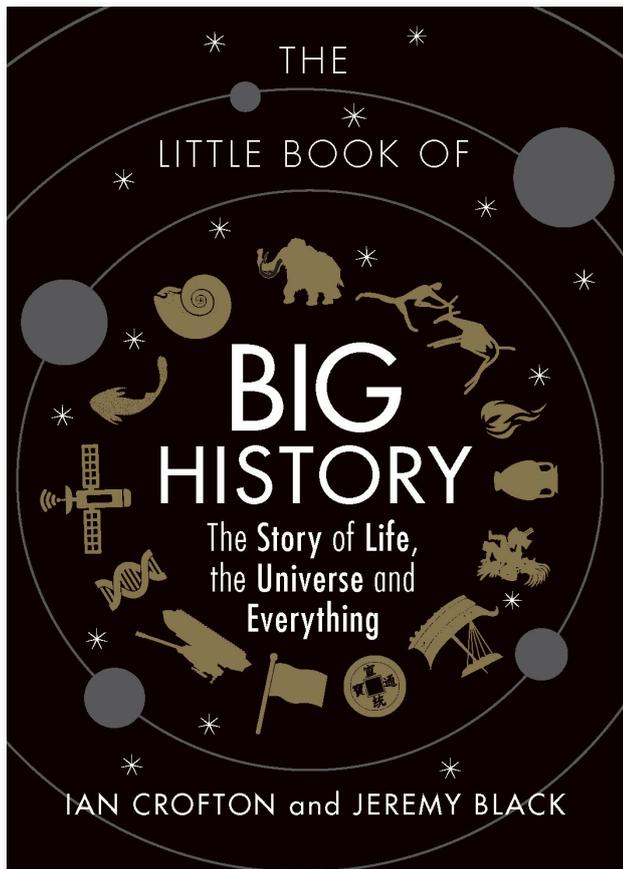


THE LITTLE BOOK OF BIG HISTORY

The Story of Life, the Universe and Everything

IAN CROFTON and JEREMY BLACK

A new, fresh look at our history on a 'macro' scale, using Bill Gates' Big History approach, charting billions of years of development from the Big Bang to the present day



From the Big Bang to the future of our planet, *The Little Book of Big History* divides history into manageable but comprehensive time frames, encompassing the cosmos, the stars, life and everything in between.

Big History is the attempt to understand and condense the entire story of the cosmos, from the Big Bang to the current day. Combining methods from history, astronomy, physics and biology to draw together the big story arcs of how the universe was created, why planets formed and how life developed, this creates a unique perspective from which to understand the place of mankind in the universe. Excited by the alternative 'framework for all knowledge' that is offered by this approach, Bill Gates is funding the Big History Project, which aims to bring the subject to a wider audience around the world.

The Little Book of Big History breaks down the main themes of Big History into highly informative and accessible parts for all readers to enjoy. By giving a truly complete timeline of world events, this book shines a whole different light on history as we learned it and makes us think of our history – and our future – in a very different way.

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Ian Crofton was formerly editor-in-chief of *The Guinness Encyclopaedia*, and has written a wide range of other general reference books, including *Science without the Boring Bits*, *Brewer's Britain and Ireland* and *Brewer's Dictionary of Modern Phrase and Fable* (both with John Ayto), and the Quercus bestseller *World History: 50 Episodes You Really Need to Know*. A polymath, with a gift for condensing complex narratives into highly readable and entertaining texts, he is the perfect guide to an increasingly popular approach to history.

Jeremy Black is a professor of History at Exeter University. He is also a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of America and the West at the Foreign Policy Research Institute based in Philadelphia. He is the author of a number of history books and is the most prolific historical scholar of our age.

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