

# [PDF] The Red Queen: Sex And The Evolution Of Human Nature (Penguin Press Science)

**Matt Ridley - pdf download free book**

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## **Books Details:**

Title: The Red Queen: Sex and the Ev

Author: Matt Ridley

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## **Description:**

**From Publishers Weekly** Why do we have sex? One of the main biological reasons, contends Ridley, is to combat disease. By constantly combining and recombining genes every generation, people "keep their genes one step ahead of their parasites," thereby strengthening resistance to bacteria and viruses that cause deadly diseases or epidemics. Called the "Red Queen Theory" by biologists after the chess piece in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* which runs but stays in the same place, this hypothesis is just one of the controversial ideas put forth in this witty, elegantly written inquiry. Ridley, a London-based science writer and a former editor of the *Economist*, argues that men are polygamous for the obvious reason that whichever gender has to spend the most time and energy creating and rearing offspring tends to avoid extra mating. Women, though far less

interested in multiple partners, will commit adultery if stuck with a mediocre mate. In Ridley's not wholly convincing conclusion, even human intellect is chalked up to sex: virtuosity, individuality, inventiveness and related traits are what make people sexually attractive. Photos. BOMC and QPB alternates.

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**From Library Journal** This is a fascinating book filled with lucid prose and seductive reasoning. Freelance science writer Ridley reaches into the literature of genetics; molecular, theoretical and evolutionary biology; ecology; sociology; and anthropology to weave an extraordinary tale of the evolution of human nature, beginning with the evolution of sex. Using Lewis Carroll's Red Queen (who runs as fast as she can to stay in the same place) as a metaphor for evolution, Ridley shows how sex was the result of an evolutionary arms race between hosts and their disease-causing parasites. Ridley covers so much ground that transitions may be abrupt or unclear, particularly in the last two chapters; also, his review of human homosexuality is thin. His occasionally pompous style (including his immediate dismissal of those who do not believe in evolution) may offend some readers. However, Ridley clearly explains many complex and remarkable concepts for a wide audience. Highly recommended.

- *Constance Rinaldo, Dartmouth Coll., Hanover, N.H.*

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