision-making.

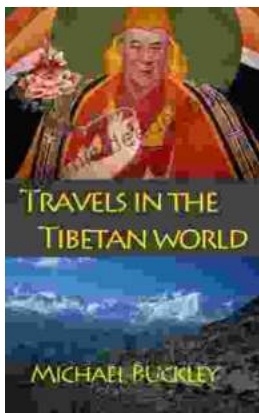
Making smart political decisions is not always easy, but it is important to try to do so. By being aware of how our Stone Age brains can get in the way of smart politics, and by educating ourselves about the issues and our own biases, we can make better decisions about who to vote for.



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