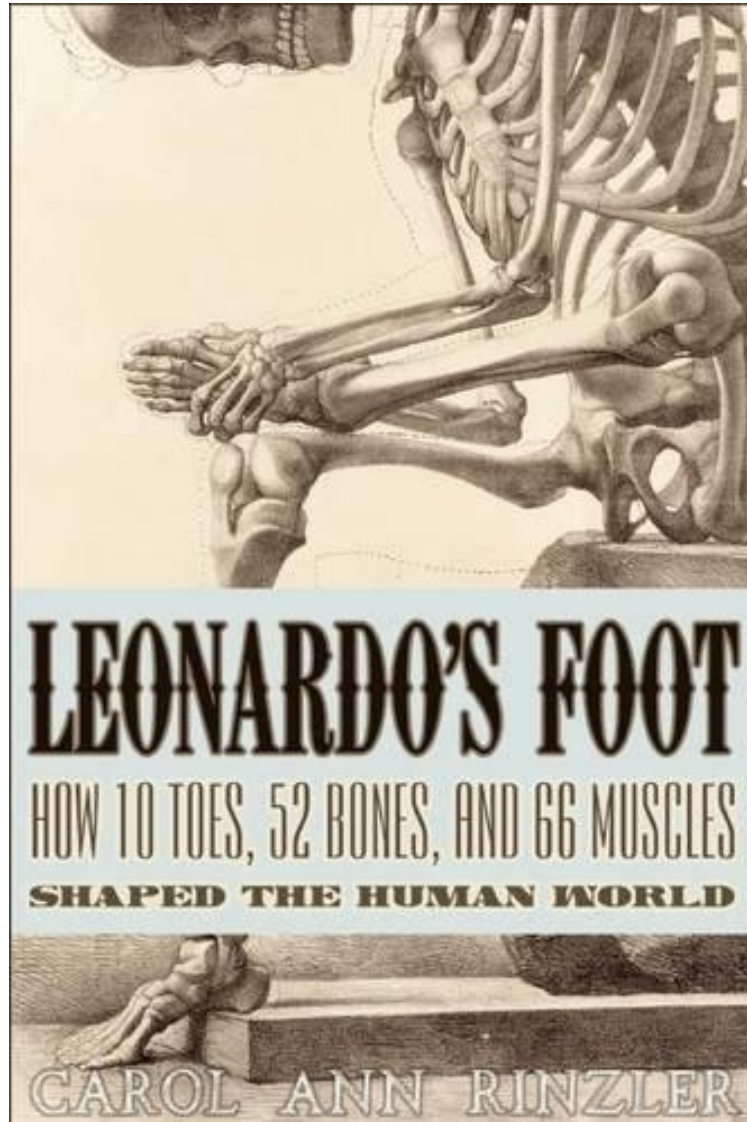


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Leonardo's Foot: How 10 Toes, 52 Bones, and 66 Muscles Shaped the Human World

Carol Ann Rinzler

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. a study of the humn footBy Ralph R. Woodworth book purchase; A fairly detailed exposition on the foot as both an art object and an object of anatomical study and treatment. A number

of peripheral considerations and anecdotes are included which liven things up. It cannot be considered a reference work. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Big Toes Up By Billie the Kid Who sits down and decides to write about feet? Who wants to read about them? Personally I find them kind of icky. It takes an exceptional writer to make this subject palatable to other than a foot fetishist, let alone compelling reading. Bravo to Rinzler for taking us on a truly fascinating walk. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Review on Leonardo's Foot By colleen young The book shares some off mainstream information about the foot. It's less about anatomy and more about historical thought on fetishes, deformities (club foot) and how society evolved regarding these matters. In general, it's information that is not commonly compiled into one source. It's entertaining

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From Publishers Weekly Amidst many digressions, Rinzler provides a number of biological and anecdotal tidbits about human feet. The development of theories about how our bipedal stance affected human evolution is treated first, including some scientific missteps. Each chapter is an independent essay ostensibly on an aspect of the foot, but a discussion of clubfeet turns into a rambling, and not always accurate, appraisal of historical attitudes toward birth defects, infanticide, and euthanasia as well as the imbalance in health coverage between the first and third worlds. The book as a whole veers wildly in this manner—from interesting information to highly tangential opinion pieces. An interesting section about the importance of the big toe morphs into anecdotes on how gout changed the world and then a page on a history of dangerous medications. The chapter on desire discusses foot fetishism, Cinderella, which senses are predominant in other animals, Biblical references to feet, foot washing, and suddenly, dissection. Those who enjoy nonsequetorial conversations may find this book entertaining, but the lack of substantiation for many of her statements deprives the reader of solid facts. (June) From Booklist *Starred* Except for putting on socks and shoes or trimming toenails, people pay little attention to their feet. After all, feet are the furthest anatomical thing from the mind—literally. Health writer Rinzler lifts the lowly human foot to new heights in this appealing book. Soliciting assistance from the fields of art, evolutionary science, history, etymology, literature, and biomechanics, Rinzler shows how the human foot is much more than a conglomeration of tissues or a potential homesite for corns and calluses. Its unique design (the adducted position of the big toe, plantigrade sole, and firm arches) allows humans to stand up on two legs and remain upright—not an easy task. Bipedal locomotion (whether walking or running) is even more difficult and amazing. In our evolutionary development, a reliable set of feet and upright posture likely preceded the emergence of our vaunted big brains. Certain conditions including clubfoot, gout, and flatfeet receive plenty of attention in the book. Foot fetish, the Chinese custom of binding feet, and the use of human feet as biblical symbols get discussed, too. Leonardo da Vinci wrote, "The human foot is a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art." He got that right. --Tony Miksanek From the Author I had just published the 5th edition of Nutrition for Dummies and was looking about for my next project. I started the search for a subject (a moment all writers anticipate with both pleasure and dread)... and then I thought about the foot--inelegant, overlooked, underreported and completely indispensable (it turns out) to our climb out of the caves into modern civilization. While it is common to credit our progress to the evolution of our increasingly more complex brain, in fact, we stood straight before we began to think straight, and our two feet have influenced our language, our politics, our religion, our legislation and, of course, our medicine. Who could resist such a mix? Ordinarily when I write I sit surrounded by medical books, including almost every single one of the Merck Manuals (I have collected all but two Manuals and all the Indexes). This time I had Dickens novels, the Bible, dictionaries in various languages, histories of the Roman Empire and the Nazi era, anthropology texts--and, yes, medical books. It was like being let loose in the biggest best toy store in the world.