
On Human Nature Wilson

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*On Human Nature
Wilson*

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TREVON HAYDEN

Genesis: The Deep Origin of Societies Simon and Schuster
 “Brimming with ideas. . . . The Origins of Creativity approach[es] creativity scientifically but sensitively, feeling its roots without pulling them out.”—Economist In a stirring exploration of human nature recalling his foundational work *Consilience*, Edward O. Wilson offers a “luminous” (Kirkus Reviews) reflection on the humanities and their integral relationship to science. Both endeavors, Wilson argues, have their roots in human creativity—the defining trait of our species. By studying fields as diverse as paleontology, evolution, and neurobiology, Wilson demonstrates that creative expression began not 10,000 years ago, as we have long assumed, but more than 100,000 years ago in the Paleolithic Age. A provocative investigation into what it means to be human, *The Origins of Creativity* reveals how the humanities have played an unexamined role in defining our species. With the eloquence, optimism, and pioneering inquiry we have come to expect from our leading biologist, Wilson proposes a

transformational “Third Enlightenment” in which the blending of science and humanities will enable a deeper understanding of our human condition, and how it ultimately originated.

The Diversity of Life Farrar, Straus and Giroux

In his new preface E. O. Wilson reflects on how he came to write this book: how *The Insect Societies* led him to write *Sociobiology*, and how the political and religious uproar that engulfed that book persuaded him to write another book that would better explain the relevance of biology to the understanding of human behavior.

The Future of Life Vintage

A landmark collected edition of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author and world-renowned biologist, illuminating the marvels of biodiversity in a time of climate crisis and mass extinction. Library of America presents three environmental classics from two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner E. O. Wilson, a masterful writer-scientist whose graceful prose is equal to his groundbreaking discoveries. These books illuminate the evolution and complex beauty of our imperiled ecosystems and the flora, fauna, and civilization they sustain, even as they reveal the personal evolution of one of the greatest scientific minds of

our age. Here are the lyrical, thought-provoking essays of Biophilia, a field biologist's reflections on the manifold meanings of wilderness. Here too is his magisterial, dazzlingly informative Diversity of Life: a sweeping tour of global biodiversity and a prophetic call to preserve the planet, filled on every page with little-known creatures, unique habitats, and fascinating ecological detail. Also included is Wilson's moving autobiography, Naturalist. Following him from his outdoor boyhood in Alabama and the Florida panhandle to the rainforests of Surinam and New Guinea--from his first discoveries as a young ant specialist to his emergence as a champion of conservation and rewilding--it rounds out a collection that will inspire wonder, curiosity, and love for a natural world now rapidly disappearing. Thirty-two pages of photographs and numerous illustrations accompany these works, which are introduced by David Quammen, one of America's leading science and nature writers.

The End of the Myth Liveright Publishing
Joy the Baker Cookbook includes everything from "Man Bait" Apple Crisp to Single Lady Pancakes to Peanut Butter Birthday Cake. Joy's philosophy is that everyone loves dessert; most people are just looking for an excuse to eat cake for breakfast.

The Meaning of Human Existence Belknap Press

This classic by the distinguished Harvard entomologist tells how life on earth evolved and became diverse, and now, how diversity and life are endangered by us, truly. While Wilson contributed a great deal to environmental ethics by calling for the preservation of whole ecosystems rather than individual species, his environmentalism appears too anthropocentric: "We should judge

every scrap of biodiversity as priceless while we learn to use it and come to understand what it means to humanity." And: "Signals abound that the loss of life's diversity endangers not just the body but the spirit." This reprint of the 1992 Belknap Press publication contains a new foreword. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR
Human Nature University of Chicago Press

"Biophilia" is the term coined by Edward O. Wilson to describe what he believes is humanity's innate affinity for the natural world. In his landmark book Biophilia, he examined how our tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes might be a biologically based need, integral to our development as individuals and as a species. That idea has caught the imagination of diverse thinkers. The Biophilia Hypothesis brings together the views of some of the most creative scientists of our time, each attempting to amplify and refine the concept of biophilia. The variety of perspectives -- psychological, biological, cultural, symbolic, and aesthetic -- frame the theoretical issues by presenting empirical evidence that supports or refutes the hypothesis. Numerous examples illustrate the idea that biophilia and its converse, biophobia, have a genetic component: fear, and even full-blown phobias of snakes and spiders are quick to develop with very little negative reinforcement, while more threatening modern artifacts -- knives, guns, automobiles -- rarely elicit such a response people find trees that are climbable and have a broad, umbrella-like canopy more attractive than trees without these characteristics people would rather look at water, green vegetation, or flowers than built structures of glass and concrete The

biophilia hypothesis, if substantiated, provides a powerful argument for the conservation of biological diversity. More important, it implies serious consequences for our well-being as society becomes further estranged from the natural world. Relentless environmental destruction could have a significant impact on our quality of life, not just materially but psychologically and even spiritually.

Tales from the Ant World Island Press

A study of insect sociology, presenting individual investigations of wasps, ants, bees, and termites, and discussing caste, behavior, communication, symbioses, and other topics.

The Good Book of Human Nature Vintage

" Perhaps more than any other scientist of our century, Edward O. Wilson has scrutinized animals in their natural settings, tweezing out the dynamics of their social organization, their relationship with their environments, and their behavior, not only for what it tells us about the animals themselves, but for what it can tell us about human nature and our own behavior. He has brought the fascinating and sometimes surprising results of these studies to general readers through a remarkable collection of books, including *The Diversity of Life*, *The Ants*, *On Human Nature*, and *Sociobiology*. The grace and precision with which he writes of seemingly complex topics has earned him two Pulitzer prizes, and the admiration of scientists and general readers around the world. *In Search of Nature* presents for the first time a collection of the seminal short writings of Edward O. Wilson, addressing in brief and eminently readable form the themes that have actively engaged this remarkable intellect throughout his career. "The central theme of the

essays is that wild nature and human nature are closely interwoven. I argue that the only way to make complete sense of either is by examining both closely and together as products of evolution.... Human behavior is seen not just as the product of recorded history, ten thousand years recent, but of deep history, the combined genetic and cultural changes that created humanity over hundreds of thousands of years. We need this longer view, I believe, not only to understand our species, but more firmly to secure its future. The book is composed of three sections. "Animal Nature, Human Nature" ranges from serpents to sharks to sociality in ants. It asks how and why the universal aversion to snakes might have evolved in humans and primates, marvels at the diversity of the world's 350 species of shark and how their adaptive success has affected our conception of the world, and admonishes us to "be careful of little lives"-to see in the construction of insect social systems "another grand experiment in evolution for our delectation. "The Patterns of Nature" probes at the foundation of sociobiology, asking what is the underlying genetic basis of social behavior, and what that means for the future of the human species. Beginning with altruism and aggression, the two poles of behavior, these essays describe how science, like art, adds new information to the accumulated wisdom, establishing new patterns of explanation and inquiry. In "The Bird of Paradise: The Hunter and the Poet," the analytic and synthetic impulses-exemplified in the sciences and the humanities-are called upon to give full definition to the human prospect. "Nature's Abundance" celebrates biodiversity, explaining its fundamental importance to the continued existence of humanity.

From "'The Little Things That Run the World'" -invertebrate species that make life possible for everyone and everything else-to the emergent belief of many scientists in the human species' possible innate affinity for other living things, known as biophilia, Wilson sets forth clear and compelling reasons why humans should concern themselves with species loss. "'Is Humanity Suicidal?'" compares the environmentalist's view with that of the exemptionalist, who holds that since humankind is transcendent in intelligence and spirit, our species must have been released from the iron laws of ecology that bind all other species. Not without optimism, Wilson concludes that we are smart enough and have time enough to avoid an environmental catastrophe of civilization-threatening dimensions-if we are willing both to redirect our science and technology and to reconsider our self-image as a species. *In Search of Nature* is a lively and accessible introduction to the writings of one of the most brilliant scientists of the 20th century. Imaginatively illustrated by noted artist Laura Southworth, it is a book all readers will treasure."

Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

National Book Award Finalist. How did humanity originate and why does a species like ours exist on this planet? Do we have a special place, even a destiny in the universe? Where are we going, and perhaps, the most difficult question of all, "Why?" In *The Meaning of Human Existence*, his most philosophical work to date, Pulitzer Prize-winning biologist Edward O. Wilson grapples with these and other existential questions, examining what makes human beings supremely different from all other species. Searching for meaning in what

Nietzsche once called "the rainbow colors" around the outer edges of knowledge and imagination, Wilson takes his readers on a journey, in the process bridging science and philosophy to create a twenty-first-century treatise on human existence—from our earliest inception to a provocative look at what the future of mankind portends. Continuing his groundbreaking examination of our "Anthropocene Epoch," which he began with *The Social Conquest of Earth*, described by the *New York Times* as "a sweeping account of the human rise to domination of the biosphere," here Wilson posits that we, as a species, now know enough about the universe and ourselves that we can begin to approach questions about our place in the cosmos and the meaning of intelligent life in a systematic, indeed, in a testable way. Once criticized for a purely mechanistic view of human life and an overreliance on genetic predetermination, Wilson presents in *The Meaning of Human Existence* his most expansive and advanced theories on the sovereignty of human life, recognizing that, even though the human and the spider evolved similarly, the poet's sonnet is wholly different from the spider's web. Whether attempting to explicate "The Riddle of the Human Species," "Free Will," or "Religion"; warning of "The Collapse of Biodiversity"; or even creating a plausible "Portrait of E.T.," Wilson does indeed believe that humanity holds a special position in the known universe. The human epoch that began in biological evolution and passed into pre-, then recorded, history is now more than ever before in our hands. Yet alarmed that we are about to abandon natural selection by redesigning biology and human nature as we wish them, Wilson

soberly concludes that advances in science and technology bring us our greatest moral dilemma since God stayed the hand of Abraham.

Biophilia National Geographic Books
One of the great intellectual battles of modern times is between evolution and religion. Until now, they have been considered completely irreconcilable theories of origin and existence. David Sloan Wilson's *Darwin's Cathedral* takes the radical step of joining the two, in the process proposing an evolutionary theory of religion that shakes both evolutionary biology and social theory at their foundations. The key, argues Wilson, is to think of society as an organism, an old idea that has received new life based on recent developments in evolutionary biology. If society is an organism, can we then think of morality and religion as biologically and culturally evolved adaptations that enable human groups to function as single units rather than mere collections of individuals? Wilson brings a variety of evidence to bear on this question, from both the biological and social sciences. From Calvinism in sixteenth-century Geneva to Balinese water temples, from hunter-gatherer societies to urban America, Wilson demonstrates how religions have enabled people to achieve by collective action what they never could do alone. He also includes a chapter considering forgiveness from an evolutionary perspective and concludes by discussing how all social organizations, including science, could benefit by incorporating elements of religion. Religious believers often compare their communities to single organisms and even to insect colonies. Astoundingly, Wilson shows that they might be literally correct. Intended for any educated reader, *Darwin's Cathedral* will change forever

the way we view the relations among evolution, religion, and human society.

The Storytelling Animal Hachette Books
Three eminent scientists analyze the scientific, social, and political roots of biological determinism.

Scientist Harvard University Press
When this classic work was first published in 1975, it created a new discipline and started a tumultuous round in the age-old nature versus nurture debate. The controversy surrounding the book's publication--and surrounding its central claim that human social behavior has a biological foundation--reverberates to this day. In the introduction to this twenty-fifth anniversary edition, Edward O. Wilson shows how research in human genetics and neuroscience over the past quarter of a century has strengthened the case for a biological understanding of human nature.

Why Sex Matters Between The Lines
The remarkable story of how one of the most biologically diverse habitats in the world was destroyed, restored, and continues to evolve—with stunning, full-color photographs by two of the world's best wildlife photographers. *A Window on Eternity* is a stunning book of splendid prose and gorgeous photography about one of the biologically richest places in Africa and perhaps in the world. Gorongosa National Park in Mozambique was nearly destroyed in a brutal civil war, then was reborn and is now evolving back to its original state. Edward O. Wilson's personal, luminous description of the wonders of Gorongosa is beautifully complemented by Piotr Naskrecki's extraordinary photographs of the park's exquisite natural beauty. A bonus DVD of Academy Award-winning director Jessica Yu's documentary, *The Guide*, is also

included with the book. Wilson takes readers to the summit of Mount Gorongosa, sacred to the local people and the park's vital watershed. From the forests of the mountain he brings us to the deep gorges on the edge of the Rift Valley, previously unexplored by biologists, to search for new species and assess their ancient origins. He describes amazing animal encounters from huge colonies of agricultural termites to specialized raider ants that feed on them to giant spiders, a battle between an eagle and a black mamba, "conversations" with traumatized elephants that survived the slaughter of the park's large animals, and more. He pleads for Gorongosa—and other wild places—to be allowed to exist and evolve in its timeless way uninterrupted into the future. As he examines the near destruction and rebirth of Gorongosa, Wilson analyzes the balance of nature, which, he observes, teeters on a razor's edge. Loss of even a single species can have serious ramifications throughout an ecosystem, and yet we are carelessly destroying complex biodiverse ecosystems with unknown consequences. The wildlands in which these ecosystems flourish gave birth to humanity, and it is this natural world, still evolving, that may outlast us and become our legacy, our window on eternity.

The Biophilia Hypothesis Metropolitan Books

WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, BIRNAM WOOD COMES TO DUNSINANE HILL The Risk Theatre Model of Tragedy presents a profoundly original theory of drama that speaks to modern audiences living in an increasingly volatile world driven by artificial intelligence, gene editing, globalization, and mutual assured destruction ideologies. Tragedy,

according to risk theatre, puts us face to face with the unexpected implications of our actions by simulating the profound impact of highly improbable events. In this book, classicist Edwin Wong shows how tragedy imitates reality: heroes, by taking inordinate risks, trigger devastating low-probability, high-consequence outcomes. Such a theatre forces audiences to ask themselves a most timely question---what happens when the perfect bet goes wrong? Not only does Wong reinterpret classic tragedies from Aeschylus to O'Neill through the risk theatre lens, he also invites dramatists to create tomorrow's theatre. As the world becomes increasingly unpredictable, the most compelling dramas will be high-stakes tragedies that dramatize the unintended consequences of today's risk takers who are taking us past the point of no return. *A Window on Eternity* Liveright Publishing

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE A new and eye-opening interpretation of the meaning of the frontier, from early westward expansion to Trump's border wall. Ever since this nation's inception, the idea of an open and ever-expanding frontier has been central to American identity. Symbolizing a future of endless promise, it was the foundation of the United States' belief in itself as an exceptional nation - democratic, individualistic, forward-looking. Today, though, America has a new symbol: the border wall. In *The End of the Myth*, acclaimed historian Greg Grandin explores the meaning of the frontier throughout the full sweep of U.S. history - from the American Revolution to the War of 1898, the New Deal to the election of 2016. For centuries, he shows, America's constant expansion - fighting wars and opening markets -

served as a “gate of escape,” helping to deflect domestic political and economic conflicts outward. But this deflection meant that the country’s problems, from racism to inequality, were never confronted directly. And now, the combined catastrophe of the 2008 financial meltdown and our unwinnable wars in the Middle East have slammed this gate shut, bringing political passions that had long been directed elsewhere back home. It is this new reality, Grandin says, that explains the rise of reactionary populism and racist nationalism, the extreme anger and polarization that catapulted Trump to the presidency. The border wall may or may not be built, but it will survive as a rallying point, an allegorical tombstone marking the end of American exceptionalism.

Not in Our Genes Harvard University Press

A provocative scholar delivers the first book on the new science of storytelling: the latest thinking on why we tell stories and what stories reveal about human nature.

Crime Human Nature Univ of California Press

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Edward O. Wilson is one of the leading biologists and philosophical thinkers of our time. In this compelling collection, Wilson's observations range from the tiny glands of ants to the nature of the living universe. Many of the pieces are considered landmarks in evolutionary biology, ecology, and behavioral biology. Wilson explores topics as diverse as slavery in ants, the genetic basis of societal structure, the discovery of the taxon cycle, the original formulation of the theory of island biogeography, a critique of subspecies as a unit of classification, and the conservation of

life's diversity. Each article is presented in its original form, dating from Wilson's first published article in 1949 to his most recent exploration of the natural world. Preceding each piece is a brief essay by Wilson that explains the context in which the article was written and provides insights into the scientist himself and the debates of the time. This collection enables us to share Wilson's various vantage points and to view the complexities of nature through his eyes. Wilson aficionados, along with readers discovering his work for the first time, will find in this collection a world of beauty, complexity, and challenge. *Darwin's Cathedral* W. W. Norton & Company

"In *The Good Book of Human Nature*, evolutionary anthropologist Carel van Schaik and historian Kai Michel advance a new view of Homo sapiens' cultural evolution. The Bible, they argue, was written to make sense of the single greatest change in history: the transition from egalitarian hunter-gatherer to agricultural societies. Religion arose as a strategy to cope with the unprecedented levels of epidemic disease, violence, inequality, and injustice that confronted us when we abandoned the bush--and which still confront us today, "-- Amazon.com.

Sociobiology Island Press

Biophilia is Edward O. Wilson's most personal book, an evocation of his own response to nature and an eloquent statement of the conservation ethic. Wilson argues that our natural affinity for life—biophilia—is the very essence of our humanity and binds us to all other living species.

On Human Nature W. W. Norton & Company

Forming a twenty-first-century statement on Darwinian evolution, one

shorn of “religious and political dogma,” Edward O. Wilson offers a bold work of scientific thought and synthesis.

Asserting that religious creeds and philosophical questions can be reduced to purely genetic and evolutionary components, and that the human body and mind have a physical base obedient to the laws of physics and chemistry, *Genesis* demonstrates that the only way for us to fully understand human behavior is to study the evolutionary histories of nonhuman species. Of these, Wilson demonstrates that at least seventeen—among them the African

naked mole rat and the sponge-dwelling shrimp—have been found to have advanced societies based on altruism and cooperation. Whether writing about midges who “dance about like acrobats” or schools of anchovies who protectively huddle “to appear like a gigantic fish,” or proposing that human society owes a debt of gratitude to “postmenopausal grandmothers” and “childless homosexuals,” *Genesis* is a pithy yet path-breaking work of evolutionary theory, braiding twenty-first-century scientific theory with the lyrical biological and humanistic observations for which Wilson is known.