



Extinction: Bad Genes or Bad Luck?

David M. Raup

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This is the first major book to present a comprehensive overview of the current state of extinction studies. At the end of the journey, Raup has put forward the best science of the day to answer the question posed by the title: Bad genes or bad luck?

In the geological record, there are five major mass extinctions?the "Big Five." The most famous happened at the end of the Cretaceous Period, when the dinosaurs and two-thirds of all marine animal species were wiped out, opening the door for the age of mammals and the rise of *Homo Sapiens*. Using this example as a springboard, David M. Raup leaps into an egaging discussion of the theories, assumptions, and difficulties associated with the science of species extinction. Woven in along the way are stories of the trilobite eye, tropical reefs, flying reptiles, and the fate of the heath hen on Martha's Vineyard, a very modern extinction.

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