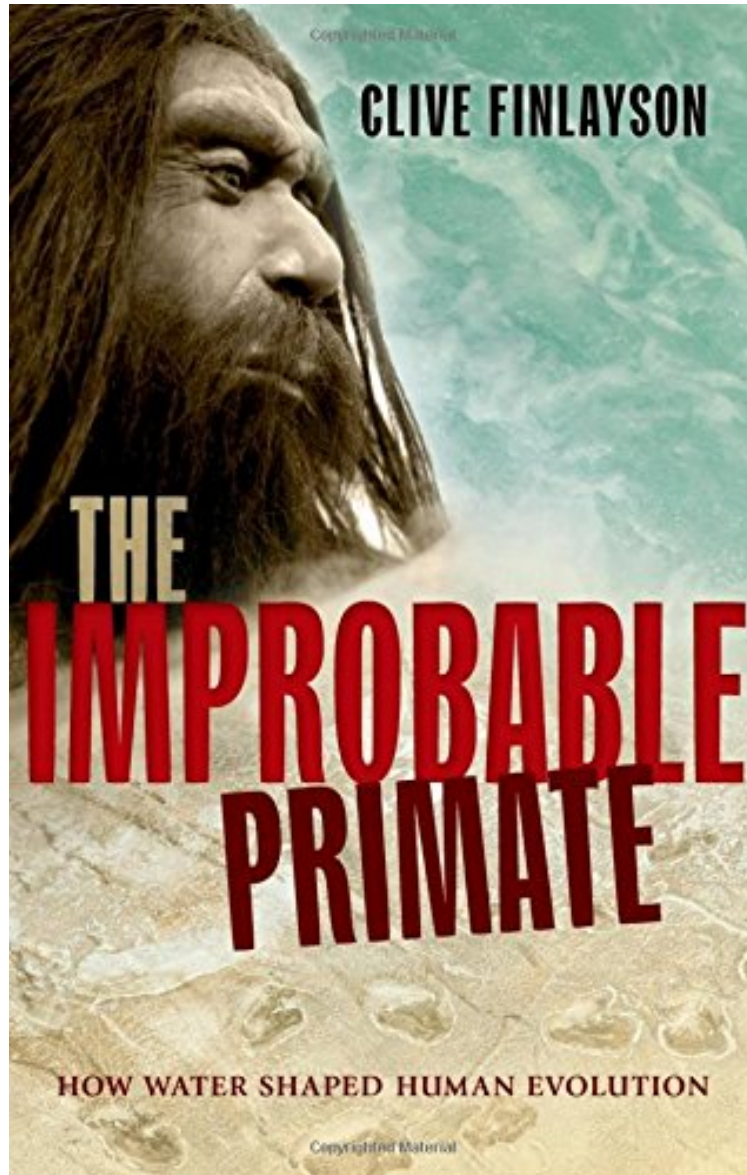


The Improbable Primate: How Water Shaped Human Evolution

Clive Finlayson

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Clive Finlayson : The Improbable Primate: How Water Shaped Human Evolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Improbable Primate: How Water Shaped Human Evolution:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Read this book, yes really.By kioreHaving read the authors previous work "The Humans Who Went Extinct" I was keen to read this one and was not disappointed.A very good overview

with up to date information, not exactly out of africa denialism, but a challenge to some of those assumptions. The premise that water access was a powerful shaping force for both human evolution and migration is well argued. If you are interested in human evolution and migration this is a must read, and if you are not maybe you will become so after reading this book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The improbable primates By Stuart W. Crosby
Finlayson does it better than any other scientist I have read on this subject. He gives credit where it is due, states his position and defends it appropriately..... he is concise and does not get himself trapped as others do..... thanks Clive for great reads!!!! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fair book By Bernard Lavallee
I like the author and all his past volumes but this one is a reach. To claim that water was the driver of evolution is pretty much of a stretch, at least for me. That early man, as we do now, needed water to survive is stating the obvious. Aside from that the book is a pretty good summary of human evolution.

In *The Improbable Primate*, Clive Finlayson takes an ecological approach to our evolution, considering the origins of modern humans within the context of a drying climate and changing landscapes. Finlayson argues that environmental change, particularly availability of water, played a critical role in shaping the direction of human evolution, contributing to our spread and success. He asserts that our ancestors carved a niche for themselves by leaving the forest and forcing their way into a long-established community of carnivores in a tropical savannah as climate changes opened up the landscape. They took their chance at high noon, when most other predators were asleep. Adapting to this new lifestyle by shedding their hair and developing an active sweating system to keep cool, being close to fresh water was vital. As the climate dried, our ancestors, already bipedal, became taller and slimmer, more adept at travelling farther in search of water. The challenges of seeking water in a drying landscape moulded the minds and bodies of early humans, and directed their migrations and eventual settlements. In this fresh and provocative view of a seven-million-year evolutionary journey, Finlayson demonstrates the radical implications for the interpretation of fossils and technologies and shows that understanding humans within an ecological context provides insights into the emergence and spread of *Homo sapiens* worldwide.

"Did water make people human? Mr Finlayson certainly makes a convincing case." -- *The Economist*
"The author provides a wealth of evidence for his view, albeit evidence that could also support alternative hypotheses. The case is carefully constructed and written in accessible prose. This is a useful addition to the ongoing exploration of the causal factors in the evolution and migration of the genus *Homo*." -- *The Quarterly of Biology*
About the Author
Clive Finlayson is a noted expert on the Neanderthals and has been researching their final stand in Gibraltar. He is Director of the Gibraltar Museum and Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto, having trained in Oxford as an evolutionary ecologist. His previous books include *Neanderthals and Modern Humans: An Ecological and Evolutionary Perspective* and *The Humans Who Went Extinct*.