

# Human Evolution A Very Short Introduction Very Short Introductions

**Teeth: A Very Short Introduction** Peter S. Ungar 2014-03-27 Teeth are amazing - the product of half a billion years of evolution. They provide fuel for the body by breaking apart other living things; and they must do it again and again over a lifetime without themselves being broken in the process. This means that plants and animals have developed tough or hard tissues for protection, and teeth have evolved ways to sharpen or strengthen themselves to overcome those defences. And just as different jobs require different tools, animals with different diets have different shaped teeth to deal with the variety of foods that they eat. In this Very Short Introduction, Peter S. Ungar, an award-winning author and leading scientist, presents the story of teeth. Ungar outlines the key concepts, including insights into the origin of teeth and their evolution. Considering why teeth are important, he describes how they are made, and how they work, including their fundamental importance in the fossil record. Ungar finishes with a review of mammal teeth, looking at how they evolved and how recent changes to our diet are now affecting dental health. 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.

*Mao: A Very Short Introduction* Delia Davin 2013-04-25 As a giant of 20th century history, Mao Zedong played many roles: peasant revolutionary, patriotic leader against the Japanese occupation, Marxist theoretician, modernizer, and visionary despot. This Very Short Introduction chronicles Mao's journey from peasant child to ruler of the most populous nation on Earth. He was a founder of both the Chinese Communist Party and the Red Army, and for many years he fought on two fronts, for control of the Party and in an armed struggle for the Party's control of the country. His revolution unified China and began its rise to world power status. He was the architect of the Great Leap Forward that he hoped would make China both prosperous and egalitarian, but instead ended in economic disaster resulting in millions of deaths. It was Mao's growing suspicion of his fellow leaders that led him to launch the Cultural Revolution, and his last years were dogged by ill-health and his despairing attempts to find a successor whom he trusted. Delia Davin provides an invaluable introduction to Mao, showing him in all his complexity; ruthless, brutal, and ambitious, a man of enormous talent and perception, yet a leader who is still detested by some and venerated by others. 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.

**Only in Africa** Norman Owen-Smith 2021-10-07 Demonstrates how Africa's physical features, savannas and abundant grazers enabled frugivorous apes to become savanna-living hunters.

[Animal Behaviour: A Very Short Introduction](#) Tristram D. Wyatt 2017-02-10 How animals behave is crucial to their survival and reproduction. The application of new molecular tools such as DNA fingerprinting and genomics is causing a revolution in the study of animal behaviour, while developments in computing and image analysis allow us to investigate behaviour in ways never previously possible. By combining these with the

traditional methods of observation and experiments, we are now learning more about animal behaviour than ever before. In this Very Short Introduction Tristram D. Wyatt discusses how animal behaviour has evolved, how behaviours develop in each individual (considering the interplay of genes, epigenetics, and experience), how we can understand animal societies, and how we can explain collective behaviour such as swirling flocks of starlings. Using lab and field studies from across the whole animal kingdom, he looks at mammals, butterflies, honeybees, fish, and birds, analysing what drives behaviour, and exploring instinct, learning, and culture. Looking more widely at behavioural ecology, he also considers some aspects of human behaviour. 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.

*American Legal History: A Very Short Introduction* G. Edward White 2014 A concise examination of the central role of legal decisions in shaping key social issues explores topics ranging from Native American affairs and slavery to business and home life as well as how criminal and civil offenses have been addressed in positive and negative ways. Original.

*Biogeography: A Very Short Introduction* Mark V. Lomolino 2020-07-23 Biogeography is the study of geographic variation in all characteristics of life - ranging from genetic, morphological and behavioural variation among regional populations of a species, to geographic trends in diversity of entire communities across our planet's surface. From the ancient hunters and gatherers to the earliest naturalists, Charles Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, and scientists today, the search for patterns in life has provided insights that proved invaluable for understanding the natural world. And many, if not most, of the compelling kaleidoscope of patterns in biological diversity make little sense unless placed in an explicit geographic context. The Very Short Introduction explains the historical development of the field of biogeography, its fundamental tenets, principles and tools, and the invaluable insights it provides for understanding the diversity of life in the natural world. As Mark Lomolino shows, key questions such as where species occur, how they vary from place to place, where their ancestors occurred, and how they spread across the globe, are essential for us to develop effective strategies for conserving the great menagerie of life across our planet. 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.

*Time: A Very Short Introduction* Jenann Ismael 2021-10-28 What is time? What does it mean for time to pass? Is it possible to travel in time? What is the difference between the past and future? Until the work of Newton, these questions were purely topics of philosophical speculation. Since then we've learned a great deal about time, and its study has moved from a subject of philosophical reflection to instead became part of the subject matter of physics. This Very Short Introduction introduces readers to the current physical understanding of the direction of time, from the Second Law of Thermodynamics to the emergence of complexity and life. Jenann Ismael charts the line of development in physical theory from Newton, via Einstein's Theory of Relativity, to the current day. Einstein's innovations led to a vision of time very different from the familiar time of everyday sense. In this new vision, time is one of the dimensions in which the universe is extended alongside the spatial dimensions. The universe appears as a static block of events, in which there is no more a difference between past and future than there is between east and west. Discussing the

controversy and philosophical confusion which surrounded the reception of this new vision, Ismael also covers the contemporary mixture of statistical mechanics, cognitive science, and phenomenology that point the way to reconciling the familiar time of everyday sense with the vision of time presented in Einstein's theories. Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring 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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**Fire: A Very Short Introduction** Andrew C. Scott 2020-06-25 Fire is rarely out of the headlines, from large natural wildfires raging across the Australian or Californian countrysides to the burning of buildings such as the disasters of Grenfell tower and Notre Dame. Fire on these scales can represent a serious risk to human life and property. But the advent of fire made and controlled by humans also represented a crucial point in our evolution, allowing us to cook our food, forge our weapons, and warm our homes. This Very Short Introduction covers the fundamentals of fire, whether wild or under human control, starting with the basics of ignition, combustion, and fuel. Andrew Scott considers both natural wildfires and the role of humans in making and suppressing fire. Despite frightening reports of wildfire destruction, he also shows how landscape fires have been part of our planet's history for 400 million years, and do not always have to be extinguished. He also considers the problem of fires in urban settings, including new ways to prevent fires. The cost of wildfire can be steep - as well as the burning, post-fire erosion and flooding can have a great impact on both humans and the environment. It can also have a lasting effect in shaping ecosystems and plant life. Scott ends by examining the relationship between fire and the climate, and considering the future of wildfire in a warming world. 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.

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 billion years ago to the extraordinary diversity of species around the globe today.

The Ice Age Jamie Woodward 2014 "In an era of warming climate, the study of the ice age past is now more important than ever. This book examines the wonders of the Quaternary ice age - to show how ice age landscapes and ecosystems were repeatedly and rapidly transformed as plants, animals,

and humans reorganized their worlds." --Publisher.

Sociolinguistics: A Very Short Introduction John Edwards 2013-07-25 This Very Short Introduction deals with the social life of language, presenting a succinct account of the most important aspects - both "micro" and "macro" - of sociolinguistics, such as language variation, language attitudes, and the relationship between language and identity.

Genomics: A Very Short Introduction John M. Archibald 2018-03-12 Genomics has transformed the biological sciences. From epidemiology and medicine to evolution and forensics, the ability to determine an organism's complete genetic makeup has changed the way science is done and the questions that can be asked of it. Its most celebrated achievement was the Human Genome Project, a technologically challenging endeavor that took thousands of scientists around the world 13 years and over 3 billion US dollars to complete. In this Very Short Introduction John Archibald explores the science of genomics and its rapidly expanding toolbox. Sequencing a human genome now takes only a few days and costs as little as \$1,000. The genomes of simple bacteria and viruses can be sequenced in a matter of hours on a device that fits in the palm of your hand. The resulting sequences can be used to better understand our biology in health and disease and to 'personalize' medicine. Archibald shows how the field of genomics is on the cusp of another quantum leap; the implications for science and society are profound. 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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Developmental Biology: A Very Short Introduction Lewis Wolpert 2011-08-25 "A concise account of what we know about development discusses the first vital steps of growth and explores one of the liveliest areas of scientific research."--P. [2] of cover.

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.

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

HUMAN EVOLUTION : A VERY SHORT INTRODUCTION. WOOD BERNARD. 2013

**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.

**Prehistory** Chris Gosden 2018 Recent archaeological discoveries from China and central Asia have changed our understanding of how human civilization developed in the period of some 4 million years before the start of written history. In this new edition of his Very Short Introduction, Chris Gosden explores the current theories on the ebb and flow of human cultural variety.

*American Women's History: A Very Short Introduction* Susan Ware 2015-02-15 In 1607, Powhatan teenager Pocahontas first encountered English settlers when John Smith was brought to her village as a captive. In 1920, the ratification of the 19th Amendment gave women the constitutional right to vote. And in 2012, the U.S. Marine Corps lifted its ban on women in active combat, allowing female marines to join the sisterhood of American women who stand at the center of this country's history. Between each of these signal points runs the multi-layered experience of American women, from pre-colonization to the present. In *American Women's History: A Very Short Introduction* Susan Ware emphasizes the richly diverse experiences of American women as they were shaped by factors such as race, class, religion, geographical location, age, and sexual orientation. The book begins with a comprehensive look at early America, with gender at the center, making it clear that women's experiences were not always the same as men's, and looking at the colonizers as well as the colonized, along with issues of settlement, slavery, and regional variations. She shows how women's domestic and waged labor shaped the Northern economy, and how slavery affected the lives of both free and enslaved Southern women. Ware then moves through the tumultuous decades of industrialization and urbanization, describing the 19th century movements led by women (temperance, moral reform, and abolitionism), She links women's experiences to the familiar events of the Civil War, the Progressive Era, and World War I, culminating in 20th century female activism for civil rights and successive waves of feminism. Ware explores the major transformations in women's history, with attention to a wide range of themes from political activism to popular culture, the work force and the family. From Anne Bradstreet to Ida B. Wells to Eleanor Roosevelt, this Very Short Introduction recognizes women as a force in American history and, more importantly, tells women's history as American history. At the core of Ware's narrative is the recognition that gender - the changing historical and cultural constructions of roles assigned to the biological differences of the sexes - is central to understanding the history of American women's lives, and to the history of the United States. 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.

Plants: A Very Short Introduction Timothy Walker 2012-04-26 Plants form a fundamental element of the biosphere, and the evolution of plants has directly affected the evolution of animal life and the evolution of the Earth's climate. Plants have also become essential to humans not only in the

form of cereal crops, fruit, and vegetables, but in their many other uses in wood and paper, and in providing medicines. Their aesthetic importance too in our parks and gardens as well as in wildflower meadows and great forests should not be underestimated. In this Very Short Introduction Timothy Walker, Director of the Botanical Gardens in Oxford, provides a concise account of the nature of plants, their variety, their evolution, and their importance and uses, stressing the need and efforts for their conservation for future generations. 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.

**Food: A Very Short Introduction** John Krebs 2013-09-26 In this Very Short Introduction, Prof Lord John Krebs provides a brief history of human food, from our remote ancestors 3 million years ago to the present day. By looking at the four great transitions in human food - cooking, agriculture, processing, and preservation - he considers a variety of questions, including why people like some kinds of foods and not others; how your senses contribute to flavour; the role of genetics in our likes and dislikes; and the differences in learning and culture around the world. In turn he considers aspects of diet, nutrition, and health, and the disparity between malnutrition in some places and overconsumption in others. Finally, he considers some of the big issues - the obesity crisis, sustainable agriculture, the role of new technologies such as genetic modification of crops, and ends by posing the question: how will it be possible to feed a population of 9 billion in 2050, without destroying our natural environment? 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 Rights** Andrew Clapham 2015 Focusing on highly topical issues such as torture, arbitrary detention, privacy, and discrimination, this book will help readers to understand for themselves the controversies and complexities behind human rights.

Anthropocene: A Very Short Introduction Erle C. Ellis 2018-02-22 The proposal that the impact of humanity on the planet has left a distinct footprint, even on the scale of geological time, has recently gained much ground. Global climate change, shifting global cycles of the weather, widespread pollution, radioactive fallout, plastic accumulation, species invasions, the mass extinction of species - these are just some of the many indicators that we will leave a lasting record in rock, the scientific basis for recognizing new time intervals in Earth's history. The Anthropocene, as the proposed new epoch has been named, is regularly in the news. Even with such robust evidence, the proposal to formally recognize our current time as the Anthropocene remains controversial both inside and outside the scholarly world, kindling intense debates. The reason is clear. The Anthropocene represents far more than just another interval of geologic time. Instead, the Anthropocene has emerged as a powerful new narrative, a concept through which age-old questions about the meaning of nature and even the nature of humanity are being revisited and radically revised. This Very Short Introduction explains the science behind the Anthropocene and the many proposals about when to mark its beginning: the nuclear tests of the 1950s? The beginnings of agriculture? The origins of humans as a species? Erle Ellis considers the many ways that the Anthropocene's "evolving paradigm" is reshaping the sciences, stimulating the humanities, and foregrounding the politics of life on a planet transformed by humans. The Anthropocene remains a work in progress. Is this the story of an unprecedented planetary disaster? Or of newfound wisdom and redemption? Ellis offers an insightful discussion of our role in shaping the planet, and how this will influence our future on many fronts. 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

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*Philosophy of Biology* Samir Okasha 2019-11-07 Over the last forty years the philosophy of biology has emerged as an important sub-discipline of the philosophy of science. Covering some of science's most divisive topics, such as philosophical issues in genetics, it also encompasses areas where modern biology has increasingly impinged on traditional philosophical questions, such as free will, essentialism, and nature vs nurture. In this Very Short Introduction Samir Okasha outlines the core issues with which contemporary philosophy of biology is engaged. Offering a whistle-stop tour of the history of biology, he explores key ideas and paradigm shifts throughout the centuries, including areas such as the theory of evolution by natural selection; the concepts of function and design; biological individuality; and the debate over adaptationism. Throughout Okasha makes clear the relevance of biology for understanding human beings, human society, and our place in the natural world, and the importance of engaging with these issues. 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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**Extinction: A Very Short Introduction** Paul B. Wignall 2019-06-27 Most people are familiar with the dodo and the dinosaur, but extinction has occurred throughout the history of life, with the result that nearly all the species that have ever existed are now extinct. Today, species are disappearing at an ever increasing rate, whilst past losses have occurred during several great crises. Issues such as habitat destruction, conservation, climate change, and, during major crises, volcanism and meteorite impact, can all contribute towards the demise of a group. In this Very Short Introduction, Paul B. Wignall looks at the causes and nature of extinctions, past and present, and the factors that can make a species vulnerable. Summarising what we know about all of the major and minor extinction events, he examines some of the greatest debates in modern science, such as the relative role of climate and humans in the death of the Pleistocene megafauna, including mammoths and giant ground sloths, and the roles that global warming, ocean acidification, and deforestation are playing in present-day extinctions. 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.

*Mammals* Thomas Stainforth Kemp 2017 Relative newcomers within the story of evolution, mammals are hugely successful and have colonized land, water, and air. Tom Kemp discusses the great diversity of mammalian species, and looks at how their very disparate characteristics, physiologies,

and behaviours are all largely driven by one unifying factor: endothermy, or warm-bloodedness.

**Savannas: A Very Short Introduction** Peter A. Furley 2016-06-16 Savannas form one of the largest and most important of the world's ecological zones. Covering one fifth of the Earth's land surface, they are home to some of the world's most iconic animals and form an extremely important global resource for plants and wildlife. However, increasing recognition of their land potential means that they are extremely vulnerable to accelerating pressures on usable land. This Very Short Introduction considers savannas as landscapes. Discussing their origin, topography, and global distribution, Peter A. Furley explores the dynamic nature of savannas and illustrates how they have shaped human evolution and movements. He goes on to discuss the unrelenting pressures that confront conservation and management and considers the future for savannas. 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.

Sexual Selection: A Very Short Introduction Marlene Zuk 2018-06-28 What is responsible for the differences between the sexes in so many animals, from the brilliant plumage of birds of paradise to the antlers on deer? And why are the traits that distinguish the sexes sometimes apparently detrimental to survival? Even when they look more or less alike, why do males and females sometimes behave differently? Questions like these have intrigued scientists and the public alike for many years, and new discoveries are showing us both how wildly variable the natural world is, and how some basic principles can help explain much of that variation. Like natural selection, sexual selection is a process that results from differential representation of genes in successive generations. Under sexual selection, however, the crucial characteristics that determine whether an individual reproduces depend on sexual competition, rather than survival ability. This Very Short Introduction considers the history of our understanding of sexual selection, from Darwin's key insights to the modern day. Considering the investment animals place on reproduction, variation in mating systems, sexual conflict, and the origin of sexual dimorphism, Marlene Zuk and Leigh Simmons discuss questions such as whether females can really choose between males on aesthetic grounds, and how sexual conflict is resolved in different species. They conclude with a consideration of the thorny question of how, and even if, sexual selection theory applies to humans. 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.

Evolution: A Very Short Introduction Brian Charlesworth 2017-06-15 Less than 450 years ago, all European scholars believed that the Earth was at 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. Even less than 150 years ago, the view that living species were the result of special creation by God was still dominant. The recognition by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace of the mechanism of evolution by natural selection has completely transformed our understanding of the living world, including our own origins. In this Very Short Introduction Brian and Deborah Charlesworth provide a clear and concise summary of the process of evolution by natural selection, and how natural selection gives rise to adaptations and eventually, over many generations, to new species. They introduce the central concepts of the field of evolutionary biology, as they have developed since Darwin and Wallace on the subject, over 140 years ago, and discuss some of the remaining questions regarding processes. They highlight the wide range of evidence for evolution, and the importance of an evolutionary understanding for instance in combating the rapid evolution of resistance by bacteria to antibiotics and of HIV to antiviral drugs. This reissue includes some key



updates to the main text and a completely updated Further Reading section. 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.

Bacteria: A Very Short Introduction Sebastian G. B. Amyes 2013-05-30 Bacteria form a fundamental branch of life. They are the oldest forms of life as we know it, and they are still the most prolific living organisms. They inhabit every part of the Earth's surface, its ocean depths, and even terrains such as boiling hot springs. They are most familiar as agents of disease, but benign bacteria are critical to the recycling of elements and all ecology, as well as to human health. In this Very Short Introduction, Sebastian Amyes explores the nature of bacteria, their origin and evolution, bacteria in the environment, and bacteria and disease. In looking at our efforts to manage co-evolving bacteria, he also considers the challenges of resistance to antibiotics. 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 Physiology: A Very Short Introduction** Jamie A. Davies 2021-05-27 Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring Physiology is the science of life, and sets out to understand how living things work and what makes them distinct from the non-living. It considers how our bodies are supplied with energy, how they maintain their internal parameters, the ways in which we gather and process information, the ways we take action, and the creation of new generations. This Very Short Introduction explores the field of human physiology, considering how the body works, senses, reacts, and defends itself. As Jamie A. Davies shows, human life (and indeed, all life) is sustained by the interplay of a wide variety of physiological mechanisms and principles. He discusses the physiological experiments and research undertaken to understand these processes, and analyses the ethical issues involved. He also considers the evolution of the scientific field itself, showing how enhanced understandings of physiological knowledge can help inform medical research and care. 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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Humour: A Very Short Introduction Noël Carroll 2014-01-23 Humour has been discovered in every known human culture and thinkers have discussed it for over two thousand years. Humour can serve many functions; it can be used to relieve stress, to promote goodwill among strangers, to dissipate tension within a fractious group, to display intelligence, and some have even claimed that it improves health and fights sickness. In this Very Short Introduction Noel Carroll examines the leading theories of humour including The Superiority Theory and The Incongruity Theory. He considers the relation of humour to emotion and cognition, and explores the value of humour, specifically in its social functions. He argues that humour, and the comic amusement that follows it, has a crucial role to play in the construction of communities, but he also demonstrates that the social aspect of humour raises questions such as 'When is humour immoral?' and 'Is laughing at immoral humour itself immoral?'. 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.

History: A Very Short Introduction John Arnold 2000-02-24 Starting with an examination of how historians work, this "Very Short Introduction" aims

to explore history in a general, pithy, and accessible manner, rather than to delve into specific periods.

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