
This book informs readers about the movement to place Western medicine in an evolutionary framework, starting with the pioneering work of George Williams, Randolph Nesse, and Margaret Profet, begun in the 1990s. As a primer, it does a nice job of providing a set of evolutionary, genetic, and ecological principles in the first three chapters; this content is necessary for understanding the medical issues that Perlman (emer., pediatrics, Univ. of Chicago) addresses in the subsequent eight chapters. The overarching argument is that what has shaped humans over the long past is differential success in reproduction driven by natural selections, rather than adaptations, to maximize health and longevity. The author uses this perspective to help readers better understand disease, both communicable and human induced, along with aging and other trade-offs. The last chapter addresses "man–made diseases" (old genes, new environments) resulting from the cultural/technological nature of the present industrial environment (e.g., sedentary lifestyles combined with excessive high-calorie food, rich in salt, refined sugars, starches, and fats). The well-researched and documented work includes key up-to-date papers. It makes a nice introduction to this timely topic. Physicians will then want to read S. Stearns and J. Koella's more expansive treatment, *Evolution in Health and Disease* (2008). **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Upper–division undergraduates and above.

--J. E. Platz, Creighton University

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