

case, turned out to be a bit of ape jaw and human skull stained to make them look older.

One mystery is who perpetrated the Piltdown hoax, but the real mystery is *why did anyone believe it?* It was *not* a particularly clever hoax. When people looked at the teeth with the right hypothesis in mind, “the evidences of artificial abrasion [filing] immediately sprang to the eye. Indeed, so obvious did they seem that it may well be asked — how was it that they had escaped notice before?”²⁷ The age-stain was better done, but the imported mammalian fossils and hand-crafted tools were again obvious frauds. People *wanted* to believe in evolution, so they were able to see what they *wanted to believe* (a “people problem” that can only be solved by honestly looking at alternate sides of an issue).

Sometimes people ask me how virtually all the evolutionists in the world could be so wrong about such an important issue as human origins. Answer: it wouldn't be the first time. Science is a human endeavor, and human beings make mistakes. Evolution goes far beyond the limits of science, and is even more easily influenced by human bias. I can understand that both intellectually and personally since I once accepted the evolutionary bias and its view of the evidence.

The “human factor” in the study of human origins is apparent in the multiple and varied interpretations of Java and Peking Man (“*Homo erectus*”) recounted in a very readable, yet thoroughly documented, book by Marvin Lubenow, *Bones of Contention*.²⁸

Joining Neanderthals, Blacks, Aborigines, and Piltown Man as proposed witnesses for human evolution at the famous Scopes trial²⁹ in 1925 was Nebraska Man. Nebraska Man was dignified by the scientific name *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii*, but he was never known by anything but a tooth. By imagination, the tooth was put in a skull, the skull was put on a skeleton, and the skeleton was given flesh, hair, and a family! Figure 28 includes a picture of Nebraska Man redrawn from a London newspaper published during the year of the Scopes trial.

Two years later, Nebraska Man was back to being just a tooth. The tooth was found in the real skull, attached to the real skeleton. It turned out not to be the tooth of man's ape-like ancestor, but the tooth of a pig!

The Australian National Museum in Sydney apparently found a solution to the problem of evolutionary links still missing between apes and man. In June of 1993, we were greeted by a display describing five kinds of apes: lemurs, oranges, gorillas, chimps, and man. No need to look for links between apes and mankind if human beings are *still* apes! One display described nursing behavior in various apes, including people. Another showed that man and chimps are the only apes that murder their own kind. A third pictured love-making among people and other apes. The text mentioned that some apes were monogamous, others polygamous or promiscuous, and that some men were like gorillas, others like chimps, etc. It was a truly inspiring and edifying display! Most evolutionists, of course, would be just as disgusted by the displays as would anyone else with a respect for science (or for common sense).

Modern speculation on mankind's ancestry centers on a group of fossils called *Australopithecus*. In the public mind, these fossils are associated especially with the work in Africa of the Leakey family and of Donald Johanson and his famous specimen, "Lucy" (Figure 29).

The name *Australopithecus* means "southern ape," and it seems that apes are just what they are. Johanson likes to point out that where he finds his australopithecine bones, he finds many of the regular African animals (rhinos, boas, hippos, monkeys, etc.), but never apes. Could it be that apes are exactly what he has been finding all along? Lucy's features are clearly ape-like — except that some claim Lucy and other australopithecines walked upright.

How crucial to the definition of man is relatively upright posture? Vincent Sarich, at the University of California in Berkeley, and Adrienne Zihlman say that if you want something

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Did the australopithecines indeed walk upright? In the *American Biology Teacher*, eminent anatomist Charles Oxnard³⁰ said:

As part of his warning, Oxnard reminds his readers of gross errors once made in the cases of Piltdown Man and Nebraska Man.

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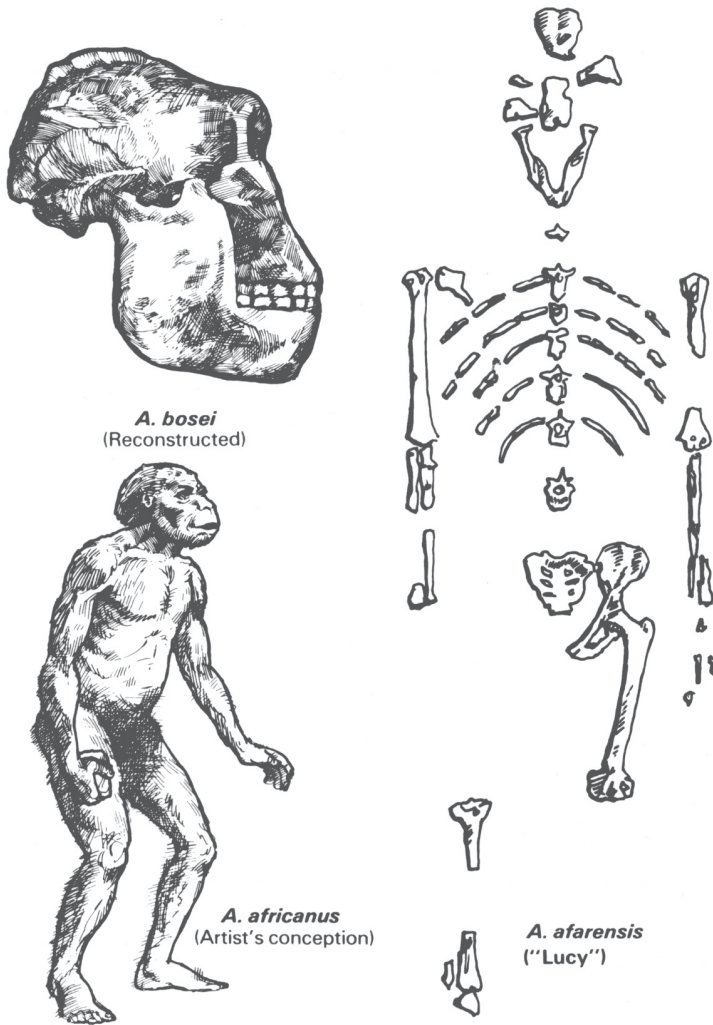


Figure 29. Australopithecines, including Johanson's "Lucy" and the Leakey finds in Africa, are the current candidates for man's ancestors. Anatomist Charles Oxnard says the fossils "provide a warning against too ready acceptance of this view." He reaches two conclusions. One is scientific: "If the australopithecines walked upright, it was not in the human manner." The second is educational: "Be critical." We must encourage our science students to examine evidence more critically, he says — and that means allowing students to explore evidences for and against both evolution and creation.

Louis Leakey started the modern interest in australopithecines (and captured the attention of *National Geographic*) way back in 1959 with his “ape man,” *Zinjanthropus*. *Zinjanthropus* has since been reclassified as *Australopithecus bosei* or *A. robustus*, and it is now considered grossly apelike, an extinct ape really not related to man at all.

In fact, it was not the skeletal features that attracted attention to the Leakey finds in the first place. It was tools. As I said at the beginning of this book, every scientist can recognize evidence of creation. Tools imply a toolmaker. Since the tools were found with *Australopithecus*, Louis Leakey assumed that that creature had made the tools. Thirteen years later, Richard Leakey found beneath the bones his father had unearthed “bones virtually indistinguishable from those of modern man.” Perhaps those tools were used *on* the owner of the gorilla-like skull, making it more like man’s meal than man’s ancestor. At the time, Richard Leakey said his discovery shattered standard beliefs in evolution.

Actually, fossil discoveries have been *shattering* standard beliefs in human evolution with monotonous regularity. Each in its day was hailed as “scientific proof” that human beings evolved from ape-like animals, yet all the candidates once proposed as our evolutionary ancestors have been knocked off the list. The cover story in *Time* magazine for March 14, 1994, *assumes* that evolution is an absolute fact,³² but it summarizes what is really the evaporating case for human evolution with these dramatic words:

Yet despite more than a century of digging, the fossil record remains *maddeningly sparse*. With so few clues, even *a single bone* that doesn't fit into the picture *can upset everything*. Virtually every major discovery has put *deep cracks* in the conventional wisdom and forced scientists to *concoct new theories*, amid furious debate [emphasis added].

It's sad that human evolution is still taught as "fact" to school children, college students, and the general public, when

