Emotions: A Brief History investigates the history of emotions across cultures as well as the evolutionary history of emotions and of emotional development across an individual's life span.

In clear and accessible language, Keith Oatley examines key topics such as emotional intelligence, emotion and the brain, and emotional disorders. Throughout, he interweaves three themes: the changes that emotions have undergone from the past to the present, the extent to which we are able to control our emotions, and the ways in which emotions help us discern the deeper layers of ourselves and our relationships.