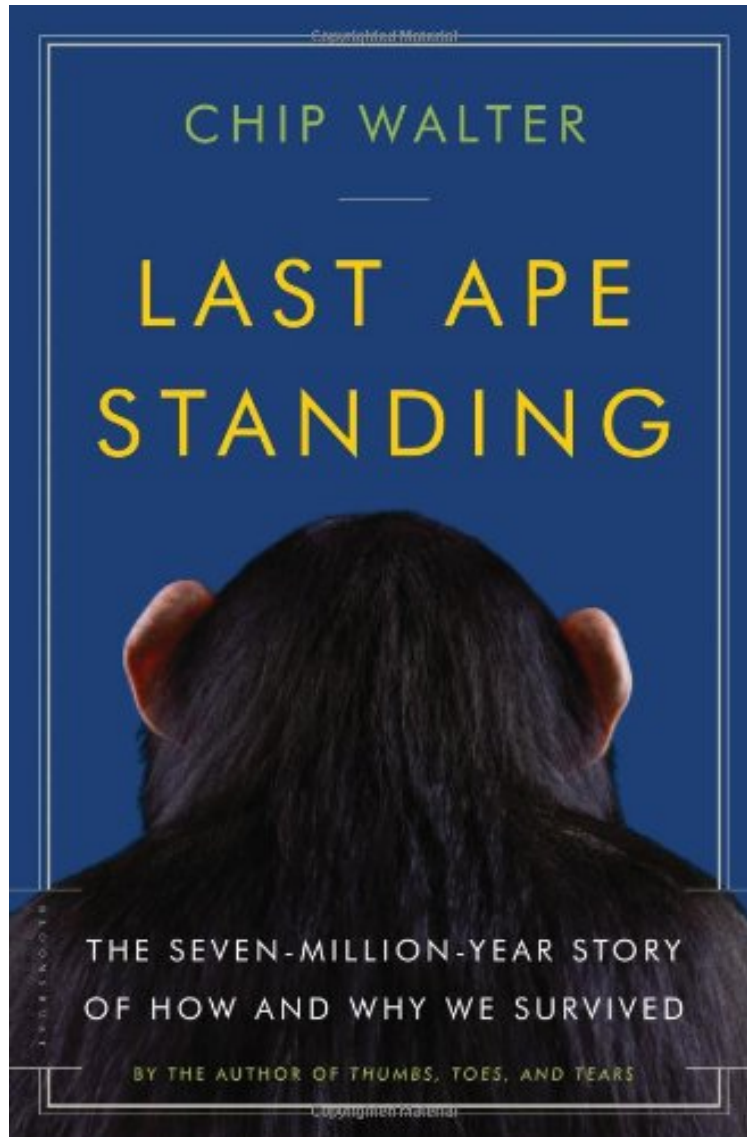


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Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived

Chip Walter

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#755338 in Books 2013-01-29 2013-01-29Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.46 x .4 x 6.42l, 1.14 #File Name: 080271756X240 pages | File size: 49.Mb

Chip Walter : Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Who knew?By jasonhadUtterly fascinating exposition of the latest theories on the evolution of modern Homo Sapiens, from the earliest fossilized traces to the present day. Not just the

how, but the why, and told in a straightforward prose unfettered by the usual 7-syllable words anthropologists love to use to convince through obfuscation and confusion. What differentiates us from our past - and from our fellow denizens of the planet. How the people we once thought of as ignorant savages, the Neanderthals, left their heritage behind for us to enjoy - through interbreeding. Most of us whose ancestry is of the northern hemisphere still carry their DNA in our cells - from one to four percent. Why childhood is so much longer for us than for our cousins the primates, and why we are born utterly helpless - as well as upside-down (or at least compared to other animals). Sadly, the author gets bogged down in the latter part of the book, expounding at great length on the mysteries of the current human brain, and in a disconcertingly repetitive manner entirely out of character. As another reviewer wrote, it is almost as if there was a word count goal and the last part of the book was written to that end rather than to the subject at hand. Psychobabble is still psychobabble, whether in the guise of paleoanthropology or of psychiatry. Enjoy! But when you get bogged down in the last chapters, don't feel you've missed anything when you close the book in frustration - you'll have read the best part.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fabulous Book
By Dale J. Horst
I hate being called a layman, but that is in fact what I am. I wanted to make a lot more money than my parents, and make it through my entire adult life without financial aid. I never became that paleoanthropologist I always wanted to be. So instead I read every book at every opportunity I can on the subject because it fascinates me. This book is fabulous, and is both understandable as well as technical. I have watched lectures by Chip Walter and he admits he is a much better writer than lecturer. He is a gifted writer, and truly takes the time to explain every point he makes in the book in clear concise terminology. I especially liked the chapter "The Voice Inside Your Head".....Fascinating.
4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wow, a GREAT Read! Entirely Fascinating and Well Researched Well Written!
By Tilly's reviews
I have to admit that I originally downloaded this book to my Kindle for two reasons, that it was a topic that my husband enjoys reading about and that it was on sale when I downloaded it...thinking he'd like it and the price was right. Forget him, as when I started reading it, I was hooked right away! Mike is going to have to (impatiently) wait to read it next as I have just a few pages yet to finish. Unlike many other reviewers, I hate giving away all the fascinating theories and scientific research plus the DNA test results that contributed to the information in this book. Lets just teasingly say...you might not exactly be WHO you thought you are as a modern humanoid. Scientific evidence is changing all the time in this field as fresh finds are made of remains and new DNA testing sheds new light on our origins. READ, LEARN and CONSIDER....and finally.... if all of our big toes start curling back underneath...we are quite possibly all in evolutionary trouble! Enough clues given...now buy it! This book is an amazing read and so well written, the author really knows how to keep the ball rolling on a topic some people might find a little boring...Boring it certainly is NOT.

Over the past 180 years scientists have sifted through evidence that at least twenty-seven human species have evolved on planet Earth. And as you may have noticed, twenty-six of them are no longer with us, done in by their environment, predators, disease, or the unfortunate shortcomings of their DNA. What enabled us to survive when so many other human species were shown the evolutionary door? Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived by acclaimed science journalist Chip Walter tells the intriguing tale of how against all odds and despite nature's brutal and capricious ways we stand here today, the only surviving humans, and the planet's most dominant species. Drawing on a wide variety of scientific disciplines, Walter reveals how a rare evolutionary phenomenon led to the uniquely long childhoods that make us so resourceful and emotionally complex. He looks at why we developed a new kind of mind and how our highly social nature has shaped our moral (and immoral) behavior. And in exploring the traits that enabled our success, he plumbs the roots of our creativity and investigates why we became self-aware in ways that no other animal is. Along the way, Last Ape Standing profiles other human species who evolved with us and who have also shaped our kind in startling ways - the Neanderthals of Europe, the "Hobbits" of Indonesia, the Denisovans of Siberia, and the recently discovered Red Deer Cave people of China, who died off just as we stood at the brink of civilizations eleven thousand years ago. Last Ape Standing is an engaging and accessible story that explores the forces that molded us into the peculiar and astonishing creature that we are.

.com QA with Chip Walter, author of Last Ape Standing Photo by Richard Kelly Photography