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Renée Schroeder

THE INVENTION OF HUMANKIND

How we outsmart evolution

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We can't expect evolution to ensure the survival of humankind. If we want to survive, we have to take matters into our own hands.

70,000 years ago, humans were first able to form a thought about something that didn't exist. What sounds simple actually marks the birth of human culture and poses the outset for a range of inventions that have formed human nature and haven't necessarily changed us for the better. We thought up myths and religions and invented languages, money and racism. Now humankind is about to complete its greatest invention: itself. Science allows us to continue our own evolution. Renée Schroeder looks back at the short period of humankind's existence, takes a detour into genetics and proclaims a new age of enlightenment.

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born 1980. After studying Economics, Nendzig partook in a journalistic training. She is an editor for "Universum" magazine and a freelance author for several magazines and newspapers.

RENÉE SCHROEDER

born 1953 in João Monlevade, Brazil, studied Biochemistry in Vienna and New York and wrote her habilitation on Genetics. She has been head of the Department for Biochemistry at Vienna University since 2005. From 2001-2005 she was a member of the Bioethics Commission of the Austrian Federal government, since 2010 she has been a member of the Austrian Council for Science and Technology Development. In 2002 she was elected Austrian Scientist of the Year, in 2003 she received the Wittgenstein Prize and was one of the first women to become a full member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.