



## Stupid Idiots: A Philosophy of Stupidity and Complete and Utter Downright Idiocy

**Lars Svendsen**

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Lars Svendsen's wry philosophical text treats stupidity as a persistent human condition that's shaped by knowledge, belief, and social context.

Drawing on philosophy, psychology, and cultural observation, the book explores how foolish thinking arises, why it persists, and how it can affect individuals, including Svendsen himself and accomplished figures like Steve Jobs, whose successes do not inoculate them against error. Framed around questions of how people know what they know, how certainty forms, and how problematic thinking persists, the book situates its argument in conversation with a wide range of thinkers, including Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Hannah Arendt, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Its tone balances seriousness with self-awareness, positioning the inquiry as one of a broad human condition.

The book distinguishes among three varieties of stupidity, using examples to show how ignorance, overconfidence, and rigid thinking manifest. It introduces several concepts, including monomania—obsessive fixation on a single idea—to explain the coexistence of intelligence and poor judgment. Brief illustrative examples ground these abstractions, including professionals ignoring contradictory evidence because it conflicts with prior beliefs. It makes a tenuous case for maintaining aspects of the political status quo and issues a response to the contemporary political climate in the United States too.

A compelling philosophical study, *Stupid Idiots* probes the persistence of human folly as a shared condition rather than an individual failing.

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