

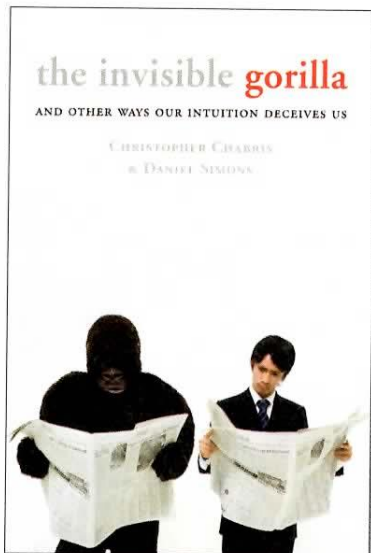


British Airways Inflight Magazine 'Business Life' Aug 2010

Books

REVIEWS The truth about "everyday illusions", plus the search for happiness, finding a job and "ism" mania

BOOK OF THE MONTH



The Invisible Gorilla, by Christopher Chabris & Daniel Simons £16.99 HARPERCOLLINS

You may have seen a video of the invisible gorilla experiment, which shows two teams of basketball players passing a ball around. At the beginning of the 60-second film, you're asked to count how many times the ball is passed.

At around the midway point, as the action continues, a woman in a gorilla suit walks into shot, beats her chest, and walks off again. The remarkable thing is that around half the people who watch the video have no memory of seeing the gorilla.

It was the authors of this book, both American psychology professors, who devised that experiment more than a decade ago. Their aim was to show that our attention is not nearly as reliable as we may imagine, and in this brilliantly

thought-provoking book they expand their scope to look at a whole raft of "everyday illusions".

These include our reliance on human memory, which they demonstrate is at best unreliable and at worst completely fictitious, and our belief that we know far more than we actually do.

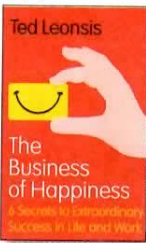
Perhaps the most striking chapter deals with the "illusion of confidence". Confidence is a human trait, and some of us have more of it than others. Yet we are more likely to trust someone and follow them simply because they are confident. The implications, in business, politics and just about every area, are huge. This really is a book that everyone should read.

10/10

The Business of Happiness, by Ted Leonsis £10.99 PIATKUS

At the age of 28, Ted Leonsis was already worth \$60m after selling his new media company. Then he had a near-death experience on a flight to Atlanta and realised that money hadn't made him happy. In this book he tells the story of his subsequent successful career and his quest to find happiness. His belief is that by following six simple steps, we can all be happy if we want to be. He also believes that happiness will lead to success in business, rather than vice versa.

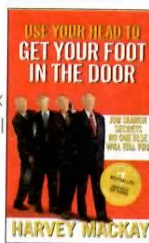
8/10



Use Your Head To Get Your Foot In The Door, by Harvey Mackay £11.99 PIATKUS

Mackay is a best-selling business author whose previous books include one called *Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive*. So he's clearly not a master of the snappy title, but he does have plenty of advice to offer on how to get (and keep) the job you really want. And he's also remarkably confident that his approach will work - at the end of the book he offers readers their money back if they've applied his principles for six months and still haven't found a job.

7/10



The Economist Book of Isms, by John Andrews £9.99 PROFILE BOOKS

What sounds like it could be a rather dull book turns out to be a little gem. Andrews offers a guide to more than 400 different "isms", which means he covers all the obvious ones but also has room for some beautifully obscure examples. Hence you'll find Montanism (a heretical Christian movement) rubbing shoulders with Bushism (making foot-in-mouth remarks) and a host of other exotic examples, including Ignosticism, Pastafarianism and Presentism. Is it an essential read? No, not really. Is it great fun? Yes, absolutely.

8/10



the top five...

...best-selling DVDs of the last decade in the UK

- 1 Mamma Mia!**
The Abba-fest takes top spot
- 2 The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King**
Final episode of the Tolkien trilogy
- 3 The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers**
See above. Second episode
- 4 Planet Earth**
David Attenborough's wildlife series
- 5 The Dark Knight**
The most recent Batman flick

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