



Out of Character: Surprising Truths About the Liar, Cheat, Sinner (and Saint) Lurking in All of Us

David Desteno, Piercarlo Valdesolo

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Have you ever wondered why a trumpeter of family values would suddenly turn around and cheat on his wife? Why jealousy would send an otherwise level-headed person into a violent rage? What could drive a person to blow a family fortune at the blackjack tables?

Or have you ever pondered what might make Mr. Right leave his beloved at the altar, why hypocrisy seems to be rampant, or even why, every once in awhile, even *you* are secretly tempted, to lie, cheat, or steal (or, conversely, help someone you never even met)?

This book answers these questions and more, and in doing so, turns the prevailing wisdom about who we are upside down. Our character, argue psychologists DeSteno and Valdesolo, isn't a stable set of traits, but rather a shifting state that is subject to the constant push and pull of hidden mechanisms in our mind. And it's the battle between these dueling psychological forces that determine how we act at any given point in time.

Drawing on the surprising results of the clever experiments concocted in their own laboratory, DeSteno and Valdesolo shed new scientific light on so many of the puzzling behaviors that regularly grace the headlines. For example, you'll learn:

- Why **Tiger Woods** just couldn't resist the allure of his mistresses even though he had a picture-perfect family at home. And why no one, including those who knew him best, ever saw it coming.
- Why even the shrewdest of investors can be tempted to gamble their fortunes away (and why risky financial behavior is driven by the same mechanisms that compel us to root for the underdog in sports).
- Why **Eliot Spitzer**, who made a career of crusading against prostitution, turned out to be one of the most famous johns of all time.
- Why **Mel Gibson**, a noted philanthropist and devout Catholic, has been repeatedly caught spewing racist rants, even though close friends say he doesn't have a racist bone in his body.
- And why **any of us** is capable of doing the same, whether we believe it or not!

A surprising look at the hidden forces driving the saint and sinner lurking in us all, *Out of Character* reveals why human behavior is so much more unpredictable than we ever realized.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Jess Bolan:

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Alan Robert:

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