

Library Journal

Reviewed on [JANUARY 1, 2016](#) | [Science and Technology](#)

Henrich (human evolutionary biology, Harvard Univ.; coauthor, *Why Humans Cooperate*) posits a unique approach to understanding human behavior, not in purely evolutionary terms, but as a process of cultural evolution. His book explores culture-gene coevolution—a snowball effect that occurs when a species, such as humans, intertwines cultural adaptations with evolutionary ones. Our ability to evolve as a cultural species provided such crucial artifacts as writing, and once individuals with a propensity for cultural imitation and transmission existed, natural selection began favoring these individuals over others. Henrich argues that no other species on Earth has been able to achieve culture-gene coevolution, a condition that propels humanity forward to this day. **VERDICT** Recommended for readers of general social science and especially those with an interest in evolutionary aspects of cultural transmission.—**JIM HAHN, UNIV. LIB., UNIV. OF ILLINOIS, URBANA**