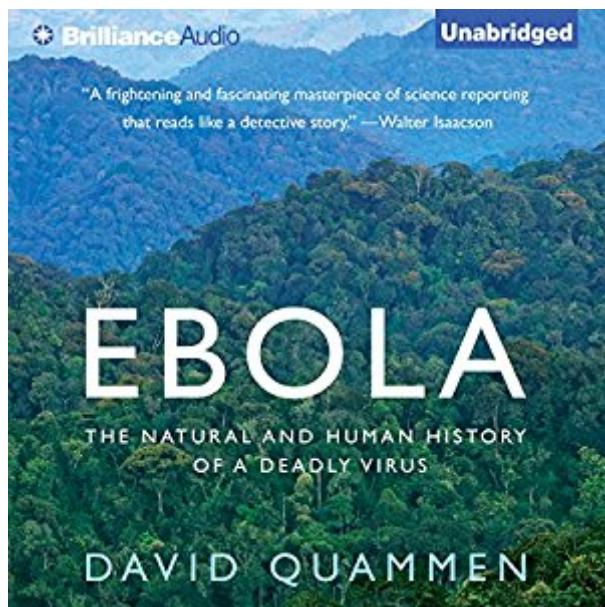


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# Ebola: The Natural And Human History Of A Deadly



## Synopsis

"A frightening and fascinating masterpiece of science reporting that reads like a detective story." - Walter Isaacson In 1976 a deadly virus emerged from the Congo forest. As swiftly as it came, it disappeared, leaving no trace. Over the four decades since, Ebola has emerged sporadically, each time to devastating effect. It can kill up to 90 percent of its victims. In between these outbreaks, it is untraceable, hiding deep in the jungle. The search is on to find Ebola's elusive host animal. And until we find it, Ebola will continue to strike. Acclaimed science writer and explorer David Quammen first came near the virus while he was traveling in the jungles of Gabon, accompanied by local men whose village had been devastated by a recent outbreak. Here he tells the story of Ebola - its past, present, and its unknowable future. Extracted from *Spillover* by David Quammen, updated and with additional material.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 49 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: December 9, 2014

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00QSHWVOW

Best Sellers Rank: #16 in Books > Medical Books > Basic Sciences > Virology #26 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > AIDS #79 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Zoology > Mammals

## Customer Reviews

Since the publisher called this "material taken from *Spillover*" (*Spillover* is here: *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic*) I wanted to compare it to that wonderful book. In particular, if it was just a way to capitalize on Ebola news and fears, with little more than *Spillover* reprinting, it would be better for the reader to just GET *Spillover*! First, *Spillover* has over 100 pages on Ebola, including the 13 Gorillas primary chapter (vs. 12 Monkeys?) beginning on page 53. In fact, though, Ebola is peppered throughout all of *Spillover* in fine fashion, and given the little progress that has been made in the last few years (fruit bats, reservoir, etc.) one would assume that this new

book doesn't have much new. Well, one would be wrong, as I was. While chipping away at my PhD in Molecular Biology and supercomputing, I worked on the weaponization, epidemiology and response aspects of Ebola (as you might know, Reston had an airborne component, though not humanly virulent in the sense of Zaire/Congo strains) and am still a contributor to Weapbola dot com, although my primary field is now robotics. Both technically and "story wise" this new book is well worth the investment, even if you have read Spillover. Quammen is one of the best Science writers still publishing today, and his books, blogs and articles are always page turners, with deep science woven flawlessly into the narrative. The book is current and up to date as recently as a couple months ago at this writing.

Ebola: The Natural and Human History of a Deadly Virus by David Quammen "Ebola: The Natural and Human History of a Deadly Virus" is a very interesting behind-the-scenes look at the quest to find the host animal carrying this devastating virus. This brief book is a product of sections of his 2012 book Spillover and recent events. Accomplished author and science journalist, David Quammen takes the reader on a journey through the jungles of Africa in search of the reservoir host. This exciting 128-page is broken out into 21 chapters. Positives: 1. Solid science writing. Well researched and engaging. 2. The hot-button topic of the day. 3. Quammen has a good grasp of the topic and writes with skill. It feels more like an action book than a standard-of-the-mill popular science book. 4. Like a good philosopher Quammen asks the right questions and its science's quest to get the answers. 5. A partial view of the history and science of Ebola. It's very accessible and focuses more on the quest to find the host. 6. Introduces and explains terms in an accessible manner. "A reservoir host is a species that carries the pathogen, harbors it chronically, while suffering little or no illness." 7. Does a great job of capturing the difficulties associated with tracking down the sources of viruses and in particular the Ebola virus. "Zoonotic pathogens can hide. That's what makes them so interesting, so complicated, and so problematic." Ebola is a zoonosis. 8. Provides many examples of other viruses that shed light on the Ebola virus. "Johnson had helped solve the Machupo crisis by his attention to the ecological dimension--that is, where did the virus live when it wasn't killing Bolivian villagers?"

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