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Human Evolution: A Very Short Introduction-Bernard Wood 2005-11-03 This introduction traces the history of paleoanthropology from its beginnings in the 18th century to the latest fossil finds. It concentrates on the fossil evidence for human evolution, making reference to the relevant archaeological evidence when appropriate. Human Evolution-Bernard Wood 2019 The study of human evolution is advancing rapidly. Newly discovered fossil evidence is adding ever more pieces to the puzzle of our past, whilst revolutionary technological advances in the study of ancient DNA are completely reshaping theories of early human populations and migrations.In this Very Short Introduction Bernard Wood traces the history of paleoanthropology from its beginnings in the eighteenth century to the very latest fossil finds. In this new edition he discusses how Ancient DNA studies have revolutionized how we view the recent (post-550 ka) human evolution, and the process of speciation. The combination of ancient and modern human DNA has contributed to discoveries of new taxa, as well as the suggestion of "ghost" taxa whose fossil records still remain to be discovered. Considering the contributions of related sciences such as paleoclimatology,geochronology, systematics, genetics, and developmental biology, Wood explores our latest understandings of our own evolution.ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, andenthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Human Evolution-Bernard A. Wood 1978 Evolution: A Very Short Introduction-Brian Charlesworth 2003-06-26 Less than 450 years ago, all European scholars believed that the earth was the centre of a universe that was at most a few million miles in extent, and that the planets, sun, and stars all rotated around this centre. Less than 250 years ago, they believed that the universe was created essentially in its present state about 6000 years ago. Less than 150 years ago, the special creation by God of living species was still dominant. The relentless application of the scientific method of inference from experiment and observation, without reference to religious, or governmental authority has completely transformed our view of our origins and relation to the universe, in less than 500 years. Few would dispute that this programme has been spectacularly successful, particularly in the twentieth century. This book is about the crucial role of evolutionary biology in transforming our view of human origins and relation to the universe, and the impact of this idea on traditional philosophy and religion. The purpose of this book is to introduce the general reader to some of the most important basic findings, concepts, and procedures of evolutionary biology, as it has developed since the first publications of Darwin and Wallace on the subject, over 140 years ago. Evolution provides a unifying set of principals for the whole of biology; it also illuminates the relation of human beings to the universe and each other. In addition, many aspects of evolution have practical importance; for instance, the rapid evolution of resistance by bacteria to antibiotics and of HIV to antiviral drugs are pressing medical problems. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

A Pocket History of Human Evolution-Silvana Condemni 2019-11-01 Why aren't we more like other apes? How did we win the evolutionary race? Find out how "wise" Homo sapiens really are. Prehistory has never been more exciting: New discoveries are overturning long-held theories left and right. Stone tools in Australia date back 65,000 years—a time when, we once thought, the first Sapiens had barely left Africa. DNA sequencing has unearthed a new hominid group—the Denisovans—and confirmed that crossbreeding with them (and Neanderthals) made Homo sapiens who we are today. A Pocket History of Human Evolution brings us up-to-date on the exploits of all our ancient relatives. Paleoanthropologist Silvana Condemni and science journalist François Savatier consider what accelerated our evolution: Was it tools, our "large" brains, language, empathy, or something else entirely? And why are the sole survivors among many early bipedal humans? Their conclusions reveal the various ways ancient humans live on today—from gossip as modern "grooming" to our gendered division of labor—and what the future might hold for our strange and unique species.

The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction-Michael J. Benton 2008-11-27 This Very Short Introduction presents a succinct and accessible guide to the key episodes in the story of life on earth - from the very origins of life four million years ago to the extraordinary diversity of species around the globe today.

Fossils: A Very Short Introduction-Keith Thomson 2005-10-13 Fossils have been vital to our understanding of the formation of the earth and the origins of all life on it. However, their impact has not been limited to debates about geology and evolution: attempts to explain their existence has shaken religion at its very roots, and they have remained a subject of ceaseless fascination for people of all ages and backgrounds. In this delightful book, Keith Thomson provides a remarkably all-encompassing explanation of fossils as a phenomenon. How did Darwin use fossils to support his theory of evolution? What are 'living fossils'? What fossils will we leave behind for future generations to examine? Building on the scientific aspects, he places fossils in a very human context, highlighting their impact on philosophy and mythology, our concept of time, and today's popular culture. What quickly becomes obvious is that the discovery of fossils and the ways in which they have been interpreted over time makes for fascinating reading. From the black market to the Piltdown Man, and from mythological dragons to living dinosaurs, fossils hold a permanent place in the popular imagination. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Basics in Human Evolution-Michael P Muehlenbein 2015-07-24 Basics in Human Evolution offers a broad view of evolutionary biology and medicine. The book is written for a non-expert audience, providing accessible and convenient content that will appeal to numerous readers across the interdisciplinary field Provides expertise from leading minds in the field Allows the reader the ability to gain exposure to various topics in one publication

Social and Cultural Anthropology: A Very Short Introduction-John Monaghan 2000-02-24 If you want to know what anthropology is, look at what anthropologists do. This Very Short Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology combines an accessible account of some of the disciplines guiding principles and methodology with abundant examples and illustrations of anthropologists at work. Peter Just and John Monaghan begin by discussing anthropologys most important contributions to modern thought: its investigation of culture as a distinctively human characteristic, its doctrine of cultural relativism, and its methodology of fieldwork and ethnography. They then examine specific ways in which social and cultural anthropology have advanced our understanding of human society and culture, drawing on examples from their own fieldwork. The book ends with an assessment of anthropologys present position, and a look forward to its likely future. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Human Evolution-Bernard A. Wood 2019 The study of human evolution is advancing rapidly. New fossil evidence is adding ever more pieces to the puzzle of our past; the new science of ancient DNA is completely reshaping theories of early human populations and migrations. Bernard Wood traces the field of palaeoanthropology from its beginnings in the eighteenth century to the present.

Human Anatomy: A Very Short Introduction-Leslie Klenerman 2015-02-26 A vast subject that includes a strange vocabulary and an apparent mass of facts, human anatomy can at first appear confusing and off-putting. But the basic construction of the human body - the skeleton, the organs of the chest and abdomen, the nervous system, the head and neck with its sensory systems and anatomy for breathing and swallowing - is vital for anyone studying medicine, biology, and health studies. In this Very Short Introduction Leslie Klenerman provides a clear, concise, and accessible introduction to the structure, function, and main systems of the human body, including a number of clear and simple illustrations to explain the key areas. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

50 Great Myths of Human Evolution-John H. Relethford 2017-01-17 50 Great Myths of Human Evolution uses common misconceptions to explore basic theory and research in human evolution and strengthen critical thinking skills for lay readers and students. Examines intriguing—yet widely misunderstood—topics, from general ideas about evolution and human origins to the evolution of modern humans and recent trends in the field Describes what fossils, archaeology, and genetics can tell us about human origins Demonstrates the ways in which science adapts and changes over time to incorporate new evidence and better explanations Includes myths such as "Humans lived at the same time as dinosaurs;" "Lucy was so small because she was a child;" "Our ancestors have always made fire;" and "There is a strong relationship between brain size and intelligence" Comprised of stand-alone essays that are perfect for casual reading, as well as footnotes and references that allow readers to delve more deeply into topics

The Evolution of the Human Head-Daniel Lieberman 2011-01 Dan Lieberman has written an innovative, exhaustively researched and carefully argued book dealing with the evolution of the human head. In it he addresses three interrelated questions. First, why does the human head look the way it does? Second, why did these transformations occur? And third, how is something as complex and vital as the head so variable and evolvable? This book addresses these questions in three sections. The first set of chapters review how human and ape heads grow, both in terms of individual parts (organs and regions) and as an integrated whole. The second section reviews how the head performs its major functions: housing the brain, chewing, swallowing, breathing, vocalizing, thermoregulating, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and balancing during locomotion. The final set of chapters review the fossil evidence for major transformations of the head during human evolution from the divergence of the human and ape lineages through the origins of Homo sapiens. These chapters use developmental and functional insights from the first two sections to speculate on the developmental and selective bases for these transformations.

The Emergence of Religion in Human Evolution-Margaret Boone Rappaport 2019-12-09 Religious capacity is a highly elaborate, neurocognitive human trait that has a solid evolutionary foundation. This book uses a multidisciplinary approach to describe millions of years of biological innovations that eventually give rise to the modern trait and its varied expression in humanity's many religions. The authors present a scientific model and a central thesis that the brain organs, networks, and capacities that allowed humans to survive physically also gave our species the ability to create theologies, find sustenance in religious practice, and use religion to support the social group. Yet, the trait of religious capacity remains non-obligatory, like reading and mathematics. The individual can choose not to use it. The approach relies on research findings in nine disciplines, including the work of countless neuroscientists, paleoneurologists, archaeologists, cognitive scientists, and psychologists. This is a cutting-edge examination of the evolutionary origins of humanity's interaction with the supernatural. It will be of keen interest to academics working in Religious Studies, Neuroscience, Cognitive Science, Anthropology, Evolutionary Biology, and Psychology.

Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Human Evolution, 2 Volume Set-Bernard Wood 2011-03-31 This comprehensive A to Z encyclopedia provides extensive coverage of important scientific terms related to improving our understanding of how we evolved. Specifically, the 5,000 entries in this two-volume set cover evidence and methods used to investigate the relationships among the living great apes, evidence about what makes the behavior of modern humans distinctive, and evidence about the evolutionary history of that distinctiveness, as well as information about modern methods used to trace the recent evolutionary history of modern human populations. This text provides a resource for everyone studying the emergence of Homo sapiens. Visit the companion site www.woodhumanevolution.com to browse additional references and updates from this comprehensive encyclopedia.

The Improbable Primate-Clive Finlayson 2014-03-27 Taking an ecological approach to our evolution, Clive Finlayson considers the origins of modern humans within the context of a drying climate and changing landscapes. Finlayson argues that environmental change, particularly availability of water, played a critical role in shaping the direction of human evolution, contributing to our spread and success. He argues that our ancestors carved a niche for themselves by leaving the forest and forcing their way into a long-established community of carnivores in a tropical savannah as climate changes opened up the landscape. They took their chance at high noon, when most other predators were asleep. Adapting to this new lifestyle by shedding their hair and developing an active sweating system to keep cool, being close to fresh water was vital. As the climate dried, our ancestors, already bipedal, became taller and slimmer, more adept at travelling farther in search of water. The challenges of seeking water in a drying landscape moulded the minds and bodies of early humans, and directed their migrations and eventual settlements. In this fresh and provocative view of a seven-million-year evolutionary journey, Finlayson demonstrates the radical implications for the interpretation of fossils and technologies and shows that understanding humans within an ecological context provides insights into the emergence and spread of Homo sapiens sapiens worldwide.

The Science of Human Evolution-John H. Langdon 2016-10-25 This textbook provides a collection of case studies in paleoanthropology demonstrating the method and limitations of science. These cases introduce the reader to various problems and illustrate how they have been addressed historically. The various topics selected represent important corrections in the field, some critical breakthroughs, models of good reasoning and experimental design, and important ideas emerging from normal science.

Catching Fire-Richard W. Wrangham 2010 In this stunningly original book, Richard Wrangham argues that it was cooking that caused the extraordinary transformation of our ancestors from apelike beings to Homo erectus. At the heart of Catching Fire lies an explosive new idea: the habit of eating cooked rather than raw food permitted the digestive tract to shrink and the human brain to grow, helped structure human society, and created the male-female division of labour. As our ancestors adapted to using fire, humans emerged as "the cooking apes". Covering everything from food-labelling and overweight tips to raw-food faddists, Catching Fire offers a startlingly original argument about how we came to be the social, intelligent, and sexual species we are today. "This notion is surprising, fresh and, in the hands of Richard Wrangham, utterly persuasive ... Big, new ideas do not come along often in evolution these days, but this is one." -Matt Ridley, author of Genome

Religion in Human Evolution-Robert N. Bellah 2011-09-15 This ambitious book probes our biological past to discover the kinds of lives that human beings have imagined were worth living. Bellah's theory goes deep into cultural and genetic evolution to identify a range of capacities (communal dancing, storytelling, theorizing) whose emergence made religious development possible in the first millennium BCE.

The Book of Humans-Adam Rutherford 2020-05-12 "Rutherford describes [The Book of Humans] as being about the paradox of how our evolutionary journey turned 'an otherwise average ape' into one capable of creating complex tools, art, music, science, and engineering. It's an intriguing question, one his book sets against descriptions of the infinitely amusing strategies and antics of a dizzying array of animals."—The New York Times Book Review Publisher's Note: The Book of Humans was previously published in hardcover as Humankind. In this new evolutionary history, geneticist Adam Rutherford explores the profound paradox of the human animal. Looking for answers across the animal kingdom, he finds that many things once considered exclusively human are not: We aren't the only species that "speaks," makes tools, or has sex outside of procreation. Seeing as our genome is 98 percent identical to a chimpanzee's, our DNA doesn't set us far apart, either. How, then, did we develop the most complex culture ever observed? The Book of Humans proves that we are animals indeed—and reveals how we truly are extraordinary.

Science and Creationism-National Academy of Sciences (U.S.) 1999 This edition of Science and Creationism summarizes key aspects of several of the most important lines of evidence supporting evolution. It describes some of the positions taken by advocates of creation science and presents an analysis of these claims. This document lays out for a broader audience the case against presenting religious concepts in science classes. The document covers the origin of the universe, Earth, and life; evidence supporting biological evolution; and human evolution. (Contains 31 references.) (CCM)

Human Evolutionary Biology-Michael P. Muehlenbein 2010-07-29 Wide-ranging and inclusive, this text provides an invaluable review of an expansive selection of topics in human evolution, variation and adaptability for professionals and students in biological anthropology, evolutionary biology, medical sciences and psychology. The chapters are organized around four broad themes, with sections devoted to phenotypic and genetic variation within and between human populations, reproductive physiology and behavior, growth and development, and human health from evolutionary and ecological perspectives. An introductory section provides readers with the historical, theoretical and methodological foundations needed to understand the more complex ideas presented later. Two hundred discussion questions provide starting points for class debate and assignments to test student understanding.

The Art Instinct-Denis Dutton 2009 The Dinka have a connoisseur's appreciation of the patterns and colours of the markings on their cattle. The Japanese tea ceremony is regarded as a performance art. Some cultures produce carving but no drawing; others specialize in poetry. Yet despite the rich variety of artistic expression to be found across many cultures, we all share a deep sense of aesthetic pleasure. The need to create art of some form is found in every human society. In fThe Art Instinct/, Denis Dutton explores the idea that this need has an evolutionary basis: how the feelings that we all share when we see a wonderful landscape or a beautiful sunset evolved as a useful adaptation in our hunter-gather ancestors, and have been passed on to us today, manifest in our artistic natures. Why do people indulge in displaying their artistic skills? How can we understand artistic genius? Why do we value art, and what is it for? These questions have long been asked by scholars in the humanities and in literature, but this is the first book to consider the biological basis of this deep human need. This sparking and intelligent book looks at these deep and fundamental questions, and combines the science of evolutionary psychology with aesthetics, to shed new light on longstanding questions about the nature of art.

Darwin: A Very Short Introduction-Jonathan Howard 2001-02-22 Darwin's theory that our ancestors were apes caused a furore in the scientific world and outside it when The Origin of Species was published in 1859. Arguments still rage about the implications of his evolutionary theory, and scepticism about the value of Darwin's contribution to knowledge is widespread. In this analysis of Darwin's major insights and arguments, Jonathan Howard reasserts the importance of Darwin's work for the development of modern biology. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Origins-Douglas Palmer 2010-09-20

Genes-Jonathan Slack 2014 Explores the discovery, nature, and role of genes in evolution and development.

The Cambridge Encyclopedia to Human Evolution-Steve Jones 1994

Understanding Climate's Influence on Human Evolution-National Research Council 2010-04-17 The hominin fossil record documents a history of critical evolutionary events that have ultimately shaped and defined what it means to be human, including the origins of bipedalism; the emergence of our genus Homo; the first use of stone tools; increases in brain size; and the emergence of Homo sapiens, tools, and culture. The Earth's geological record suggests that some evolutionary events were coincident with substantial changes in African and Eurasian climate, raising the possibility that critical junctures in human evolution and behavioral development may have been affected by the environmental characteristics of the areas where hominins evolved. Understanding Climate's Change on Human Evolution explores the opportunities of using scientific research to improve our understanding of how climate may have helped shape our species. Improved climate records for specific regions will be required before it is possible to evaluate how critical resources for hominins, especially water and vegetation, would have been distributed on the landscape during key intervals of hominin history. Existing records contain substantial temporal gaps. The book's initiatives are presented in two major research themes: first, determining the impacts of climate change and climate variability on human evolution and dispersal; and second, integrating climate modeling, environmental records, and biotic responses. Understanding Climate's Change on Human Evolution suggests a new scientific program for international climate and human evolution studies that involve an exploration initiative to locate new fossil sites and to broaden the geographic and temporal sampling of the fossil and archeological record; a comprehensive and integrative scientific drilling program in lakes, lake bed outcrops, and ocean basins surrounding the regions where hominins evolved and a major investment in climate modeling experiments for key time intervals and regions that are critical to understanding human evolution.

Processes in Human Evolution-Francisco J. Ayala 2017-03-01 The discoveries of the last decade have brought about a completely revised understanding of human evolution due to the recent advances in genetics, palaeontology, ecology, archaeology, geography, and climate science. Written by two leading authorities in the fields of physical anthropology and molecular evolution, Processes in Human Evolution presents a reconsidered overview of hominid evolution, synthesising data and approaches from a range of inter-disciplinary fields. The authors pay particular attention to population migrations - since these are crucial in understanding the origin and dispersion of the different genera and species in each continent - and to the emergence of the lithic cultures and their impact on the evolution of cognitive capacities. Processes in Human Evolution is intended as a primary textbook for university courses on human evolution, and may also be used as supplementary reading in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses. It is also suitable for a more general audience seeking a readable but up-to-date and inclusive treatment of human origins and evolution.

Transcendence-Gaia Vince 2020-01-21 In the tradition of Guns, Germs, and Steel and Sapiens, a winner of the Royal Society Prize for Science Books shows how four tools enabled us as humans to control the destiny of our species "A wondrous, visionary work." —Tim Flannery, scientist and author of the bestselling The Weather Makers What enabled us to go from simple stone tools to smartphones? How did bands of hunter-gatherers evolve into multinational empires? Readers of Sapiens will say a cognitive revolution -- a dramatic evolutionary change that altered our brains, turning primitive humans into modern ones -- caused a cultural explosion. In Transcendence, Gaia Vince argues instead that modern humans are the product of a nuanced coevolution of our genes, environment, and culture that goes back into deep time. She explains how, through four key elements -- fire, language, beauty, and time -- our species diverged from the evolutionary path of all other animals, unleashing a compounding process that launched us into the Space Age and beyond. Provocative and poetic, Transcendence shows how a primate tool dominion over nature and turned itself into something marvelous.

Dragons of Eden-Carl Sagan 2012-09-26 "A history of the human brain from the big bang, fifteen billion years ago, to the day before yesterday. . . . It's a delight."—The New York Times Dr. Carl Sagan takes us on a great reading adventure, offering his vivid and startling insight into the brain of man and beast, the origin of human intelligence, the function of our most haunting legends—and their amazing links to recent discoveries. "How can I persuade every intelligent person to read this important and elegant book? . . . He talks about all kinds of things: the why of the pain of human childbirth. . . . the reason for sleeping and dreaming. . . . chimpanzees taught to communicate in deaf and dumb language. . . . the definition of death. . . . cloning. . . . computers. . . . intelligent life on other planets. . . . Fascinating. . . . delightful."—The Boston Globe "In some lost Eden where dragons ruled, the foundations of our intelligence were laid. . . . Carl Sagan takes us on a guided tour of that lost land. . . . Fascinating. . . . entertaining. . . . masterful. . . ."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The Goodness Paradox-Richard Wrangham 2019-01-29 "A fascinating new analysis of human violence, filled with fresh ideas and gripping evidence from our primate cousins, historical forebears, and contemporary neighbors." —Steven Pinker, author of The Better Angels of Our Nature We Homo sapiens can be the nicest of species and also the nastiest. What occurred during human evolution to account for this paradox? What are the two kinds of aggression that primates are prone to, and why did each evolve separately? How does the intensity of violence among humans compare with the aggressive behavior of other primates? How did humans domesticate themselves? And how were the acquisition of language and the practice of capital punishment determining factors in the rise of culture and civilization? Authoritative, provocative, and engaging, The Goodness Paradox offers a startlingly original theory of how, in the last 250 million years, humankind became an increasingly peaceful species in daily interactions even as its capacity for coolly planned and devastating violence remains undiminished. In tracing the evolutionary histories of reactive and proactive aggression, biological anthropologist Richard Wrangham forcefully and persuasively argues for the necessity of social tolerance and the control of savage divisiveness still haunting us today.

Astrobiology: A Very Short Introduction-David C. Catling 2013-10-24 Examines the origins of life on Earth and the search for extraterrestrial life, through an understanding of the factors that have allowed life to exist on this planet and the commonalities on others that may enable life elsewhere.

The Evolution of Human Sexuality-Donald Symons 1979-08-30 Anthropology, Sexual Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Gender and Cultural Studies

The Ancestor's Tale-Richard Dawkins 2016-09-06 The renowned biologist and thinker Richard Dawkins presents his most expansive work yet: a comprehensive look at evolution, ranging from the latest developments in the field to his own provocative views. Loosely based on the form of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Dawkins's Tale takes us modern humans back through four billion years of life on our planet. As the pilgrimage progresses, we join with other organisms at the forty "rendezvous points" where we find a common ancestor. The band of pilgrims swells into a vast crowd as we join first with other primates, then with other mammals, and so on back to the first primordial organism. Dawkins's brilliant, inventive approach allows us to view the connections between ourselves and all other life in a bracingly novel way. It also lets him shed bright new light on the most compelling aspects of evolutionary history and theory: sexual selection, speciation, convergent evolution, extinction, genetics, plate tectonics, geographical dispersal, and more. The Ancestor's Tale is at once a far-reaching survey of the latest, best thinking on biology and a fascinating history of life on Earth. Here Dawkins shows us how remarkable we are, how astonishing our history, and how intimate our relationship with the rest of the living world.

Sapiens-Yuval Noah Harari 2015-02-10 New York Times Bestseller A Summer Reading Pick for President Barack Obama, Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg From a renowned historian comes a groundbreaking narrative of humanity's creation and evolution—a #1 international bestseller—that explores the ways in which biology and history have defined us and enhanced our understanding of what it means to be "human." One hundred thousand years ago, at least six different species of humans inhabited Earth. Yet today there is only one—Homo sapiens. What happened to the others? And what may happen to us? Most books about the history of humanity pursue either a historical or a biological approach, but Dr. Yuval Noah Harari breaks the mold with this highly original book that begins about 70,000 years ago with the appearance of modern cognition. From examining the role evolving humans have played in the global ecosystem to charting the rise of empires, Sapiens integrates history and science to reconsider accepted narratives, connect past developments with contemporary concerns, and examine specific events within the context of larger ideas. Dr. Harari also compels us to look ahead, because over the last few decades humans have begun to bend laws of natural selection that have governed life for the past four billion years. We are acquiring the ability to design not only the world around us, but also ourselves. Where is this leading us, and what do we want to become? Featuring 27 photographs, 6 maps, and 25 illustrations/diagrams, this provocative and insightful work is sure to spark debate and is essential reading for aficionados of Jared Diamond, James Gleick, Matt Ridley, Robert Wright, and Sharon Moalem.

The Third Chimpanzee-Jared M. Diamond 2006-01-03 The Development of an Extraordinary Species We human beings share 98 percent of our genes with chimpanzees. Yet humans are the dominant species on the planet -- having founded civilizations and religions, developed intricate and diverse forms of communication, learned science, built cities, and created breathtaking works of art -- while chimps remain animals concerned primarily with the basic necessities of survival. What is it about that two percent difference in DNA that has created such a divergence between evolutionary cousins? In this fascinating, provocative, passionate, funny, and endlessly entertaining work, renowned Pulitzer Prize-winning author and scientist Jared Diamond explores how the extraordinary human animal, in a remarkably short time, developed the capacity to rule the world. . . . and the means to irrevocably destroy it.

Eugenics-Philippa Levine 2016-12-15 In 1883, Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the word "eugenics" to express his dream of perfecting the human race by applying the laws of genetic heredity. Adapting Darwin's theory of evolution to human society, eugenics soon became a powerful, international movement, committed to using the principles of heredity and statistics to encourage healthy and discourage unhealthy reproduction. Early in the twentieth century and across the world, doctors, social reformers, and politicians turned to the new science of eugenics as a means to improve and strengthen their populations. Eugenics advocates claimed their methods would result in healthier, fitter babies and would dramatically limit human suffering. The reality was a different story. In the name of scientific progress and of human improvement, eugenicists targeted the weak and the sick, triggering coercive legislation on issues as disparate as race, gender, immigration, euthanasia, abortion, sterilization, intelligence, mental illness, and disease control. Nationalists eagerly embraced eugenics as a means to legitimize their countries' superiority and racialized assumptions, and the Nazis notoriously used eugenics to shape their "final solution." In this lucid volume, Philippa Levine tackles the intricate and controversial history of eugenics, masterfully synthesizing the enormous range of policies and experiments carried out in the name of eugenics around the world throughout the twentieth century. She questions the widespread belief that eugenics disappeared after World War II and evaluates the impact of eugenics on current reproductive and genetic sciences. Charting the development of such controversial practices as artificial insemination, sperm donation, and population control, this book offers a powerful, extraordinarily timely reflection on the frequent interplay between genetics and ethics. Eugenics may no longer be a household word, but we feel its effects even today.

Apes and Human Evolution-Russell H. Tuttle 2014-02-17 Russell Tuttle synthesizes a vast literature in primate evolution and behavior to explain how apes and humans evolved in relation to one another and why humans became a bipedal, tool-making, culture-inventing species distinct from other hominoids. He refutes the theory that we are sophisticated, instinctively aggressive and destructive killer apes.

Mammals: A Very Short Introduction-T. S. Kemp 2017-09-28 From a modest beginning in the form of a little shrew-like, nocturnal, insect eating ancestor that lived 200 million years ago, mammals evolved into the huge variety of different kinds of animals we see today. Many species are still small, and follow the lifestyle of the ancestor, but others have adapted to become large grazers and browsers, like the antelopes, cattle, rhinos, or elephants, or the lions, hyaenas, and wolves that prey upon them. Yet others evolved to be specialist termite eaters able to dig into the hardest mounds, or tunnel creating burrowers, and a few took to the skies as gliders and the bats. Many live partly in the water, such as otters, beavers, and hippos, while whales and dugongs remain permanently in the seas, incapable of ever emerging onto land. In this Very Short Introduction Tom Kemp explains how it is a tenfold increase in metabolic rate - endothermy or "warm-bloodedness" - that lies behind the high levels of activity, and the relatively huge brain associated with complex, adaptable behaviour that epitomizes mammals. He describes the remarkable fossil record, revealing how and when the mammals gained their characteristics, and the tortuous course of their subsequent evolution, during which many bizarre forms such as sabre-toothed cats, and 30-tonne, 6-m high browsers arose and disappeared. Describing the wonderful adaptations that mammals evolved to suit their varied modes of life, he also looks at those of the mainly arboreal primates that culminated ultimately in Homo sapiens. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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