

A Natural History of Shells

Geerat J. Vermeij



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Jan Zalasiewicz, Mark Williams



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[Skeletons](#) Jan Zalasiewicz, Mark Williams, 2018-03-09 Over half a billion years ago life on earth took an incredible step in evolution when animals learned to build skeletons Using many different materials from calcium carbonate and phosphate and even silica to make shell and bone they started creating the support structures that are now critical to most living forms providing rigidity and strength Manifesting in a vast variety of forms they provided the framework for sophisticated networks of life that fashioned the evolution of Earth's oceans land and atmosphere Within a few tens of millions of years all of the major types of skeleton had appeared Skeletons enabled an unprecedented array of bodies to evolve from the tiniest seed shrimp to the gigantic dinosaurs and blue whales The earliest bacterial colonies constructed large rigid structures stromatolites built up by trapping layers of sediment while the mega skeleton that is the Great Barrier Reef is big enough to be visible from space The skeletons of millions of coccolithophores that lived in the shallow seas of the Mesozoic built the white cliffs of Dover These and insects put their scaffolding on the outside as an exoskeleton while vertebrates have endoskeletons Skeletons may be hydrostatic or as is common made of calcium phosphate or from carbonate

or silica the latter used to create delicate and elegant designs by diatoms and radiolarians They need to be light and strong for flight Plants use tubes of dead tissue for rigidity and transport of liquids which in the case of tall trees need to be strong enough to extend 100 m or more from the ground Others simply stitch together a coating from mineral grains on the seabed In *Skeletons* Jan Zalasiewicz and Mark Williams explore the incredible variety of the skeleton innovations that have enabled life to expand into a wide range of niches and lifestyles on the planet Discussing the impact of climate change which puts the formation of some kinds of skeleton at risk they also consider future skeletons including the possibility that we might increasingly incorporate metal and plastic elements into our own as well as the possible materials for skeleton building on other planets

Jeff Herman's Guide to Book Publishers, Editors & Literary Agents Jeff Herman, 2003 A guide to the names and specialties of American and Canadian publishers editors and literary agents includes information on the acquisition process and on choosing literary agents

A Natural History of Pragmatism Joan Richardson, 2006-12-21 Joan Richardson provides a fascinating and compelling account of the emergence of the quintessential American philosophy pragmatism She demonstrates pragmatism's engagement with various branches of the natural sciences and traces the development of Jamesian pragmatism from the late nineteenth century through modernism following its pointings into the present Richardson combines strands from America's religious experience with scientific information to offer interpretations that break new ground in literary and cultural history This book exemplifies the value of interdisciplinary approaches to producing literary criticism In a series of highly original readings of Edwards Emerson William and Henry James Stevens and Stein *A Natural History of Pragmatism* tracks the interplay of religious motive scientific speculation and literature in shaping an American aesthetic Wide ranging and bold this groundbreaking book will be essential reading for all students and scholars of American literature

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