



Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

July/Aug. 1986: Vol. 3 No. 4

What Is a Caveman?

By Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

When you hear the word *caveman*, what picture pops into your mind? Is it a hunched over, hairy, half-man/half-ape creature with a club in his hand? This is the popular idea. The familiar Fred Flintstone is a good example. Where does this idea originate? Is it based on good fossil evidence?

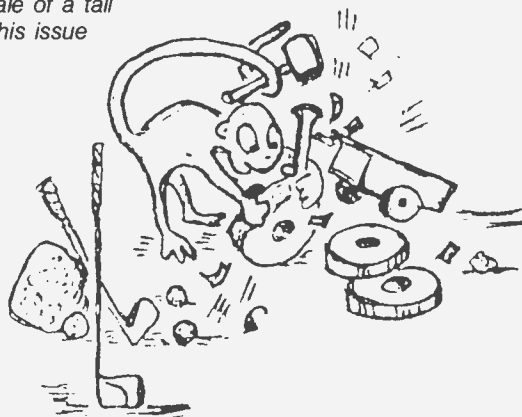
Actually, the popular image of cavemen has been ingrained in our minds by the media who have been brainwashed into believing we evolved from ape-like creatures. Hence, thousands of children are convinced that we evolved from apes without ever seeing a shred of evidence. The pictures they see in books and on television are actually artists' reconstructions based on fragmentary evidence and preconceived ideas. Remember the case of Nebraska Man discussed in the last issue of *Think & Believe*? The complete ape-man reconstruction was based entirely on one tooth — and a lot of preconceived ideas. The tooth was later found to be from an extinct pig and not a man after all. Preconceived ideas have been flavoring the evidence for years.

These pictures very subtly (but quite effectively!) sway children and adults into accepting evolutionary doctrine. While we were visiting a family in which the parents strongly believed in creation, the subject of evolution came up (as it frequently does around us!). The mother was shocked when her 5th grade daughter expressed her belief that people evolved from apes. This youngster was convinced and her parents didn't even know why. Pictures are convincing. Unfortunately, they are not so much based on evidence as they are on someone's preconceived ideas of what the evidence represents. The artist seems to get the blame, but remember the true blame rests with the scientist who dictates what the artist should draw. Many are given previously reconstructed skulls which

have already had plenty of speculation administered and asked to proceed from there.

So then, what is a caveman if it is not the half ape/half man evolutionary missing link? A caveman is simply a man who lives in a cave. Many people around the world today would fit this category, and they are not necessarily any more "primitive" than we are. We personally know of 2 families in the Grand Junction area who live in caves today. (That makes them cave men and cave women and cave kids, doesn't it?) However, when they drive to town in their fancy automobiles no one would suspect them to be cavepeople because they look the same as everyone else. Our conclusion is that "ancient" cavemen were merely men who lived in caves.

*A tale of a tail
in this issue*



NOTES & QUOTES

■ Have you ever noticed the certainty with which evolution is presented as fact?

- Four to five million years ago, the earliest human-like creatures first strode upright across the rolling savannas of East Africa, gazed over the vast plain, and began competing with much stronger, faster, and deadlier carnivores for a place in the sun. (Phillip Whitten and Martin K. Nickels, "Our Forebears' Forbears," *The Sciences*, Jan/Feb 1983, p. 20)
- The evolutionary origin of living organisms, including humans, is today beyond reasonable doubt. We do not know all the details of the process, although we know the evolutionary history of mankind better than that of most other living species. Anybody taking the effort to become familiar with the evidence cannot doubt that our ancestors of millions of years ago were not human. To be sure, there still exist people who deny the reality of evolution, but these are either ignorant of the evidence or have so prejudged the matter that no evidence is meaningful to them. (Francisco J. Ayala and James W. Valentine, *Evolving: The Theory and Processes of Organic Evolution*, 1979, p. 378)

■ Ayala and Valentine seem so sure of the evidence. Ironically, the theories of human evolution were formulated before any fossil evidence was available:

- The first evolutionists had their work made doubly difficult for them. Despite their growing *faith* in the evolution of man, they had so little fossil evidence to go on that their theories were of necessity largely speculative. Darwin, in fact, wrote his epochal *The Descent of Man* without a single human fossil as evidence to support his theory. (F. Clark Howell and the Editors of TIME-LIFE BOOKS, *Early Man*, 1965, p. 21) (Emphasis added)

■ The evidence is *still* very fragmentary, and theories about human evolution are constantly changing:

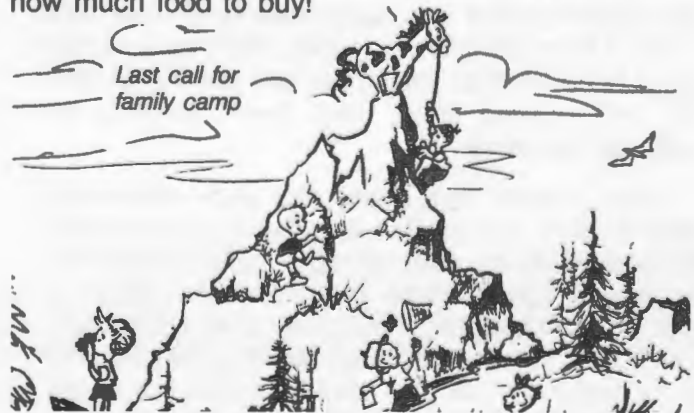
- Richard Leakey summed up the situation on the final Walter Cronkite Universe program. He said that if he were going to draw a family tree for man, he would just draw a huge question mark. The fossil evidence was too scanty for us to possibly know man's evolutionary origin and he didn't think we were ever going to know it. (Luther D. Sunderland, *Darwin's Enigma*, 1984, p. 87)
- The newcomer to the subject of human evolution can quite easily be overwhelmed by both the immensity of the subject and the vast amount of specialized knowledge that must be brought to

bear upon the subject to gain our present understanding. Let him be reassured on two counts. First, no one of us who teaches or writes about the evolution of man possesses more than a small fraction of this total body of knowledge; and second, what we know about evolution is but a small fraction of what we would like to know and eventually will know. (Bertram S. Kraus, *The Basis of Human Evolution*, 1964, p. 2)

■ Aren't you reassured by these statements? Kraus seems sure that we will eventually know how man evolved — Leakey is not so sure, but he still believes evolution to be true. Statements like these make it clear that evolution is held as a faith. The actual evidence is fragmentary and interpretations change rapidly. The Biblical account, however, has remained the same for thousands of years, and though it has been rejected by many, it has never been disproved.

- Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7 NASB)

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SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

Homo Erectus

In our last issue we spotlighted the first five creatures in the graphic illustration of our "evolutionary tree of ancestors" found in the November, 1985 *National Geographic*. We concluded that these creatures did not run as the magazine pictures them doing — in fact they didn't even *walk* in an upright fashion. They were purely apes and monkeys and are no more our relatives than the man in the moon. In this issue we proceed to climb the evolutionary tree and take a look at the next candidates for our "ancestors."

Homo erectus is shown as a very primitive half-ape/half-man link. As we look at the available evidence, however, it becomes evident that he indeed was true man. The original *Homo erectus* (Java Man) was reconstructed from a cranium (skull cap) and a fully modern femur (leg bone) found about 50 feet away. The discoverer later said he thought the skull was merely that of a gibbon. So much for Java man. The controversial bones of another *Homo erectus* (Peking Man) mysteriously disappeared and are not available for inspection.

The most interesting find of *Homo erectus* is that of a 12 year old boy. It was estimated that he would have grown to be a man in excess of 6 feet tall. The height alone has thrown some of the anthropologists into confusion (it really doesn't take much new evidence to do that) since it has been assumed that our "ancestors" were short ape-men. The October 19, 1984, *Rocky Mountain News* reports:

The skeleton will revise previous notions that humankind's close ancestors were scrawny ape-like creatures not much taller than 5 feet, said Richard Leakey, director of the National Museums of Kenya. In fact, they were taller than most populations today.

While some researchers are saying the bones are virtually identical to modern man, others are saying there are slight differences. This would probably put the differences within the genetic variability of modern man. One researcher has said that it is surprising how long man has looked like man.

As always, when new finds are uncovered, we must be careful in our blanket acceptance of the original claims — they frequently change — but according to data we now have, *Homo erectus* is not the "missing link."

The Neanderthals

The Neanderthals are some of the most popular cavemen. For years they were portrayed by the media as very stupid, ape-like creatures — now they are considered entirely human. Why? Preconceived ideas often flavored the interpretation of the evidence. Also, early Neanderthal fossil reconstructions were based upon bones of diseased individuals. Further fossil finds and more investigation led to a consensus among paleo-anthropologists that Neanderthal was in fact within the genetic potential of man today and would probably go unnoticed in a crowd.

To most people Neanderthal man is anything but human — a grunting, shuffling beast rather than an intelligent being. But recently a true picture of him has taken shape, and a different picture it is from the one commonly held. Within less than a generation of our own lifetime this ancient man has been lifted from the misconceptions of nearly a century to deserved inclusion within the ranks of humanity. (Ralph Solecki in the Introduction to *The Neanderthals* by George Constable and the Editors of TIME-LIFE BOOKS, 1973, p. 7)

The range of variability of Neanderthal features has been shown to overlap with the modern range of variability more so than once was thought. This means that Neanderthal features may occasionally be seen just by strolling through the nearest crowd, although no individual will have a complete array of Neanderthal characteristics It helps to know that Neanderthals came in many shapes and sizes, and that these are sometimes matched by modern men. (George Constable and the Editors of TIME-LIFE BOOKS, *The Neanderthals*, 1973, p. 129)

Our typesetter told us she had a friend who exhibited at least 12 definite "Neanderthal" characteristics, and "Boy, was he handsome!" Even though our picture of Neanderthal man has been changed, media artists still perpetuate the misconception. We maintain it is the artistic reconstruction and not the evidence that has falsely convinced so many about evolution.

To sum up the evidence presented in these last two issues of *Think & Believe* we can say that the fossils seem to fit into one of three categories: pure monkey, pure ape, or pure man. The only intermediate forms bridging the gaps are creatures imagined by evolutionary scientists and drawn by artists. Truly, they have made monkeys out of men. We have climbed *National Geographic's* "evolutionary tree" and found that when the evolutionists have presented all their findings, they are still out on a limb. Man has always been man. Ape has always been ape.

DARWIN'S DINGALING THEORY OR The Biggest Hole in the Theory of Evolution

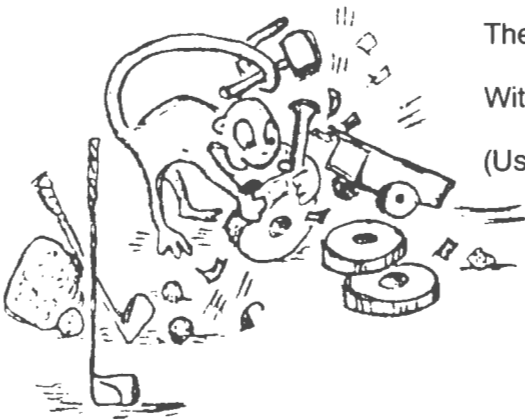


What self-respecting monkey
there swinging from that tree
would ever think of giving up
that HANDY TAIL? Not me!

This prehistoric grunter is
just beginning to see
it takes all three to start a fire . . .
two paws plus a tail, you see.



Then strolling down this pathway
it spied some logs . . . oh wheel!
With a hole-in-one, for work and fun
"golf" and "wagons" were begun.
(Using its tail yet? Yessiree!)



A handy holder-upper I'll STILL need
when talking to thee . . .
one to hold the phone . . . two to write
this poem. Lose MY tail? NOT ME!

—Leona Buhr Schalow



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