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Thought Contagion: How Belief Spreads Through Society: The New Science of Memes

By Aaron Lynch

Basic Books (AZ). Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 208 pages. Dimensions: 7.9in. x 4.9in. x 0.5in.Fans of Douglas Hofstadter, Daniel Bennet, and Richard Dawkins (as well as science buffs and readers of Wired Magazine) will revel in Aaron Lynchs groundbreaking examination of memeticsthe new study of how ideas and beliefs spread. What characterizes a meme is its capacity for displacing rival ideas and beliefs in an evolutionary drama that determines and changes the way people think. Exactly how do ideas spread, and what are the factors that make them genuine thought contagions Why, for instance, do some beliefs spread throughout society, while others dwindle to extinction What drives those intensely held beliefs that spawn ideological and political debates such as views on abortion and opinions about sex and sexualityBy drawing on examples from everyday life, Lynch develops a conceptual basis for understanding memetics. Memes evolve by natural selection in a process similar to that of Genes in evolutionary biology. What makes an idea a potent meme is how effectively it out-propagates other ideas. In memetic evolution, the fittest ideas are not always the truest or the most helpful, but the ones best at self replication. Thus, crash diets spread not...



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