

Book of Report Bones of Contention

A Creationist Assessment of Human Fossils

by Marvin Lubenow

Baker Books; ©1992. Mr. Lubenow has updated this book as of 2002. Either book can be found at www.Christianbook.com or, of course, on www.Amazon.com and www.ebay.com (as well as many other sites).

General Topic: Human and ape fossil evidence and evolution.

Recommendation: Highly recommended to anyone on either side of the evolution debate. I believe this to be the best of the *Creation versus Evolution* books. My summarization below should not be used instead of the real thing; this is a book which should be studied carefully by all those interested in this particular topic.

Summary:

Notable Features: Several charts of human and ape fossils; more complete than you will find in any science book.

Periodic definitions of the technical terms of evolution in a light gray box (e.g., *hominid*, *taxonomy*).

Preface:

The Human fossil record supports the theory of special creation rather than the theory of evolution.

Lubenow does not attempt to deal with every aspect of evolution. When it comes to the dates assigned by evolutionists, he disagrees with these dates, but still allows them in his data in order to make a point.

Chapter One: The Family Gathering

Most people (including scientists and paleontologists) have never seen an actual human fossil or even the picture of an actual human fossil.

The actual fossils are under great security. In many cases, their exact location has been kept secret.

One of the few times human fossils could be seen was a 1984 exhibit in the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Lubenow made several interesting points:

- (1) the reason for this exhibit was the creation-evolution debate which threatened the predominance of evolution theory.
- (2) One cannot simply view the fossil evidence and be immediately convinced of evolution. The key is interpretation of the evidence.
- (3) There was only a fraction of the human fossils on display at this exhibition.
- (4) Scientific works on human evolution are based primarily upon either casts made of the existing fossils or descriptions of the actual fossils made by those who have seen them and more often upon descriptions of casts of the original fossils.
- (5) The casts are not good enough.
 - (5a) The fraudulent Piltdown Man fossils were composed of a human cranium combined with the teeth of an orangutan which had been filed down. The files marks could clearly be seen on the *fossil* teeth themselves, but not on the cast made.
 - (5b) There are casts for only a small percentage of the total fossil material.
 - (5c) Only about half of the most important fossil material have casts available for study.
 - (5d) The casts lack the detail of the original fossils.
 - (5e) Precision mounts were made from the casts in order to secure the actual fossils at the 1984 exhibition. Most of the fossils did not fit the mounts made for them.

Chapter Two: A Inexact King of Science

Carl Sagan: "Not all scientific statements have equal weight."

Evolutionary theory is guilty of begging the question (that is, you assume that which you are trying to prove).

Evolutions do not distinguish between scientific evidence and historical evidence; because something is possible to do, that does not mean it was done. The example given was, a study of boats and water and weather conditions can show that it is possible for George Washington and his army to cross the Delaware during the time of year that it is said that crossed the Delaware. This is, however, not proof that he did so. This means that, even if we could manage to change a reptile into a mammal, such an experiment would not *prove* that evolution is true.

We have all seen pictures of fossils or of fossil casts which show man evolving from a small, slumped-over ape to modern-day man. What is not generally known is:

- 1) Some fossils which do not fit into the evolution scheme are left out.

- 2) Some fossils of true humans are arbitrarily downgraded to make them appear as though they are our ancestors, when in fact, they are fully human fossils.
- 3) Some nonhuman fossils are upgraded so that they appear to be human ancestors.

Any group of things can be arranged into an *evolutionary sequence*. Although Lubenow does not make this point, anyone could take a dozen modern skeletons from all over the world and arrange them into an evolutionary sequence.

Excellent quotations from Richard Leakey (who calls paleoanthropology more of an art than a science) and David Pilbeam, who speaks as to why his fossil *Ramapithecus* was easily accepted as hominid (human), even though later it was clearly shown not to have any relationship to humans.

Lubenow makes mention of Philip Johnson's book *Darwin on Trial*; Johnson asserts, among other things, that evolution is more a religion than a science. The logical next step would be that, all of our schools are teaching a religion when they present evolution (the fact that a majority of science teachers agree that evolution is true does not necessarily make evolution a science).¹

Chapter Three: Dead Reckoning

Although it is assumed by many that the hominid fossil evidence is small, between 1969–1976, approximately 4000 hominid fossils have been discovered. Numerous quotations from scientific magazines and journals are offered as to how few human fossils have been discovered, one of them saying all the hominid fossils could be stacked upon a billiard table (I guess the stack would be pretty high?). When an anthropaleontologist bemoans that we do not have many fossils, what he is really saying is, there are not many human fossils which clearly support the theory of evolution. There are a huge number of hominid fossils which have been found; the problem is, they just do not support the theory of evolution as clearly as the evolutionist would like.

Chapter Four: Monkey Business in the Family Tree

Good quotation from Vincent Sariach, who participated in many of the Creation versus Evolution debates, and many times pointed out that science has an inherent, self-correcting mechanism.

¹ This particular observation is mine.

In the real world, scientists are often subject to a *publish or perish* existence. There is little motivation to confirm or falsify the work of a fellow scientist (i.e., they do not have the time or resources to do so). Whereas we may view scientists as a discerning, critical, self-correcting and self-policing society, they actually more often accept by faith the studies and propositions proposed by others.

Lubenow offers two examples of glaring errors which remained uncorrected for an inordinate amount of time. The Neanderthal man was the picture of a brutish, barely half-human creature, whose gait was slumped over, whose brain, given his ape-like appearance, had to have been like that of a child's. This impression comes to us from 1911, when this distorted version was presented to us based upon the evidence of the skeletal remains that had been discovered. It was not until 1955 that evidence was presented which contradicted the tradition view of the Neanderthal man, after he was touted for 44 years as a clear example of evolution. It took at least 20 years for the clear misinterpretation of the evidence to be removed from school textbooks (so, even after science had *corrected* itself, traditional Neanderthal man was still presented for twenty years as evidence of evolution to impressionable minds). The author watched with interest the display of the Neanderthal men at the Field Museum of the Natural History of Chicago, which did not remove its incorrect display of the Neanderthal man (however, the old Neanderthal men were not thrown away, of course; they were added to the dinosaur display on the second floor, labeled *An alternate view of Neanderthal*).

The second error which Lubenow offers up is that of the Piltdown man. Even though this was clearly a fraud perpetrated by an unknown person (there are about a dozen suspects), the Piltdown man stood as *science* for forty years, a relatively long time to expose an obvious fraud. Excellent detailed presentation is given by Lubenow. Apparently, more than 500 scientific doctoral theses were written on the Piltdown man before he was discovered to be a fraud, which confirms Lubenow's earlier assertion that scientists are more likely to accept by faith the studies and propositions offered by others.

Chapter Five: Looks Isn't Everything

Lucy + 3,000,000 years + 5,000,000 mutational events = modern man. There are no modern equivalents to Lucy because *she* evolved into us. Punctuated equilibria is examined in this chapter, and how death is a friend to the evolutionist. The older, inferior species must always die out while the newer, mutated species must survive and dominate.

The tidy evolution from *Australopithecus africanus* to *Homo habilis* to *Homo erectus* archaic *Homo sapiens* to modern *Homo sapiens* is critically examined. Lubenow first presents the theory, gives us a rough time frame to work with, and offers what could possibly falsify this neat theory. (1) An inferior species must die out when the improved, mutated variety comes into being; prolonged side-by-side existence of the a species

and that which it evolved into would falsify evolution. (2) We should not find modern man before his time. That is, if we find fossils of modern man which significantly predate his time on earth, this would also falsify evolution.

Even though there seems to be universal agreement among evolutions that *Australopithecus africanus* eventually became *Homo habilis* (handy man), which became *Homo erectus* (erect man), which became archaic *Homo sapiens* (primitive wise man), which finally became modern man, *Homo sapiens* (wise man), these classifications are not clear-cut or universally agreed upon.

And, by the way, *the existence of a "favorable" mutation has yet to be conclusively demonstrated.*

Since we have evolved from a different genus, we should not expect to find modern-looking fossils occurring during the time of Lucy (our chimp-like ancestor); nor should archaic or primitive fossils show up during modern times.

When a fossil does not conform to the time line that it should, evolutionists reclassify the fossil so that it falls within the accepted time period. That is, a *Homo erectus* fossil can become a *Homo sapiens* fossil, if it has been determined that it lived during the *wrong* time.

First example: the 1924 discovery of a skull which had come from the lie works at Taung (in South Africa?). This skull became known as an extinct primate which was in our evolutionary line named by its discoverer as *Australopithecus africanus*. Until Lucy, this skull was almost universally accepted as coming from our older direct ancestors, and was between 2 and 3 million years old. By 1960, a picture of this skull could be found in virtually every science textbook which dealt with human origins. In 1973, it was determined that the cave in which this skull was found was only 870,000 years old. That means the skull cannot be 2 to 3 million years old. Several evolutionists questioned the age of this skull, and finally, Phillip Tobias admitted that, "Although nearly 50 yer have elapsed since its discovery, it is true to say that the Taung skull has never yet been fully analyzed and described." Others have decided since then that this skull must be *Homo habilis* or perhaps *robustus*, which is not human at all. The discovery of Lucy eclipsed the Taung skull, so its importance, as well as discussions of its age and proper classification have faded into the background. He was later moved out of our family tree altogether, even though this skull stood as *proof* for 50 years of evolution. Since then, this skull has been moved back into the human line; the dating of the cave became suspect. The point is, these skulls can move from one grouping to another; and the dating of these fossils is also rather elastic. The key is, we accept evolution, and then make all of the evidence fit into the accepted theory.

Another even more damning example is given.

**Chapter Six: With a Name Like Neanderthal
 He's Got to Be Good**

I stopped here; I highly recommend this book. Very logical and reasonable.