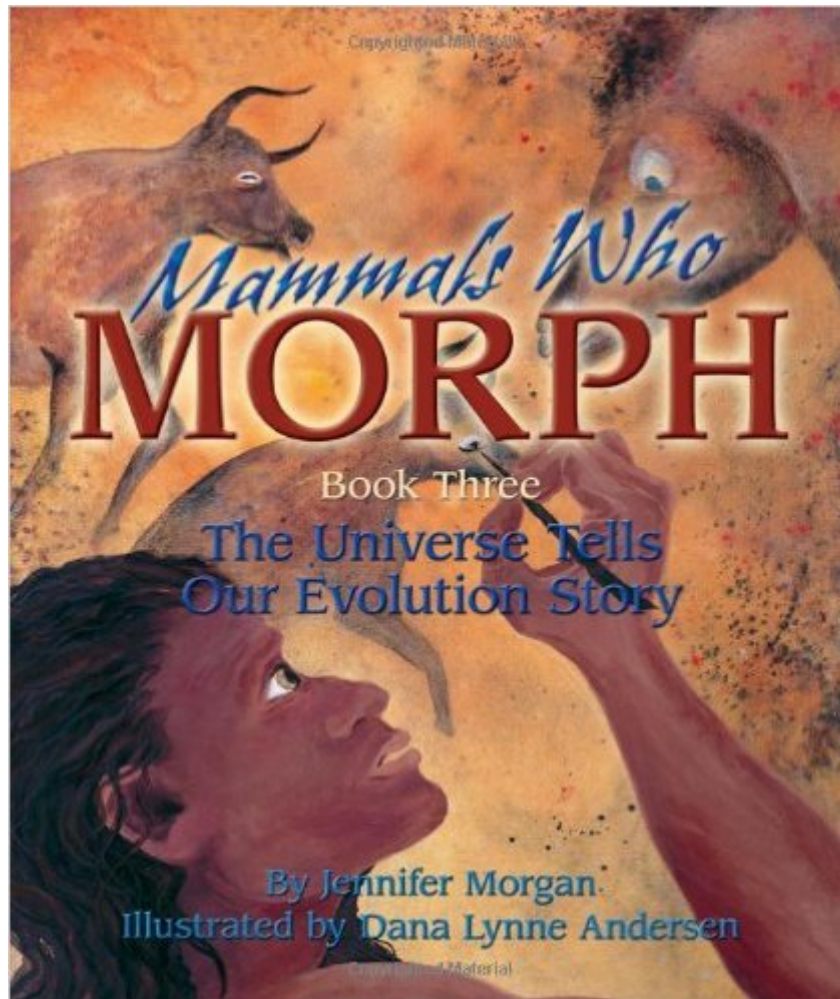


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Mammals Who Morph: The Universe Tells Our Evolution Story: Book 3 (The Universe Series)



Synopsis

This remarkable evolution series, narrated by the Universe itself, concludes with this third book, the amazing story of mammals and humans. It picks up after *From Lava to Life: The Universe Tells Our Earth Story* with the extinction of dinosaurs, and tells how tiny mammals survived and morphed into lots of new Earthlings â horses, whales and a kind of mammal with a powerful imagination--you! It is a story of chaos, creativity and heroes--the greatest adventure on Earth! And it is a personal story . . . about our bodies, our minds, and spirits. It is our story. As the president of the American Montessori Society said, These books are alive with wonder, radiance, and deep relevance.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂÂ See all reviewsÂ (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #74,551 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #50 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Biology #111 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Animals > Mammals #355 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Evolution

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 2 - 7

Customer Reviews

This is the concluding volume of a bizarrely brilliant trilogy on the history of the universe and of life. Every school and public library - no, every family! - in America should own all three volumes in the trilogy. (The earlier volumes are "Born With a Bang" and "From Lava to Life.") There is a rising tide of anti-science ideology in the United States, accompanied (and caused) by a vast scientific illiteracy. This is frightening not only because modern economies are so heavily dependent upon scientific knowledge but also because it is science which dissipated the ancient fear-ridden world of witches and ghosts and demons. Take away science and the old terrors can return to haunt humankind. And those terrors long served, and can still serve, to justify man's inhumanity to man. The reasons for the anti-science tide are complex: America, for example, has an anti-intellectual tradition going

back to the Romantic era of the early nineteenth century (see, e.g., E. D. Hirsch's discussion in "The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them"). Because knowledge in general, and especially in science, is necessarily "elitist," science also runs against the populism and egalitarianism long endemic in the United States. Most disturbing is the use of anti-science propaganda by various political and cultural forces to cynically advance their own political agenda (and make some money on the side). For example, Ann Coulter, in her recent book "Godless," launched a lengthy and virtually unhinged attack on the fact of evolution. At a higher intellectual level, the noted Jewish "neoconservative" intellectual Irving Kristol has declared, "All I want to do is break the bonds of Darwinian materialism which at the moment restrict our imagination."

As a resident of Princeton, New Jersey, a town filled with eminent scientists (including my Noble Laureate physicist uncle) I have lived for years believing that science was beyond my ken, beyond my capacity for even the faintest glimmering of understanding. In the last few years I have been thrilled to discover Jennifer Morgan, a Princeton author who has written three science books designed for children, entitled A Universe Story Trilogy. The first book, *Born With a Bang*, covers the history of the universe from its beginning 13.7 billion years ago to the beginning of Earth. The second book, *From Lava to Life*, tells the story of life beginning as bacteria . . . to the reign of the dinosaurs. *Mammals Who Morph*, the third book, takes the story from the extinction of the dinosaurs to the rise of *Homo sapiens*. The three books are charming and work as wonderful bedtime story reading. But despite the charm and the beautiful illustrations, Ms. Morgan is writing hard science. In a recent seminar which she led, I learned that she spent a number of years talking with cosmologists, evolutionary biologists, and anthropologists, doing her best to be sure that these children's stories were rigorously in accord with current scientific thinking. To be sure, scientific thinking changes, as Ms. Morgan is the first to acknowledge, and indeed theories which are current today are subject to revision tomorrow. But the extraordinary gift which Jennifer Morgan has given, is a sense that science is full of wonder, excitement and reverence.

This third and final volume in a now-classic series of children's books culminates in a square look at the bad news facing our own impetuous species today (environmental decline, embattled peoples). Yet it leaves readers inspired to do their part in carrying the awesome multi-billion-year story of the universe forward in healthy ways. In all three volumes of cosmic, biological, and cultural history -- *Born With a Bang: The Universe Tells Our Cosmic Story* (Sharing Nature With Children Book), *From Lava to Life: The Universe Tells Our Earth's Story* (Sharing Nature With Children Book), and

Mammals Who Morph: The Universe Tells Our Evolution Story (Sharing Nature With Children Book) -- the author presents episodes of catastrophes that actually happened: subatomic particle annihilation in volume 1, the oxygen crisis and meteor impact in volume 2, and in this volume (number 3) how the bright side of human ingenuity can also morph into a dark side: technological inventiveness that can turn disagreements into inter-group warfare and that can devastate ecologies in unanticipated ways. Too often, books written for children sugarcoat the natural world and our own human history -- thus offering scant guidance for finding one's way through the challenges of life.

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