The human body is thought of conventionally as a biological entity, with its longevity, morbidity, size, and even appearance determined by genetic factors immune to the influence of society or culture. Since the mid-1980s, however, there has been a rising awareness of how our bodies, and our perception of them, are influenced by the social, cultural, and material contexts in which humans live. Drawing on studies of sex and gender, education, governance, the economy, and religion, The Body: A Very Short Introduction demonstrates how our physical being, or embodiment, allows us to affect our material and virtual world, while enabling governments to shape and direct our thoughts and actions.

Feminism: A Very Short Introduction
Margaret Walters

Feminism: A Very Short Introduction provides an historical account of feminism, exploring its earliest roots as well as key issues including voting rights, the liberation of the sixties, and its relevance today. How much have women's lives really changed? In the West women still come up against the ‘glass ceiling’ at work, most earning considerably less than their male counterparts. What are we to make of the now commonplace insistence that feminism deprives men of their rights and dignities? And how does one tackle the issue of female emancipation in different cultural and economic environments — in, for example, the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent, and Africa?
Sexuality: A Very Short Introduction focuses on the social, political, and psychological aspects of sexuality to explore what shapes our sexuality, and how our attitudes to sex have in turn shaped the wider world. The assumptions we have about what is ‘normal’ in sexuality, in reality, vary widely across time and place: from sex education, HIV/AIDS, and eugenics, to religious doctrine, gay rights, and feminism. What shapes our sexuality? Is it a product of our genes, or of society, culture, and politics? How have concepts of sexuality and sexual norms changed over time? How have feminist theories, religion, and HIV/AIDS affected our attitudes to sex?