



# The World in Six Songs: How the Musical Brain Created Human Nature

By Daniel J. Levitin

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**The World in Six Songs: How the Musical Brain Created Human Nature** By Daniel J. Levitin

**The author of the *New York Times* bestseller *This Is Your Brain on Music* reveals music's role in the evolution of human culture in this thought-provoking book that "will leave you awestruck" (*The New York Times*).**

Daniel J. Levitin's astounding debut bestseller, *This Is Your Brain on Music*, enthralled and delighted readers as it transformed our understanding of how music gets in our heads and stays there. Now in his second *New York Times* bestseller, his genius for combining science and art reveals how music shaped humanity across cultures and throughout history.

Here he identifies six fundamental song functions or types—friendship, joy, comfort, religion, knowledge, and love—then shows how each in its own way has enabled the social bonding necessary for human culture and society to evolve. He shows, in effect, how these “six songs” work in our brains to preserve the emotional history of our lives and species.

Dr. Levitin combines cutting-edge scientific research from his music cognition lab at McGill University and work in an array of related fields; his own sometimes hilarious experiences in the music business; and illuminating interviews with musicians such as Sting and David Byrne, as well as conductors, anthropologists, and evolutionary biologists. *The World in Six Songs* is, ultimately, a revolution in our understanding of how human nature evolved—right up to the iPod.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Charles Darwin meets the Beatles in this attempt to blend neuroscience and evolutionary biology to explain why music is such a powerful force. In this rewarding though often repetitious study by bestselling author Levitin (*This Is Your Brain on Music*), a rock musician turned neuroscientist, argues that music is a core element of human identity, paving the way for language, cooperative work projects and the recording of our lives and history. Through his studies, Levitin has identified six kinds of songs that help us achieve these goals: songs of friendship, joy, comfort, knowledge, religion and love. He cites lyrics ranging from the songs of Johnny Cash to work songs, which, he says, promote feelings of togetherness. According to Levitin, evolution may have selected individuals who were able to use nonviolent means like dance and music to settle disputes. Songs also serve as memory-aids, as records of our lives and legends. Some may find Levitin's evolutionary explanations reductionist, but he lightens the science with personal anecdotes and chats with Sting and others, offering an intriguing explanation for the power of music in our lives as individuals and as a society. (Aug.)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Fans that have read *This Is Your Brain on Music* are in for another treat; newcomers to Levitin will still find much to enjoy in this consideration of music and human civilization. Levitin writes with both knowledge of neuroscience and evolutionary biology and a deep appreciation for the musician's craft—one that will resound loudly with musicophiles. The *New York Times Book Review*, however, questioned some of Levitin's "unprovable" scientific claims, and others faulted him for taking a reductionist view of evolution, shamelessly namedropping, cherry-picking songs from a select era, and failing to edit a verbose tome. Despite such flaws, most readers will find something to connect with in the book—even if it's just one song. Copyright 2008 Bookmarks Publishing LLC

Review

"A must-read...A literary, poetic, scientific, and musical treat."—*Seattle Times*

"Masterful...Eminently enjoyable."—*Los Angeles Times*

"Why can a song make you cry in a matter of seconds? *Six Songs* is the only book that explains why."—Bobby McFerrin, ten-time Grammy Award-winning artist ("Don't Worry, Be Happy")

"A fantastic ride."—*New Scientist*

"Leading researchers in music cognition are already singing its praises."—*Evolutionary Psychology*

"Exquisitely well-written and easy to read, serving up a great deal of scientific information in a gentle way for those of us who are—or just think we are—a bit science-phobic."—Huffington Post

"Fascinating. Provides a biological explanation for why we might tap our feet or bob our heads in time with a favorite song, how singing might soothe a baby, and how music emboldens soldiers or athletes preparing for conflict."—Associated Press

“An exemplary mix of scientist and artist, student and teacher, performer and listener.”—*Library Journal* (starred review)

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Beverly Dewitt:**

This book untitled *The World in Six Songs: How the Musical Brain Created Human Nature* to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, this is because when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this specific book in the book retailer or you can order it by means of online. The publisher on this book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, because you can read this book in your Mobile phone. So there is no reason to you to past this reserve from your list.

#### **Karen Wells:**

Why? Because this *The World in Six Songs: How the Musical Brain Created Human Nature* is an unordinary book that the inside of the guide waiting for you to snap this but latter it will jolt you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such amazing way makes the content inside easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

#### **Michael Patterson:**

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#### **Clara Radtke:**

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