



## EXTRA LIFE A SHORT HISTORY OF LIVING LONGER STEVEN JOHNSON

PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

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**ACCOMPANIED BY A BBC4 TELEVISION SERIES**  
**Presented by Steven Johnson and David Olusoga**

**EXTRA LIFE: A SHORT HISTORY OF LIVING LONGER** delves into the extraordinary successes of public health and medicine in the past century, and the people who made it possible

As the world races to produce and distribute COVID-19 vaccines, Steven Johnson sheds light on past successes in public health and what will drive future advances. As a species we have doubled our life expectancy in just one hundred years. Modern advances have given us each an extra twenty thousand days to live on average—the most astonishing measure of human progress by far. *EXTRA LIFE* is a close and fascinating look at the milestones of this progress— from the discoveries of vaccines and antibiotics, to the introduction of things that are now commonplace, such as pasteurized milk, chlorinated drinking water and seatbelts.

He pays tribute to the unsung heroes behind each of these breakthroughs, giving as much credit to Louis Pasteur as to the muckraking journalist who exposed the corrupt milk industry, or to the courageous FDA bureaucrat in the States whose refusal to rubber-stamp a new drug application saved the lives of countless newborns and brought about tougher drug regulations.

Johnson also turns his analytical eye to the present: Do we risk regressing in life expectancy as our public health systems face unprecedented challenges such as the one we are living through? Are we overlooking any current technologies or field of research that will enable us to live even longer than we do now?

Steven Johnson will present a four-part television series with historian David Olusoga, also titled *Extra Life: A Short History of Living Longer*. As with the book, the series, set in the context of today's COVID-19 crisis, explores the lessons learned from previous global pandemics—including smallpox, cholera, the Spanish flu, and others—and reveals how scientists, doctors, self-experimenters, and activists launched a public health revolution, saving millions of lives, fundamentally changing how we think about illness and ultimately paving the way for modern medicine.

### **ABOUT STEVEN JOHNSON:**

**Steven Johnson** is the bestselling author of thirteen books, including *Where Good Ideas Come From*, *Farsighted*, and *The Ghost Map*. He is the host and co-creator of the Emmy-winning PBS/BBC series *How We Got to Now*, and the host of the podcast *American Innovations*. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, and Marin County, California.

### **PRAISE FOR STEVEN JOHNSON:**

"Mr. Johnson's erudition can be quite **gob smacking**." --The Wall Street Journal

"Riveting... A **deep thinker and gifted storyteller**." --The New York Times Book Review

"A **true page-turner**" --The Washington Post

"A **maven of the history of ideas**." --The Guardian

"An **unbelievable book**...it's an innovative way to talk about history." - Jon Stewart on *How We Got To Now*

**Steven Johnson is available for interview**

**For review copies and more information please contact Becke Parker:**

[becke@bparkerpr.co.uk](mailto:becke@bparkerpr.co.uk) / 07810 480924