



# Our Political Nature: The Evolutionary Origins of What Divides Us

By Avi Tuschman

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**Our Political Nature: The Evolutionary Origins of What Divides Us** By Avi Tuschman

**The first book to tell the natural history of political orientations.**

*Our Political Nature* is the first book to reveal the hidden roots of our most deeply held moral values. It shows how political orientations across space and time arise from three clusters of measurable personality traits. These clusters entail opposing attitudes toward tribalism, inequality, and differing perceptions of human nature. Together, these traits are by far the most powerful cause of left-right voting, even leading people to regularly vote against their economic interests.

As this book explains, our political personalities also influence our likely choice of a mate, and shape society's larger reproductive patterns. Most importantly of all, it tells the evolutionary stories of these crucial personality traits, which stem from epic biological conflicts.

Based on dozens of exciting new insights from primatology, genetics, neuroscience, and anthropology, this groundbreaking work brings core concepts to life through current news stories and personalities. For instance, readers will meet Glenn Beck and Hugo Chavez and come to understand the underlying evolutionary forces they represent. By blending serious research with relevant contemporary examples, *Our Political Nature* casts important light onto the ideological clashes that so dangerously divide and imperil our world today.

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Review

"Think of this book as the next step after Jonathan Haidt."

--**TYLER COWEN**, Professor of Economics, George Mason University

"Political pundits on the left and right are rushing to grab pieces of *Our Political Nature* to substantiate their own biases, and this is understandable enough: this is a book of stunning scope and importance. The canvas here is global, and to put it bluntly I've never read anything this fascinating or compelling. I suspect this book will be a cause for heated debate in political and intellectual circles for a long time to come."

--**PAUL CHUTKOW**, Author and journalist

"The first book I've read that credibly attempts to present a unified view of political science, anthropology, genetics, neuroscience, and primatology. ...offers a penetrating explanation for why Americans (and the rest of the world) vote on a left-right spectrum, even against self and economic interest."

--**CEDRIC MUHAMMAD**, in *Forbes*

"At the same time disquieting, stimulating, and hopeful in its observations about humankind's evolutionary heritage and future. ...this book may provide the starting point for the political equivalent of the American Psychology Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* by allowing citizens to identify extremists on both sides of the political spectrum. And sadly, this may be an increasingly necessary tool."

--**PATRICK A. STEWART**, Assoc. Professor of Political Science, U. of Arkansas; author of *Debatable Humor: Laughing Matters on the 2008 Presidential Primary Campaign*

"Best book I've read on [the topic]."

--**MICHAEL SHERMER**, Founding Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, and columnist for *Scientific American*

"Tuschman's book attempts a feat that those of us monitoring the emerging science of politics have long been waiting for... If he's right, a dramatic new window opens on who we are and why we behave as we do."

--**CHRIS MOONEY**, Award-winning author and science and political journalist, in *Washington Monthly*

"*Our Political Nature* shows us that there are evolutionary underpinnings to our political attitudes, and that being liberal or conservative may reflect much deeper tendencies than we are inclined to think. This book is important reading for anyone trying to understand the sources of our present-day political world."

—**FRANCIS FUKUYAMA**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Origins of Political Order*

"At a time when unexpected political turmoil and economic crashes have exposed how feeble is our understanding of the forces that drive these crises, *Our Political Nature* provides a welcome respite from

the intellectual confusion now reigning. In these pages Avi Tuschman offers a fascinating perspective on the deepest roots of the clashes that are changing our world.”

—**MOISÉS NAÍM**, author of *The End of Power* and former editor in chief of *Foreign Policy*

“In a remarkable interdisciplinary tour de force, evolutionary anthropologist Avi Tuschman integrates findings from social psychology, genetics, and neuroscience to provide a rich understanding of the polarization in politics throughout history, and of man’s inhumanity to man. In *Our Political Nature* he makes clear that be it vote choice or the decision to go to war, our politics are the product of the passions that drive us, which are deeply rooted in humanity’s evolutionary origins.”

—**JERROLD M. POST, MD**, Director, Political Psychology Program at George Washington University, and author of *Leaders and Their Followers in a Dangerous World*

#### About the Author

**Avi Tuschman** (Washington, DC) is an expert on the hidden roots of political orientation. He began his career in politics as the youngest advisor in the government palace in Lima. While serving as the Senior Writer to President Alejandro Toledo (Peru, 2001-2006), Tuschman produced numerous articles and speeches designed to shape public opinion. In 2009, Dr. Tuschman joined hands with Toledo and seventeen other former presidents to co-write a regional policy agenda on democratic governance. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon lauded the document and called it historically unprecedented. Tuschman holds a B.A. and a Ph.D. in evolutionary anthropology from Stanford.

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