



The Cell: A Very Short Introduction

Terence Allen , Graham Cowling

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In this *Very Short Introduction*, Terrence Allen and Graham Cowling offer an illuminating account of the nature of cells--their basic structure, forms, division, signaling, and programmed death. Allen and Cowling start with the simple "prokaryotic" cell--cells with no nucleus--and show how the bodies of more complex plants and animals consist of billions of "eukaryotic" cells, of varying kinds, adapted to fill different roles--red blood cells, muscle cells, branched neurons. The authors also show that each cell is an astonishingly complex chemical factory, the activities of which we have only begun to unravel in the past fifty years.

The Cell: A Very Short Introduction Details

Date : Published November 1st 2011 by Oxford University Press, USA (first published September 29th 2011)

ISBN : 9780199578757

Author : Terence Allen , Graham Cowling

Format : Paperback 145 pages

Genre : Science, Biology, Nonfiction



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Thaer says

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Eman says

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Peter says

I've yet to read one of these that failed to do what it states on the cover. This particular volume includes an interesting 'Further Reading' section that includes some very good URL's.

Mohammed-Makram says

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Afif says

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Diego says

Me gusta mucho esta, no sé si decirle saga, de libros. Son complejos pero no tanto, y ayudan caleta a tener una pincelada de temas en los que uno maneja algo (muy recomendable saber algo, aunque sea lo del colegio). Se complementan bien entre ellos, además.

Ahmed says

Ahmed Hazem (?????????) says

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After being encountered to “Very Short Introductions” series a few years ago in Arabic translation, finally, I succeeded in finishing the first book of it, The Cell, in the original English version.?

What I thought about this series is that it’s written plainly to make the subject more accessible to the public. But what I read is different, the book is written scientifically by specialists, but only the outlines with details require a little concentration to catch.

It is a panoramic view of the cell. Starting by defining what it is, to its structures and functions. Then it is different types in different species. How all this knowledge discovered and accumulated and changes with time and technologies, was an exciting part of all the scientific details. After that, the use of that in different areas, most importantly in medicine, and finally, the future of cell studies.

the writers did dive in some areas and brushed just the surface in others, for example, he wrote details about

The cytoskeleton, but very few about DNA transcription and translation, which is one of the most critical cellular functions...

In conclusion, I recommend this book to everyone who what to know about the basic unit of life: The Cell.

William Anderson says

Despite being a "very short introduction" this is a dense book filled with fantastic information and detail that far outweighs the entirety of what you may have learned about cells back in highschool, or even AP biology. If you are looking to understand in depth the change in understanding for what we have learned from when you last learned about the cell, or to be inspired by the complexity of nature, this is worth picking up.

Abdelrahman Badran says

There is nothing more exciting than wading in the cytosol of the cells and penetrating the nuclear envelope by the power of imagination !! .

the book attracts me more at the last chapter particularly the notion of using nano-particles as new surgeons in the world of medicine .

wonderful book my salute to the author .

Tso William says

If you were approaching cell biology, then this book would indeed have been a very short introduction. If a person was, however, studying general biology where the cell topic normally occupies no more than 20 to 30 pages in a textbook, this hundred-pages introduction is a very *deep* survey of the cell. Still for a layman like me, the book is almost impenetrable.

Nevertheless this very short introduction raises some interesting philosophical issues. As only a minority of cells (e.g. neuron cell) lasts a lifetime, the majority of them is replaced daily, weekly or monthly. In other words, your body of today is neither identical to the one of yesterday nor to the one of tomorrow. Despite these constant changes, you remain who you are. There is an *essence* , whatever it is, which defines you, so that you retain the integrity in the midst of changes.

There is indeed some cells that can last lifetime, like the previously mentioned neuron cells, but surely, the neuron cells per se cannot define you, just as a finger is not equivalent to you. The cells form tissues; tissues organs; organs body. The body as the end-product, so to speak, is worth more than the sum of the cells because a body is capable of thinking and feeling. There is an *emergent* quality arising from the innumerable cellular interactions.

Arun says

The title is a misnomer. If you are looking for a "very short introduction," thinking that you can have all the basic knowledge you can have of the chosen subject by glancing into this book in the time of making a couple of train journeys, then you are heading towards disappointment. Though it comes under the series Very Short Introductions, it actually is deep and huge. There can only be two possibilities: either that the subject is too vast or that the authors misguides us with their title.

It occurs to me that the former is most probably the truth, for simply reading a few pages will bring into your mind - whether or not you have basic knowledge in biology - an array of unanswered questions which will, presumably, get satiated only if you refer to the 1000-paged hardbound textbooks on this subject. Cell Biology, I never realised until now, is such a dynamic, imaginative, fascinating field in Biology.

The format of the book is simply top-class. The authors structured the content very well, in that, that it introduces to the reader to the basics of cell in an amusing manner. It is, in short, a journey; an epic journey in which, like The Magic School Bus, you get to miniaturize yourself and enter the contents of the cell. The authors give a brief introduction to what a cell is, then starts from the outermost coat taking us towards the core, the nucleus. Once the construction of the cell has been outlined in short as much as possible, these authors take us in a journey to witness the workings of a cell; what happens if something goes wrong; how they manage themselves; how they die; what is the future of cell research and such. Beautifully written.

I would recommend this to every person on earth. It will present to you a whole new way to look at the world - that the entire world is functioning at the cellular level. It is deeply inspiring, I can bet.

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