



Finding Our Tongues: Mothers, Infants, and the Origins of Language

Dean Falk

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Scientists have long theorized that abstract, symbolic thinking evolved to help humans negotiate such classically male activities as hunting, tool making, and warfare, and eventually developed into spoken language. In *Finding Our Tongues*, Dean Falk overturns this established idea, offering a daring new theory that springs from a simple observation: parents all over the world, in all cultures, talk to infants by using baby talk or “Motherese.” Falk shows how Motherese developed as a way of reassuring babies when mothers had to put them down in order to do work. The melodic vocalizations of early Motherese not only provided the basis of language but also contributed to the growth of music and art.

Combining cutting-edge neuroscience with classic anthropology, Falk offers a potent challenge to conventional wisdom about the emergence of human language.



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