



The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting: How the Science of Strategic Thinking Can Help You Deal with the Toughest Negotiators You Know--Your Kids

By Paul Raeburn, Kevin Zollman

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“I absolutely loved this book, both as a parent and as a nerd.” ?Jessica Lahey, author of *The Gift of Failure*

As every parent knows, kids are surprisingly clever negotiators. But how can we avoid those all-too-familiar wails of “That’s not fair!” and “You can’t make me!”? In *The Game Theorist’s Guide to Parenting*, the award-winning journalist and father of five Paul Raeburn and the game theorist Kevin Zollman pair up to highlight tactics from the worlds of economics and business that can help parents break the endless cycle of quarrels and ineffective solutions. Raeburn and Zollman show that some of the same strategies successfully applied to big business deals and politics?such as the Prisoner’s Dilemma and the Ultimatum Game?can be used to solve such titanic, age-old parenting problems as dividing up toys, keeping the peace on long car rides, and sticking to homework routines.

Raeburn and Zollman open each chapter with a common parenting dilemma. Then they show how carefully concocted schemes involving bargains and fair incentives can save the day. Through smart case studies of game theory in action, Raeburn and Zollman reveal how parents and children devise strategies, where those strategies go wrong, and what we can do to help raise happy and savvy kids while keeping the rest of the family happy too.

Delightfully witty, refreshingly irreverent, and just a bit Machiavellian, *The Game Theorist’s Guide to Parenting* looks past the fads to offer advice you can put into action today.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Unlike most parenting books . . . this one is based on actual research into how humans behave . . . in the home it should increase the odds that there will be less whining for all involved." **?Laura Vanderkam, *The Wall Street Journal***

"[Raeburn and Zollman] join a welcome trend of academics pairing up with writers (or comedians!) to create a true crossover offering, one that marries rigorous research and real scholarship with a compelling style and narrative arc that human beings actually want to read on purpose." **?Rebecca Schuman, *Slate***

"Kids are master manipulators. They play up their charms, pit adults against one another, and engage in loud, public wailing. So it's your job to keep up with them . . . *The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting* . . . explains how." **?Chelsea Leu, *Wired***

"[Notes] all the ways dealing with kids might go more smoothly if only parents knew a little bit about game theory." **?Leanne Italie, *Associated Press***

"Raeburn and Zollman's book is a bible for every parent?and every adult who must make decisions with his or her peers." **?Courtney Linder, *Pittsburgh City Paper***

"Suggests that tactics commonly used in business and economics transactions?a framework of strategies known as game theory?could help parents engage with their children with more confidence and success . . . [Raeburn and Zollman] offer parents a unique set of guidelines for defusing disagreements by using strategies that encourage the entire family to work together toward a common goal." **?Mindy Weisberger, *Live Science***

"Carefully created economic approaches are given, along with incentives and bargaining to help parents successfully raise children." **?Julia Harris-Parker, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution***

"Raeburn and Zollman put the math on the back burner and bring the commonsensicality of the theory to the fore . . . There is a fluid, natural feel to the authors' examples . . . Tantalizing perspectives on cultivating sharing, honesty, and cooperation via game theory." **?Kirkus Reviews (starred review)**

"Of the many parenting books on the market, it's fair to say only one invokes vampire bats and the Doomsday Machine. Not that *The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting* is all bloodsucking and mutually assured destruction: It uses strategic thinking and science to help parents navigate such dreaded children's chestnuts as 'He started it!' and 'Are you saying you don't believe me?' . . . The advice they offer is grounded in reality?if derived from unexpected sources." **?Mike Doherty, *Maclean's***

"Practical win-win parenting methods that teach kids about human nature, negotiation, and cooperation." **?Modern Dads Podcast**

"With a light touch and sure-footed mastery of both child-rearing and economics, Raeburn and Zollman bring humor and verve to a serious subject: How to negotiate with your kids in a way that will leave

everyone . . . well, not happy, exactly, but with a sense of being treated fairly and with mutual respect. Read it and count on fewer fights at the dinner table, the TV room, and the back seat of the car!" **?Robin Marantz Henig, Contributing Writer, *The New York Times Magazine*; coauthor, with Samantha Henig, of *Twentysomething***

"The small transactions of parenting?sharing, dividing, collaborating and compromising?are fraught with peril. Solutions that feel fair are not always just, particularly in the eyes of our children. Paul Raeburn and Kevin Zollman achieve two incredible feats in *The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting*: they helped me find a way to be fair and just in my parenting while teaching me the basics of game theory. I absolutely loved this book, both as a parent, and as a nerd." **?Jessica Lahey, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed***

"*The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting* will teach you useful strategies from the world of game theory to add to your parenting repertoire. Even game theorists will marvel at Raeburn and Zollman's ability to elucidate deep ideas and turn them into practical rules of thumb for raising children. Humorous, informative, and practical?you should even let your kids read it!" **?Scott E. Page, Leonid Hurwicz Collegiate Professor of Complex Systems, Political Science, and Economics at the University of Michigan**

About the Author

Paul Raeburn is the award-winning author of several books, including *Do Fathers Matter?*, a National Parenting Publications Gold Medal winner and a Mom's Choice Award winner, and *Acquainted with the Night*, a memoir of raising children with mental illness. His articles have appeared in *Discover*, *The Huffington Post*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Scientific American*, and *Psychology Today*, among many others. He lives in New York City.

Kevin Zollman is a game theorist and an associate professor of philosophy at Carnegie Mellon University. His work has been covered in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *Scientific American*, and elsewhere.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mona Savoy:

Reading a book can be one of a lot of task that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book therefore. There are a lot of reasons why people fantastic. First reading a publication will give you a lot of new information. When you read a publication you will get new information due to the fact book is one of many ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, reading through a book will make a person more imaginative. When you examining a book especially fictional book the author will bring someone to imagine the story how the character types do it anything. Third, it is possible to share your knowledge to other folks. When you read this *The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting: How the Science of Strategic Thinking Can Help You Deal with the Toughest Negotiators You Know--Your Kids*, it is possible to tells your family, friends and also soon about yours e-book. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a guide.

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Carlton Wood:

In this era globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make someone to understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of personal references to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended to you is The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting: How the Science of Strategic Thinking Can Help You Deal with the Toughest Negotiators You Know--Your Kids this book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented how can the world has grown up. The words styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some analysis when he makes this book. Honestly, that is why this book suitable all of you.

Tanya Wilson:

Is it you who having spare time then spend it whole day by means of watching television programs or just laying on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting: How the Science of Strategic Thinking Can Help You Deal with the Toughest Negotiators You Know--Your Kids can be the solution, oh how comes? It's a book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your spare time by reading in this new era is common not a geek activity. So what these guides have than the others?

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