

Sleep A Very Short Introduction Very Short Introductions

In this provocative but balanced essay, Kenneth Minogue discusses the development of politics from the ancient world to the twentieth century. He prompts us to consider why political systems evolve, how politics offers both power and order in our society, whether democracy is always a good thing, and what future politics may have in the twenty-first century. 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.

Linguistics falls in the gap between arts and science, on the edges of which the most fascinating discoveries and the most important problems are found. Rather than following the conventional organization of many contemporary introductions to the subject, the author of this stimulating guide begins his discussion with the oldest, 'arts' end of the subject and moves chronologically through to the newest research - the 'science' aspects. A series of short thematic chapters look in turn at such areas as the prehistory of languages and their common origins, language and evolution, language in time and space (the nature of change inherent in language), grammars and dictionaries (how systematic is language?), and phonetics. Explication of the newest discoveries pertaining to language in the brain completes the coverage of all major aspects of linguistics from a refreshing and insightful angle. 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 Gothic is wildly diverse. It can refer to ecclesiastical architecture, supernatural fiction, cult horror films, and a distinctive style of rock music. It has influenced political theorists and social reformers, as well as Victorian home décor and contemporary fashion. Nick Groom shows how the Gothic has come to encompass so many meanings by telling the story of the Gothic from the ancient tribe who sacked Rome to the alternative subculture of the present day. This unique Very Short Introduction reveals that the Gothic has predominantly been a way of understanding and responding to the past. Time after time, the Gothic has been invoked in order to reveal what lies behind conventional history. It is a way of disclosing secrets, whether in the constitutional politics of seventeenth-century England or the racial politics of the United States. While contexts change, the Gothic perpetually regards the past with fascination, both yearning and horrified. It reminds us that neither societies nor individuals can escape the consequences of their actions. The anatomy of the Gothic is richly complex and perversely contradictory, and so the thirteen chapters here range deliberately widely. This is the first time that the entire story of the Gothic has been written as a continuous history: from the historians of late antiquity to the gardens of Georgian England, from the mediaeval cult of the macabre to German Expressionist cinema, from Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy to American consumer society, from folk ballads to vampires, from the past to the present. 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.

Since dyslexia was first described in the British Medical Journal in 1896, there has been debate about the definitions and diagnostic procedures used, with some casting doubt on its very existence. However, there is now a considerable body of research regarding the nature and characteristics of this relatively common learning disorder. The contemporary view of dyslexia has emerged from a century of research in medicine, psychology, and more recently neuroscience, and we now understand enough about this learning disorder to guide policy and practice. This Very Short Introduction provides an accessible overview of this exciting field of research, beginning with its history, and drawing on testimony from people living with dyslexia. Considering the potential causes of dyslexia, and looking at both genetic and environment factors, Margaret Snowling shows how cross-linguistic studies have documented the prevalence of dyslexia in different languages. Discussing the various brain scanning techniques that have been used to find out if the brains of people with dyslexia differ in structure or function from those of typical readers, Snowling moves on to weigh up various strategies and interventions which can help people living with dyslexia today. 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.

Projects

Politics: A Very Short Introduction

Linguistics: A Very Short Introduction

Artificial Intelligence: A Very Short Introduction

Being Good

The earth's daily rotation affects just about every living creature. From dawn through to dusk, there are changes in light, temperature, humidity, and rainfall. However, these changes are regular, rhythmic and, therefore, predictable. Thus, the near 24 hour circadian rhythm is innate: a genetically programmed clock that essentially ticks of its own accord. This Very Short Introduction explains how organisms can -know- the time and reveals what we now understand of the nature and operation of chronobiological processes. Covering variables such as light, the metabolism, human health, and the seasons, Foster and Kreitzman illustrate how jet lag and shift work can impact on human well-being, and consider circadian rhythms alongside a wide range of disorders, from schizophrenia to obesity. 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.

Ageing is an activity we are familiar with from an early age. In our younger years upcoming birthdays are anticipated with an excitement that somewhat diminishes as the years progress. As we grow older we are bombarded with advice on ways to overcome, thwart, resist, and, on the rare occasion, embrace, one's ageing. Have all human beings from the various historical epochs and cultures viewed aging with this same ambivalence? In this Very Short Introduction Nancy A. Pachana discusses the lifelong dynamic changes in biological, psychological, and social functioning involved in ageing. Increased lifespans in the developed and the developing world have created an urgent need to find ways to enhance our functioning and well-being in the later decades of life, and this need is reflected in policies and action plans addressing our ageing populations from the World Health Organization and the United Nations. Looking to the future, Pachana considers advancements in the provision for our ageing populations, including revolutionary models of nursing home care such as Green House nursing homes in the USA and Small Group Living homes in the Netherlands. She shows that understanding the process of ageing is not only important for individuals, but also for societies and nations, if the full potential of those entering later life is to be realised. 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.

"Sleep is one of the most important but least understood aspects of our life, wellness, and longevity ... An explosion of scientific discoveries in the last twenty years has shed new light on this fundamental aspect of our lives. Now ... neuroscientist and sleep expert Matthew Walker gives us a new understanding of the vital importance of sleep and dreaming"--Amazon.com.

This title introduces a wide array of approaches to understanding myth from varied disciplines. It uses the famous ancient myth of Adonis to analyse the ideas and individual approaches and theories of theorists such as Sigmund Freud, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Albert Camus, and Roland Barthes. This new edition considers the interactions of myth theory with cognitive science, the implications of the myth of Gaia, and the differences between story-telling and myth, as well as the future study of myth.

A Short Introduction to Ethics

Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction

Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction

Schizophrenia: A Very Short Introduction

Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction

From popular histories through to reworkings of classical subject matter by contemporary poets, dramatists, and novelists, the classical world and the masterpieces of its literature continue to fascinate readers and audiences in a huge variety of media. In this Very Short Introduction, William Allan explores what the 'classics' are and why they continue to shape our Western concepts of literature. Presenting a range of material from both Greek and Latin literature, he illustrates the variety and sophistication of these works, and considers examples from all the major genres. Ideal for the general reader interested in works of classic literature, as well as students at A-Level and University, this is a lively and lucid guide to the major authors and literary forms of the ancient period. 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.

Viruses are big news. From pandemics such as HIV, swine flu, and SARS, we are constantly being bombarded with information about new lethal infections. In this Very Short Introduction Dorothy Crawford demonstrates how clever these entities really are. From their discovery and the unravelling of their intricate structures, Crawford demonstrates how these tiny parasites are by far the most abundant life forms on the planet. With up to two billion of them in each litre of sea water, viruses play a vital role in controlling the marine environment and are essential to the ocean's delicate ecosystem. Analyzing the threat of emerging virus infections, Crawford recounts stories of renowned killer viruses such as Ebola and rabies as well as the less known bat-borne Nipah and Hendra viruses. Pinpointing wild animals as the source of the most recent pandemics, she discusses the reasons behind the present increase in potentially fatal infections, as well as evidence suggesting that long term viruses can eventually lead to cancer. By examining our lifestyle in the 21st century, Crawford looks to the future to ask whether we can ever live in harmony with viruses, and considers the ways in which we may need to adapt to prevent emerging viruses with devastating consequences. 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.

Preface -- Introduction: what is critical theory? -- The frankfurt school -- A matter of method -- Critical theory and modernism -- Alienation and reification -- Enlightened illusions -- The utopian laboratory -- The happy consciousness -- The great refusal -- From resignation to renewal -- Unfinished tasks -- Further reading -- Index What is dreaming, and what causes it? Why are dreams so strange and why are they so hard to remember? Replacing dream mystique with modern dream science, J. Allan Hobson provides a new and increasingly complete picture of how dreaming is created by the brain. Focusing on dreaming to explain the mechanisms of sleep, this book explores how the new science of dreaming is affecting theories in psychoanalysis, and how it is helping our understanding of the causes of mental illness. J. Allan Hobson investigates his own dreams to illustrate and explain some of the fascinating discoveries of modern sleep science, while challenging some of the traditionally accepted theories about the meaning of dreams. He reveals how dreaming maintains and develops the mind, why we go crazy in our dreams in order to avoid doing so when we are awake, and why sleep is not just good for health but essential for life. 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.

Babylonia: A Very Short Introduction

Myth

From Aetiology to Public Health

Dreaming

The Rhythms Of Life

The history of Ancient Babylonia in ancient Mesopotamia is epic. After playing host to three great empires, the Hammurabic and Kassite empires, and the Neo-Babylonian Empire ruled by Nebuchadnezzar, it was conquered by the Persians. Entered triumphantly by Alexander the Great, it later provided the setting for the Conqueror's deathbed. Squabbled over by his heirs, Babylonia was subsequently dominated by the Parthian and Roman empires. In this Very Short Introduction, Trevor Bryce takes us on a journey of more than 2,000 years across the history and civilization of ancient Babylonia, from the emergence of its chief city, Babylon, as a modest village on the Euphrates in the 3rd millennium BC through successive phases of triumph, decline, and resurgence until its royal capital faded into obscurity in the Roman imperial era. Exploring key historical events as well as the day-to-day life of an ancient Babylonian, Bryce provides a comprehensive guide to one of history's most profound civilizations. 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.

Explores sleep disorders, describes breakthroughs in the study of sleep, and considers the impact of modern society on it.

In this fascinating book, Harvard researcher Hobson offers an intriguing look at the nightly odyssey through the illusory world of dreams. Hobson describes how the theory of dreaming has advanced dramatically over the past 50 years, sparked by the use of EEGs in the 1950s and by recent innovations in brain imaging. 20 illustrations.

A lively introduction that combines the perspectives of philosophy, psychology and neuroscience - written by the top name in the field, Susan Blackmore.

Druids: A Very Short Introduction

Circadian Rhythms

Why We Sleep

The Biological Clocks That Control the Daily Lives of Every Living Thing

Autobiography: A Very Short Introduction

The era known as Reconstruction is one of the unhappiest times in American history. It succeeded in reuniting the nation politically after the Civil War but in little else. Among its chief failures was the inability to chart a progressive course for race relations after the abolition of slavery and rise of Jim Crow. Reconstruction also struggled to successfully manage the Southern resistance towards a Northern, free-labor pattern. But the failures cannot obscure a number of notable accomplishments, with decisive long-term consequences for American life: the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, the election of the first African American representatives to the US Congress, and the avoidance of any renewed outbreak of civil war. Reconstruction suffered from poor leadership and uncertainty of direction, but it also laid the groundwork for renewed struggles for racial equality during the Civil Rights Movement. This Very Short Introduction delves into the constitutional, political, and social issues behind Reconstruction to provide a lucid and original account of a historical moment that left an indelible mark on American social fabric. Award-winning historian Allen C. Guelzo depicts Reconstruction as a "'bourgeois revolution" -- as the attempted extension of the free-labor ideology embodied by Lincoln and the Republican Party to what was perceived as a Southern region gone astray from the Founders' intention in the pursuit of Romantic aristocracy. 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.

*Sleep: A Very Short Introduction*Oxford University Press

Happiness is an everyday term in our lives, and most of us strive to be happy. But defining happiness can be difficult. In this Very Short Introduction, Dan Haybron considers the true nature of happiness. By examining what it is, assessing its importance in our lives, and how we can (and should) pursue it, he considers the current thinking on happiness, from psychology to philosophy. Illustrating the diverse routes to happiness, Haybron reflects on contemporary ideas about the pursuit of a good life and considers the influence of social context on our satisfaction and well-being. 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.

Comparative Literature is both the past and the future of literary studies. Its history is intimately linked to the political upheavals of modernity: from colonial empire-building in the nineteenth century, via the Jewish diaspora of the twentieth century, to the postcolonial culture wars of the twenty-first century, attempts at 'comparison' have defined the international agenda of literature. But what is comparative literature? Ambitious readers looking to stretch themselves are usually intrigued by the concept, but uncertain of its implications. And rightly so, in many ways: even the professionals cannot agree on a single term, calling it comparative in English, compared in French, and comparing in German. The very term itself, when approached comparatively, opens up a Pandora's box of cultural differences. Yet this, in a nutshell, is the whole point of comparative literature. To look at literature comparatively is to realize just how much can be learned by looking over the horizon of one's own culture; it is to discover not only more about other literatures, but also about one's own; and it is to participate in the great utopian dream of understanding the way nations and languages interact. In an age that is paradoxically defined by migration and border crossing on the one hand, and by a retreat into monolingualism and monoculturalism on the other, the cross-cultural agenda of comparative literature has become increasingly central to the future of the Humanities. We are all, in fact, comparatists, constantly making connections across languages, cultures, and genres as we read. The question is whether we realise it. This Very Short Introduction tells the story of Comparative Literature as an agent of international relations, from the point of view both of scholarship and of cultural history more generally. Outlining the complex history and competing theories of comparative literature, Ben Hutchinson offers an accessible means of entry into a notoriously slippery subject, and shows how comparative literature can be like a Rorschach test, where people see in it what they want to see. Ultimately, Hutchinson places comparative literature at the very heart of literary criticism, for as George Steiner once noted, 'to read is to compare'. 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.

Viruses: A Very Short Introduction

Classical Literature: A Very Short Introduction

The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction

Dyslexia

"First published in hardback as Art Incorporated 2004"--T.p. verso.

Four o'clock in the morning, and the lights are on and still there's no way we're going to sleep, not after the film we just saw. The book we just read. Fear is one of the most primal human emotions, and one of the hardest to reason with and dispel. So why do we scare ourselves? It seems almost mad that we would frighten ourselves for fun, and yet there are thousands of books, films, games, and other forms of entertainment designed to do exactly that.As Darryl Jones shows, the horror genre is huge. Ranging from vampires, ghosts, and werewolves to mad scientists, Satanists, and deranged serial killers, the cathartic release of scaring ourselves has made its appearance in everything from Shakespearean tragedies to internet memes. Exploring the keytropes of the genre, including its monsters, its psychological chills, and its love affair with the macabre, Darryl Jones discusses why horror stories disturb us, and how society responds to literary and film representations of the gruesome and taboo. Should the enjoyment of horror be regarded withsuspicion? Are there different levels of the horrific, and should we distinguish between the commonly reviled carnage of contemporary torture porn and the culturally acceptable bloodbaths of ancient Greek tragedies?Analysing the way in which horror manifests multiple personalities, and has been used throughout history to articulate the fears and taboos of the current generation, Jones considers the continuing evolution of the genre today. As horror is mass marketed to mainstream society in the form of romanticvampires and blockbuster hits, it also continues to maintain its former shadowy presence on the edges of respectability, as banned films and violent internet phenomena push us to question both our own preconceptions and the terrifying capacity of human nature.

What is innovation? How is innovation used in business? How can we use it to succeed? Innovation - the ways ideas are made valuable - makes an important contribution to economic and social development, and is an increasingly topical issue. Not so long ago, there were no information technologies, commercial airlines, or television companies. Our parents were born into a world very different to today's, where television had yet to be invented, and there was no penicillin or frozen food. When our grandparents were born there were no internal combustion engines, aeroplanes, cinemas, or radios. In the last 150 years our world has been transformed - largely in part due to innovation. This Very Short Introduction looks at what innovation is and why it affects us so profoundly. It examines how it occurs, who stimulates it, how it is pursued, and what its outcomes are, both positive and negative. Innovation is hugely challenging and failure is common, yet it is essential to our social and economic progress. Mark Dodgson and David Gann consider the extent to which our understanding of innovation developed over the past century and how it might be used to interpret the global economy we all face in the 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.

Popular science at its most exciting: the breaking new world of chronobiology - understanding the rhythm of life in humans and all plants and animals. The entire natural world is full of rhythms. The early bird catches the worm -and migrates to an internal calendar. Dormice hibernate away the winter. Plants open and close their flowers at the same hour each day. Bees search out nectar-rich flowers day after day. There are cicadas that can breed for only two weeks every 17 years. And in humans: why are people who work anti-social shifts more illness prone and die younger? What is jet-lag and can anything help? Why do teenagers refuse to get up in the morning, and are the rest of us really 'larks' or 'owls'? Why are most people born (and die) between 3am-5am? And should patients be given medicines (and operations) at set times of day, because the body reacts so differently in the morning, evening and at night? The answers lie in our biological clocks the mechanisms which give order to all living things. They impose a structure that enables us to change our behaviour in relation to the time of day, month or year. They are reset at sunrise and sunset each day to link astronomical time with an organism's internal time.

The Unsettling Story of Horror

Ageing: A Very Short Introduction

Sleeping with the Lights On

A Very Short Introduction

The Gothic: A Very Short Introduction

Why do we need sleep? What happens when we don't get enough? From the biology and psychology of sleep and the history of sleep in science, art, and literature: to the impact of a 24/7 society and the role of society in causing sleep disruption this introduction answers everything you've ever wanted to know about sleep.

The Sikh religion has a following of over 20 million people worldwide. However,events such as the verbal and physical attacks on Sikhs just after September 11, where Sikhs were being mistaken for Muslims, suggest that the Sikh faith still remains mysterious to many. This Very Short Introduction introduces newcomers to the meaning of the Sikh religious tradition, its teachings, practices, rituals and festivals. Eleanor Nesbitt highlights and contextualizes the key threads in the history of Sikhism, from the first Gurus to martyrdom, militarization, and the

increasingly significant diaspora. Examining gender, caste, and the changes that are currently underway in the faith, Nesbitt considers contemporary Sikh identities and their role in our 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.

Every day we seem to make and act upon all kinds of free choices - but are these choices really free? Or are we compelled to act the way we do by factors beyond our control? This book looks at free will.

The applications of Artificial Intelligence lie all around us: in our homes, schools and offices, in our cinemas, in art galleries and - not least - on the Internet. The results of Artificial Intelligence have been invaluable to biologists, psychologists, and linguists in helping to understand the processes of memory, learning, and language from a fresh angle. As a concept, Artificial Intelligence has fuelled and sharpened the philosophical debates concerning the nature of the mind, intelligence, and the uniqueness of human beings. In this Very Short Introduction , Margaret A. Boden reviews the philosophical and technological challenges raised by Artificial Intelligence, considering whether programs could ever be really intelligent, creative or even conscious, and shows how the pursuit of Artificial Intelligence has helped us to appreciate how human and animal minds are possible. 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.

Film: A Very Short Introduction

Archaeology: A Very Short Introduction

Innovation: A Very Short Introduction

Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction

Critical Theory: a Very Short Introduction

Schizophrenia is the archetypal form of madness. Schizophrenia is a common disorder and has a devastating effect on sufferers and their families-patients typically hear voices in their heads and hold bizarre beliefs. The schizophrenic patient presented to the public in sensational press reports and lurid films bears little resemblance to reality of the illness. This book describes what schizophrenia is really like, how the illness progresses, and the treatments that have been applied. It also summarizes the most up-to-date knowledge available about the biological bases of this disorder. Finally it attempts to give some idea of what it is like to have schizophrenia and what this disorder tells us about the relationship between mind and brain. 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.

Dictionaries are far more than works which list the words and meanings of a language. In this Very Short Introduction Lynda Mugglestone takes a look at how dictionaries are made, considering how they reflect the dominant social and cultural assumptions of the time in which they were written.

Consciousness, 'the last great mystery for science', remains a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the world? What creates our identity? Do we really have free will? Could consciousness itself be an illusion? Exciting new developments in brain science are continuing the debates on these issues, and the field has now expanded to include biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers. This controversial book clarifies the potentially confusing arguments, and the major theories, whilst also outlining the amazing pace of discoveries in neuroscience. Covering areas such as the construction of self in the brain, mechanisms of attention, the neural correlates of consciousness, and the physiology of altered states of consciousness, Susan Blackmore highlights our latest findings. 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.

Autobiography is one of the most popular of written forms. From Casanova to Benjamin Franklin to the Kardashians, individuals throughout history have recorded their own lives and experiences. These personal writings are central to the work of literary critics, philosophers, historians and psychologists, who have found in autobiographies from across the centuries not only an understanding of the ways in which lives have been lived, but the most fundamental accounts of what it means to be a self in the world. In this Very Short Introduction Laura Marcus defines what we mean by 'autobiography', and considers its relationship with similar literary forms such as memoirs, journals, letters, diaries, and essays. Analysing the core themes in autobiographical writing, such as confession, conversion and testimony; romanticism and the journeying self; Marcus discusses the autobiographical consciousness (and the roles played by time, memory and identity), and considers the relationship between psychoanalysis and autobiography. Exploring the themes of self-portraiture and performance, Marcus also discusses the ways in which fiction and autobiography have shaped each other. 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

Sleep: A Very Short Introduction

Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams

Comparative Literature: A Very Short Introduction

Free Will: A Very Short Introduction

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.

Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring The Cold War dominated international life from the end of World War II to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. But how did the conflict begin? Why did it move from its initial origins in Postwar Europe to encompass virtually every continent? And why, after lasting so long, did the war end so suddenly and unexpectedly? Robert McMahon considers these questions and more, as well as looking at the legacy of the Cold War and its impact on international relations today. The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction is a triumph not just of the Soviet-American struggle at its heart, but also of the waves of decolonization, revolutionary nationalism, and state formation that swept the non-Western world in the wake of World War II. McMahon places the 'Hot Wars' that cost millions of lives in Korea, Vietn the larger framework of global superpower competition. He shows how the United States and the Soviet Union both became empires over the course of the Cold War, and argues that perceived security needs and fears shaped U.S. and Soviet decisions from the beginning—far more than their economic and territorial ambitions. He unpacks how these needs and fears were conditioned by the divergent cultures, ideologies, and historical experiences of the two principal contestants and their allies. Covering the years 1945-1990, this second edition uses recent scholarly available documents to offer a fuller analysis of the Vietnam War, the changing global politics of the 1970s, and the end of the Cold War. 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.

It is not only in our dark hours that scepticism, relativism, hypocrisy, and nihilism dog ethics. Whether it is a matter of giving to charity, or sticking to duty, or insisting on our rights, we can be confused, or be paralysed by the fear that our principles are groundless. Many are a world science has unmasked us as creatures fated by our genes to be selfish and tribalistic, or competitive and aggressive. Simon Blackburn, author of the best-selling Think, structures this short introduction around these and other threats to ethics. Confronting seven different image as moral, well-behaved creatures, he charts a course through the philosophical quicksands that often engulf us. Then, turning to problems of life and death, he shows how we should think about the meaning of life, and how we should mistrust the sound-bite sized absolute moral debates. Finally he offers a critical tour of the ways the philosophical tradition has tried to provide foundations for ethics, from Plato and Aristotle through to contemporary debates.

Sleep disturbances and sleep deprivation are increasingly common in modern society. Epidemiological methods of investigation have shown that sleep deprivation is associated with a variety of chronic conditions and health outcomes. Sleep medicine is a rapidly growing field of concern affecting people across their lifespan. Relevant to a wide range of specialities including respiratory medicine, neurology, cardiology, and psychiatry, sleep also has a significant impact on the study of epidemiology, public health, and preventive medicine. Sleep, Health, and Society provides epidemiological evidence linking sleep deprivation and disruption to several chronic conditions, and explores the public health implications with the view to developing preventive strategies. The new edition of Sleep, Health, and Society provides up-to-date information on recently published sleep medicine. Fully updated to reflect new research and data, as well as additional new chapters exploring eating patterns, nutrition, pregnancy, cancer, pain, and CBT in relation to sleep. Written by leading experts in the field of sleep medicine, Sleep, Health, and Society is ideal for professionals in epidemiology and public health. The research presented would also be valuable to respiratory physicians, neurologists, cardiologists, and psychiatrists who are interested in the impact of sleep disturbances and disorders.

Reconstruction: a Very Short Introduction

Happiness: A Very Short Introduction

Sleep

Sleep, Health, and Society

Dictionaries: A Very Short Introduction

"In this Very Short Introduction Andrew Davies looks at how projects have developed since the industrial revolution to create the human-built world in which we live, work, and play. Considering some of our greatest endeavours such as the Erie Canal, Apollo Moon landing, Japanese product development, and Chinese ecocity projects, Davies identifies how projects are organized and managed to design and produce large and complex systems, cope with fast changing conditions, and deal with the immense uncertainties required to create breakthrough innovations in products and services. He concludes by considering how projects could be organized to address the challenges facing the post-industrial society of the 21st century"--Amazon.com.

This entertaining Very Short Introduction reflects the enduring popularity of archaeology - a subject which appeals as a pastime, career, and academic discipline, encompasses the whole globe, and surveys 2.5 million years. From deserts to jungles, from deep caves to mountain tops, from pebble tools to satellite photographs, from excavation to abstract theory, archaeology interacts with nearly every other discipline in its attempts to reconstruct the past. In this new edition, Paul Bahn brings the text up to date, including information about new discoveries and interpretations in the field, and highlighting the impact of developments such as the potential use of DNA and stable isotopes in teeth, as well the effect technology and science are having on archaeological exploration. 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.

Offers a wealth of insight into the paradoxical nature of film, considering its role and impact on society in the 20th century as well as its future in the digital age. Original.

Who were the Druids? What do we know about them? Do they still exist today? The Druids first came into focus in Western Europe - Gaul, Britain, and Ireland - in the second century BC. They are a popular subject; they have been known and discussed for over 2,000 years and few figures flit so elusively through history. They are enigmatic and puzzling, partly because of the lack of knowledge about them has resulted in a wide spectrum of interpretations. Barry Cunliffe takes the reader through the evidence relating to the Druids, trying to decide what can be said and what can't be said about them. He examines why the nature of the druid caste changed quite dramatically over time, and how successive generations have interpreted the phenomenon in very different ways. 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.