

The Light Bulb



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I D E A

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Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness Center

Human Origins and Intelligent Design

By Casey Luskin

Two Different Views of Origins

There are two fundamentally different causes for human origins: blind natural processes (chance-law) or purposeful intelligent design. The chance-law hypothesis, neo-Darwinian evolution, states that humans arose through random mutations preserved by blind natural selection. Thus the famous paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson said in his book *The Meaning of Evolution*, that under evolution, "[m]an is the result of purposeless and natural processes that did not have him in mind."¹ On the other hand, intelligent design theory postulates that humans originated due to the intentional arrangement of biomatter—including the human genetic code—by an intelligent agent. Under intelligent design, humans exist because an intelligent being *did* "have them in mind."

Can we detect intelligent design from the fossil record?

One thing we know about intelligent agents is that their complex designs tend to contain large amounts of specified and complex information. Thus, they can rapidly infuse large amounts of genetic information into the

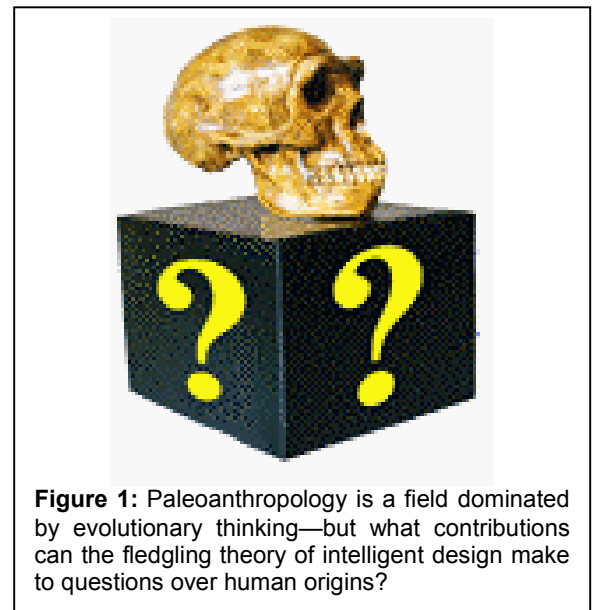


Figure 1: Paleoanthropology is a field dominated by evolutionary thinking—but what contributions can the fledgling theory of intelligent design make to questions over human origins?

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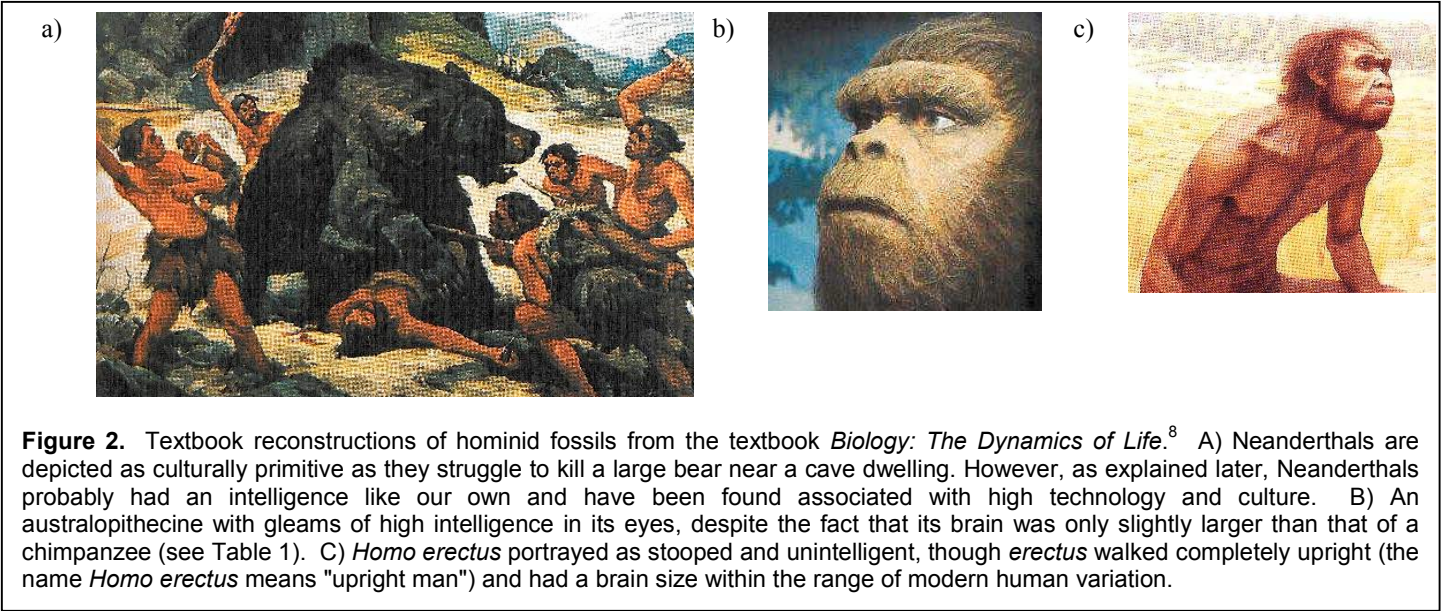
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biosphere. If this took place in the past, it would be reflected in the fossil record as the abrupt appearance of new fossil forms without similar precursors. Thus, when we find the rapid appearance new fossil forms, which lack transitions from previous different fossil forms, we may infer intelligent design.

Also, designers often re-use basic designs that work, with slight variations. For example, in the parking lot of a mall and you'll likely see dozens of cars built upon a similar body design, with slight variations and differences. Similarly, members of a "basic type", represent a group of similar and related species which acquired their genetic programming through intelligent design, and not through common descent.³ Like the car example, members of a basic type are fundamentally similar, but have undergone minor changes through microevolution. These observations can also be built into our understanding of intelligent design.

From our understanding of “basic type” biology, the following could be predictions of intelligent design:

- 1) Members of a basic type appear suddenly and distinct, without transitions in the fossil record from earlier forms, and
- 2) Subsequent forms the basic type are variants of, and very similar to, the initial fossil forms.



Some Limitations of Paleoanthropology

In 1980 the late paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould noted that, “[m]ost hominid fossils, even though they serve as a basis for endless speculation and elaborate storytelling, are fragments of jaws and scraps of skulls”.⁴ More recently, *Nature* editor Henry Gee wrote, “[f]ossil evidence of human evolutionary history is fragmentary and open to various interpretations.”⁵ The scarcity of data makes it difficult to confirm how, or even if extinct fossil species are related, and makes it easy to speculate under the influences from preconceptions and biases. Harvard zoologist Richard Lewontin explains:

*When we consider the remote past, before the origin of the actual species Homo sapiens, we are faced with a fragmentary and disconnected fossil record. Despite the excited and optimistic claims that have been made by some paleontologists, no fossil hominid species can be established as our direct ancestor.*⁶

A *Science* article entitled, “The Politics of Paleoanthropology,” describes how this lack of data causes paleoanthropologists to face challenges in remaining objective because of the sheer lack of evidence and the nature of the subject of study:

*The field of paleoanthropology naturally excites interest because of our own interest in origins. And, because conclusions of emotional significance to many must be drawn from extremely paltry evidence, it is often difficult to separate the personal from the scientific disputes raging in the field.*⁷

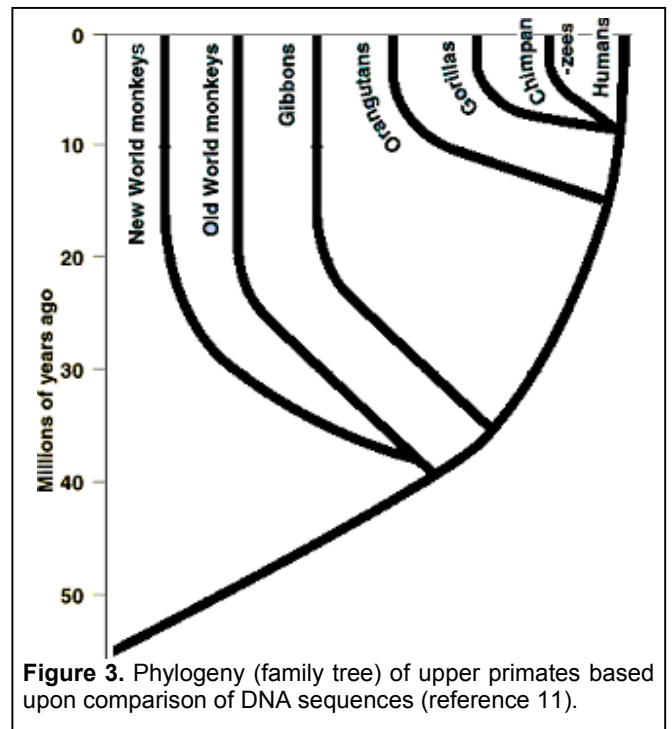
Paleoanthropology is a field where theories may be based only upon limited and incomplete evidence, which is rarely examined through intelligent design.

Many textbooks show interpretive drawings of hominids which may mislead the public to believe actually represent real data (see Figure 2).⁸ These reconstructions are only loosely based upon fossil evidence and often provide only a highly subjective evolutionary interpretation. As famed physical anthropologist Earnest A. Hooton from Harvard University cautioned in 1931, “alleged restorations of ancient types of man have very little, if any, scientific value and are likely only to mislead the public.”⁹

The Australopithecines

Humans, apes, and monkeys are members of the Order Primates.

Under evolution, all primates are related and the chimpanzee is the closest living relative to humans, and humans are descended from a common ancestor they shared with chimpanzees (see Figure 3). There is essentially no fossil evidence of the supposed evolutionary ancestors of chimpanzees and other living apes,² however there are some species believed by



Continued on Page 9

IDEA Center News and Events:

Two New IDEA Courses!

The IDEA Center recently completed teaching the "IDEA Course *Reloaded*," a wonderful ten-week course with nearly 20 students. As this newsletter goes to print, we are teaching the fourth IDEA Course, at Coastland Christian Bible College and University.

IDEA Center Outreach:

The Center has been reaching students and churches:

- On July 26th, 2003, the IDEA Center co-sponsored a successful conference at Carlsbad Community Church where Michael Behe, J. P. Moreland, and H. Wayne House spoke to an audience of about 150.
- On October 19th and November 2nd, 2003, Ryan Huxley participated in "Design vs. Darwin: A Scientific Controversy" panel discussions and at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church.
- Later in 2003, Ryan Huxley and Casey Luskin presented before a "Science & Religion Group" sponsored by members of Solana Beach Presbyterian Church on cosmic design and the fossil record.
- In January, 2004, Casey Luskin taught for two days before four biology classes at a public high school in San Diego. The students seemed to be interested in intelligent design, and many had good thought-provoking questions!



New IDEA Club Chapters!

Since the last issue of The Light Bulb, four new IDEA Clubs have been founded!

- Our first "outside-the-U.S." IDEA Club was founded by Mr. Caleb O. Seda who teaches science at Braeside High School in Nairobi, Kenya! We are overjoyed to help Mr. Seda help his students learn about the evidence supporting intelligent design
- Chemistry major at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Ben Kissling started an IDEA Club and has hosted a number of discussions. Check the club out at <http://www.geocities.com/intelligentdesignunl/idtn.html>

- Hillsdale College senior Michael Francisco has founded an IDEA Club there. Hillsdale was the site of a large conference debating intelligent design in November, 2002. This promises to be an active and debate-sparking IDEA Club!
- Wade Abbott, doctoral student in biochemistry, who founded an IDEA Club at University of Victoria, Canada. This second outside-the-U.S. Club has an incredible website at <http://uvss.uvic.ca/clubs/idea/>.
- Additionally, the UCSD IDEA Club sponsored a lecture with Dr. Fazale Rana on January 27th, 2004 discussing the evidence supporting intelligent design of humans. The turnout was great as over 150 attended.

We're always looking for students or others interested in starting IDEA clubs. For more information, please contact us at info@ideacenter.org.

IDEA Hats are In:

IDEA Hats are now available for \$15. They read "Understanding our Origins / Designed For a Purpose" and have the IDEA name and website as well. Order one on Page 13!

IDEA in the News

- Last issue we mentioned that, "any publicity is good publicity." Well, we've received some more "good publicity" through our mention in the recent book *Creationism's Trojan Horse*. See page 6 for details.
- The IDEA Club at UCSD was referenced in an article entitled, "Design or Chance?," by David F. Dawes on the cover of the January/February 2004 issue of *Faith Today* magazine, devoted to "Seeking to inform, equip, and inspire Christians across Canada."
- Staff members Eddie Colanter, Scott Uminsky, and Casey Luskin were on the air with Michael Law during "The Grapevine" on KPRZ 1210 am on both July 25th and October 29th, 2003. The earlier show was also actually in the absence of Mr. Law, as IDEA staff hosted the show as they interviewed special guests Michael Behe and H. Wayne House in the studio. The second radio gig was with Mr. Law, discussing Phillip Johnson's lecture (see page 5 for a full report).

Updated IDEA Club Leadership Manual:

With more clubs being started, the IDEA Center recently updated the IDEA Club leadership manual. The new manual was finished in February, 2004, and we hope that students will benefit from it as they start IDEA Clubs. See page 13 for details.

New Website in progress:

Some kind folks at Newfangled Graphics (Newfangled.com) have donated their services to build new website for the IDEA Center. Though work remains to be done, we are excited to report the site (screen shot at left) is close to completion, and most of the content is uploaded. Stay tuned for updates about when the site goes online!



IDEA
Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness Center

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Michael Behe Speaks at IDEA Center-Sponsored Conference
> details

Articles
Corrections and Comments to statements made about the IDEA Center in *Creationism's Trojan Horse*

News & Events
Another out-of-the-U.S. IDEA Club: IDEA Club begins at University of Victoria, Canada!
Problems with Panspermia or Extraterrestrial Origins of Life Scenarios

Brief Origins News Updates:

Complex Coral Genes: A recent Nature news article¹ states that corals and humans share a surprisingly large number of genes. From an evolutionary standpoint, this is "surprising" because "many of these genes are not shared with flies and worms, even though those animals evolved millions of years after coral." Out of coral 500 genes that were known from previous studies, nearly 90% had matches in humans, but about 10% had matches with humans but not in less advanced animals like the fruit fly. Since corals are thought to be near the base of the animal tree, this was surprising (from an evolutionary standpoint) because, "the [evolutionary] assumption was that coral would lack many of the genes found in higher animals." Apparently some of these genes are used in higher vertebrates to create our complex nervous systems, and it was not thought they'd be found in more "primitive" corals that have a simpler nervous system. A similar finding was also apparently reported from a study on flatworms that found "advanced" genes that were not expected. This finding is not surprising if one considers intelligent design, where a designer can re-use parts in unrelated organisms.

Origins of Life Experts Discuss Weaknesses:

Prominent origins of life researchers – Stanley Miller, Leslie Orgel, Jeffrey Bada, and Gerald Joyce -- gathered at UCSD to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of the famous "Miller-Urey" experiment.² Bada spoke about Miller's work and conceded that the gasses on the early earth were not those that could have produced amino acids, and was skeptical that organic material could have been transported to earth from space. In our opinion, this leaves origins of life theories without an explanation for the primordial soup. Joyce, expert on the "RNA World," admitted that the "RNA World hypothesis" was very speculative, and noted they are only 14/200 of the way toward explaining how an RNA world might have existed. (Their best molecule is an RNA polymerase that can replicate 14/200 of itself.) The RNA world hypothesis is only made because DNA is too complex to have arisen from the "soup," and something "less complex" is necessary. But RNA is also too complex and would also have needed a precursor. Though some self-replicating molecules have been created in the lab, it is not yet known how they could have turned into RNA.

The Biggest Mistake in the History of Molecular Biology:

Scientific American discussed that "junk-DNA" is not so junky.³ The article states that there are at least 2 layers of

functionality in non-coding-DNA: "one layer is woven throughout the vast "noncoding" sequences of DNA that interrupt and separate gene ... transcribed into varieties of RNA that perform a much wider range of functions than biologists had imagined possible." Pseudogenes and microRNAs are also suggested as a possible source of functionality in DNA. Introns ("long stretches of intergenic DNA inside genes") "were immediately assumed to be evolutionary junk" and "long ago written off as irrelevant because they yield no proteins." The article admits that the "assumption [that the DNA was junk] was too hasty" and "[t]he failure to recognize the importance of introns 'may well go down as one of the biggest mistakes in the history of molecular biology.'" Could evolutionary assumptions have caused "one of the biggest mistakes in the history of molecular biology?" Perhaps all biology does not make sense in the light of evolution.



Evolutionists traditionally say marsupials evolved in the southern hemisphere, citing the presence of marsupial species in Australia as evidence supporting their theory. The finding of the oldest marsupial fossil in the northern hemisphere makes that claim less compelling.

Asian Marsupials Challenge the Biogeography of Evolution:

A recent find of the oldest marsupial fossil presents a "paradox" for evolution and biogeography.⁴ The traditional evolutionary story has stated that marsupials evolved in the southern supercontinent of Gondwanaland, which supposedly included what is now Australia, South America, Antarctica, and Africa, which

explains why so many marsupial species are found in Australia. This fossil find in China puts marsupials in the north at a time evolutionists thought they weren't there. Evolutionary theory can probably overcome this find, however, it makes the story that "all marsupials are in the south, therefore they clearly evolved there together" much less compelling. As one of the paleontologists who found the fossil stated, "[i]t's an interesting paradox ... If you look across the world, South America and Australia, you find the present-day marsupials in great abundance and diversity. But those are not the original points where they evolved."

A race of skeleton people? In a landmark find, the satire website, TheOnion.com reports that an "Archaeological Dig Uncovers Ancient Race of Skeleton People."⁵ Apparently a team of British and Egyptian archaeologists found "'skeleton people'—skinless, organless humans who populated the Nile delta region an estimated 6,000 years ago." One speculated that these "skeletons may, in fact, be ancestors of us all" however another scientist countered that, "[t]he evidence of an evolutionary link between humans and skeletons is sparse at best." See reference 5 for the entire funny spoof.

References: 1. "Coral reveals ancient origins of human genes; Invertebrate DNA raises questions about evolution models," by Carina Dennis at <http://www.nature.com/nsu/031215/031215-2.html> (December 16, 2003). 2. Bada, Joyce, Orgel speak at UCSD on the Origins of Life by Casey Luskin at <http://www.arn.org/docs2/news/ucsdoriginoflife062003.htm> (June, 2003) 3. "The Gems of "Junk" DNA," Scientific American, Nov. 2003, W. Wayt Gibbs 4. See a report at "Skippy probably had relatives in Asia: scientists" at <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/12/11/1071125595997.html>. 5. "Archaeological Dig Uncovers Ancient Race of Skeleton People." http://www.theonion.com/onion3545/ancient_race.html.

Phillip Johnson Lectures to IDEA Audience in San Diego

On November 1, 2003, the IDEA Center sponsored a lecture with UC Berkeley Law Professor Phillip Johnson at Carlsbad Community Church. The lecture was publicized on radio in both San Diego and Orange Counties, and drew nearly 200 individuals from San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties to hear Johnson speak.

Johnson, who has been called the “godfather” of the intelligent design movement due to his role in bringing together its scholars, spoke about the history of the intelligent design movement and its importance to our culture. Johnson spoke of his own personal journey into the creation – evolution issue, as an agnostic who wasn’t thinking about God, to finally asking hard questions of Darwinists and in his opinion, not getting sufficient answers. He also talked about how intelligent design theory is crucial for challenging the naturalistic philosophy at the heart of many academic fields today. Johnson, who was once a Supreme Court clerk, understands the changes that have happened in our culture in the past 50 years and sees the dominance of naturalism as having played a significant role. His perspective on the role of naturalism in our culture should carry some weight.




IDEA Center staff pose with Phillip Johnson (front left) after his lecture in San Diego on November 1, 2003.

Photos by Brit Colanter, 2003



During a lively Q & A session, Johnson spoke about how intelligent design theory can have applications beyond the sciences, in fields of art, media, and literature. A reception followed Johnson’s talk where he signed copies of his books, *Darwin on Trial*, *The Wedge of Truth*, and *The Right Questions*. Attendees also had the chance to converse with IDEA Center staff about intelligent design.

We were very grateful for the support from the audience, and the many individuals who came and were interested in hearing Phillip Johnson. The IDEA Center is also grateful to Phillip Johnson and his wife Kathie for coming down to San Diego for the day to help San Diegans better understand intelligent design. 

Quote Qua Quote

Chomsky and some of his fiercest opponents agree and some of his fiercest opponents agree on one thing: that a uniquely human language instinct seems to be incompatible with the modern Darwinian theory of evolution, in which complex biological systems arise by the gradual accumulation over generations of random genetic mutations that enhance reproductive success. Either there is no language instinct, or it must have evolved by other means. Since I have been trying to convince you that there is a language instinct but would certainly forgive you if you would rather believe Darwin than believe me, I would also like to convince you that you need not make that choice. Though we know few details about how the language instinct evolved, there is no reason to doubt that the principal explanation is the same as for any other complex instinct or organ, Darwin’s theory of natural selection.

Stephen Pinker, 'The Big Bang', Chapter 11 of *The Language Instinct*, pp. 332-369. (New York, NY: William Morrow and Company, 1994). *Note: This quote by Harvard evolutionary psychologist Stephen Pinker illustrates naturalism at work: Pinker assumes there must be a Darwinian evolutionary explanation for human language even though it seems too complex to have evolved.*

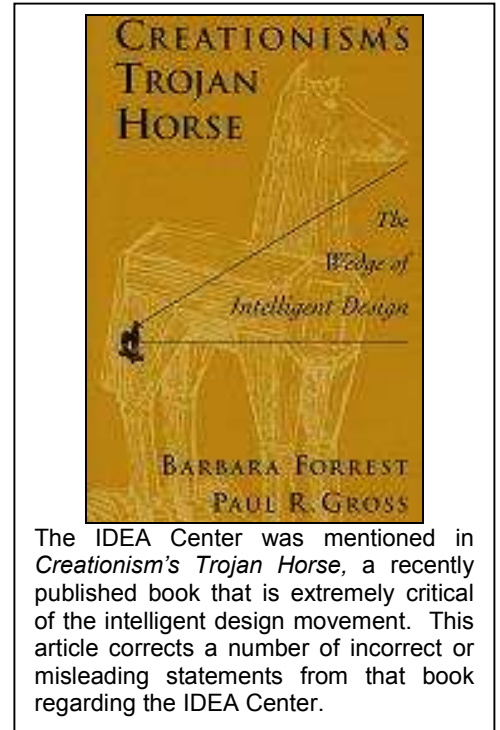
Corrections and Comments to statements made about the IDEA Center in Creationism's Trojan Horse

By IDEA Center staff

In January, 2004, Barbara Forrest and Paul R. Gross released a book critiquing the intelligent design movement entitled, *Creationism's Trojan Horse*. This 401 page book critiqued the intelligent design movement, which it repeatedly and almost solely referred to as the "wedge movement," primarily through allegations that it is merely a religious, rather than scientific enterprise. The IDEA Center was mentioned for about 2 paragraphs and the purpose of this article is to correct various factual errors in *Creationism's Trojan Horse* regarding the IDEA Center.

In correcting these errors, the IDEA Center does not allege that there was or was not sloppy scholarship nor purposeful misrepresentation on the part of the authors, Paul R. Gross or Barbara Forrest. We are merely trying to correct factual errors that exist in the book about our organization, whatever reason there is for their origin.

The following is the exact text about the IDEA Center in *Creationism's Trojan Horse*:



The IDEA Center was mentioned in *Creationism's Trojan Horse*, a recently published book that is extremely critical of the intelligent design movement. This article corrects a number of incorrect or misleading statements from that book regarding the IDEA Center.

"The Wedge has already acquired two groups of college followers, the Intelligent Design Undergraduate Research Center (IDURC) and the Intelligent Design and Evolutionary [1] Awareness (IDEA) Club. ...

"The IDEA Club was begun by students at UC-San Diego, but since the graduation of its student founders, it is now known as the IDEA Center [2] and is affiliated with the Tacoma, Washington, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary [3], a graduate school that teaches that "God created ex-nihilo and formed the universe in the six literal days as described in Genesis 1." [4] IDEA Club founder Casey Luskin is an IDEA Center administrator. The IDEA Center's advisory board consists of Wedge members Phillip Johnson, William Dembski, Michael Behe, Jonathan Wells, Jay Wesley Richards, Mark Hartwig, and Francis Beckwith [5]; Dennis Wagner, executive director of Access Research Network; and young-earth creationist John Baumgardner, all of whom also serve as the speakers bureau.

"The purpose of the center is to spread ID at high schools and universities by starting campus chapters: "The IDEA Center itself grew out of the IDEA Club at UC San Diego and there is now also a new chapter at Vanderbilt University [where all the student officers are science majors and the faculty advisor is a professor of microbiology and immunology]. ... We aim to help other students to do the same at their own schools-whether public, private, high school, college, secular, or religious." According to the IDEA Center, chapters exist at the University of Texas-Dallas, California State University-Sacramento, Long Beach (California) City College, UC-San Diego (the original chapter), the University of Hawaii-Hilo [6], Pulaski Academy in Arkansas (pre-kindergarten through grade 12), and South Lehigh High School in Center Valley, Pennsylvania, (which is only a few miles from Bethlehem, where Michael Behe works and resides) [7]. Chapters were being planned at the University of San Francisco (Paul Chien's university) [8] and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire[9]. An "off-campus" chapter exists in Baraboo, Wisconsin."

(*Creationism's Trojan Horse*, pg. 301-302; the bracketed numbers were added to refer to sections discussed below)

1. Factual Error: Name of the IDEA Club:

This error is minor, as the "IDEA" name is said to stand for "Intelligent Design and *Evolutionary* Awareness" when in reality it stands for "Intelligent Design and *Evolution* Awareness." To our knowledge, the word "Evolutionary" has never been in our name nor in the name of any IDEA Club.

2. Factual Error: Status of the IDEA Club after the IDEA Center started:

The text reads:

"The IDEA Club was begun by students at UC-San Diego, but since the graduation of its student founders, it is now known as the IDEA Center ..."

The IDEA Club at UCSD is not "now known as the IDEA Center." The IDEA Club at UCSD never ceased to exist or changed its status as a recognized student organization on the campus of UC San Diego once the IDEA Center started. After student founders of the IDEA Club at UCSD graduated, new student leaders took over and ran the club and have continued to do so as of the writing of this document. The original student founders of the IDEA Club at UCSD did their own thing and founded the IDEA Center separate from the IDEA Club. The IDEA Club at UCSD itself did not change or become "known as the IDEA Center" once the Center was started.

3. Factual Error: Affiliation with Faith Seminary:

On page 301, the text reads:

"the IDEA Center ... is affiliated with the Tacoma, Washington, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary"

Additionally, in a section not cited in the large excerpt above, *Creationism's Trojan Horse* on page 168 states:

"With the graduation of its student founders, IDEA [Club at UCSD] has matured into the IDEA center, affiliated with a young-earth Lutheran seminary."

The IDEA Center was at one time affiliated with Faith Seminary. The reasons for our affiliation have nothing to do with their religious connections. The reasons were purely practical: the original founders of the IDEA Center desired to start a non-profit organization, however we wanted to initially exist under the umbrella of some pre-existing non-profit organization.

Before the formation of the IDEA Center, the Center's desired to initiate the Center under a pre-existing non-profit intelligent design organization. After speaking with various intelligent design organizations, it was determined that though they supported what we did, available resources did not make it practicable for us to officially affiliate with any ID groups. However, the IDEA Center's co-founders did have a close personal connection to some of the administrators at Faith Seminary, a non-profit Lutheran Seminary that exists in both Tacoma, Washington, and has a satellite campus in Southern California. We briefly affiliated with them with the understanding that the relationship was merely to "help get us off the ground" until we were ready to become an autonomous non-profit, with the ultimate goal of becoming an autonomous 501(c)(3) organization.

This plan was implemented. In August of 2002, the IDEA Center formally broke all official ties with Faith Seminary when it incorporated as a non-profit public benefit corporation in the State of California. The IDEA Center filed paperwork which was processed by November of 2002, when the IDEA Center became officially registered as a non-profit public benefit corporation in the State of California. All this information is public record available through the Secretary of the State of California. Hopefully this will clear up any questions about our affiliation with Faith Seminary.

It should be noted that the book merely said that we were "affiliated" with Faith Seminary. "Affiliated" is a tough term to define, although Dictionary.com says that to be affiliated means "To adopt or accept as a member, subordinate associate, or branch." In that sense, we have had no affiliation since August of 2002. However, the IDEA Center has co-sponsored a few small events with Faith Seminary related to intelligent design theory. However, since August of 2002, there has been no formal affiliation between the IDEA Center and Faith Seminary. Such a formal affiliation would have been legally impossible since we incorporated in August of 2002.

All this being said, it is possible that it is our fault that we did not have current information describing our affiliation with Faith Seminary on our website when the authors apparently accessed it on April 5, 2003. They may have in good faith relied upon that information as accurate, even though our website was out-of-date. As noted in the introduction above, our purpose here is not to make any allegations about scholarship, but merely to correct errors. It is incorrect to state or imply that the IDEA Center has had any formal affiliation with Faith Seminary since August of 2002.

4. Misleading Comment with Unknown Citation: Faith Seminary's Beliefs about the Age of the Earth:

On page 301, the text reads:

"the IDEA Center ... is affiliated with the Tacoma, Washington, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, a graduate school that teaches that 'God created ex-nihilo and formed the universe in the six literal days as described in Genesis 1.'"

Additionally, in a section not cited in the large excerpt above, *Creationism's Trojan Horse* on page 168 states:

"With the graduation of its student founders, IDEA [Club at UCSD] has matured into the IDEA center, affiliated with a young-earth Lutheran seminary."

Without commenting on the author's motives behind making such a comment, one thing needs to be made clear: the IDEA Center did not seek affiliation because it was (or was not) an organization that adhered to a young-earth. In fact, at least half of the original co-founders of the IDEA Center were not even aware that Faith Seminary believed in a young-earth at the time the Center was founded. Why the Forrest and Gross felt it necessary to comment that Faith Seminary believes in a young earth we do not know, and is beyond the scope of this discussion. However, our main point here is to clear up any misconceptions that might have resulted from that statement regarding the IDEA Center's position on the age of the earth.

The IDEA Center's website has always had since its very beginning in January of 2002, the following statement on its FAQ:

• Does IDEA take a position on the age of the earth?

The age of the earth is not an issue related to intelligent design theory, nor is it necessarily related to the validity of evolutionary theory, nor does this author believe it is even related to the validity of the Bible. For this reason, IDEA finds no reasons from its mission statement to make any statements about the age of the earth. This is an important question, however, and if you are struggling with it or are interested in learning more about this issue, we suggest you

contact various authorities from various sides of the question, and come to your own conclusions. IDEA has resources which can provide information, and please feel free to contact us at "info@ideacenter.org" for help.

(IDEA Center FAQ at www.ideacenter.org)

Thus, the IDEA Center has always made it explicitly clear that the age of the earth is something that has nothing to do with our organization, so we make no statements about it. This adopted position has always been ultra-clear on our website, and we hope that there are no misconceptions about our position on the age of the earth from this point forward.

5. **Factual Error: Francis Beckwith on IDEA Center Advisory Board**

The book states that Francis Beckwith is on our Advisory Board. When the authors state they accessed our website, in April of 2003, he was on our Advisory Board. However, as of August of 2003, Francis Beckwith is no longer on our Advisory Board.

6. **Factual Error: IDEA Club at the University of Hawaii-Hilo:**

The book states that there is an IDEA Club at the University of Hawaii-Hilo. While our website may have stated that there is such a club when the authors accessed it in April of 2003, at the time of the book's publication (January, 2004) there is not to our knowledge an IDEA Club at the University of Hawaii-Hilo, as is currently reflected on our website.

7. **Misleading Comment: Geographical Closeness of Southern Lehigh High School IDEA Club to Michael Behe:**

The book notes the close proximity of the Origins IDEA Club to the home of well known proponent of intelligent design, Michael Behe:

According to the IDEA Center, chapters exist at ... and South Lehigh High School in Center Valley, Pennsylvania, (which is only a few miles from Bethlehem, where Michael Behe works and resides)

We merely wish to clear up any misconceptions that there may be about the origins of this IDEA Club--Michael Behe had absolutely nothing to do with it. The club was formed by a high school student who, to our knowledge, did not know Michael Behe and had no affiliation with him in starting the club.

8. **Misleading Comment: Paul Chien's Association with the potential IDEA Club at University of San Francisco:**

This statement seems to imply that Paul Chien is somehow associated with the desire to start an IDEA Club at the University of San Francisco. In fact, the club's sponsor would be Dr. Stephen Huxley of the business department, as has always been stated on our website. To our knowledge, there is no indication that Dr. Chien would have any affiliation with the club.

9. **Factual Error: Prospective IDEA Club at the University of Wisconsin Eau-Claire:**

Though our website may have incorrectly stated this, there is no longer a prospective IDEA Club at the University of Wisconsin, Eau-Claire.



Spotlight: The IDEA Club at the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

In spring of 2003, the IDEA Club at the University of Oklahoma, Norman was founded. This club was unique in that it had previously been a club on the OU campus associated with creation science. They decided to affiliate with the IDEA Center because of the known network of clubs and the interest they had in promoting intelligent design theory. The OU IDEA Club has been wildly successful. They try to have speakers come to every meeting, including individuals such as Dr. Ray Bohlin (author of *Natural Limits to Biological Change*), Dr. Michael Keas (Professor of Philosophy of Science at Oklahoma Baptist University), and Dr. Jeff Harwell (Professor/Director Chemical Engineering at OU). Because of the high caliber speakers, they regularly draw between 25 and 75 individuals to their meetings.

Recently the OU IDEA Club has generated some controversy on campus. A number of professors have spoken out against intelligent design, but the OU IDEA Club leaders have been there to answer many of the objections coming their way.

The OU IDEA Club is exemplary of the impact that an IDEA Club can have on a campus: 1) They have an committed leadership which allows them to put on quality meetings and reach a large segment of the student population. 2) Their impact upon students is big enough to attracts the attention of the faculty, allowing them to help them better understand intelligent design. The IDEA Center is excited about the impact this club is making—for more information, see their club's website at "<http://www.ou.edu/css/>".



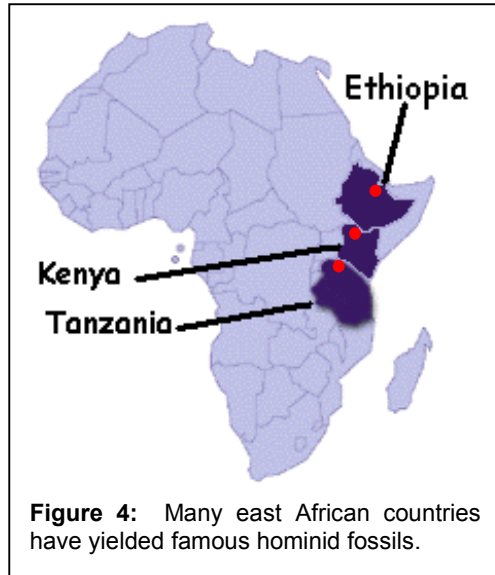


Figure 4: Many east African countries have yielded famous hominid fossils.

Continued from Page 2:

evolutionists to be ancestors, or close relatives of the ancestors of humans. The majority of "hominid" fossils have been divided into two taxonomic categories: the genus *Australopithecus* and the genus *Homo* (which includes our species, *Homo sapiens*).

Australopithecines (literally meaning "southern ape") are a genus of extinct hominids that lived in eastern Africa (see Figure 4) from about 4.2 million years ago (Ma) until about 1 Ma.¹⁰ Some evolutionists think they are ancestral to humans (see Figure 9), however it has also been argued they are a "side-branch" of the line that led to humans, and not direct human ancestors.¹² The four most common species are *Australopithecus afarensis*, *Australopithecus africanus*, *Australopithecus robustus*, and *Australopithecus boisei*.¹³ The two smaller and "gracile" forms, *africanus* and *afarensis* (the species which includes the famous fossil "Lucy", see Figure 5) are thought by evolutionists to be those most closely related to humans (see Figure 9).

Australopithecines stood about 1-1.5 m in height and had relatively small brains between 370 and 515 cubic cm (cc)^{14, 15}--a range that extends only slightly beyond

the brain size of a chimpanzee (see Table 1). Though there are fossils creating a general grade of increasing skull sizes from *Australopithecus* into modern *Homo*, the fossil record indicates that about 2 Ma, skull sizes began a "dramatic trajectory" that ultimately resulted in an "approximate doubling in brain size."¹⁴ This "rapid evolution" is not uncommon with regards to the origins of characteristics of the genus *Homo*.

The australopithecine mode of locomotion has been a point of controversy. Many evolutionists believe they were "bipedal" (i.e. walked on two legs). Early studies thought the pelvis of australopithecines was a clear-cut precursor to *Homo*-like bipedality,¹⁶ while many later studies of australopithecine locomotion found it to be different from that of modern apes, but also very different from that of humans--a distinct mode of locomotion.^{12, 17} One study found sharp differences between the pelvic bones of australopithecines and *Homo*, and, lacking intermediate fossils, proposed a period of "very rapid evolution corresponding to the emergence of the genus *Homo*."¹⁸ Other recent studies have found that the handbones of Lucy are similar to those of a knucklewalking ape,^{19, 20} and that their inner ear canals, responsible for balance and related to locomotion, resemble small inner-ear canals of the great apes rather than larger canals found in humans and other members of the genus *Homo*.²¹ The most common consensus is that australopithecines were adapted for both tree-climbing and at least semi-upright walking,²⁵ walking differently from humans and living apes.⁵⁰

However, australopithecines were apes and were very different from humans. One reviewer said that ecologically speaking, australopithecines "may still be considered as apes."²³ Harvard paleoanthropologist William Howells mentioned that the arboreal bipedalism of Lucy was "successful in serving Lucy's purposes," but "not something simply transitional"⁵⁰ to the locomotion of modern humans. These are important clues as to whether or not australopithecines were fully bipedal hominids and ancestral to humans.



Figure 5: The remains of the famous australopithecine fossil. "Lucy"

It is difficult to connect the australopithecine fossils with any previous fossil primates. Paleoanthropologist Tim White called the early record of hominids "a black hole in the fossil record."²² Paleontologist Steven Stanley notes that, "the latest Miocene and very earliest Pliocene (the period from about eight to four million years ago) has revealed little of the assumed transition ... to the australopithecines."²⁴ One recent study found that *Australopithecus africanus* (similar to *Australopithecus afarensis*), had a body shape more similar to modern apes than to members of *Homo*.²⁵ Given the distinct qualities of australopithecines and the fact that their skeleton resembled modern apes than modern humans,²⁵ it does not seem unreasonable to infer that they could be a designed basic type unrelated to *Homo*. To strengthen this claim, it remains to be seen if there are species linking *Australopithecus* to *Homo* from the fossil record.

Table 1. Cranial Capacities (with reference).	
Taxon	Cranial Capacities
Gorilla (<i>Gorilla gorilla</i>)	340 - 752 cc (ref 38)
Chimpanzee (<i>Pan troglodytes</i>)	275 - 500 cc (ref 38)
<i>Australopithecus</i>	370 - 515 cc (refs 14, 15)
<i>Homo habilis</i>	Avg 552 cc (ref 25)
<i>Homo ergaster</i>	Avg 854 cc (ref 25)
<i>Homo erectus</i>	850 - 1250 cc (ref 38)
<i>Homo neanderthalensis</i>	1100 - 1700 cc (ref 38)
<i>Homo sapiens</i> (modern man)	700 - 2200 cc (ref 37)

Is there a Link between *Homo* and *Australopithecus*?

Similar to *Australopithecus*, the genus *Homo* has a number of different taxonomic schemes. There three most commonly used species include *Homo habilis*, *Homo erectus*, and *Homo sapiens*, which most evolutionists believe are sequentially related, in that order. But there is disagreement. Some "lump" all *Homo* fossils under a single species, *Homo sapiens*, while others employ the aforementioned species and *Homo neanderthalensis* (also classified under *Homo sapiens*), *Homo heidelbergensis* (a variant of *Homo neanderthalensis*), *Homo ergaster* (similar to *Homo erectus*), and *Homo rudolfensis* (otherwise classified as *Homo habilis*).

One fossil claimed as an intermediate between *Australopithecus* and *Homo* is *Homo habilis* (see Figure 6).^{11, 26} *Homo habilis* remains were first discovered in 1960, and were named in 1964 by famous paleoanthropologist Richard Leakey, and his team.^{13, 26} Despite controversy over fossil dates, *habilis*, is also often claimed as the earliest member of *Homo*. *Homo habilis* It is said to show brain enlargement, the first usage of primitive stone tools, and the origin of a humanlike bipedal pelvic gait.²⁶ While it is generally accepted that *Homo habilis* is a real species, one paleontologist called it a "wastebasket taxon"²⁷ due to the "motley" bone assortment attributed to it. The most complete specimens are only two very fragmented skeletons.¹³

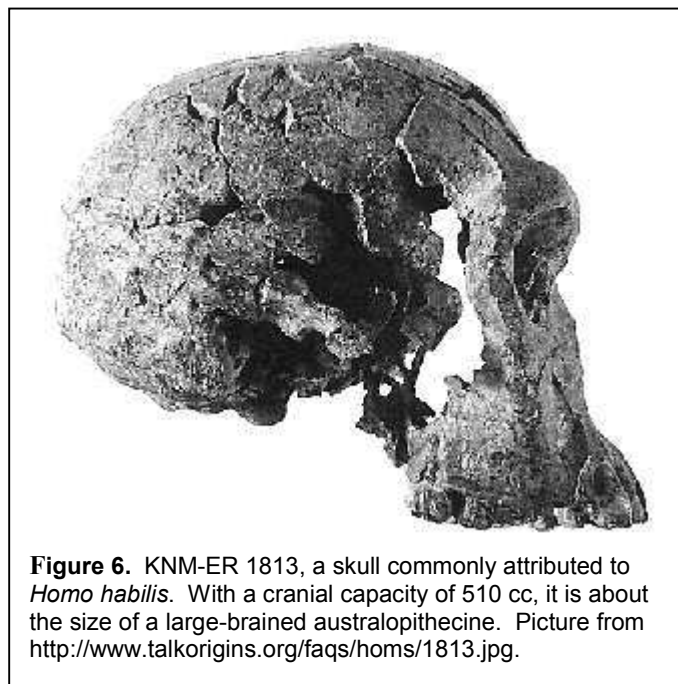


Figure 6. KNM-ER 1813, a skull commonly attributed to *Homo habilis*. With a cranial capacity of 510 cc, it is about the size of a large-brained australopithecine. Picture from <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/homs/1813.jpg>.

A study of one of the fragmented specimens compared the post-cranial skeleton of *habilis* to that of Lucy, supposedly an australopithecine precursor to *Homo habilis*.²⁸ The study found that *Homo habilis* was in 24 out of 28 test characteristics more similar to modern African apes than it was to other members of *Homo*. Given that the skeleton was placed in the genus *Homo*, these results were called by one of the authors, "unexpected in view of previous accounts of *Homo habilis* as a link between australopithecines and humans."²⁹

A similar analysis by paleoanthropologists Bernard Wood and Mark Collard found that *H. habilis* has body proportions more similar to the australopithecines than to *Homo*.²⁵ The study found that the mode of locomotion of *Homo habilis* was "terrestrial bipedalism with an ability to climb proficiently," and grouped it with the australopithecines. *Homo habilis* was found to be australopithecine in all of its major characteristics—body size, body shape, locomotion, jaws and teeth, development, and brain size. Finally, an analysis of the ear canals, indicative of the mode of locomotion, found that a *habilis* skull is most similar to cercopithecoids (baboons), suggesting it "relied less on bipedal behaviour than the australopithecines."²¹ This strengthens the case that *Homo habilis* is not a species of intermediate morphology between australopithecines and *Homo*, as it lacks reliable criteria connecting it to modern humans, or establishing it as a link between australopithecines and *Homo*.

After removing *habilis* from the genus *Homo*, the earliest known member of *Homo* becomes *Homo erectus* (dated as early as 1.9 Ma²⁵). Even if *habilis* did bear a close resemblance to the genus *Homo*, it could not be a transition because it appears about the same time as the earliest members of *Homo*, and most *habilis* specimens post-date the appearance of *Homo*.³⁰

Fossil forms with features transitional between *Australopithecus* and *Homo* are, according to Wood and Collard, very rare. They analyzed 6 characteristics of hominids, and only one was found to be transitional between *Homo* and *Australopithecus*: brain-size. But what does brain size prove? Some have contended that brain-size is not even necessarily a good way to measure intelligence or language ability because internal brain organization is much more complex and important for determining intelligence than is the sole dimension of brain size.³¹ If brain-size is less important, then there seems to be a transitionless break between the morphology of the members of *Homo* and the members of *Australopithecus*.

What does this really prove?



A "Big Bang" origin of *Homo*

One study in the *Journal of Molecular Biology and Evolution* found that *Homo* and *Australopithecus* differ significantly in brain size, dental function, increased cranial buttressing, expanded body height, visual, and respiratory changes (see Figure 7):^{30, 32}

*We, like many others, interpret the anatomical evidence to show that early H. sapiens [H. erectus and H. ergaster] was significantly and dramatically different from ... australopithecines in virtually every element of its skeleton and every remnant of its behavior.*³⁰

Noting these many changes, the study called the evolutionary origin of humans, "a real acceleration of evolutionary change from the more slowly changing pace of australopithecine evolution"³⁰ and noted that this transformation must have included radical changes:

The anatomy of the earliest H. sapiens [H. erectus and H. ergaster] sample indicates significant modifications of the ancestral genome and is not simply an extension of evolutionary trends in an earlier australopithecine lineage throughout the Pliocene. In fact, its combination of features never appears earlier...³⁰

These rapid, unique, and genetically significant changes are termed "a genetic revolution" where "no australopithecine species is obviously transitional."³⁰ One commentator proposed this evidence implies a "big bang theory" of human evolution.³³

Although Hawks et. al.³⁰ explain the rapid origin of *Homo* as an extreme population bottleneck during a "speciation event," the evidence matches the criteria for inferring intelligent design. Given the lack of fossil forms providing sufficient evidence of an evolutionary transformation between *Homo* and *Australopithecus*, and given the apparent very large and rapid genetic changes associated with the origin of *Homo*, from an intelligent design perspective, the "big bang" origin of *Homo* represents the exact kind mass-infusion of genetic information into the biosphere that would be expected had the genus *Homo* been intelligently designed apart from relation to *Australopithecus*.

Homo as a basic type

Intelligent design theory predicts that organisms which are reproductively compatible are said to be members of the same basic type.³ Donald Johanson suggested that *Homo erectus* could reproduce with modern humans.³⁴ Others have suggested that given range of variation within modern humans, *Homo erectus* could be a member of our modern species.³⁵ Though the postcranial skeleton of *Homo erectus* is poorly understood, known remains are consistent with modern human mode of locomotion.²⁵ *Homo ergaster*, often classified under *Homo erectus*, was found with a nearly complete skeleton that is very similar to modern humans.²⁵ *Homo erectus* is the "earliest species to demonstrate the modern human semicircular [ear] canal morphology,"²¹ previously noted as a feature indicative of the mode of locomotion. Some authors have even referred to *Homo erectus* and *Homo ergaster* as "early *Homo sapiens*."^{30, 36}

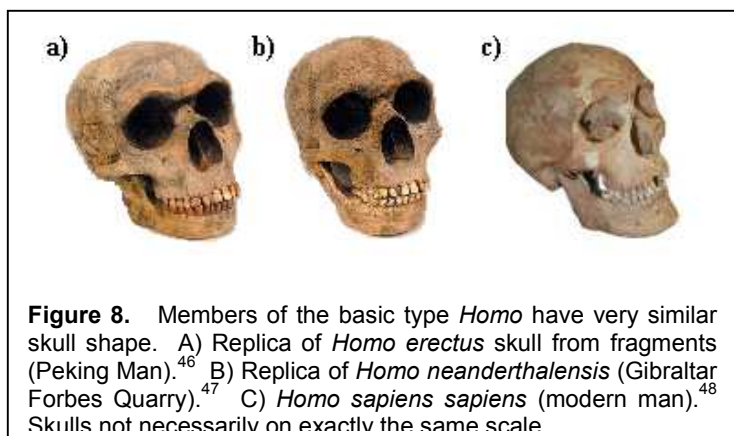


Figure 8. Members of the basic type *Homo* have very similar skull shape. A) Replica of *Homo erectus* skull from fragments (Peking Man).⁴⁶ B) Replica of *Homo neanderthalensis* (Gibraltar Forbes Quarry).⁴⁷ C) *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man).⁴⁸ Skulls not necessarily on exactly the same scale

"race" of our own species^{41, 42} as their body shapes are within the range of modern human variation,²⁵ and they probably interbred with modern humans.⁴² Even some evolutionists have speculated they had normal language capabilities.⁴³ and Neanderthal remains have been found with art,⁴² culture,^{42, 43} including burial of their dead,⁴⁴ and technology including the usage of complex tools,^{42, 43} and chain-mail armor.⁴⁵ These similarities make mating compatibility between *Homo erectus*, *Homo neanderthalensis*, with modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) a strong possibility. Neanderthal and *Homo erectus* differences from *Homo sapiens* are small and be explained as microevolutionary effects of "size variation, climatic stress, genetic drift and differential expression of [common] genes."⁴⁹

Conclusion

In conclusion, our genus *Homo* appears to have been intelligently designed and is not connected to the australopithecine apes or any other apes through ancestry:

- 1) The alleged australopithecine ancestors are very different from the earliest members of *Homo*,
- 2) *Homo* appears suddenly and distinct, without transitions in the fossil record from any earlier forms, and
- 3) Subsequent forms of *Homo* are variants of and very similar to the initial forms of *Homo*.

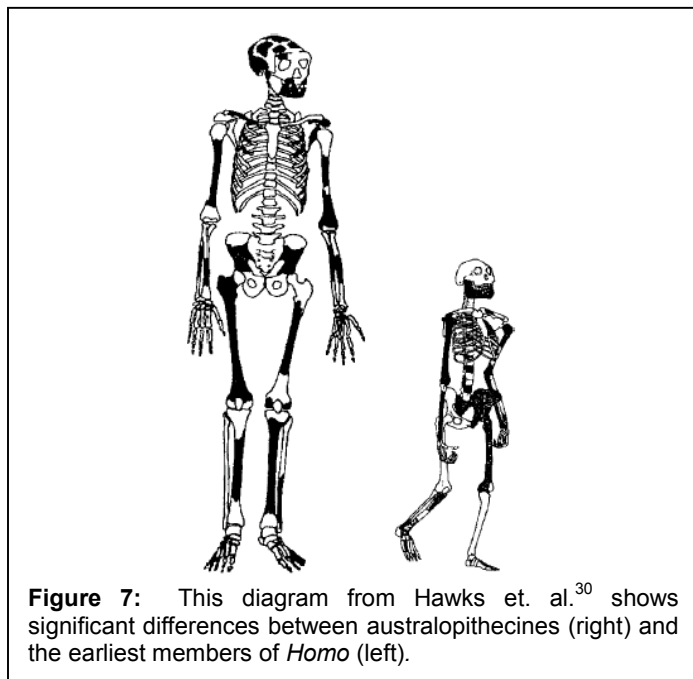


Figure 7: This diagram from Hawks et. al.³⁰ shows significant differences between australopithecines (right) and the earliest members of *Homo* (left).

Wood and Collard found that *Homo ergaster* and *Homo erectus* had intermediate cranial capacities,²⁵ but they are within human variation (see Table 1). Not only is cranial capacity of uncertain importance for determining intelligence,³¹ but *erectus* skulls as large as 1250 cc³⁸ are within the "normal" range for humans.¹¹ More importantly, *erectus* remains have been found with signs of culture³⁹ and contemporary with modern humans.⁴⁰

Later members of *Homo* such as *Homo neanderthalensis* are more humanlike. "Neanderthal" fossils have been called a

"race" of our own species^{41, 42} as their body shapes are within the range of modern human variation,²⁵ and they probably interbred with modern humans.⁴² Even some evolutionists have speculated they had normal language capabilities.⁴³ and Neanderthal remains have been found with art,⁴² culture,^{42, 43} including burial of their dead,⁴⁴ and technology including the usage of complex tools,^{42, 43} and chain-mail armor.⁴⁵ These similarities make mating compatibility between *Homo erectus*, *Homo neanderthalensis*, with modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) a strong possibility. Neanderthal and *Homo erectus* differences from *Homo sapiens* are small and be explained as microevolutionary effects of "size variation, climatic stress, genetic drift and differential expression of [common] genes."⁴⁹

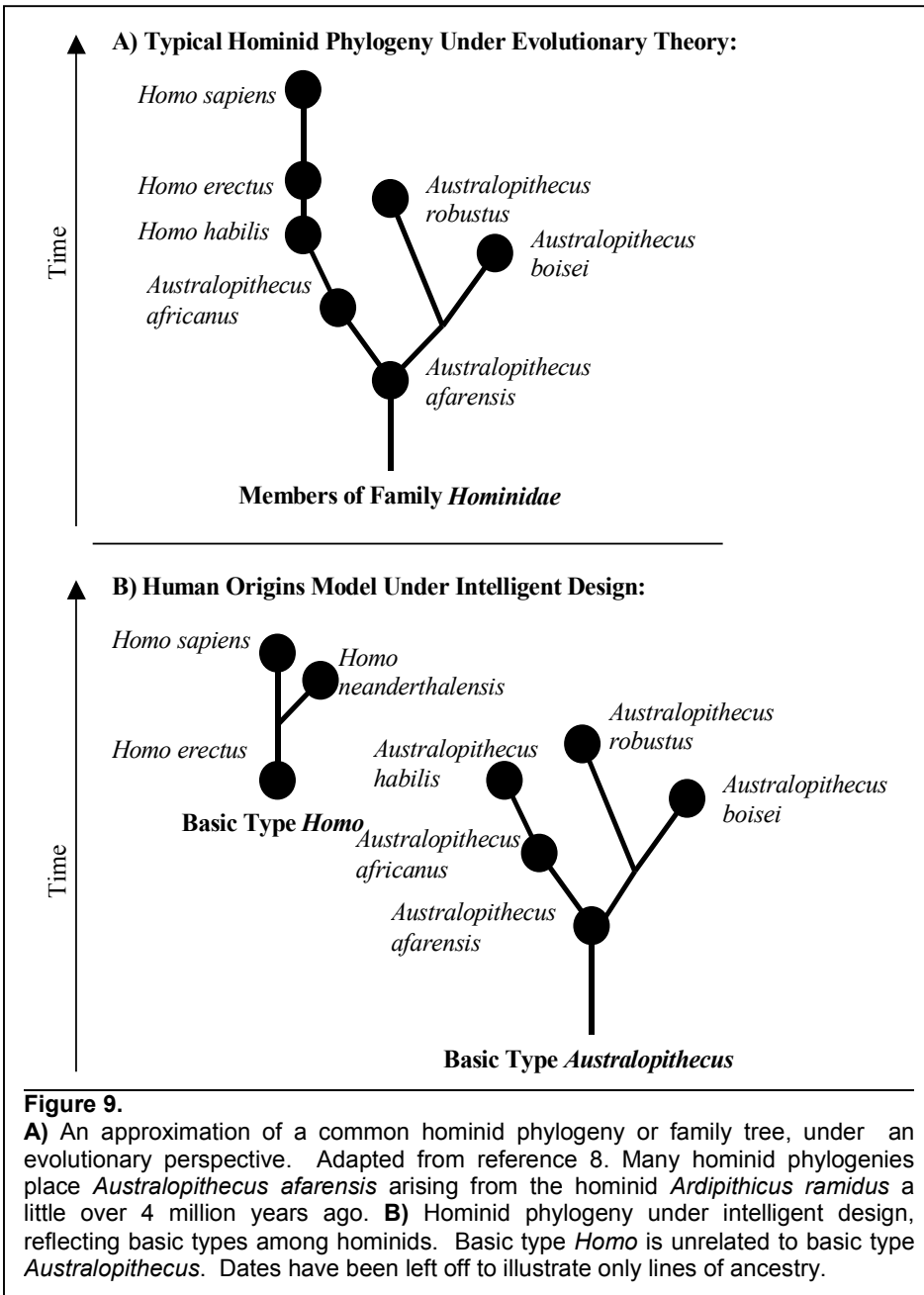


Figure 9.

A) An approximation of a common hominid phylogeny or family tree, under an evolutionary perspective. Adapted from reference 8. Many hominid phylogenies place *Australopithecus afarensis* arising from the hominid *Ardipithecus ramidus* a little over 4 million years ago. **B)** Hominid phylogeny under intelligent design, reflecting basic types among hominids. Basic type *Homo* is unrelated to basic type *Australopithecus*. Dates have been left off to illustrate only lines of ancestry.

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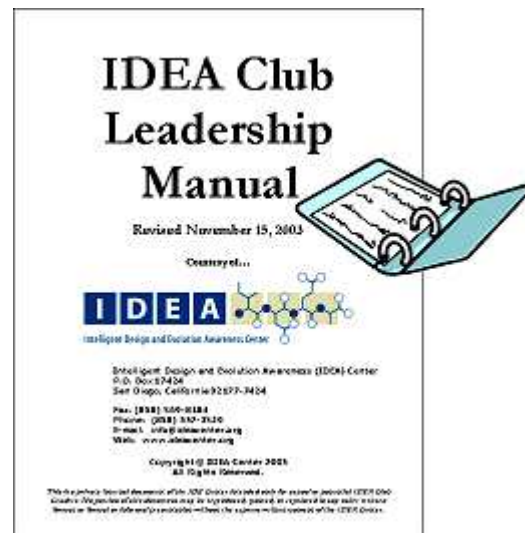


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