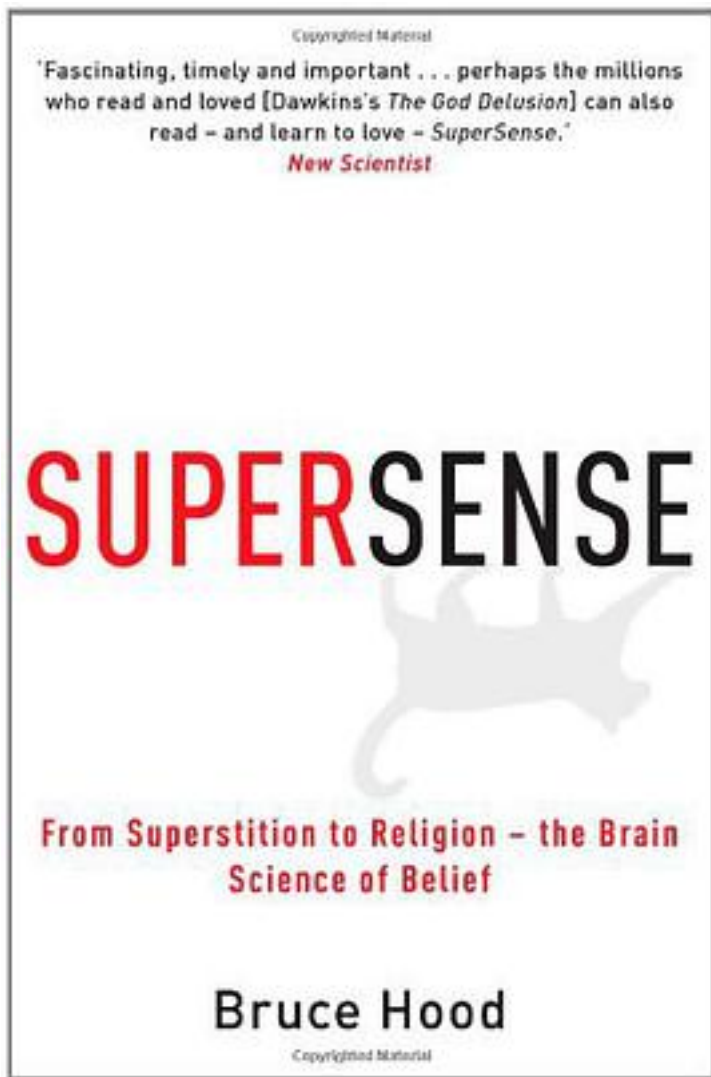


Supersense



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Why is it that Tony Blair always wore the same pair of shoes when answering Prime Minister's Questions? That John McEnroe notoriously refused to step on the white lines of a tennis court between points? And that President-elect Barack Obama played a game of basketball the morning of his victory in the Iowa primary, and continued the tradition the day of every following primary? Superstitious habits are common. Do you ever cross your fingers, knock on wood, avoid walking under ladders, or step around black cats? Sentimental value often supersedes material worth. If someone offered to replace your childhood teddy bear or wedding ring with a brand new, exact replica, would you do it? How about GBP20 for trying on a jumper owned by Fred West? Where do such feelings come from and why do most of us have them? Humans are born with brains designed to make sense of the world and that need for an explanation can lead to beliefs that go beyond reason. To be true they would have to be supernatural. With scientific education we learn that such beliefs are irrational but at an intuitive level they can be resistant to reason or lie dormant in otherwise sensible adults. It now seems unlikely that any effort to get rid of supernatural beliefs or superstitious behaviours will be completely successful. This is not all bad news - such beliefs are a useful glue that binds us together as a society. Combining brilliant insight with witty example Hood weaves a page-turning account of our 'supersense' that navigates a path through brain science, child development, popular culture, mental illness and the paranormal. After reading SuperSense, you will realize why you are not as reasonable as you might like to think - and why that might be no bad thing.

作者介绍:

Bruce Hood is currently the Director of the Bristol Cognitive Development Centre in the Experimental Psychology Department at the University of Bristol. He has been a research fellow at Cambridge University and University College London, a visiting scientist at MIT and a faculty professor at Harvard.

目录:

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