Human Evolution: A Very Short Introduction
Bernard Wood

Human Evolution: A Very Short Introduction traces the history of palaeoanthropology from its beginnings in the 18th century to the very latest fossil finds. In this new edition it discusses how ancient DNA studies have revolutionized how we view the recent (post-550,000 years ago) human evolution, and the process of speciation. The combination of ancient and modern human DNA has contributed to discoveries of new taxa, as well as the suggestion of ‘ghost’ taxa whose fossil records still remain to be discovered. Considering the contributions of related sciences such as palaeoclimatology, geochronology, systematics, genetics, and developmental biology, this VSI explores our latest understandings of our own evolution.

Social and Cultural Anthropology: A Very Short Introduction
John Monaghan and Peter Just

What is unique about human beings? How are groups of people formed and what holds them together? What is the nature of belief, economic exchange, the self? Social and Cultural Anthropology: A Very Short Introduction provides an account of some of the discipline's guiding principles and methodology. It begins by discussing the most important contributions of anthropology to modern thought: its investigation of culture as a distinctively human characteristic, its doctrine of cultural relativism, and its methodology of fieldwork and ethnography. Drawing on fieldwork examples from Mexico and Indonesia, the specific ways in which social and cultural anthropology have advanced our understanding of human society and culture are examined.