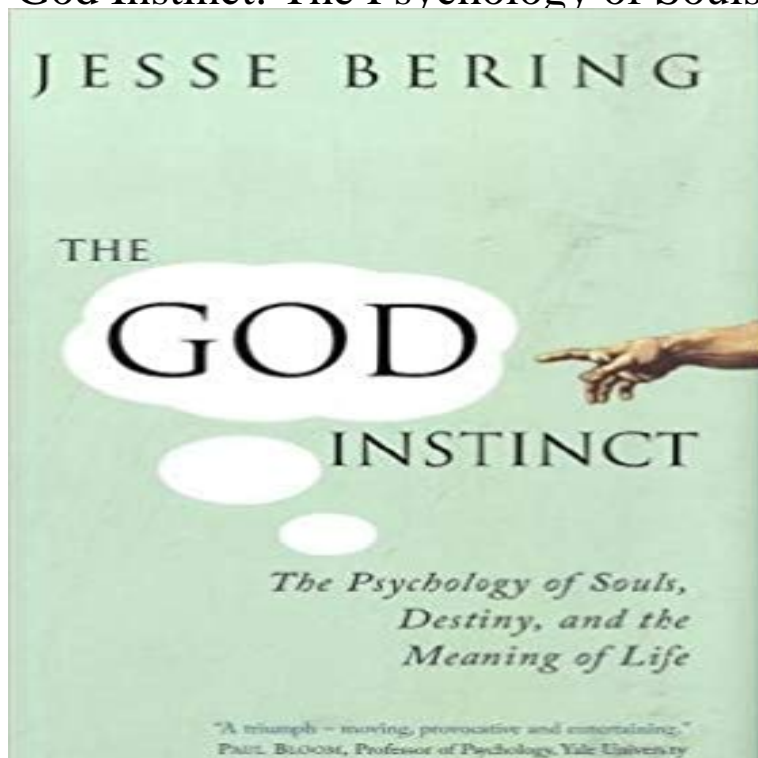


God Instinct: The Psychology of Souls, Destiny and the Meaning of Life



The new science of religion - there is no bigger subject. In this book, we are going to address head-on some of life's biggest questions: Is there really a God who cares about you? Is there really a special reason that you are here? Will your soul live on after you die? Or, alternatively, are God, souls and destiny simply a set of seductive cognitive illusions, one that can be accounted for by the unusual evolution of the human brain? The God Instinct explores how people's everyday thoughts, behaviours and emotions betray an innate tendency to reason as though God were deeply invested in their public lives and secret affairs. In this entertaining and thought-provoking book, Jesse Bering unravels the evolutionary mystery of why we grapple for meaning, purpose and destiny in life. He argues that God is not merely an idea to be entertained or discarded based on the evidence. Nor is God a cultural invention, an existential band-aid, an opiate of the masses. Instead, Bering proposes, God is a way of thinking. That strangely sticky sense that some intentional agent willfully created us as individuals, wants us to behave in particular ways, observes and knows about our otherwise private actions, communicates messages to us in code through natural events and intends to meet us after we die would also have been felt by our ancestors and led to their behaving in ways that favoured their reputations (and thus saved their genes).

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