

Sometimes, genes make blue-footed boobies (and us!) 'selfish douchebags'

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

In my last post I made the case for [why we are not](#), in fact, slaves to nature and our genes. Today allow me to do the opposite.

A few months ago, [I published a story](#) for Hakai magazine about a researcher in Mexico named Hugh Drummond, who has dedicated his entire life to studying blue-footed booby behavior. Normally, the angle for such a story would be a sloppy version of "hey, look at this crazy guy who studies this crazy thing that will never be of use to anyone!" But that wasn't my angle because it's not true.

First, you have to understand that boobies are dicks. Seriously, they are profoundly selfish douchebags. Mated pairs cheat on each other every chance they get. It's so bad that if you remove a male from his nest around the time the female is laying, when he comes back he'll destroy all the eggs because he assumes his girl has been stepping out on him in the meantime.

So why has Drummond spent 35 years on a tiny island off the coast of Mexico studying douchebag seabirds? Because this is the essence of who we are. I'm not saying that beneath some thin veneer we are just as bad as these feathery pricks. But our genes are selfish. It's just that we have also evolved large brains and the ability/need to work well in groups. Our big brains give us the ability to feel empathy, love, and all the great things that make us human.

Read full, original post: [Boobies Behaving Badly](#)