



The Oxford Companion to the Body (Oxford Companions) (No. 1)

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Here is a delightfully diverse, informative look at the human body, combining medical and physiological fact with articles that offer cultural, mythological, religious, historical, and artistic perspectives. In over 1200 alphabetically arranged entries, *The Oxford Companion to the Body* covers every aspect of human anatomy as well as related topics that range from Aggression, Aspirin, and Anxiety, to Warts, Whistling, Yoga, and X-Rays.

Attractively designed with over 400 illustrations--including 15 full-color plates focusing on human physiology--this engrossing Companion shows how the body works, how it grows, develops, and ages, how it goes wrong, and even how it has inspired artists through the centuries. There are profiles of historical figures who have made important contributions to our understanding of the body, such as Galen, Vesalius, and da Vinci. There are also concise and readable accounts of the structures of all major systems of the body, their processes, and the diseases that affect them, from the nervous system to the skeleton to the brain. But one of the pleasures of the book is the many unexpected entries to come across: Body Language and Brain Death, Freckles and Frostbite, Potty Training and Phantom Limbs, Sleep Disorders and Survival at Sea. The volume also boasts general essays that describe how the body is seen in Zen Buddhism, Islam, mythology, and other disciplines.

Written by over 250 experts, under the guidance of a distinguished editorial board, with full cross-referencing and suggested further reading, *The Oxford Companion to the Body* is both an authoritative resource and a browser's delight.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Another in the "Oxford Companion" series (it was preceded in the sciences by companions to the mind in 1987 and to medicine in 1986), this is a beautifully produced tome comprising over 1000 entries written by 350 contributors, the majority of whom are British academicians. Editors Blakemore and Jennett are physiology professors at Oxford and the University of Glasgow, respectively, and British spelling is used throughout. Many entries provide See also references, and longer entries include suggestions for further reading. There is also a comprehensive index. Illustrations, including line drawings, black-and-white photographs, and full-color plates, are used conservatively, and some entries, such as "Surgery," could have been enhanced by the inclusion of some sort of illustration. However, the editors have succeeded admirably in their goal of providing a "seamless blending of science and humanities." Entries range from major religions and how each views the body (e.g. "Hinduism and the Body," a two-page article) to many parts of the body ("Fallopian Tubes" merits a brief paragraph as well as See also references, and while neither fingers nor toes warrants an entry, "Fingerprints" does). There are entries for professions that specialize in the use of the body ("Model, Artist's," with the requisite nude photograph) and even for concepts, like "Leisure," with See also references to "Relaxation" and "Sport." "Mandrake Root" is listed because it resembles a person and is beautifully illustrated by a reproduction from Dioscorides's *Materia medica*. Remarkably affordable and compulsively readable, this volume will find a home in any academic or public library's history of medicine or reference collection. Martha E. Stone, Massachusetts General Hosp. Lib., Boston

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From Booklist

Developed by Oxford University Press with the support of the Physiological Society, *The Oxford Companion to the Body* strives to bring "the wonders and excitement of the science of physiology to a broad audience." In addition to science, it includes cultural, historical, and religious perspectives.

The approximately 1,000 alphabetically arranged entries range from short definitions to longer entries that include contributors' names and recommended readings. Many scholars, mostly from the U.S and UK, including historians and physiologists, contributed to this guide. Although anatomical systems and physiological functions make up the bulk of the entries, examples of the broad scope of coverage include *Furniture and the body*, *Hinduism and the body*, *Lifespan*, *Mermaid*, and *Tattooing*. Also included are some biographies of noted physicians. There are a few color plates, and plates of the human body follow the index. The emphasis in many of the entries is British though the scope is international.

This is neither a medical guide nor a medical dictionary; rather, it is a summary of the art and science of our bodies. Suitable for a wide audience, *The Oxford Companion to the Body* is recommended for academic, medical, and large public libraries. *RBB*

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Review

"This is a beautifully produced tome comprising over 1000 entries....Remarkably affordable and compulsively readable, this volume will find a home in any academic or public library."--*Library Journal* [STARRED REVIEW] "A deft interweaving of anatomy and biology with psychology, anthropology, philosophy, religion, literature, history, art history and physical science, this compendium is hardly the dry

stuff of typical reference books. Turn to any page and you're likely to be drawn in."--*Los Angeles Times*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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