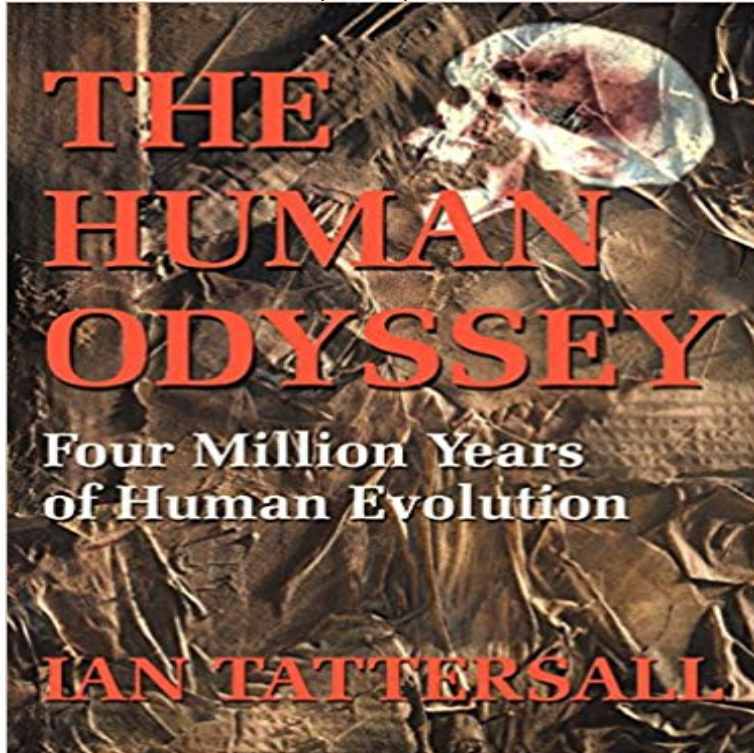


The Human Odyssey: Four Million Years of Human Evolution



This newly updated text chronicles a history of human evolution starting three and a half million years ago, when two upright figures walked together across the Laetoli desert in Tanzania, and their footsteps were captured forever in volcanic ash. Were these remarkable footprints made by one of our earliest ancestors, and what can they tell us about the human evolutionary journey? This is just one of the puzzles of the compelling story of human evolution explored in this volume. Based on the new Hall of Human Biology and Evolution at the American Museum of Natural History, the most extensive exhibition of the subject ever designed, *The Human Odyssey* examines how both significant fossil finds and startling new theories have been used by scientists to trace the path of human evolution. Here are the stories behind such famous fossil discoveries as *Gigantopithecus*, the Black Skull, Java Man, and Lucy, and the surprising clues they reveal about the date and place of human origins. Here too are the bold theories and controversies that have influenced the field of evolution, from the idea of natural selection put forth by Charles Darwin to the new role that DNA analysis plays in fossil research. Illustrated throughout with more than a hundred photographs, drawings, maps, and stunning artistic re-creations of early humans and their environment, *The Human Odyssey* is virtually a portable museum devoted to this fascinating subject. Drawing from the latest research in both the laboratory and the field, it clearly illuminates some of the most provocative questions scientists have ever asked: Where did we come from, and how did we become what we are today?

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