The history of science abounds with momentous theories that disrupted conventional wisdom and yet were eventually proven true. Ajit Varki and Danny Brower's "Mind over Reality" theory is poised to be one such idea—a concept that runs counter to commonly-held notions about human evolution but that may hold the key to understanding why humans evolved as we did, leaving all other related species far behind. At a chance meeting in 2005, Brower, a geneticist, posed an unusual idea to Varki that he believed could explain the origins of human uniqueness among the world's species: Why is there no humanlike elephant or humanlike dolphin, despite millions of years of evolutionary opportunity? Why is it that humans alone can understand the minds of others? Haunted by their encounter, Varki tried years later to contact Brower only to discover that he had died unexpectedly. Inspired by an incomplete manuscript Brower left behind, Denial presents a radical new theory on the origins of our species. It was not, the authors argue, a biological leap that set humanity apart from other species, but a psychological one: namely, the uniquely human ability to deny reality in the face of inarguable evidence—including the willful ignorance of our own inevitable deaths. The awareness of our own mortality could have caused anxieties that resulted in our avoiding the risks of competing to procreate—an evolutionary dead-end. Humans therefore needed to evolve a mechanism for overcoming this hurdle: the denial of reality. As a consequence of this evolutionary quirk we now deny any aspects of reality that are not to our liking—we smoke cigarettes, eat unhealthy foods, and avoid exercise, knowing these habits are a prescription for an early death. And so what has worked to establish our species could be our undoing if we continue to deny the consequences of unrealistic approaches to everything from personal health to financial risk-taking to climate change. On the other hand, reality-denial affords us many valuable attributes, such as optimism, confidence, and courage in the face of long odds. Presented in homage to Brower's original thinking, Denial offers a powerful warning about the dangers inherent in our remarkable ability to ignore reality—a gift that will either lead to our downfall, or continue to be our greatest asset.

Denial - Self-Deception, False Beliefs, and the Origins of the Human Mind

Describes why humans are able to deny reality and ignore their own inevitable deaths to the detriment of the entire species and what might be done to change this mindset.

The Truth About Denial - Bias and Self-Deception in Science, Politics, and Religion

People believe what they want to believe. It is a striking—yet all too familiar—fact about human beings that our belief-forming processes can be so distorted by fears, desires, and prejudices that an otherwise sensible person may sincerely uphold a false claim about the world despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. When we describe someone as being "in denial," we mean that he or she is personally threatened by some set of facts and consequently fails to assess the situation properly according to the evidence, instead arguing and interpreting
evidence in light of a pre-established conclusion. In a world polarized over politics, culture, race, and religion, it is evident that ideological commitments can influence one's perception of reality in socially destructive ways, especially when one perceives a threat to these commitments. When group interests, creeds, or dogmas are threatened by unwelcome factual information, biased thinking can become ideological denialism. This is a problem that affects everybody: Whereas denial can interfere with individual well-being, ideological denialism can stand in the way of urgent advancements in public policy. This book offers an accessible, historically and scientifically informed overview of our understanding of denial and denialism. Adrian Bardon introduces the reader to the latest developments in the interdisciplinary study of denial, and then investigates the role of human psychology and ideology in, respectively, science denial, economic policy, and religious belief.

Essentials of Glycobiology

Sugar chains (glycans) are often attached to proteins and lipids and have multiple roles in the organization and function of all organisms. "Essentials of Glycobiology" describes their biogenesis and function and offers a useful gateway to the understanding of glycans.

The Genesis of Science - How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution

The Not-So-Dark Dark Ages What they forgot to teach you in school: People in the Middle Ages did not think the world was flat The Inquisition never executed anyone because of their scientific ideologies It was medieval scientific discoveries, including various methods, that made possible Western civilization’s “Scientific Revolution” As a physicist and historian of science James Hannam debunks myths of the Middle Ages in his brilliant book The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution. Without the medieval scholars, there would be no modern science. Discover the Dark Ages and their inventions, research methods, and what conclusions they actually made about the shape of the world.

Evolutionary Perspectives on Death

The latest volume in this multidisciplinary series on key topics in evolutionary studies, Evolutionary Perspectives on Death provides an evolutionary analysis of mortality and the consideration of death. Bringing together noted experts from a variety of fields, the books emanate from conferences held at Oakland University, and are dedicated to providing wide ranging and occasionally provocative views of human evolution. The volume on death covers topics from biology, anthropology, psychology, sociology and philosophy, with contributors addressing how evolution informs the process of comprehending, grieving, depicting, celebrating, and accepting death. Among the topics covered: Evolutionary perspectives on the loss of a twin Nonhuman primate responses to death Death in literature Witnessing and representing the death of pets The role of human decomposition facilities in shaping American perspectives on death This insightful volume showcases groundbreaking empirical and theoretical research addressing death and mortality from an evolutionary perspective,
demonstrating the intellectual value of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding psychological processes and behavior. Chapter 6 of this book is available open access under a CC BY 4.0 license at link.springer.com.

Gestalt Therapy - Roots and Branches - Collected Papers

There has been a renewed interest in the last ten years in the underpinnings - theoretical, philosophical, and historical - of the Gestalt approach. Often in the past, these have been lost in oversimplified versions of the therapy. The author's aim in his writings has been to provide a full and coherent account of Gestalt theory, and to emphasise our links to our therapeutic and philosophical heritage, particularly psychoanalysis and existentialism. His theme is a field-relational theory of self as the centrepiece of the approach, and how this has been placed within a structure that is still recognisably psychoanalytic. In this approach, self is understood as meaningful only in relation to what is taken as other, and how that other is contacted. The formation of a relatively coherent self-concept is a task, not a given, and can be problematic as well as helpful (when it no longer supports the person's life-situation).

The Human Predicament - Life Without Illusions

Are human lives ultimately meaningless? Is our inevitable death bad? Would immortality be better? Should we hasten our deaths by taking our own lives in acts of suicide? Many people ask these big questions and many are plagued by them. Surprisingly few analytic philosophers have spoken to these important questions. When they have engaged the big existential questions they have tended, like more popular writers, to offer comforting, optimistic answers. The Human Predicament offers a less sanguine assessment. David Benatar invites readers to take a clear-eyed view of our situation, defending a substantial, but not unmitigated, pessimism about human life. Benatar argues that while our lives can have some meaning, cosmically speaking we are ultimately the insignificant beings that we often fear we are. A candid appraisal reveals that the quality of life, although less bad for some people than for others, leaves much to be desired in even the best cases. But death, David Benatar argues, is hardly the solution. Our mortality exacerbates rather than mitigates our cosmic meaninglessness. It can release us from suffering but even when it does it imposes another cost - annihilation. This unfortunate state of affairs has nuanced implications for how we should think about immortality, about suicide, and about the aspects of life in which we can and do find deeper meaning. Engaging profound existential questions with analytic rigor and clarity, The Human Predicament is clear eyed, unsentimental, and deeply provocative to some of our most cherished beliefs.

COVID-19 in Manitoba - Public Policy Responses to the First Wave

On 12 March 2020 Manitoba confirmed its first case of COVID-19. One week later, a province-wide state of emergency was declared, ushering in a new sense of urgency and rarely used government powers to protect Manitobans from the devastating global reach of the novel coronavirus. The wide-ranging impacts of the pandemic have touched every facet of Manitoba society and provincial responsibility, including health, economic development, social services, and government operations. COVID-19 has challenged the conventional policy-making
process—complicating agenda setting and policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation—while governments have been under pressure to make swift decisions in life-and-death matters. New programs must address urgent and shifting health and economic realities, but also anticipate future waves of COVID-19 and potentially significant repercussions for future governments. "COVID-19 in Manitoba: Public Policy Responses to the First Wave" seeks to understand how Manitoba fared during the first months of the pandemic, with twenty-seven chapters that address key aspects of the pandemic and discuss how government policy can help lay the foundation for resiliency in the midst a continuing public-health crisis. This open-access volume is an essential resource for citizens and policy-makers alike, as it identifies policy gaps and successes of Manitoba’s early COVID response and points to strategies to prepare for future waves of the pandemic.

The Code - Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America

One of New York Magazine's best books on Silicon Valley! The true, behind-the-scenes history of the people who built Silicon Valley and shaped Big Tech in America Long before Margaret O'Mara became one of our most consequential historians of the American-led digital revolution, she worked in the White House of Bill Clinton and Al Gore in the earliest days of the commercial Internet. There she saw firsthand how deeply intertwined Silicon Valley was with the federal government--and always had been--and how shallow the common understanding of the secrets of the Valley’s success actually was. Now, after almost five years of pioneering research, O'Mara has produced the definitive history of Silicon Valley for our time, the story of mavericks and visionaries, but also of powerful institutions creating the framework for innovation, from the Pentagon to Stanford University. It is also a story of a community that started off remarkably homogeneous and tight-knit and stayed that way, and whose belief in its own mythology has deepened into a collective hubris that has led to astonishing triumphs as well as devastating second-order effects. Deploying a wonderfully rich and diverse cast of protagonists, from the justly famous to the unjustly obscure, across four generations of explosive growth in the Valley, from the forties to the present, O'Mara has wrestled one of the most fateful developments in modern American history into magnificent narrative form. She is on the ground with all of the key tech companies, chronicling the evolution in their offerings through each successive era, and she has a profound fingertip feel for the politics of the sector and its relation to the larger cultural narrative about tech as it has evolved over the years. Perhaps most impressive, O'Mara has penetrated the inner kingdom of tech venture capital firms, the insular and still remarkably old-boy world that became the cockpit of American capitalism and the crucible for bringing technological innovation to market, or not. The transformation of big tech into the engine room of the American economy and the nexus of so many of our hopes and dreams--and, increasingly, our nightmares--can be understood, in Margaret O'Mara's masterful hands, as the story of one California valley. As her majestic history makes clear, its fate is the fate of us all.