

The surprising evolutionary links between our big toe, thumb, pharynx, and the human emotions of love, sadness, and joy.

Among the countless attributes that separate us from the rest of the animal kingdom, six stand out—our big toe, opposable thumb, oddly shaped pharynx, and our abilities to laugh, kiss, and cry. Though seemingly unconnected, they are actually closely linked, each marking a fork in the evolutionary road where we went one way and the rest of the animal kingdom went another.

Drawing on complexity theory, the latest brain-scanning techniques, and new insights from fields as diverse as anthropology, artificial intelligence, and robotics, *Thumbs, Toes, and Tears* reveals a creature that was shaped as much by its social relationships and internal self-image as by its ability to walk upright, make tools, and use language. As the story of each trait unfolds, Walter explores how we came to be the way we are. *Thumbs, Toes, and Tears* is delightful, informative, and thought-provoking.

"Chip Walter's brilliant book explains . . . the story of the tipping point of evolution . . . *Thumbs, Toes, and Tears* is the first book that I am aware of that tells it in a comprehensive—and highly entertaining—way. One could argue that it is the most important story in the history of the universe."

—from the foreword by Ray Kurzweil, author of *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*



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