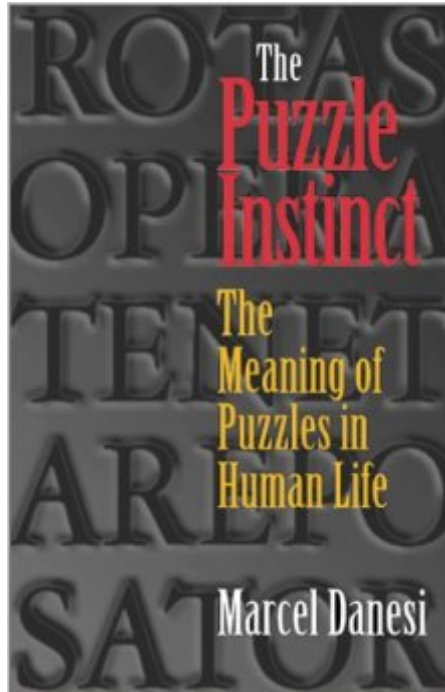


The book was found

The Puzzle Instinct: The Meaning Of Puzzles In Human Life



Synopsis

One of the most famous anagrams of all time was constructed in the Middle Ages. The unknown author contrived it as a Latin dialogue between Pilate and Jesus. Jesus's answer to Pilate's question "What is truth" is phrased as an ingenious anagram of the letters of that very question: Pilate: Quid est veritas? ("What is truth?") Jesus: Est vir qui adest. ("It is the man before you.") The origin of anagrams is shrouded in mystery. One thing is clear, however—in the ancient world, they were thought to contain hidden messages from the gods. Legend has it that even Alexander the Great (356–323 b.c.) believed in their prophetic power. —from Chapter Two

The most obvious explanation for the popularity of puzzles is that they provide a form of constructive entertainment. But in *The Puzzle Instinct* Marcel Danesi contends that the fascination with puzzles throughout the ages suggests something much more profound. Puzzles serve a deeply embedded need in people to make sense of things. Emerging at the same time in human history as myth, magic, and the occult arts, the puzzle instinct, he claims, led to discoveries in mathematics and science, as well as revolutions in philosophical thought. Puzzles fill an existential void by providing "small-scale experiences of the large-scale questions that Life poses. The puzzle instinct is, arguably, as intrinsic to human nature as is humor, language, art, music, and all the other creative faculties that distinguish humanity from all other species."

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Indiana University Press; First Edition edition (June 19, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0253340942

ISBN-13: 978-0253340948

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,793,639 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 in Books > Law > Health & Medical Law > Malpractice #84 in Books > Law > Business > Insurance Law #436 in Books > Law > Health & Medical Law > Medical Law & Legislation

Customer Reviews

Twenty-five years ago, there was a boom in sales of a fist-sized ingenious contraption of plastic, a fractured cube of multi-colored sides, the pieces of which could be twisted so that all the six faces

had different colors (easy) or back to the one configuration where each face had only its own color (hard). The ubiquitous Rubik's Cube came and went (well, it is a puzzle classic in its simplicity; you can still buy it, but the fad is gone), but there will be some other puzzle fad not long from now. The urge to figure out puzzles seems to be as ingrained in human personality as the urge to make language or art. In *The Puzzle Instinct: The Meaning of Puzzles in Human Life* (Indiana University Press), Marcel Danesi, a professor of semiotics and anthropology, tries to figure out the meta-puzzle: life has lots of mysteries and complications. Why should we want to manufacture more? Danesi's book turns out to be a spirited review of puzzle history, and the history is a long one. The *Ahmes Papyrus*, nearly four thousand years old, is one of the earliest surviving documents of civilization anywhere, and is essentially a series of mathematical puzzles. It is significant that its title is *Directions for Attaining Knowledge of All Dark Things*. Charlemagne, the founder of the Holy Roman Empire, had a puzzle-maker on staff, and King Louis XIII of France had a Royal Anagrammatist. A description of Rubik's Cube is included, of course, as well as many other puzzle fads. The popularity of crossword puzzles is undimmed since they were introduced in the *New York World* in 1913; the original one is reproduced here. Crosswords became an overnight sensation, and many people still have to do their crossword puzzle every day.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The Puzzle Instinct: The Meaning of Puzzles in Human Life
The Best Large Print Word Search
Puzzle Book: A Collection of 50 Themed Word Search Puzzles; Great for Adults and for Kids! (The Best Large Print Word Search Puzzle Books) (Volume 1)
The Homing Instinct: Meaning and Mystery in Animal Migration
The New York Times Monday Through Friday Easy to Tough
Crossword Puzzles: 50 Puzzles from the Pages of The New York Times (New York Times Crossword Puzzles)
The Consuming Instinct: What Juicy Burgers, Ferraris, Pornography, and Gift Giving Reveal About Human Nature
Simon and Schuster Super Crossword Puzzle Book #13: The Biggest and the Best (Simon and Schuster's Super Crossword Puzzle Books)
New York Times Crossword Puzzle Dictionary (2nd ed) (Puzzle Reference)
The Must Have 2016 Sudoku Puzzle Book: 366 puzzle daily sudoku book for the leap year. A challenge for every day of the year. 366 Sudoku Games - 5 levels of difficulty (easy to hard)
Simon & Schuster Mega Crossword Puzzle Book #1 (Mega Crossword Puzzle Books)
Simon & Schuster Mega Crossword Puzzle Book #4 (Simon & Schuster Mega Crossword Puzzle Books)
Large Print Word Search Puzzle Book (Word Search Puzzle Books For Adults) (Volume 1)
Spanish-English Word Puzzle Book: 14 Fun Spanish and English Word Games (Bilingual Word Puzzle Books) (Spanish Edition)
Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self-Reliant, and Better

Students for Life Basic Instinct Formula - How To Overcome Sexual Performance Anxiety And Have A Mind-Blowing Sex Life Just Like It Was Designed By Nature Evolutionology: The Power Of Knowing How People Work: Your Life, Instinct, & Emotional Intelligence (A Practical Guide) New Wood Puzzle Designs: A Guide to the Construction of Both New and Historic Puzzles Ultimate Mind Games: With Over 400 Puzzles (Puzzle Books) The New York Times Easy Crossword Puzzle Omnibus Volume 12: 200 Solvable Puzzles from the Pages of The New York Times The New York Times Tuesday Crossword Puzzle Omnibus: 200 Easy Puzzles from the Pages of The New York Times The New York Times Easy Crossword Puzzle Omnibus Volume 11: 200 Solvable Puzzles from the Pages of The New York Times

[Dmca](#)