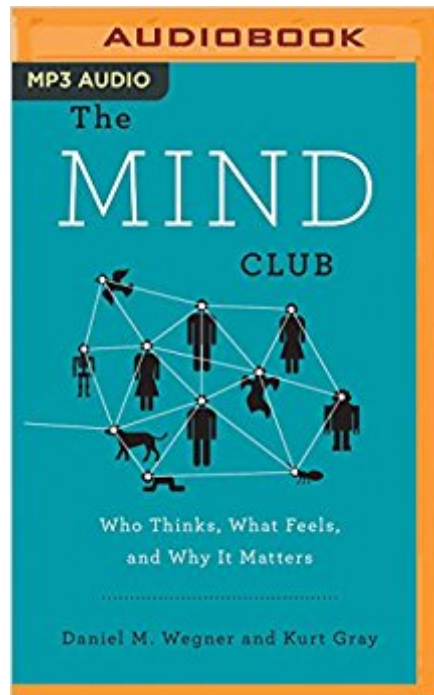




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The Mind Club: Who Thinks, What Feels, And Why It Matters



Synopsis

From dogs to gods, dive into the science of mysterious minds—including your own. Nothing seems more real than the minds of other people. When you consider what your boss is thinking or whether your spouse is happy, you are admitting them into the "mind club". It's easy to assume other humans can think and feel, but what about a cow, a computer, a corporation? What kinds of minds do they have? Daniel M. Wegner and Kurt Gray are award-winning psychologists who have discovered that minds—while incredibly important—are a matter of perception. Their research opens a trove of new findings, with insights into human behavior that are fascinating, frightening, and funny. The Mind Club explains why we love some animals and eat others, why people debate the existence of God so intensely, how good people can be so cruel, and why robots make such poor lovers. By investigating the mind perception of extraordinary targets—animals, machines, comatose people, God—Wegner and Gray explain what it means to have a mind and why it matters so much. Fusing cutting-edge research and personal anecdotes, The Mind Club explores the moral dimensions of mind perception with wit and compassion, revealing the surprisingly simple basis for what compels us to love and hate, to harm and to protect.

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Customer Reviews

"If we could only mind read, we would know how our first date or job interview really went. In reality, we understand little about what goes on in the minds of others, even those we think we know best. According to psychologists Wegner and Gray, 'you can never be certain that other minds

even "exist." The authors explore these uncertainties, weaving together personal anecdotes and research on human behavior and perception to try to unravel the mysteries of the mind.

•Scientific American "Daniel Wegner was among the world's cleverest, wittiest, and most beloved social psychologists. The Mind Club is genuinely novel, with brilliantly conceived studies on some of the deepest issues the mind of man can ponder."

•Steven Pinker, author of The Stuff of Thought and How the Mind Works "Reading The Mind Club will take your thoughts about minds to places you never imagined [Wegner and Gray] have created a true page-turner: witty, quirky and insightful."

•New Scientist "A wonderful and strange book; science-fiction thought experiments ('robot versus baby') informed by social psychology experiments of fascinating design, part ethics, philosophy, neuroscience... authentically mind-boggling. And fun!"

•Boing Boing "A layman's guide to understanding how humans come to understand the minds of others... where and why people draw the line between perceiving another (or an inanimate object) as having a mind or not."

•Brian Resnick, Vox "Daniel Wegner's final book is a masterpiece made ever more precious by his untimely death. Thankfully, his brilliance and wit live on in these pages, and in his collaborator and protégé, Kurt Gray, who presents their ideas with clarity, depth, and style. The Mind Club is not to be missed."

•Daniel Gilbert, author of Stumbling on Happiness "One of psychology's greatest and one of its best young minds who better to remind us to mind minds."

•Michael Norton, Harvard Business School Professor and coauthor of Happy Money: The Science of Happier Spending "A pleasure for anyone comfortable with the thought that knowing others' minds will improve our own."

•Kirkus "Daniel Wegner was one of psychology's most creative minds, and Kurt Gray was one of his most creative collaborators. The Mind Club describes their biggest idea together using thought-provoking examples, clever writing, and brilliant experiments. Essential reading for anyone who owns a mind and wants to know how to use it!"

•Nicholas Epley, Professor of Behavioral Science, University of Chicago Booth School of Business and author of Mindwise "Did he intend to cause harm? Did she feel pain and suffer? When it comes to morality, abortion, animal rights, legal culpability many of the deepest questions boil down to: Does he or she (or even it) have a properly working mind? In lucid prose, Wegner and Gray explore the profound nature and implications of this question one that is becoming all the more complex as lines of awareness and intent blur in a world where technology is rapidly advancing."

•David DeSteno, author of Out of Character "An engaging

ride through the hidden science of the human mind. If this book doesn't change the way you see the world, and yourself, nothing will.

•Jonah Berger, Wharton Professor and Bestselling Author of Contagious and Invisible Influence

“The world lost an intellectual giant when Daniel Wegner passed. Lucky for us, his legendary wit and conversation-stoking discoveries live on in *The Mind Club*, and indeed in the career and voice of Kurt Gray, one of Daniel's last doctoral students. *The Mind Club* draws you in with fun facts that hold grave implications for the meaning of life, loss, and morality.

•Barbara Fredrickson, author of Positivity and Love 2.0

“Science writing at its best: informative, entertaining, and thought-provoking. Who knew that the debate over whether an embryo is human can be explained by the same processes that have you believing your car has it in for you? Gray is a gifted young scientist who shares his insights in an easy, delightfully snarky way. But the best thing about *The Mind Club* is that it gives us one more chance to perceive Wegner's mind, in all its glorious wit and intelligence; for those of us who knew him, this is a gift, and for those who didn't, it's an opportunity not to be missed.

•Lisa Feldman Barrett, Ph.D., Director of the Interdisciplinary Science Laboratory and University Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Northeastern University and author of *How Emotions Are Made*

From the Hardcover edition. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Daniel M. Wegner was the John Lindsley Professor of Psychology in Memory of William James at Harvard University, and recipient of the 2011 Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award of the American Psychological Association, the 2011 William James Fellow Award of the Association for Psychological Science, and the 2011 Distinguished Scientist Award of the Experimental Social Psychology. He is the author of *The Illusion of Conscious Will*, among other books. He passed away in July 2013. Kurt Gray is an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where he leads the Mind Perception and Morality Lab. He received his BSc from the University of Waterloo and his Ph.D. in social psychology from Harvard University. A recipient of the Janet Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Research from the Association for Psychological Science, he lives in Chapel Hill. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

A fun-to-read, easy-to-understand introduction to mind perception, morality, and why lifelike robots are not to be trusted. Recommended to anyone with an interest in psychology, particularly those wanting to explore how our impressions and preconceptions of people affect our everyday lives. Great read!

Outstanding! Serious books are often difficult to slog through, while entertaining books are often vacuous. *The Mind Club* is both serious and seriously entertaining! It addresses state of the art research on the psychology of mind perception and morality--I should know, I just got my Ph.D. and do research in this field. And it does so in a fun and lighthearted way characteristic of Wegner's and Gray's writings. Enjoy!

This is a lucid, funny, and insightful book that makes the psychology of moral judgment far less of a muddle. It is a fitting culmination of Daniel Wegner's remarkable career. One of the most creative minds the field of psychology has ever seen. (I never had the pleasure of meeting him.) The book pulls together much of Wegner's work and ends, fittingly, with a discussion of the self and the illusion of free will. It is also very fortunate that Wegner had a wonderful colleague and coauthor in Kurt Gray, who could see this project through to the end. Highly recommended.

It's something most of us haven't thought much about: who has a mind? But as Wegner and Gray reveal, this question is incredibly important to society and our daily lives. It determines how we make our moral judgments and dictates our position on issues like abortion, vegetarianism, religion, and even the acceptability of sex dolls. Each chapter (other than the introduction) is about a different "cryptomind," including the animal, the machine, the patient, the silent (like vegetative patients, autistic children), the enemy, the group, the dead, God, and the self. Each chapter builds off the last, but is kind of self-contained, discussing the philosophical, moral and psychological questions surrounding each mind. The book is scientific but accessible, it offers serious observations and is also seriously funny. Reading it will instantly make you the most interesting person at a cocktail party. *The Mind Club* is wide-ranging. The chapters can seem to wander a little far, but such wanderings help keep the book fresh. Many books have only enough new ideas for the first chapter, but this is just packed with insights and observations. It's definitely a little different than the standard psychology book, but different can be good. I, for one, am happy that I joined *The Mind Club*.

The Mind Club is written by the late Dan Wegner, a legend in the field of Social Psychology, and one of his last students, Kurt Gray, himself a young star in the same field. Reading *The Mind Club* felt like sitting in on their conversations at Harvard, listening to their theories and experiments. At moments the book can be funny, touching, informational and insightful. It's one of my favorite

psychology books, both entertaining and educational.

Fun and well-researched read. For those who enjoy Malcolm Gladwell and Freakonomics types of books, this will be right up your alley. I enjoyed the irreverent writing style, but don't be fooled by the jokes. It's filled with interesting experiments and some fundamental surprises that may alter the way you view both yourself and the world around you.

This book should be required reading in all religious studies classes as well as psychology classes. You will see the world differently after reading this book; it is a life-changer. You may have to read it twice though because there was so much depth involved that you may want to experience it again. One of the best books I've ever read!

The Mind Club is the best book by far I have ever read on the problem of Other Minds. The authors set up their easy to understand framework in the first chapter and the rest of the book just follows. I love their approach. I devoured the book. The way I perceive the issues around Other Minds is forever changed.

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