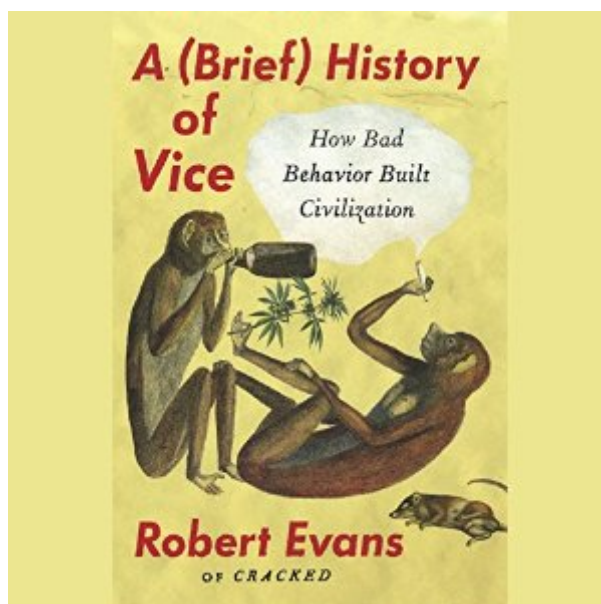


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A Brief History Of Vice: How Bad Behavior Built Civilization



Synopsis

History has never been more fun - or more intoxicating. Guns, germs, and steel might have transformed us from hunter-gatherers into modern man, but booze, sex, trash talk, and tripping built our civilization. Cracked editor Robert Evans brings his signature dogged research and lively insight to uncover the many and magnificent ways vice has influenced history, from the prostitute-turned-empress who scored a major victory for women's rights to the beer that helped create - and destroy - South America's first empire. And Evans goes deeper than simply writing about ancient debauchery; he recreates some of history's most enjoyable (and most painful) vices and includes guides so you can follow along at home. You'll learn how to: Trip like a Greek philosopher Rave like your Stone Age ancestors Get drunk like a Sumerian Smoke a nose pipe like a pre-Columbian Native American A celebration of the brave, drunken pioneers who built our civilization one seemingly bad decision at a time, *A Brief History of Vice* explores a side of the past that mainstream history books prefer to hide.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours and 42 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Penguin Audio

Audible.com Release Date: August 9, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01II6OQNY

Best Sellers Rank: #24 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Puzzles & Games > Trivia #51 in Books > History > World > Civilization & Culture #58 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Philosophy

Customer Reviews

I own this book in paperback AND on kindle (preordered it as soon as I could!) and I really don't have enough room to list all of the things that make this 110% worth your time and money, but I'll do my best. Firstly, this is the most beautifully well-researched book I have ever read in my life. As a researcher, myself, I was deeply inspired by that alone. Robert didn't just read a bunch of papers; he left the country and went into Slovenia, Serbia, and other fascinating places to track down the information he needed from the locals there. He personally interviewed the experts of each field

discussed. He tested every single thing he talks about on himself (and sometimes friends), providing a step-by-step guide complete with photographs and detailed conclusions that leave absolutely no questions unanswered. His amazing, literally laugh-out-loud-worthy sense of humor aside, what makes him such a fantastic writer is his absolute dedication to the pursuit of solid answers, leaving no stone unturned, no source uninvestigated, no theory untested. There are no vague assumptions in this book, no suppositions unsupported by primary sourcing--in short, not an ounce of laziness. He is downright dogged in the acquisition of knowledge, and his ability to think of the right questions and follow through with the right answers will certainly win him a Pulitzer one day (I've had fifty bucks riding on that since the first time I read one of his articles). The man is 27 years old, and already he has the investigative skills of a veteran reporter. You can trust that everything he writes about is absolutely true, to the best of not only his knowledge, but the knowledge of the best minds in the ever-shifting businesses of vice and "vice.

Are you looking for a funny, somewhat decently researched book about sex and drugs and trash talking, with some trivia that will impress your friends and step by step guides to getting like people in ancient times? If that is what you seek, then this is the book for you. In contrast to the impression one might get from the title, there is, admittedly with a few exceptions, little information on how the vices explored in the book have formed civilization. Sure, Churchill and Stalin, who couldn't stand each other, became BFFs after getting drunk together and then they planned their invasion of their common enemy. I'll also grant that coffee is good for alertness which I suppose maybe results in a better civilization, but the author doesn't tell us how BDSM, getting high from mushrooms, or salamander brandy has helped form our society. This is not something that bothered me when I read the book, though. But if you expect to gain deep lessons about how you can use drugs and be a jerk and at the same time build a better society, then you might end up disappointed. Much of the charm of this book, and it is a very charming book, comes from the willingness of Robert Evans to expose himself, or his friends and acquaintances, to ancient drug recipes and "cures" for various ailments. For instance, he tries to make beer by following the oldest known beer recipe (not a hit), he tries communal pot smoking (a moderate hit), and he tries to drink his own waste products to help self-inflicted, cheese induced, constipation (could be judged either way depending on your criteria). Evans keeps reassuring the reader that he did not do certain things and did not try certain drugs because "that would have been a felony" - an argument that makes me a little suspicious.

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