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# Evil Genes

## THE BOOK

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| **Author** | Barbara Oakley |
| **Published** | October 1, 2007 |
| **Format** | Hardcover |
| **Pages** | 459 |
| **ISBN-10** | 159102580X |
| **ISBN-13** | 978-1591025801 |
| **Price** | $28.95 |

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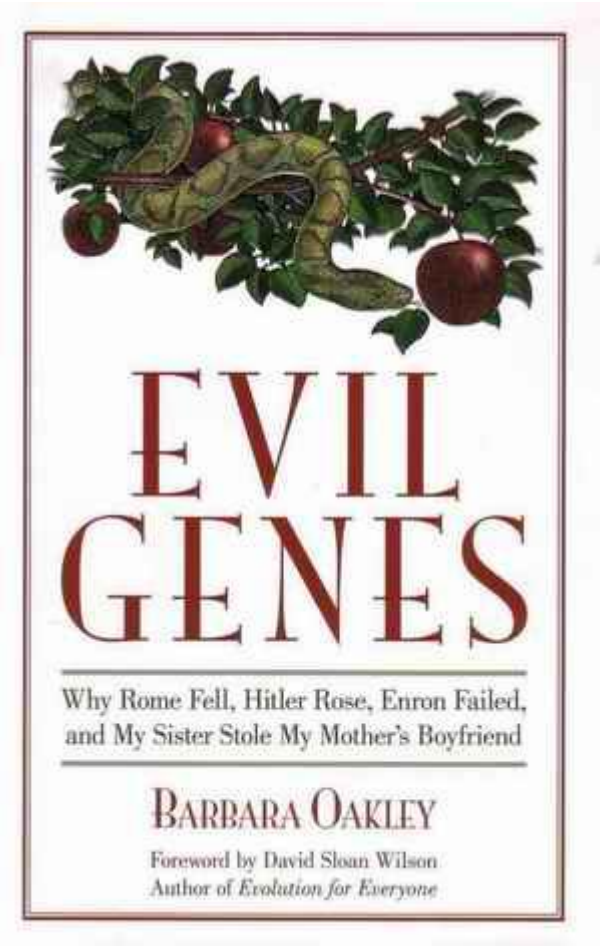
> *...A GENETIC BASIS FOR EVIL? ...I was quite impressed by the book, and would like to keep the book in my library for ever. Very good thought provoking read...*

**Editor's recommendation** — this book carries the editor's "must buy" recommendation.

Evil Genes: Why Rome Fell, Hitler Rose, Enron Failed and My Sister Stole My Mother's Boyfriend *by* Barbara Oakley. Hardcover, 8.9 x 5.9 x 1.3".
Prometheus Books, 59 John Glenn Drive, Amherst, New York 14228-2197, USA. or . Publication Date: October 1, 2007. 459 pages, Category: Psychology, Popular Science, History, Business, ISBN-10: 159102580X; ISBN-13: 978-1591025801. Price $28.95

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As a long standing book reviewer, I have got used to coming across highly unusual books, but every once in a while, I come across such a highly unusual book, that it immediately catches my attention, and I get hooked on to it. I must confess though, that this does not happen very frequently. It happened last week - after a long time - when I came across Barbara Oakley's *Evil Genes* .

The title of the book rhymes very well with the well-known and hugely successful "*The Selfish Gene*" by Richard Dawkins. "*The Selfish Gene*" presents a gene-centered view of evolution, and it was very natural for me to assume that the book under review would somehow give me the gene-centered view of evil, or how evil could be interpreted in genetic terms. The subtitle of the book was quite intriguing too, and I started to read the book mainly to see what indeed was the connection between the fall of Rome, the rise of Hitler and failure of Enron (I was not aware of Oakley's sister, so obviously I was not aware of how and why she stole her mother's boyfriend). As I turned the pages, I realized the book was a systematic study of evil from a multidisciplinary point of view - social, psychological, medical and genetic. Oakley, in her thesis, attempts to convey to us that the evil has a genetic foundation. And to support her theory, she cites several authentic scientific studies.

> *...After initially explaining the basics of DNA for the uninitiated, the author takes us on a marvelous journey of what she calls "Machiavellian genes". We are told about serotonin, its fifteen kind of receptors, how they work in a Rube Goldberg style chain of events and so on...*

As a hard core medical man, my main aim was to dig out the medical basis behind evil. She unravels this in chapter 3 entitled "Evil Genes". I eagerly turned to this chapter. After initially explaining the basics of DNA for the uninitiated, the author takes us on a marvelous journey of

what she calls "Machiavellian genes". We are told about serotonin, its fifteen kind of receptors, how they work in a Rube Goldberg style chain of events and so on. Along the way, I came across terms like imaging genetics, which even we in the medical field have come to know only recently.

Overall Oakley is able to present a convincing proof of her theory that "evil resides in genes". This may have dangerous legal repercussions though. Because if a smart lawyer reads her book, he may be able to convince a jury in a criminal case, that his client is in fact only a slave of his genes, and passing a sentence on him may be cruel and perhaps unjust.

**Click here to read Barbara's interview with the Editor in chief of this journal**



Oakley does pose this question to all of us among a total of 15 points "for pondering" at the end of her book. This is a section which alone is worth the price of the book.

I was quite impressed by the book, and would like to keep the book in my library for ever. Very good thought provoking read.

Email Barbara Oakley, the author of this book by clicking here

Those willing to know more about this book or the author may want to click here or here

View this book on Amazon

*-Editor-in-Chief*