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There are many stories we can tell about the past, and we are not, perhaps, as free as we might imagine in our choice of which stories to tell, or where those stories end. John Arnold's Very

Short Introduction is a stimulating essay about how we study and understand history. The book begins by inviting us to think about various questions provoked by our investigation of history, and explores the ways these questions have been answered in the past. Concepts such as causation, interpretation, and periodization, are introduced by means of concrete examples of how historians work, giving the reader a sense of the excitement of discovering not only the past, but also ourselves. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Logic is often perceived as having little to do with the rest of philosophy, and even less to do with real life. Graham Priest explores the philosophical roots of the subject, explaining how modern formal logic addresses many issues. How advertising works is not a question that has a simple answer. Advertising is a diverse entity and different campaigns work (or fail to work) in a plethora of different ways. Most advertising persuades people to buy things, but how? And who does it aim to persuade? And how are these decisions made? In this Very Short Introduction Winston Fletcher, an expert with extensive knowledge of advertising from the inside, aims to answer these questions, and in doing so, dispels some of the myths and misunderstandings surrounding the industry. The book contains a short history of advertising and an explanation of how the industry works, and how each of the parties (the advertisers, the media and the agencies) are involved. It considers the extensive spectrum of advertisers and their individual needs. It also looks at the financial side of advertising and asks how advertisers know if they have been successful, or whether the money they have spent has in fact been wasted. Fletcher concludes with a discussion about the

controversial and unacceptable areas of advertising such as advertising products to children and advertising products such as cigarettes and alcohol. He also discusses the benefits of advertising and what the future may hold for the industry. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Fashion is a global industry, and plays a role in our economic, political, cultural, and social lives. However, fashion is often denigrated as trivial and superficial, a sign of vanity and narcissism. This Very Short Introduction will give a clear understanding of how fashion has developed while addressing these divergent views. Simon Blackburn tackles the major moral questions surrounding birth, death, happiness, desire, and freedom, and considers how we should think about the meaning of life. This new edition highlights the importance of an understanding of approaches to ethics and its foundations, and how this relates to our modern world of eroding trust. "First published 1980 as an Oxford University Press paperback; Reissued 1996; First published as a Very Short Introduction 2000"--Title page verso. Considering literature comparatively can help readers realize how much can be learned by looking beyond the horizon of their own cultures, discovering not only more about other literatures, but also about their own. Ben Hutchinson offers a history of comparative literature, placing it at the heart of literary criticism. A clear and informative introduction to the science of codebreaking, explaining what algorithms do, how they are used, the risks associated with using them, and why governments should be concerned. Among the topics covered in this introduction to the largest and oldest institution in the world are the origins of the Catholic Church, how Catholicism has changed and adapted over

the centuries and the challenges the Catholic Church faces in the 21st century. Introduces readers to the basic properties of light - reflection and refraction, polarization, and interference- before moving on to how light is generated, its role in relativity, and quantum effects it exhibits. Astrophysics is said to have been born when Isaac Newton saw an apple drop in his orchard and had the electrifying insight that the Moon falls just like that apple. James Binney shows how the application of physical laws derived on Earth allows us to understand objects that exist on the far side of the Universe. What is 'nothing'? What remains when you take all the matter away? Can empty space - a void - exist? This Very Short Introduction explores the science and the history of the elusive void: from Aristotle who insisted that the vacuum was impossible, via the theories of Newton and Einstein, to our very latest discoveries and why they can tell us extraordinary things about the cosmos. Frank Close tells the story of how scientists have explored the elusive void, and the rich discoveries that they have made there. He takes the reader on a lively and accessible history through ancient ideas and cultural superstitions to the frontiers of current research. He describes how scientists discovered that the vacuum is filled with fields; how Newton, Mach, and Einstein grappled with the nature of space and time; and how the mysterious 'aether' that was long ago supposed to permeate the void may now be making a comeback with the latest research into the 'Higgs field'. We now know that the vacuum is far from being empty - it seethes with virtual particles and antiparticles that erupt spontaneously into being, and it also may contain hidden dimensions that we were previously unaware of. These new discoveries may provide answers to some of cosmology's most fundamental questions: what lies outside the universe, and, if there was once nothing, then how did the universe begin? ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-

sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. From the Plantation of Ulster in the seventeenth century to the entry into peace talks in the late twentieth century the Northern Irish people have been engaged in conflict - Catholic against Protestant, Republican against Unionist. The traumas of violence in the Northern Ireland Troubles have cast a long shadow. For many years, this appeared to be an intractable conflict with no pathway out. Mass mobilisations of people and dramatic political crises punctuated a seemingly endless succession of bloodshed. When in the 1990s and early 21st century, peace was painfully built, it brought together unlikely rivals, making Northern Ireland a model for conflict resolution internationally. But disagreement about the future of the province remains, and for the first time in decades one can now seriously speak of a democratic end to the Union between Northern Ireland and Great Britain as a foreseeable possibility. The Northern Ireland problem remains a fundamental issue as the United Kingdom recasts its relationship with Europe and the world. In this completely revised edition of his Very Short Introduction Marc Mulholland explores the pivotal moments in Northern Irish history - the rise of republicanism in the 1800s, Home Rule and the civil rights movement, the growth of Sinn Fein and the provisional IRA, and the DUP, before bringing the story up to date, drawing on newly available memoirs by paramilitary militants to offer previously unexplored perspectives, as well as recent work on Northern Irish gender relations. Mulholland also includes a new chapter on the state of affairs in 21st Century Northern Ireland, considering the question of Irish unity in the light of both Brexit and the approaching anniversary of the 1921 partition, and drawing new lessons for the future.

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every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Statistics has evolved into an exciting discipline which uses deep theory and powerful software to shed light on the world around us: from clinical trials in medicine, to economics, sociology, and countless other subjects vital to understanding modern life. This Very Short Introduction explores and explains how statistics works today. Examines the history and origins of witchcraft, from pre-history to the present day, considering why it still features so heavily in our culture Authors names reversed on previous editions. First published as part of the best-selling The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain, Kenneth Morgan's Very Short Introduction to Twentieth-Century Britain is a crisp analysis of the forces of consensus and of conflict in modern Britain since the First World War. The only short introduction to Romanticism that incorporates not only the English but the Continental movements, and not only literature but music, art, religion, and philosophy.- publisher description. Introduction; 1 The information revolution; 2 The language of information; 3 Mathematical information; 4 Semantic information; 5 Physical information; 6 Biological information; 7 Economic information; 8 The ethics of information; Conclusion; References. "How does the brain work? Michael O'Shea provides an accessible introduction to the key questions and current state of brain research, and shows that, though we know a surprising amount, we are still far from having a complete understanding. The topics he discusses range from how we sense things and how memories are stored, to the evolution of brains and nervous systems from primitive organisms, as well as altered mental states, brain-computer hybrids, and the future of brain research."--BOOK JACKET. What has tragedy been made to mean by dramatists, story-tellers, critics, philosophers, politicians, and journalists? This work shows the relevance of tragedy to the

modern world, and extends beyond drama and literature into visual art and everyday experience. With a broad scope across the millennia, from high literature to popular culture, between page and stage and screen, this Very Short Introduction considers comedy not only as a literary genre, but also as a broader impulse at work in many other historical and contemporary forms of satire, parody, and play. This book provides an historical account of feminism, exploring its earliest roots and key issues such as voting rights and the liberation of the sixties. Margaret Walters brings the subject completely up to date by providing a global analysis of the situation of women, from Europe and the United States to Third World countries. This stimulating Very Short Introduction to music invites us to really think about music and the values and qualities we ascribe to it. The world teems with different kinds of music-traditional, folk, classical, jazz, rock, pop-and each type of music tends to come with its own way of thinking. Drawing on a wealth of accessible examples ranging from Beethoven to Chinese zither music, Nicholas Cook attempts to provide a framework for thinking about all music. By examining the personal, social, and cultural values that music embodies, the book reveals the shortcomings of traditional conceptions of music, and sketches a more inclusive approach emphasizing the role of performers and listeners. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. This Very Short Introduction explores the significance of the Koran both in the modern world and in traditional Muslim culture. Michael Cook provides a lucid and direct account of the Koran as codex, as scripture, as liturgy, and as the embodiment of truth, and examines its means of formation and dissemination. He also

discusses issues of interpretation for certain key verses, demonstrating that fecundity of the text for readers throughout the world. Discusses the basic components of computers; how increasingly miniature parts have led to products, applications, and networks that solve problems; the issues that increased connectivity has produced; and some of the emerging technologies in the field. For a century Nietzsche has been among the most controversial of modern writers. Since his death in 1900 he has been appropriated as an icon by an astonishingly diverse spectrum of people, whose interpretation of his philosophy have been equally varied. This introduction to his life and work examines the numerous ambiguities in his writings, traces his development, and explodes many misconceptions. Sport is big business; international in nature and the focus of much media and cultural attention. In this Very Short Introduction, Mike Cronin charts the history of sport, from its traditional origins in folk football and cock fighting to its position as a global phenomenon today. Looking at a variety of sports from team games such as rugby, cricket, and football to games for individuals such as golf, tennis, and skiing, he considers how these first emerged and captivated the interest of ordinary people, and how sport has been transformed within our daily lives. Exploring the relationship between sport and class, gender, commerce, identity, and ethics, Cronin considers some of the central issues in sport today, including the high pay of professional footballers and the glamour of women in sports, as well as fair play standards. Charting sport through the ages and around the world, this is a short guide to the history, development, and place of sport in contemporary global society. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging



topics highly readable. Are we born with our fears or do we learn them? Why do our fears persist? What purpose does anxiety serve? In this Very Short Introduction we discover what anxiety is, what causes it, and how it can be treated. Looking at six major anxiety disorders, the authors introduce us to this most ubiquitous and essential of emotions. From the beginning of time, humans have been driven by both a fear of the unknown and a curiosity to know. Our forebears tried to create certainty in the unknown, by seeking to influence outcomes with sacrifices to gods, preparing for the unexpected with advice from oracles, and by reading the stars through astrology. As scientific methods improve and computer technology develops we become ever more confident of our capacity to predict and quantify the future by accumulating and interpreting patterns from the past, yet the truth is there is still no certainty to be had. This introduction considers some of our most burning questions about what the future is. This book focuses on the philosophy and argument of Plato's writings, drawing the reader into Plato's way of doing philosophy and the general themes of his thinking. It discusses Plato's style of writing: his use of the dialogue form, his use of what we today call fiction, and his philosophical transformation of myths. It also looks at his discussions of love and philosophy, his attitude to women, and to homosexual love. It explores Plato's claim that virtue is sufficient for happiness and touches on his arguments for the immortality of the soul and his ideas about the nature of the universe. Rousseau was both a central figure of the European Enlightenment and its most formidable critic. In this compact, thought-provoking study of his works across a range of disciplines, Robert Wokler shows how his thinking and writing were all inspired by an ideal of humanity's self-realization in a condition of unfettered freedom. No other work on Rousseau provides such a readable introduction to his life and work. "Fully updated new edition"--Label on cover. The longest of the stories in this book is short, and the shortest is just one sentence long.

Which means there are lots of stories : a whole bookful to make you think, laugh, Shiver, and think again. How many possible sudoku puzzles are there? In the lottery, what is the chance that two winning balls have consecutive numbers? Who invented Pascal's triangle? (it was not Pascal) Combinatorics, the branch of mathematics concerned with selecting, arranging, and listing or counting collections of objects, works to answer all these questions. Dating back some 3000 years, and initially consisting mainly of the study of permutations and combinations, its scope has broadened to include topics such as graph theory, partitions of numbers, block designs, design of codes, and latin squares. In this Very Short Introduction Robin Wilson gives an overview of the field and its applications in mathematics and computer theory, considering problems from the shortest routes covering certain stops to the minimum number of colours needed to colour a map with different colours for neighbouring countries.

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Risk is everywhere - from genetically modified crops, dams, and stem-cell therapy to heartbreak, online predators, inflation, and robbery. This Very Short Introduction examines what science has learned about how people deal with risks, what we can learn through decision theory, and how we can evaluate risk in our own lives. Without cause and effect, there would be no science or technology, no moral responsibility, and no system of law. Causation is therefore the most fundamental connection in the universe and a core topic of philosophical thought. This Very Short Introduction introduces all of the main theories of causation and its key debates. Together these countries pioneered new technologies that have made them ever richer. Economics has the

capacity to offer us deep insights into some of the most formidable problems of life, and offer solutions to them too. Combining a global approach with examples from everyday life, Partha Dasgupta reveals the connections between economics, politics, and development, and shows how these interactions create the world we live in today.

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