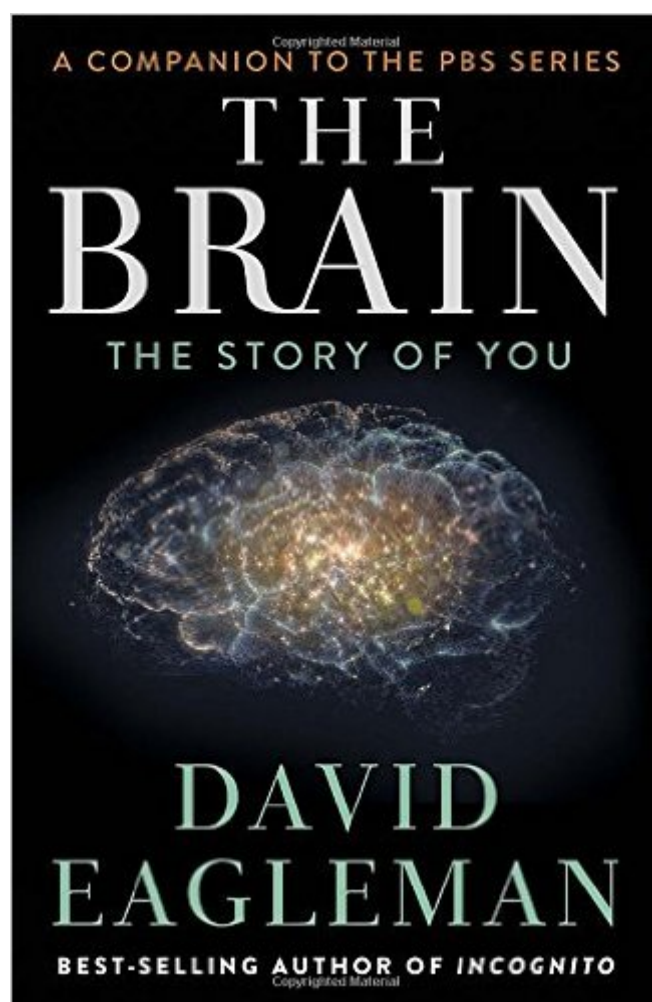


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# The Brain: The Story Of You



## Synopsis

Locked in the silence and darkness of your skull, your brain fashions the rich narratives of your reality and your identity. Join renowned neuroscientist David Eagleman for a journey into the questions at the mysterious heart of our existence. What is reality? Who are *you*? How do you make decisions? Why does your brain need other people? How is technology poised to change what it means to be human? In the course of his investigations, Eagleman guides us through the world of extreme sports, criminal justice, facial expressions, genocide, brain surgery, gut feelings, robotics, and the search for immortality. Strap in for a whistle-stop tour into the inner cosmos. In the infinitely dense tangle of billions of brain cells and their trillions of connections, something emerges that you might not have expected to see in there: *you*. This is the story of how your life shapes your brain, and how your brain shapes your life. (A companion to the six-part PBS series. Color illustrations throughout.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Those of us who watched the six-part PBS series based on this companion book are especially grateful to have it available so that we can continue to increase our understanding of what the human brain is and does as well as of what else it could do if properly nourished. With all due respect to the value of space exploration, it is also important to explore -- with David Eagleman's assistance -- the "inner cosmos" where we learn "how we decide, how we perceive reality, who we are, how our lives are steered, why we need other people, and where we're headed as a species

that's just beginning to grab its own reins.

The Brain: The Story of You by David Eagleman "The Brain" is an excellent companion piece to the six-part PBS series of the same title. Neuroscientist and best-selling author David Eagleman, educates and fascinates the general public with a wonderful popular-science examination of our brains. This captivating 224-page book includes the following six chapters: 1. Who am I?, 2. What is reality?, 3. Who's in control?, 4. How do I decide?, 5. Do I need you?, and 6. Who will we be?.

Positives:

1. Popular science at its best. Accessible, enlightening and fun to read.
2. The fascinating topic of neuroscience in the masterful hands of David Eagleman.
3. Full of colorful illustrations that complement the excellent narrative.
4. Eagleman's writing style is easy on the brain. His goal is to educate the general public and he succeeds.
5. Full of interesting facts spruced throughout the book. "As many as two million new connections, or synapses, are formed every second in an infant's brain. By age two, a child has over one hundred trillion synapses, double the number an adult has."
6. A good description of the teen's brain. "Beyond social awkwardness and emotional hypersensitivity, the teen brain is set up to take risks."
7. Goes over some of the key components of the brain. "The scientists were particularly interested in a small area of the brain called the hippocampus - vital for memory, and, in particular, spatial memory."
8. Includes interesting stories. The story of Charles Whitman is quite enlightening with major repercussions on a society that values evidence.
9. Describes how memories are formed. "Our past is not a faithful record. Instead it's a reconstruction, and sometimes it can border on mythology."

As is prominently displayed on the front cover, The Brain: The Story of You is a companion to the PBS t.v. series The Brain with David Eagleman, so it should come as no surprise that the book is a relatively brief and cursory introduction to modern theories based on recent discoveries in neuroscience studies. Its brevity and lack of depth, however, does not detract from its quality and importance. The book is very well-produced and contains many screen shots from the t.v. series as well as a plethora of colorful charts, diagrams, and pictures to illustrate the concepts Eagleman presents. Through six chapters, each supporting one hour of the series, Eagleman explains how the brain determines who we are as individuals; the electrochemical processes by which our brain interprets reality; how our conscious brain as well as our unconscious controls our attitudes and actions; how brains develop decision-making patterns; why the brain requires interaction with other humans; and finally, how forthcoming products will help to augment the brain's ability to receive

and interpret new kinds of sensory input and operate remote limbs or vehicles. Eagleman does an exceptional job of giving the basics of a deep, varied, and exponentially expanding corpus of academic research and offers plenty of examples of previous and current studies conducted by other neuroscientists. The book includes a helpful and not overly-technical glossary and a hefty endnotes section referring interested readers to a multitude of more in-depth resources.

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