



Neural Darwinism: The Theory Of Neuronal Group Selection

By Gerald Edelman

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Already the subject of considerable pre-publication discussion, this magisterial work by one of the nation's leading neuroscientists presents a radically new view of the function of the brain and nervous system. Its central idea is that the nervous system in each individual operates as a selective system resembling natural selection in evolution, but operating by different mechanisms. By providing a fundamental neural basis for categorization of the things of this world it unifies perception, action, and learning. The theory also completely revises our view of memory, which it considers to be a dynamic process of recategorization rather than a replicative store of attributes. This has deep implications for the interpretation of various psychological states from attention to dreaming. *Neural Darwinism* ranges over many disciplines, focusing on key problems in developmental and evolutionary biology, anatomy, physiology, ethology, and psychology. This book should therefore prove indispensable to advanced undergraduate and graduate students in these fields, to students of medicine, and to those in the social sciences concerned with the relation of behavior to biology. Beyond that, this far-ranging theory of brain function is bound to stimulate renewed discussions of such philosophical issues as the mind-body problem, the origins of knowledge, and the perceptual basis of language.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Gerald M. Edelman is director of the Neurosciences Institute and chairman of the Department of Neurobiology at the Scripps Research Institute. He received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1972. He is also the author of *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire; Tobiology* ; and *The Remembered Present* .

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