



# Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived

*Chip Walter*

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Over the past 180 years scientists have sifted through evidence that at least twenty-seven human species have evolved on planet Earth. And as you may have noticed, twenty-six of them are no longer with us, done in by their environment, predators, disease, or the unfortunate shortcomings of their DNA. What enabled us to survive when so many other human species were shown the evolutionary door? *Last Ape Standing: The Seven-Million-Year Story of How and Why We Survived* by acclaimed science journalist Chip Walter tells the intriguing tale of how against all odds and despite nature's brutal and capricious ways we stand here today, the only surviving humans, and the planet's most dominant species.

Drawing on a wide variety of scientific disciplines, Walter reveals how a rare evolutionary phenomenon led to the uniquely long childhoods that make us so resourceful and emotionally complex. He looks at why we developed a new kind of mind and how our highly social nature has shaped our moral (and immoral) behavior. And in exploring the traits that enabled our success, he plumbs the roots of our creativity and investigates why we became self-aware in ways that no other animal is. Along the way, *Last Ape Standing* profiles other human species who evolved with us and who have also shaped our kind in startling ways - the Neanderthals of Europe, the "Hobbits" of Indonesia, the Denisovans of Siberia, and the recently discovered Red Deer Cave people of China, who died off just as we stood at the brink of civilizations eleven thousand years ago.

*Last Ape Standing* is an engaging and accessible story that explores the forces that molded us into the peculiar and astonishing creature that we are.

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