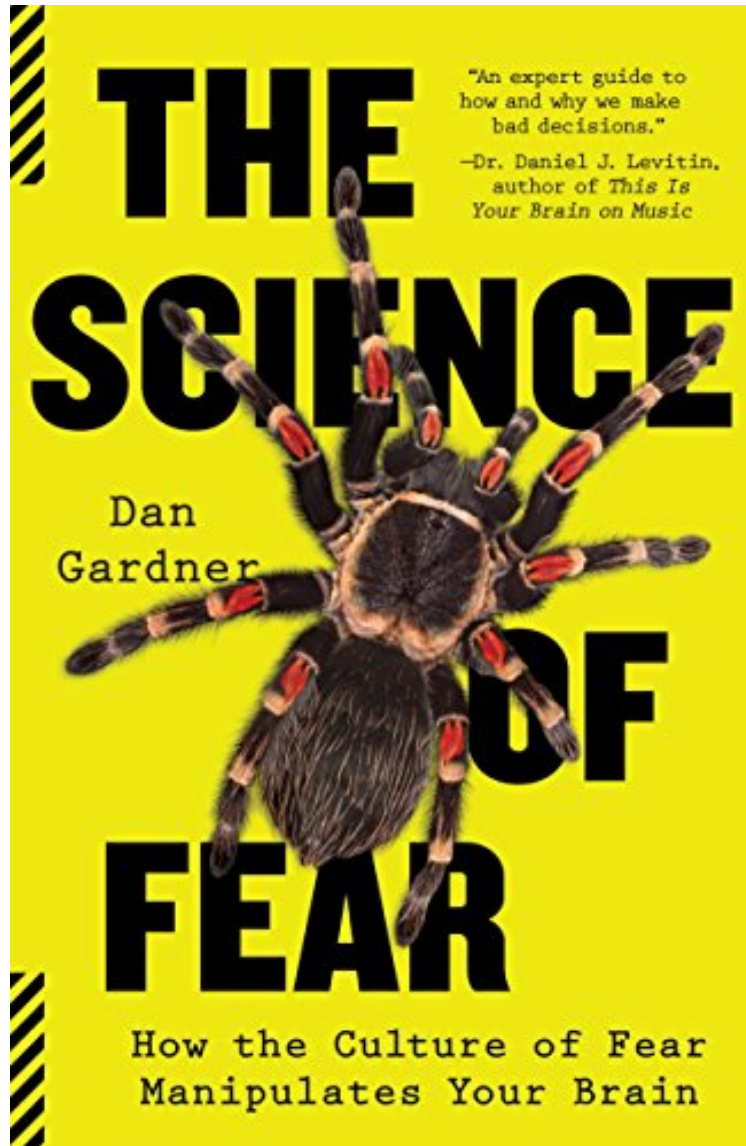


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The Science of Fear: How the Culture of Fear Manipulates Your Brain

Daniel Gardner

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Daniel Gardner : The Science of Fear: How the Culture of Fear Manipulates Your Brain before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Science of Fear: How the Culture of Fear Manipulates Your Brain:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Does fear rule (ruin) your life?By Richard LennoxVery thorough analysis of how our culture and media contribute and use our hard-wired fears to emotionally keep any logic at bay while we flounder handwringing and focus on the wrong triggers. Probably the people who really need the book, won't

read it. Great examples of how travel by air severely dropped off, after 9-11... But auto accidents (a REAL fear) rose during that time! Unrealistic fear trumps realism! Know anyone who thinks they must have a heart attack after a bit of heartburn, or being unwilling to live in the whole Northwest, because of the potential for a recently popularized major earthquake. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Insight into the Human Psyche By Money Honey The Science of Fear is an in-depth look at what drives people to fear things that, in reality, pose little threat to our existence. The book is enlightening, and I found myself looking at the world around me differently after reading it. The book combines real world examples with the science behind it, providing a thorough explanation for why we fear the things we do, the impact our environment has on the development of these fears, and most notably, how to recognize these biases in ourselves and others. While the book won't necessarily change the way you react to media reports, the fears of our families or friends, or the stories we may hear from politicians or action groups, it does help put them in perspective and better reflect the reality of the fear. The book's main con is that it is a bit dry, and it isn't necessarily an easy read. Its a book you would read because you are interested in learning about the subject, but not necessarily one you would become engrossed in. 20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Makes risk assessment easier to understand By Lance Bledsoe Gardner's book is both enjoyable and informative, providing a wealth of information about how humans evaluate risk. In particular, the author shows how our instincts (or "Gut") reactions to risk are often incorrect, yet we are reluctant to overrule these reactions with the more calm and reasoning "Head" side of our thinking. Gardner uses a vast review of research in the field of risk assessment to bolster his points, yet manages to make these scientific studies accessible to laypeople, summarizing many of the principles with names such as the Example Rule, the Anchoring Rule, and the Rule of Typical Things. He then gives a number of examples of how people are often led astray by different entities (e.g., the news media, advertising agencies, political campaigns) who use these principles to evoke unreasoning fear as a means of manipulation, the implicit message being, "Here's something that you should be afraid of, but if you'll just buy this product or elect this candidate, you'll be safe." I especially enjoyed the abundant statistics and discussions about the relative risk or safety of different activities (e.g., car travel vs. airline travel, heart disease vs. cancer, etc.), and how, from a historical and statistical perspective, "there's never been a better time to be alive." I would have liked for Gardner to have covered certain topics in more detail (e.g., vaccinations, climate change), but the ones he did cover in detail (e.g., terrorism, environmental chemicals, the role of the news media) were all well done. All in all, a fascinating and valuable book for anyone who wants to know how to better use the reasoning side of their brain to evaluate the risks we all face.

"An invaluable resource for anyone who aspires to think clearly" (The Guardian) from the New York Times bestselling author of Superforecasting and Future Babble From terror attacks to collapsing economies, from painkiller epidemics to mass gun violence and poisonous toys from China, our list of fears seems to be exploding. Yet we are the safest and healthiest humans in history. Why are we so worried? The Science of Fear is an introduction to the new brain science of risk, dissecting the fears that misguide and manipulate us every day. Award-winning journalist Dan Gardner demonstrates how irrational fear springs from the ways humans miscalculate risks based on our hunter-gatherer brains. With the exclusive cooperation of risk-science pioneer Paul Slovic and other leading experts, Gardner reveals how our "gut" reactions lead us astray. Understanding our irrational fears frees us from political and corporate manipulation, and makes our choices better. Ultimately, The Science of Fear will make you brave. "Excellent... Analyzes everything from the media's predilection for irrational scare stories to the cynical use of fear by politicians... [A] cheery corrective to modern paranoia." —The Economist "An entertaining, often jolting account of why trivial risks terrify us, even as we engage in wildly dangerous activities with hardly a qualm." —Kirkus (starred review) "Elegantly weaves academic research and everyday experience, exposing the secrets of emotion and reason, and the essential roles they play on our lives. An excellent book." —Dan Ariely, New York Times bestselling author of Predictably Irrational From the Trade Paperback edition.

From Publishers Weekly Gardner, a columnist and senior writer for the Ottawa Citizen, is both matter-of-fact and entertaining in this look at fear and how it shapes our lives. Although we are capable of reason, says Gardner, we often rely instead on intuitive snap judgments. We also assume instinctively, but incorrectly, that [i]f examples of something can be recalled easily, that thing must be common. And what is more memorable than headlines and news programs blaring horrible crimes and diseases, plane crashes and terrorist attacks? In fact, such events are rare, but their media omnipresence activates a gut-level fear response that is out of proportion to the likelihood of our going through such an event. It doesn't help that scientific data and statistics are often misunderstood and misused and that our risk assessment is influenced less by the facts than by how others respond. Gardner's vivid, direct style, backed up by clear examples and solid data from science and psychology, brings a breath of fresh air and common sense to an emotional topic. (June) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "An excellent work... a cheery corrective to modern paranoia." —The Economist "An invaluable resource for anyone who aspires to think clearly." —The Guardian "An entertaining,

often jolting account of why trivial risks terrify us, even as we engage in wildly dangerous activities with hardly a qualm."—Kirkus (starred review) "Gardner's vivid, direct style, backed up by clear examples and solid data from science and psychology, brings a breath of fresh air and common sense to an emotional topic."—Publisher's Weekly "Elegantly weaves academic research and everyday experience, exposing the secrets of emotion and reason, and the essential roles they play on our lives. An excellent book."—Dan Ariely, New York Times bestselling author of Predictably Irrational "Essential reading for anyone interested in the social mistakes we make every day—and how to fix them."—Tyler Cowen, author of Discover Your Inner Economist "Those of us who spend our careers in research hope that someone like Daniel Gardner will come along and bring our findings to the world in an engaging and scientifically accurate way."—Paul Slovic, Professor of Psychology, University of Oregon "Compelling... By showing how to read statistics properly and engage the head over gut instinct, Gardner aims to get us thinking more carefully about how we run our lives—and make it harder for politicians, the media and advertisers to lead us astray."—The New Scientist "Terrific... As a writer, he's exceptionally good—he has the clarity of Malcolm Gladwell.... He takes you through a maze of difficult academic work, and makes it seem simple."—The Evening Standard "A fascinating insight into the peculiar and devastating nature of human fear, while training the reader to be ever wary of misleading media announcements."—The Daily Telegraph "Elegantly summarizes the results of psychological research... His chapters on the risk of being a victim of crime or terrorism provoke a peculiar mix of comfort and despair. It is heartening that the danger is slight; it's unsettling how skewed our political system and consumer culture are towards convincing us of the opposite."—The Observer

About the Author Daniel Gardner is a columnist and senior writer for The Ottawa Citizen, He has received numerous awards for his writing, including Amnesty International's Media Award and the Michener Award. Scott Peterson is a voice actor, copy writer, and studio engineer, with a number of years experience in voice acting and production from narration to animation. He is fluent in German, English, and passable Spanish, with a large array of characters and impressions in his acting arsenal.