
Creation Answers

Creation Education Materials, P.O. Box 153402, Irving, TX 75015-3402

Who does this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creation research within the reach of Christians and provide up-to-date reliable information on creation issues. Wayne Spencer is a creation author and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and has published in various creation publications, such as the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Creation magazine, the Journal of Creation (TJ), and Origins (from the Biblical Creation Society, UK).

This newsletter is meant to help people plug into creation resources and get informed about creation and evolution. It is provided free of charge on request. Using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary for viewing the newsletter. There are no restrictions in copying this newsletter or passing it on to others. To request to be placed on the e-mail list, send a request to wspencer@creationanswers.net.

More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the creationanswers.net web site. You'll also find many other resources. <http://creationanswers.net>

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A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

Greetings,

In this issue I address a subject that is important in origins. It may be the topic that over the years has been in the media more than any other origins topic, the origin of man. In "The Non-Evolution of Man" I address what the Bible teaches versus what evolution claims about our own origins. So many books and articles have been written about these things. I am just trying to summarize the issue. This will be done in two parts, so please hang on to this issue so you can refer to it in September when the next issue goes out. Evolution plays down our uniqueness as human beings by claiming we descended from lower animals and apes. But I think the subject of paleoanthropology, the study of ancient man and man's origins, shows how humans are designed to live above the level of animals. But man must find his way with the help of the God who made him, or man can degenerate to the level of an animal.

The creationanswers.net website has just recently been moved to a new web hosting company. It went down for a few hours on June 25th. This was mostly to save costs but it may allow me to add some new features to the website. I want to thank everyone who uses my website. I would be glad to hear any comments you have about it.

August 3-6 I will be attending and speaking at the International Conference on Creationism. So, I am in the process of preparing for that.

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

The Non-Evolution of Man, Part 1

One of the most controversial aspects of evolutionary theory is also perhaps the most widely published, or at least this was the case for years. The field of paleoanthropology deals with ancient man, including the origin of man. Thus many famous evolutionist scientists have searched for evidence that modern apes and modern humans have a common ancestor. If you were to see such a common ancestor (if it were real), you would call it an ape. Thus, though evolutionists are sometimes critical of people describing their theories in this way, it is not really inaccurate to say evolutionists believe we evolved from apes. It is just that evolutionists believe we evolved from apes of the past, not from the exact varieties of apes that live now.

Scripture, on the other hand, is quite clear that Adam and Eve were the first human beings and that they did not descend from any other living creatures. Adam was miraculously created by God from the dust of the ground. Indeed the word "adam" essentially means "dust" or "earth." Eve was miraculously created from a rib or some other part of Adam's side. Adam says in Genesis that she was to be the "mother of all the living." God demonstrates the equality of our maleness and femaleness by this means of creation. Thus the origin of the first man and woman is an important teaching in the book of Genesis and this account from Genesis cannot be reconciled with evolutionary science. It is not to be taken as figurative because then it ceases to have its point in context.

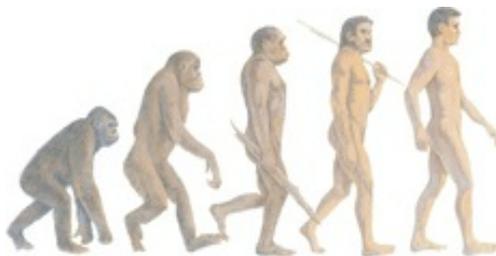
Those who have tried to suggest that God used evolution to create have problems dealing with Genesis regarding the origin of the first man and woman. The Catholic church has made various statements to the effect that it is acceptable to believe in evolution but that the origin of human

beings must be separate. It clearly contradicts Scripture to suggest that lower animals (such as ape-men intermediates or "hominids" as they are called) evolved into humans. To suggest such a scenario brings up a difficult question of how did humans come to be made in God's image if they evolved from animals that were not made in God's image? This is no small problem. Man's unique traits as being in God's image include his high intelligence, his use of spoken and written language, making moral judgements, and belief in God and life after death. Strict evolutionists would just dismiss the Biblical teaching that human beings are made in God's image. But Christians cannot afford to dismiss the doctrine of being made in God's image. It is an extremely important teaching that implies there is a unique high value to human life that does not apply to any other form of life. This is also suggested in the fact that in the Creation account in Genesis chapter one, Man was the last being God made, since man and woman were the pinnacle of His creation.

Research regarding the supposed evolution of man is full of examples of very bad science. Evolutionary science has failed to assemble any substantial evidence that Homo Sapiens evolved from ancient apes. It is true that sometimes creationists have made some mistakes in how information has been quoted or in how information has been told and retold. But the minor mistakes of creationists pale in comparison to the gross examples of bad judgement, sloppy conclusions, and outright dishonesty that has characterized this area of evolutionary science. A book written by two evolutionists in 2001 pointed put it this way, ". . . we must admit that the history of paleontology does not read as a shining example of the pursuit of truth, especially where it was the truth of man's origins that was at issue. . . . we do know that the popular image of the scientist as a dispassionate seeker after the truth could not be further from reality." (See Gibbin, J. and Cherfas, J., The First

Chimpanzee: In Search of Human Origins, Penguin Books, London, p. 59, 2001.) One paleoanthropologist commented about the lack of objectivity in science, "In my view, 'objectivity' does not exist in science. Even in the act of gathering data, decisions about what data to record and what to ignore reflect the framework of the scientist." (See Wolpoff, M.H., Paleoanthropology, Second Edition, McGraw-Hill, Boston, p. iv, 1999.)

The following will summarize the problems with the evolutionary science about the evolution of man. It may be helpful to divide this into past controversies and present (or recent) controversies. The past controversies are no longer really controversial because they are ideas that are widely known to be outdated and incorrect and few question this. Note that science textbooks and natural history museums do not always catch up to the current understanding of things according to evolutionists. Sometimes museum displays are deliberately left inaccurate for various reasons. It is not just creationists that are often appalled at the outdated or inaccurate content in textbooks or museums. Evolutionists are also sometimes appalled. This is why Christians and especially Christian parents need to be informed on these issues. It is not that Christians should avoid natural history museums; rather they should help their kids sort out truth from error in the science of origins. Let us briefly consider background on skeletal differences between apes and humans, then look at past controversies. The next issue of this newsletter will continue with more on recent controversies regarding human origins.



Humans Versus Apes

In the science of human origins, it is necessary to deal with facts about the skeletons of humans and apes. There is a need to have some knowledge of the differences between the two. It is also important to realize that "distinctive" human features (as well as ape features) exhibit a natural amount of variation. So in looking at fossil skeletal remains a scientist asks what each feature of the fossils is more like, is it more like the bones of a human or more like the bones of an ape? An interesting example would be the size of the brain case for Neanderthals. Neanderthals, once thought to be an ancestor of modern man, are now considered to be homo sapiens (human). Wikipedia lists the following figures for ranges of values for cranial capacities (brain size), with volumes in cubic centimeters.

- Orangutans: 275–500 cc
- Chimpanzees: 275–500 cc
- Gorillas: 340–752 cc
- Humans: 1100–1700 cc
- Neanderthals: 1200–1700 cc

These figures may be debatable in some cases but they give approximate differences. Human cranial capacity is known to vary from about 830 cc for some Australian aborigines to the largest recorded being 2800 cc. Note that brain size has nothing to do with how intelligent a human being is. People with bigger brains are not smarter necessarily. Human average cranial capacities are 1350 cc for women and 1500 cc for men (data from Dr. David Menton, an anatomy professor). As the above figures show, Neanderthal's skull sizes are essentially in the same range as humans but most estimates would put Neanderthal skulls as slightly larger than the average human skull. On the other hand, a small human skull (such as one from a pigmy or a child for example) could have a similar capacity to a

large Gorilla skull. Large cranial capacity may be a good indicator of the skull being human if it is in good condition. But usually a fossil is incomplete and the skull may be in fragments. Thus there is some uncertainty in the brain capacity when the skull has to be reassembled to estimate it. This is how a characteristic that is a relatively good indicator of whether a fossil is human or not can actually be difficult to use in practice, unless there are other bones found or other kinds of clues from where the fossils are found.

Other than cranial capacity, there are other characteristics that distinguish humans from apes. Ape jaws are shaped more like a capital "U" whereas human jaws are more parabola shaped. Apes usually have prominent brow ridges around the eyes but how prominent these are varies and even some modern humans have brow ridges also. The hips, knee joints, legs, and feet are also distinctive for humans to allow us to walk fully upright all the time. Apes have opposable big toes that allow them to grasp with their feet for spending a lot of time in trees. Also though some apes may walk on two feet, they don't do it in a fully upright way like humans do and they don't do it all the time. Apes have to lean to the side as they walk on two feet because they can't straighten up like humans. They have to do this to balance their weight over their feet so they don't fall over. Apes also have proportionally longer arms and shorter legs because they walk using their arms a lot, even those that can walk on two feet part of the time. So the proportions of the leg bones and arm bones can help determine if a fossil is human or ape.

Past Controversies

In 1912 a medical doctor reported finding a jaw and part of a skull in a gravel pit near Piltdown England. It came to be known as Piltdown Man but was found to be a hoax in which the teeth on the jaw

fragment were filed down to make it look as if it were worn down like human teeth. This Hoax fooled many scientists for many years before it was finally exposed as a hoax.

Then in 1922 a man named Harold Cook brought a single tooth to Henry Fairfield Osborn, who was head of the American Museum of Natural History, in New York. Cook told Osborn some information on where it was found and Osborn then published the claim that it had characteristics of both man and ape. Henry Osborn promoted the idea it was an ancestor of modern man. The tooth was used in the famous trial of John Scopes in 1925 in Dayton, TN. It also made news headlines including in the Illustrated London Daily News, which even printed drawings of "Nebraska man" and his wife. In 1927, more of the skeleton was found. The additional evidence made clear "Nebraska man" was actually an extinct pig called a peccary. Creationist Dr. Duane Gish used to joke in his lectures that this is a case where the pig made a monkey out of the evolutionist!

Ramapithicus was another case from the 1970's. It was promoted as one of a branch of apes that evolved into humans and was published as such in 1977 in Scientific American in an article by Dr. Elwyn Simons. Simons made a number of strong claims about Ramapithicus and published something in Time magazine. However, another scientist, a Dr. Robert Eckhardt also published in Scientific American a paper comparing Ramapithicus to another fossil that many agreed to be an ape, called Dryopithicus. Eckhardt made a number of detailed measurements of the teeth of Dryopithicus and Ramapithicus and compared them to the range of known variation in the teeth of chimpanzees. This showed there was more variation in the teeth of living chimpanzees than there was between Dryopithicus and Ramapithicus. Teeth adapt to the diet and environment of the animal and so this nullified much of the evidence of Ramapithicus being an ancestor of man. Other studies of the jaw of

Ramapithecus indicated ape-like characteristics, so Ramapithecus was just an ape, possibly an orangutan. Not only is there a tendency for scientists to read into evidence what they want to see, but there is also sometimes a tendency to take it to the media much too soon and claim too much.

Another controversy of the past is the Neanderthals. There is now general agreement that Neanderthals were homo sapiens. Many evolutionists believe the Neanderthals lived from about 30,000 to 150,000 years ago and that they were a branch of humans that is now extinct. It used to be claimed by some evolutionists that Neanderthals were in modern man's ancestry, but that view seems to be largely abandoned today. I think it is possible they should be regarded as an extinct race of humans, but I would not accept the above age figures. For years there was a tendency in the way they were drawn or reconstructed, to make them look more "brutish" or ape-like than was realistic.

The first Neanderthals were actually discovered in 1856 in Germany, but they were later found in several countries in Europe, Africa, China, and others. They have never been found in North or South America apparently. Dr. David Menton describes them as follows. "This race of men was characterized by prominent eyebrow ridges, low forehead, long narrow skull, a protruding upper jaw, and a strong lower jaw with a short chin. They were deep chested with curved-heavy built leg bones and large joints." None of these features make them a different species from modern man. Some specimens have indications of them suffering from Vitamin D or calcium deficiency (rickets) or from arthritis. But, there are now a few hundred Neanderthal fossils which have been found and their unique characteristics cannot all be explained by rickets or arthritis.

Anatomy experts have found mistakes in how some Neanderthal models and reconstructions were done that made

them look less human than they really were. (This particular point alone has been the subject of many books and articles by both evolutionists and creationists.) They would have looked like other people alive today. There is now evidence that Neanderthals used tools and musical instruments, buried their dead, and even had a variety of burial customs. In a number of cases the remains of multiple individuals have been found in a single cave or location, likely indicating a burial site, possibly used by a family or a community. In a few cases dozens of individuals were buried in the same site. Creationist Marvin Lubenow reports that there are a few sites where the Neanderthals and homo sapiens were actually buried together. This is a pretty good indication they were fully human. So the evidence is quite clear now that they were fully human. They were within the range of what is possible for homo sapiens.

There are many other fossil cases that could be mentioned. Java man was one that went in science books and was used to promote evolution for years even though there was little real evidence to base it on. There are many examples like that in the research from evolutionists on the evolution of man. Some fossils believed to be mankind's ancestors have been controversial for years and still are. More cases like this will be examined in part 2 of this article in the next newsletter.

Problems with Mitochondrial Eve

In the late 1987 there were reports from evolutionists saying that the lineages of humans could be traced genetically back to a single human female that lived in Africa. This hypothetical woman was dubbed "mitochondrial Eve." This was based on genetic studies of what is called mtDNA, from the mitochondria in our cells. Mitochondria function as energy generators for running cells and they have their own DNA that is separate from normal DNA in the cell

nucleus. Evolutionists believed that this mtDNA could be used to trace evolutionary ancestry. This idea is based on two assumptions, 1) that the mtDNA comes only from the mother and 2) that mutation rates for the mtDNA have been relatively constant over evolutionary time.

Both evolutionists and creationists would like to find evidence pointing to one human female in the past that is the mother of us all. There are two views of the evolution of man and one of them, called the "Out of Africa" theory, has it that the first humans evolved only in one place and that was in Africa. The mitochondrial Eve idea was put forth by evolutionists to support this notion. However, complications and errors in the data and the science of this became evident after it was published in the media. Some of the evidence pointed to a human origin only several thousand years ago. This looked good to creationists. Some creationists may argue that the mitochondrial Eve evidence supports a Biblical origin of man.

Though I would be happy to see such evidence, I suspect creationists should not use the mitochondrial Eve argument. The problem is that the two fundamental assumptions of the idea above may have both been shown to be wrong. The mtDNA does not come only from the mother and mutation rates are not constant. The whole subject of "Mutation rates" is fraught with problems also, being based on faulty evolutionary assumptions. It appears to me that scientists really do not know nearly enough about the mtDNA to be able trace any kind of lineage from it.

In January 2003 scientist Peter Forster of Cambridge made the following statements about errors in the mtDNA work. "More than half of the mtDNA sequencing studies ever published contain obvious errors." He went on to say, "fundamental research papers, such as those claiming a recent African origin for mankind ...have been criticized, and rejected due to the

extent of primary data errors." To find out more on this I would recommend the following two articles. Perhaps genetic research will shed new light on this question in the future.

<http://www.trueorigin.org/mitochondrialeve01.asp>

<http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/2332>

International Conference on Creationism, August 3-6, 2008

This August an important conference takes place in the Pittsburgh, PA area at a Radisson Hotel. It is the Sixth International Conference on Creationism (ICC). This is a peer-reviewed scholarly conference where leading creationists present new research related to creation. All papers must be from a six-day creation point of view that holds to a young age of thousands of years for the Earth and the universe. The ICC is a very exciting conference. Many important new ideas often come from this conference.

There is a thorough review process that takes about a year for each paper. If the paper is accepted, the author is allowed to present it at the conference and it is published in the hard-bound conference proceedings. The review process in this provides accountability for ensuring quality work from creationist researchers. I am fortunate to have presented papers at the ICC in 1994, 1998, and 2003. I will present one paper in August (God willing). To find out details about the conference go to <http://www.icc08.org>.