

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910460182303321
Autore	Allen John S (John Scott), <1961->
Titolo	The lives of the brain [[electronic resource] ] : human evolution and the organ of mind / / John S. Allen
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge, Mass., : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009
ISBN	0-674-05349-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (351 p.)
Disciplina	612.8/2
Soggetti	Brain - Evolution Brain - Growth Human evolution Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [281]-326) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- The human brain in brief -- Brain size -- The functional evolution of the brain -- The plastic brain -- The molecular evolution of the brain -- The evolution of feeding behavior -- The aging brain -- Language and brain evolution -- Optimism and the evolution of the brain.
Sommario/riassunto	Though we have other distinguishing characteristics (walking on two legs, for instance, and relative hairlessness), the brain and the behavior it produces are what truly set us apart from the other apes and primates. And how this three-pound organ composed of water, fat, and protein turned a mammal species into the dominant animal on earth today is the story the author seeks to tell in this book. Adopting what he calls a bottom-up approach to the evolution of human behavior, the author considers the brain as a biological organ; a collection of genes, cells, and tissues that grows, eats, and ages, and is subject to the direct effects of natural selection and the phylogenetic constraints of its ancestry. An exploration of the evolution of this critical organ based on recent work in paleoanthropology, brain anatomy and neuroimaging, molecular genetics, life history theory, and related fields, this book shows us the brain as a product of the contexts in which it evolved : phylogenetic, somatic, genetic, ecological,

demographic, and ultimately, cultural-linguistic. Throughout, the author focuses on the foundations of brain evolution rather than the evolution of behavior or cognition.

---