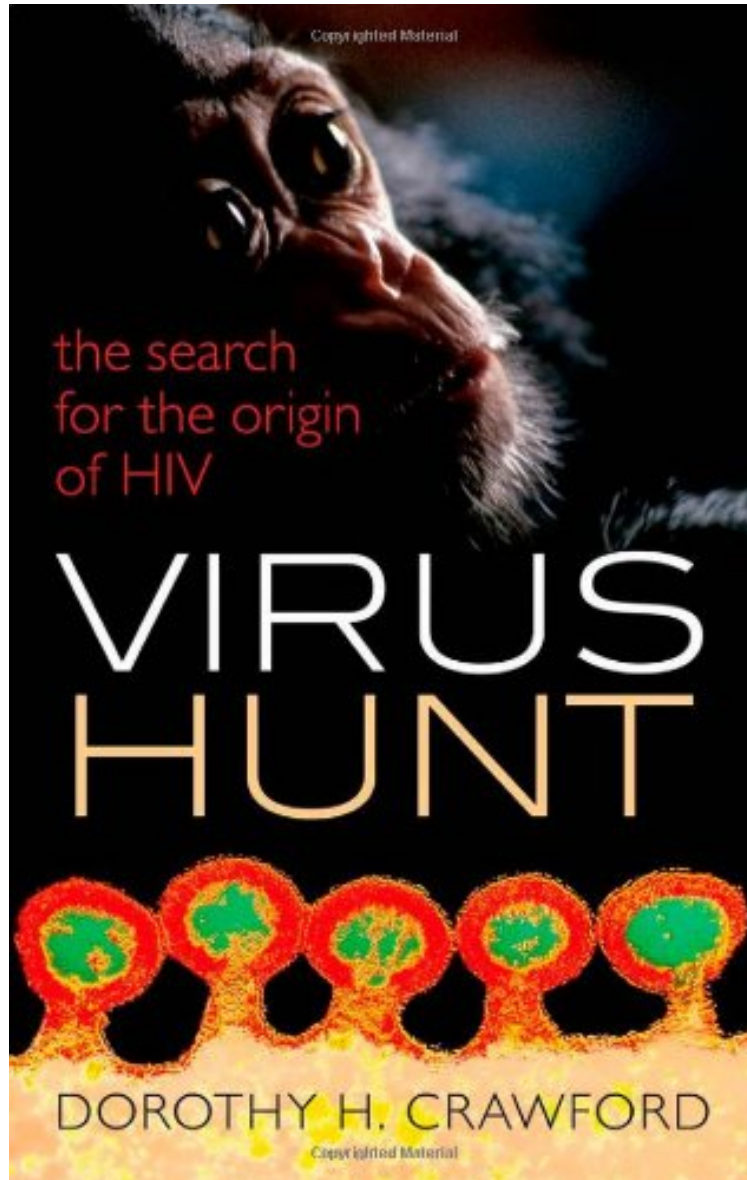


[Free download] Virus Hunt: The Search for the Origin of HIV

Virus Hunt: The Search for the Origin of HIV

Dorothy H. Crawford

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Dorothy H. Crawford : Virus Hunt: The Search for the Origin of HIV before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Virus Hunt: The Search for the Origin of HIV:

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In *Virus Hunt*, renowned virologist Dorothy H. Crawford takes us inside one of the great research quests of our time--the search for the origin of AIDS. From hospital intensive care wards to research laboratories to the African rain forests, Crawford follows the trail of the virus back to its roots deep in Africa. We track wild monkeys and apes through the jungle--gathering their DNA via hair and feces samples--to discover from which primates HIV first jumped to our species, ultimately concluding that the most virulent strain, HIV-1, came from chimpanzees in Cameroon. We then time travel back to colonial Africa around the turn of the 20th century, when the virus first spread to humans. But even the rapidly mutating HIV could not survive in one person long enough to adapt to our immune system. Crawford shows that it may have been given the opportunity to adapt by being transmitted rapidly from one person to the next through unsterile syringes, ironically used during a campaign to wipe out disease by mass inoculation. The book then moves to Leopoldville (now Kinshasa), where Crawford describes the unique series of social upheavals, starting in the 1920s, that sparked epidemic levels of sexually transmitted diseases, allowed HIV-1 to begin its exponential growth. And when in the 1960s chance took the virus abroad to Haiti, from where it jumped to the United States, its pandemic spread began. Crawford tells a gripping story of brilliant scientific sleuthing, breakthrough discoveries, tragic errors, stubborn intractable mysteries, generous collaborations, and bitter disputes. And along the way, she conveys, with a light and engaging touch, a wealth of interesting observations about viruses, DNA, disease, immune systems, the very latest research methods, and of course HIV.

From Publishers Weekly Scottish virologist Crawford (*Viruses: A Very Short Introduction*) celebrates the brilliant evolutionary sleuthing that helped solve the puzzle of the origins of HIV, a virus unlike any other that has now infected over 60 million people. The University of Edinburgh professor explains that those hunting for the source of the virus that causes AIDS collectively scoured the medical literature, hunted for old blood samples to test for HIV, and painstakingly analyzed genomes from around the world to find the answers they were looking for. Researchers discovered that though the scourge didn't make headlines until the early 1980s, its roots stretch back into the west central Africa of the early 20th century. They also found that the natural reservoir of the predecessor of HIV turned out to be a subspecies of chimpanzee whose infection jumped to humans likely through exposure to infected blood during hunt to arrive in the U.S. around 1969. Crawford's incredible tale of medical detection also offers an absorbing take on African history, politics, and culture, as well as the invasion of European explorers and slave traders. This dense but engrossing history will appeal primarily to scientists, but it has a much broader significance: by understanding where, how, when and why the virus evolved and spread among us, we can surely work to prevent the next one. 21 bw illus. (Aug.) "A wonderful source book for professionals and a highly informative, often engrossing tale for lay readers." --Kirkus "an engrossing history" --Publishers Weekly "This engaging work will appeal to a broad audience." --Library Journal "Crawford provides a contemporary summary of what is known about the origins of HIV and its movement from chimpanzees and mangabeys to humans. Her writing is crisp and clear." -R. Adler, University of Michigan, Dearborn, CHOICE About the Author Dorothy H. Crawford has been Assistant Principal for Public Understanding of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh since 2007. Her previous books include *The Invisible Enemy*, *Deadly Companions*, and *Viruses: A Very Short Introduction*. She was elected a Fellow of both the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2001, and awarded an OBE for services to medicine and higher education in 2005.