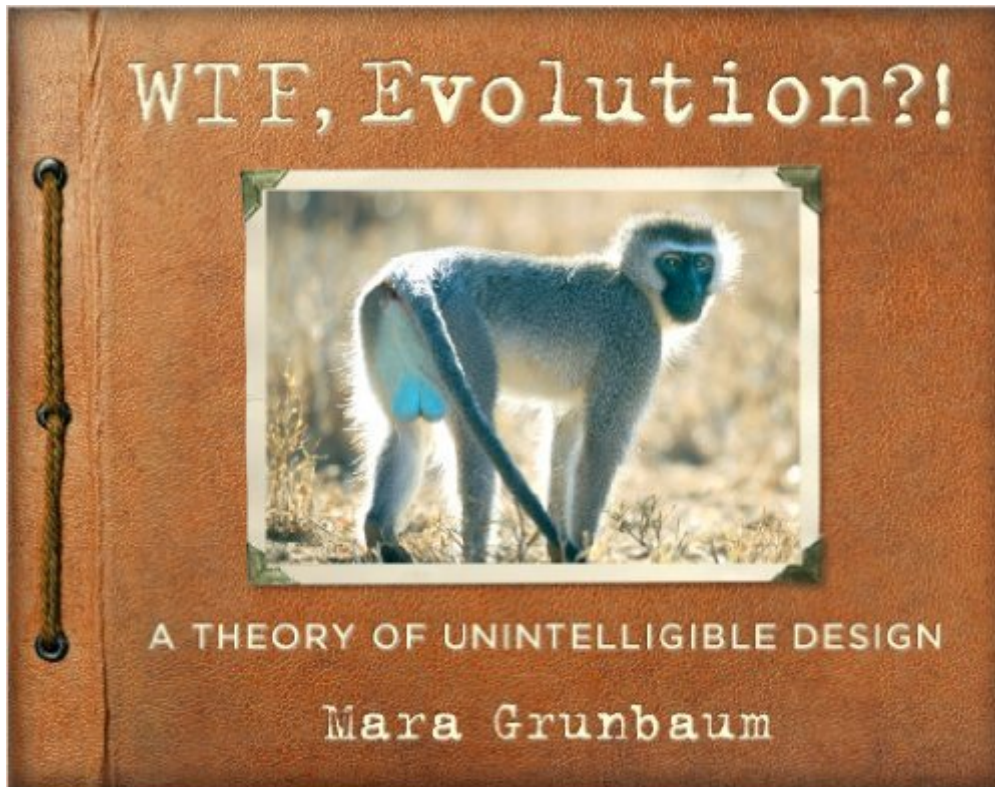


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WTF, Evolution?!: A Theory Of Unintelligible Design



Synopsis

We all have our off days. Why should Evolution be any different? Maybe Evolution got carried away with an idea that was just a little too crazy—like having the Regal Horned Lizard defend itself by shooting three-foot streams of blood from its eyes. Or maybe Evolution ran out of steam (Memo to Evolution: The Irrawaddy Dolphin looks like a prototype that should have been left on the drawing board). Or maybe Evolution was feeling cheeky—a fish with hands? Joke™s on you, Red Handfish! Or maybe Evolution simply goofed up: How else to explain the overgrown teeth of the babirusas that curl backward over their face? Oops. Mara Grunbaum is a very smart, very funny science writer who celebrates the best—or, really, the worst—of Evolution™s blunders. Here are more than 100 outlandish mammals, reptiles, insects, fish, birds, and other creatures whose very existence leaves us shaking our heads and muttering WTF?! Ms. Grunbaum™s especially brilliant stroke is to personify Evolution as a well-meaning but somewhat oblivious experimenter whose conversations with a skeptical narrator are hilarious. For almost 4 billion years, Evolution has produced a nonstop parade of inflatable noses, bizarre genitalia, and seriously awkward necks. What a comedian!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book presents around 101 unusual real-world creatures that are the product of billions of years of evolution. The most bizarre looking and behaving animals (and a few plants) that the author could find. I was impressed because nearly half the species in the book were ones I'd never heard of before, so it was pretty exciting to see all these creatures that look like something from an Avatar

movie sequel but which are actually real. It's presented mostly as a dialog with an anthropomorphized Evolution. Here's an example of the style: "New idea!" "Mm hmm." "Floppy, inflatable nose... ON AN ANTELOPE!" "Evolution, are you taking this seriously at all?" This actually isn't as annoying as you might think, and the text is well written. It's light and silly and makes the book completely approachable to someone who might otherwise get bored reading a bunch of details that might be interesting only to a scientist. Just don't expect a serious scientific work. This is a picture book that basically makes fun of funny-looking animals. There are also short chapter introductions (the book is roughly organized into groups like "Awkward Solutions", "Dirty Jokes", etc.) and the occasional fact-boxes with greater detail about a creature's evolutionary oddity. In case you're wondering, this is a pro-evolution book in that the author clearly believes in evolution and is not making fun of the idea of evolution itself. That said, you could change the word Evolution to God throughout the book and it would be just as funny. The pictures are very good and the quality of the printing is excellent.

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