Contents

Introduction: An Unnatural History of Humanity	I
Human nature and our unnatural history	3
A new science of the social	8
The three biases	13
PART ONE: NATURE EVOLVED	
1. Copycat Culture	19
The ritual animal	22
Ritual is all in the mind	25
The origins of overimitation	29
The mechanics of conformism	33
2. Wild Religion	
Missionaries, spirits, and ancestors	43
Religion in the wild	48
The intuitive foundations of wild religion	51
Catchy counter-intuitions and their social consequences	58
The gods are in charge	63
Religion and morality	65
3. Social Glue	73
The evolution of self-sacrificial behaviour	76
Ritual ordeals and shared suffering	79
Shared essence and fusion	82
The origins of fusion	86
Fighting and dying for the group	96

Contents

PART TWO: NATURE EXTENDED

4.	Cranking Up Conformism	105
	Rituals, routines, and the first big groups	IIO
	The birth of routinization	118
	Routinization and the rise of social complexity	123
	Farming and future-mindedness	128
5.	Religiosity and the Rise of Supernatural Authority	136
	Why worship the ancestors?	140
	Divine sanction and worldly authority	145
	The rise of human sacrifice	152
	The demise of human sacrifice	159
	Moralizing religions	165
6.	Tribalism and the Evolution of Warfare	174
	Warfare and the evolution of tribalism	176
	Two forms of group bonding	182
	Extended fusion and warfare	188
	Sacred values and the rise of imperialism	191
PAR	T THREE: NATURE REIMAGINED	
7.	Conformism and the Climate	203
	The unnaturalness of capitalism	208
	The hidden rituals of economic life	214
	Conformism and capitalism	219
	Ritual and the rebirth of future-mindedness	224
8.	Religiosity on Sale	236
	Animism and advertising	240
	Moral bias and the news	247
	Moral contagion and social media	253
9.	Tribalism Today	262
	Fusion, the media, and violent extremism	266
	Tribalism in the age of mutually assured destruction	275
	Returning to the tribe	282

Contents

Epilogue: Rise of the Teratribe	294
Revolutionizing routines	295
Rethinking world religion	300
The global tribe	305
Acknowledgements	313
Notes	315
Index	345