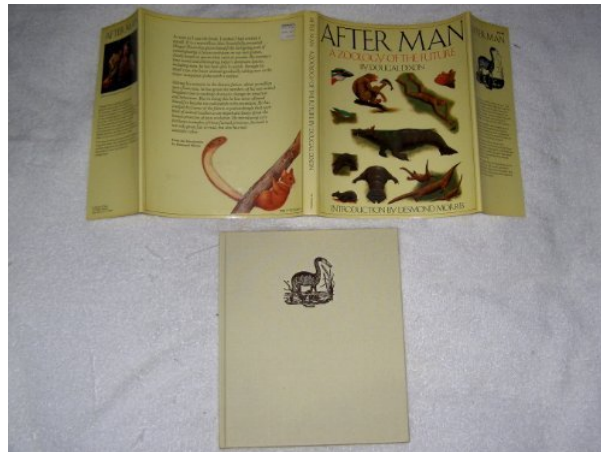
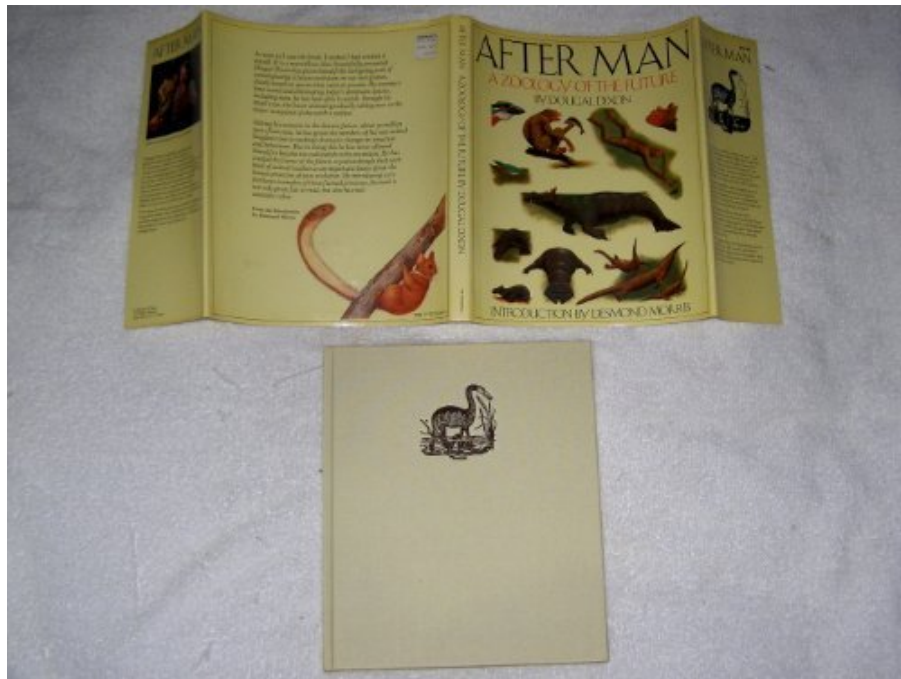


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Review

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What exotic creatures does tomorrow hold? Dougal Dixon's classic work of speculative anthropology blends science and fantasy in a stunning zoology of the future.

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Most helpful customer reviews

18 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

Almost like a science book...

By Michael Valdivielso

What would happen if mankind disappeared and the animals of Earth went back to following the rules of evolution? This book will show you. Each part of the book deals with another region of the Earth; deserts, glasslands, polar regions and so on. See meat-eating predators evolved from rats and bats, large grazers and browsers developed from fast breeding rabbits and the sea going creatures descended from penguins.

Like the book 'Man After Man', the book starts off with science chapters that in this case do their best to explain evolution, the food chain and the history of life on Earth.

Unlike 'Man After Man' it is not set up like a story, but a true non-fiction text book, like one you might have in a class room or while out camping. It also has maps and gives you information on the environments and what changes have happened to the Earth during the 50 million years. With just over 120 pages and full of color pictures, I wish there had been more! 'Man After Man' felt longer because it had more text and less pictures.

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Creative, educational, and just plain fun!

By Amazon Customer

"After Man" is one of the most engaging, creative books I have ever had the pleasure of reading. While one might think from its outlandish illustrations that it is a book for children, this is simply not the case. That's not to say a ten or eleven year old wouldn't enjoy this book, but there's plenty an adult can take away from it as well.

Beginning with a basic review of the principles of biology and evolution, Dixon proceeds to apply them across a range of environments on an Earth 50 million years removed from mankind. The result is a menagerie of remarkable creatures. Remarkable in that they are frequently unique, even bizarre, but even more remarkable because they represent the result of a familiar creature's evolution. Dixon's world isn't a fantasyland, every creature in it holds true to the principles he so effectively explains in the first chapter. Moreover, they all fill an important ecological niche; he hasn't created 150 pages of carnivores. Rather, he presents a balanced, albeit limited, ecosystem that sheds light on the state of our own environment today.

Beautifully illustrated and highly engaging, "After Man" is a must read for anyone interested in evolution and anthropology. Furthermore, this book is educational without being heavy handed. One by no means needs to be an expert to learn from and enjoy this very unique work.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Beautiful *and* Intelligent

By Jedidiah Carosaari

I've been sharing this book with my biology students as something to read when they're done with tests. It is an excellent tool for grasping the foundations of evolution. Dixon overviews the basics of evolutionary theory in clear and precise language at the beginning, and then provides amazingly beautiful (and in some cases, nightmarish) illustrations of what the future might hold for us. Or rather, not for us, since he posits that our species dies out, which is admittedly a little depressing. Similarly to Vonnegut's Galapagos, Dixon hypothesizes that a large brain might not actually be an evolutionary advantage, but rather a disadvantage. Through the disappearance of humanity he shows how our destruction of the environment is causing wholesale destruction of countless species, and causing damage to our own. It is only when our species disappears, and the earth has 50 million years to recover, that evolution can continue again.

I love the drawings, particular of naked Sandsharks that look like something from the spice worms of Dune, Striger cats that have prehensile tails and grasping paws, Predator Rats, Swimming Monkeys, the penguin become 12 meter whale-like plankton-eating Vortex, Slobbers who catch insects with their slobber, and look like a marsupial bundle of moss, and bipedal walking screaming 1.5m tall bats, the Night Stalkers. Some of

these ideas may sound outlandish- a good number of them certainly are. But the best part is Dixon gives solid evolutionary theory for how each would evolve, dictated by a changing environment and the raw material of previous genetic code. So we get classic island gigantism and the freedom of evolution on islands. We get the foreseeable continual development of symbiosis between antelopes and tick birds, such that now the tick birds nest in a special dorsal cleft on the antelope. And those animals that are the most successful today, such as the rodents, insectivores, and lagomorphs (especially rats and rabbits) are the ones with the greatest opportunity for diversity in the future.

I would highly recommend this book for any student of evolution. It's not fact; it's simply based on sound theory. It's the best kind of science fiction, as it all could happen. It's certainly fiction, but more than fiction, as it will help you contemplate the foundational truths of evolution.

Future Evolution

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