



"*Evolutionary History* is a brilliant and provocative work. No single discipline is more revolutionary in its implications than evolution, but few historians have integrated its insights into their work. Edmund Russell has taken on this enormously important challenge. He weaves evolution and history together in surprising ways, offering illuminating reinterpretations of topics as varied as the Industrial Revolution and pit bulls. *Evolutionary History* promises to change the way you think about both evolution and history."

— NANCY LANGSTON, University of Wisconsin, Madison

"Edmund Russell will change how you view history. With startling examples, Russell shows that evolution is not a prehistoric force, but an everyday influence in human affairs. His chapter on the seeds of the Industrial Revolution alone makes this book a must-read."

— ADAM ROME, former editor of *Environmental History* and author of *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism*

"All organisms have an impact on their ecosystems. Through their actions, they create an environment of selection for other organisms and adapt in turn to the environment that they have changed. In this introduction to the field of evolutionary history, Edmund Russell points out that humans, too, alter the selection pressures that shape the life histories of other organisms. Our ecological footprint, moreover, has grown dramatically since the agricultural transition ten thousand years ago. In much the same way that industrialization made humanity an agent for climate change, we have become ecological agents. As organisms have adapted to anthropogenic influences, we in turn find ourselves adapting to them, both culturally and genetically. As Russell demonstrates, the coevolutionary spiral that emerges from these intertwining processes is the very stuff of history."

— DANIEL LORD SMITH, Harvard University

"With this splendidly lucid and impressively wide-ranging book, Edmund Russell invites us to think anew about the ever-changing dance of humans and nature. His important arguments will provoke debate and shift the horizons of scholarship in several fields."

— GRAEME WYNN, University of British Columbia

We tend to see history and evolution springing from separate roots, one grounded in the human world and the other in the natural world. Human beings have become, however, probably the most powerful species shaping evolution today, and human-caused evolution in populations of other species has probably been the most important force shaping human history. This book introduces readers to evolutionary history, a new field that unites history and biology to create a fuller understanding of the past than either field of study can produce on its own. Evolutionary history can stimulate surprising new hypotheses for any field of history and evolutionary biology. How many art historians would have guessed that sculpture encouraged the evolution of tuskless elephants? How many biologists would have predicted that human poverty would accelerate animal evolution? How many military historians would have suspected that plant evolution would convert a counterinsurgency strategy into a rebel subsidy? How many historians of technology would have credited evolution in the New World with sparking the Industrial Revolution? With examples from around the globe, this book will help readers see the broadest patterns of history and the details of their own life in a new light.

EDMUND RUSSELL is Associate Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, and Society and the Department of History at the University of Virginia. He has won several awards for his work, including the Leopold-Hidy Prize for the best article published in *Environmental History* in 2003; the Edelstein Prize in 2003 for an outstanding book in the history of technology published in the preceding three years; and the Forum for the History of Science in America Prize in 2001 for the best article on the history of science in America published in the previous three years by a scholar within ten years of his or her PhD. His previous books include *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War* (coedited with Richard P. Tucker, 2004) and *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (2001). He has published articles in the *Journal of American History*, *Environmental History*, *Technology and Culture*, and the *Washington Post*.

COVER DESIGN BY KATHLEEN LENCH/BLACK KAT DESIGN

Cover illustration: *Beast's Abode* (detail of the right-hand side) by Jan Smeets (1549–1638).
Castello Sforzesco, Milan / The Bridgeman Art Library.

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

www.cambridge.org

ISBN 978-0-521-74509-3



9 780521 745093 >