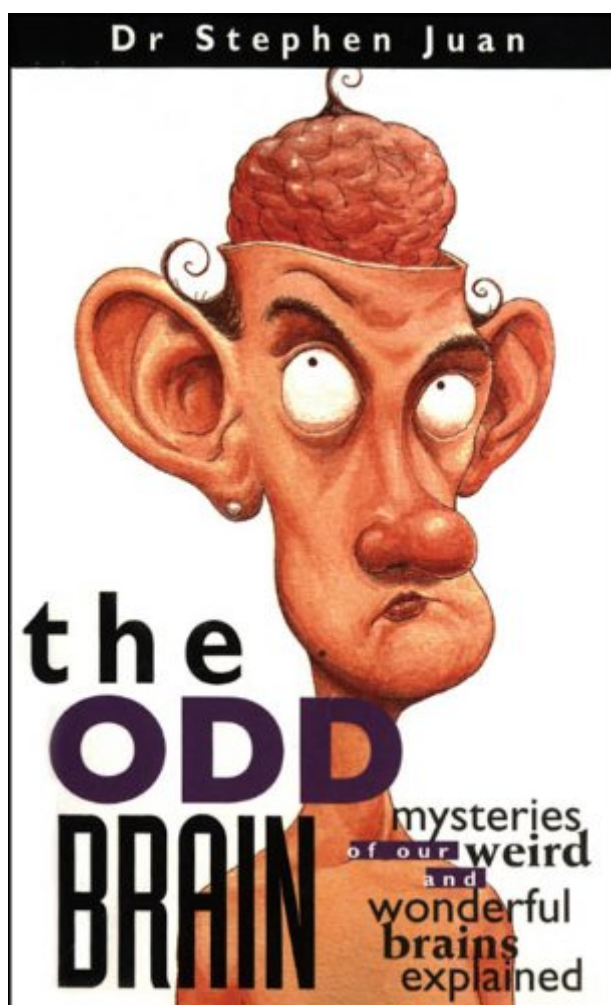


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The Odd Brain: Mysteries Of Our Weird And Wonderful Brains Explained



Synopsis

Dr. Juan is that rarest of rarities, a scholar with a sense of humor. He fearlessly tours the brain's mysterious corridors, discussing such wide-ranging topics as phobias, compulsive water drinking, serial killers, the secrets of hypnotism, and the man who thought he was a cat. You will find this book absolutely engrossing. Do kleptomaniacs have a legitimate excuse to steal? Can excessive TV watching physically "shape" a child's growing brain? These answers and scores more fill Dr. Stephen Juan's fascinating and endlessly entertaining book *The Odd Brain*. Following up his popular first book, *The Odd Body*, Dr. Juan takes us on an animated tour of the enigmatic organ that sits on top of them all. Equal parts scholarly professor--he teaches at the University of Sydney--cultural detective, and theater of oddities tour guide, Dr. Juan explores bizarre brain disorders and the normal-but-still-weird brain phenomena that we all occasionally experience (like *deja vu*). Through it all, Dr. Juan pulls off the nifty trick of making the clinical both clear and entertaining. Each chapter is packed with real-life anecdotes and case studies. These include the Criminal Brain, the Savant Brain, the Shy Brain, the Suicidal Brain, the Thrill-Seeking Brain, the Obsessive-Compulsive Brain, and more than 20 others. For anyone who's ever witnessed unusual behavior and thought, "Now, what would make a person do that?" *The Odd Brain* is sure to have an answer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a neuroscience undergrad, I wanted a light but informative book about the brain, so I thought this would be a good pick. But after reading eleven chapters of it, I have learned little about the brain that I did not already know, and I'm discouraged from reading further for two main reasons: First, the book is poorly written. The writing style itself is ambiguous and a bit corny, and the author fails to tie together concepts and stories within a chapter (e.g. chapter 4, why did he bring up Brownell's murder?). Other times the chapter titles end up being misnomers (e.g. the chapter "The Craving Brain" is really only about chocolate). I feel that the proposed mystery in each chapter is hardly resolved or explained well because the author relies heavily on historical accounts and anecdotes; whatever actual science he delves into is often based on single studies rather than multiple studies or reviews. Second, and more important, the author uses questionable sources for some of his content, which causes me to doubt the veracity of anything in this book. He cites the tabloid "Weekly World News" multiple times; for example, in chapter 11 he recounts WWW's story about a woman with three brains, and upon reading the original article I do not understand how he could have believed it. He also gets information from "Psychology Today", hardly an academic source. While for the most part he cites articles from peer-reviewed journals, the blatantly false tale of the three-brained woman causes me to doubt anything I read in this book. All in all, if you want to learn about weird psychology or the brain, find a different book or go to Wikipedia.

This is a great fun book. I hope this rating balances out the other poor rating that is on .

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