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978-1-107-11476-0 - The Evolution of Human Sociability: Desires, Fears, Sex and Society

Ron Vannelli

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## The Evolution of Human Sociability

### Desires, Fears, Sex and Society

How do desires and fears motivate human sociability? What effect do these motivators have on reproductive, social and political behaviour? And, crucially, how might we understand them separate from preconceived notions of design, purpose or higher morality?

Taking these questions as a focus, this book examines human evolution with the emphasis on sexual selection and the evolution of a number of human psychological processes. Exploring evolutionary, sexual and maturational processes, along with primate, fossil and geological evidence, Professor Vannelli argues that human nature can be conceptualized as species-typical desires and fears, derived from sexual selection during human evolution, and that these can be treated as major motivators of human behaviour. Presenting additional evidence from the anthropology of band societies, along with material from group behaviour, Vannelli highlights the importance of pair-bonding, friendship, alliance behaviour, vengeance seeking and interpersonal and 'tribal' politics in human social behaviour, providing a unique and interdisciplinary framework for understanding human nature and the evolution of human sociability, including in its modern forms.

**Ron Vannelli** is Professor Emeritus at Birmingham City University, UK, where he taught epistemology, the psychology of personhood, social theory and political sociology for over 25 years. His PhD focused on accusation processes in human politics (interpersonal, sexual and political), and his research interests have spanned human evolution, the psychology of personhood, cultural anthropology and sociology. Developments in brain neuroscience, the study of emotions, sociobiology and evolutionary psychology fuelled his desire to explore the links between biology and human behaviour.

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RON VANNELLI  
*Birmingham City University, UK*



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**For**  
**Liz, Alex and Mia**

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I think that it is important in this day and age of technology to acknowledge the vital role the internet plays in interdisciplinary scholarship of this kind. To put together this work a number of specialties had to be consulted, from the geology of Africa at the time of human differentiation to some of the legends and plays coming out of ancient Athens. Most academic journals are now available either free to anyone or via access through an institution of learning. It would take a great deal of time to find and travel to all the right libraries, wait for interlibrary loans and get all the notes required in relatively short sittings if this had to be done in pre-internet times. And information from a wide variety of sources, such as the Smithsonian Institute, World Health Organization, UNESCO or the CIA *World Factbook*, is instantly available, as well as from a number of online encyclopaedias, including such open and democratic sites as Wikipedia. The point is: ‘times are changing,’ and even we in academia are not immune; indeed we should embrace the opportunities provided by the new means of information storage and retrieval afforded to us to move beyond the confines of extremely narrow specialisms to more interdisciplinary approaches.

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