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Chimps and humans ---- classified the same?

Humans and chimpanzees should be lumped together in the same classification - genus Homo -says a new report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Researchers claim that chimps and bonobos (genus Pan) have more in common with humans than any other primate—allegedly sharing 99.4% of their DNA.

According to news reports, researchers based their conclusion on a comparison of 97 genes from humans and various primates. But the human genome has at least 30,000 genes! Moreover, the genomes of primates are not anywhere near completely mapped.

The figure 99.4% is both misleading and attention-grabbing (other researchers claim figures of only 95%). The public is led to believe that chimps are ‘99.4% human.’ Yet

bananas, as has been pointed out by evolutionist Steven Jones of England, share 50% of their genes with human beings, but are not 50% human! People, created in the image of God, are profoundly different from all other creatures. This comes from observation and common sense. {From Answers in Genesis USA Answers Update Vol. 10. Issue 7 p 7}



Fraud and Forgery in Paleoanthropology

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Abstract

A review of the history of paleoanthropology leads to the conclusion that the discipline is far less objective than that for physics, chemistry, or even biology. The field is rife with controversy and fraud, including outright faking. Classic examples include Piltdown man and Hesperopithecus, but many other less well-known examples exist that are reviewed in this paper. Several well-documented examples are cited in some detail to illustrate the types of problems encountered, and the results of fraud in paleoanthropology.

Keywords: paleoanthropology, science fraud, evolution of humans, Piltdown man, hobbits, Homo floresiensis, scientific bias, human fossils, science corruption.

Introduction

Extensive historical research has documented the fact that the so-called objective field of human evolution is highly subjective—and bias, fraud, and even forgery are all common (Judson 2004). The best known examples include Piltdown man, which has been proven to be a composite of a human skull and an ape jaw (Bergman 2003) and Hesperopithecus man, which turned out to be a pig’s tooth (Bergman 2006), but many other major examples exist.

The scientists involved in these controversies are often not minor-league players, but include many of those who have dominated the field of

paleoanthropology in the twentieth century. The effects of their fraud can be far reaching and may affect entire disciplines (Feder 2006; Kohn 1988). Even well-known modern paleoanthropology leaders, including the Leakey family (Louis, Mary, and Richard), have been involved in much controversy, including accusations of misrepresentation, sloppy work, and poor documentation.

Paleoanthropology is especially a contentious field for reasons including the strong human interest in our origins, and because conclusions of emotional significance . . . must be drawn from extremely paltry evidence, it is often difficult to separate the personal from the scientific in disputes raging within the field (Holden 1981, p. 738).

Fix noted that one critical reason for the conflicts is that the human fossil record is still so sparse that those who insist on positive declarations can do nothing more than jump from one hazardous surmise to another and hope that the next dramatic discovery does not make them utter fools . . . Clearly, some people refuse to learn from this. As we have seen, there are numerous scientists and popularizers today who have the temerity to tell us that there is ‘no doubt’ how man originated. If only they had the evidence (Fix 1984, p. 150).

A major reason for the numerous controversies in paleoanthropology is that paleoanthropology is a field in which the students far outnumber the objects of study. There are lively—and sometimes acrimonious—debates about whether a given fossil is really something new, or merely a variant of an already named species. These arguments about scientific names often mean very little. Whether a humanlike fossil is named as one species or another can turn on matters as small as half a millimeter in the diameter of a tooth, or slight differences in the shape of the thighbone. The problem is that there are simply too few specimens, spread out over too large a geographic area, to make these decisions with any confidence. New finds and revisions of old conclusions occur constantly (Coyne 2009, p. 197). Another reason for the many controversies and forgery allegations is that the anthropological field is

divided into “camps,” “schools,” or cliques that are not uncommonly at war with each other. Each school is often dominated by a small number of scientists who are charismatic leaders. Each camp tries to “prove” its own evolution theory, often dogmatically, by using fossils, most of which consist of badly damaged fragments. In the words of Gee, the problem is the “Fossil evidence of human evolutionary history is fragmentary and open to various interpretations” (Gee 2001). Sides are taken in these conflicts, and, as Morell (1995) eloquently demonstrates, the participants sometimes end up in altercations not unlike those fought between nations—whereas unethical behavior (and almost everything else) is fair game. Only physical aggression is normally ruled out (though it sometimes occurs).

Reading various paleoanthropology publications reveals both the extent and the degree of conflicts in a field that, as a whole, has very little hard data, most of which can be construed in several different ways. Controversy occurs because new fossil discoveries are typically not shared with other scientists for years, if ever, due to publishing priority concerns. A common complaint is that the persons claiming the discovery are too slow to publish their findings—and are flinging around arguments and interpretations without giving others something solid in print to evaluate. The Leakey and Johanson camps also claim each others’ popular books are filled with inaccuracies. White and Johanson in particular complain that while Leakey refuses to accept the designation and placement of *Australopithecus afarensis*, he will not offer an alternative (Holden 1981, p. 739). Typically, to get full credit for a fossil discovery one must publish first. To do this the discovering paleoanthropologists retain exclusive access to their fossils for a decade or more before allowing others to study them. Since these fossils are often fragile and easily broken, working with them tends to damage them. This fact further discourages allowing direct access to the fossil to those outside the group discovering it.

For all of these reasons most researchers have access only to photographs or, at best, casts of the fossils.

Most anthropologists must rely on descriptions and interpretations produced by the discoverer of the fossils—the very person who has a vested interest in proving his or her own theories. In view of this fact, it is not surprising that major disagreements are common.

Hoarding Important Fossil Finds

An example of this conflict is the fact that when a fossil is discovered, the discoverer tends to hoard it to prevent others outside of his clique from exploiting or getting credit or fame from their discovery (Tattersall and Schwartz 2002, p. 239). A growing tendency exists for certain paleoanthropologists to refuse access to their finds even after they have published a preliminary description of their fossil discoveries, at which time their artifacts are under the rules of the discipline which stipulate that the fossils are to be shared with other researchers. In these cases the discoverers often argue that they have the right to withhold their fossil finds because of the dubious claim that the initial publications, even when prepared in accord with the dictates of the *Code* and published in major vehicles such as *Nature* and *Science*, merely constitute “announcements.” “Publication,” it is disingenuously contended, occurs only with the appearance of a long interpretive monograph (Tattersall and Schwartz 2002, p. 240). Tattersall and Schwartz add that it is common for this monograph publication period to take decades or longer, and may never be completed. Examples they provide is Louis Leakey’s *Homo habilis* finds, which were finally written up in the form of a detailed technical monograph by Professor Phillip V. Tobias “some 30 years after their discovery, while the important fossil crania from Forbes’ Quarry and Steinheim” site are yet to be written up in any detail 150 and 69 years respectively since their recoveries. More recently several new hominid species legally published as early as 1994 still remain off-limits to researchers not belonging to the describing cliques. This has potentially harmful consequences, for, if not rapidly subjected to informed scrutiny, the initial describers’ interpretation of the specimens’ significance tends

automatically to become established wisdom in the field. In this way, untested notions readily become incorporated into textbooks, the secondary literature, and the vast reaches of the popular media, without any consideration of alternative interpretations. As things too often are, alternative interpretations are difficult or impossible to formulate, because even casts (poor substitutes for the originals in any event) are rarely available and . . . photographs of specimens published in *Nature* or *Science* tend to be so small and lacking in contrast that much useful information is obscured (Tattersall and Schwartz 2002, p. 240). A more recent example is Professor Teuku Jacob who, until his death in 2007, attempted to withhold the remains of *Homo Floresiensis* even though he was not party to the initial discovery (Culotta 2005a).

Blocking Access to Creationists

The difficulty that creationists and others have in obtaining access to fossils is another problem. Museums and other human fossil remains’ repositories commonly refuse access requests made by creationists. As Tattersall and Schwartz wrote *Science* is a system of provisional knowledge that constantly requires re-examination and testing. It cannot function as a system in which assertions have to be left unchallenged for want of free access to the primary data (Tattersall and Schwartz 2002, p. 239). The difficulties that confront creationists, such as Dr. Jack Cuozzo when he attempted to access fossil humans, illustrate the problem in challenging existing interpretations. His experience is detailed in his book *Buried Alive: The Startling Truth About Neanderthal Man* (Cuozzo 1998).

Arrogance in Paleoanthropology

A major issue in dealing with the problem of arrogance is that no small amount of arrogance exists within the scientific community. Hooper concluded that some scientists dogmatically believe not only that they have the answer, but that only they have the right to ask the questions—and if they don’t, no one else should (Hooper 2002). A review of history vividly shows that an “other side” often exists to the dominant views of scientists in each camp—the

views of those who dominate the literature in *Nature*, *Science*, and other leading scientific journals. This fact illustrates a common problem in paleoanthropology related to the difficulties leading scientists have in evaluating the data fairly and objectively. An example is Tim White, professor at the University of California Berkeley, who had a falling out with Donald Johanson to the extent that; “White and Johanson now barely speak to each other because of earlier bitter disagreements over research style and conduct” (Dalton 2006, p. 269). Tim White’s former University of Michigan professor Dr. Milford Wolpoff added that Tim knows the “right” way . . . and that’s with a capital “R” . . . I used to think once he got a job and was treated with professional respect, he’d calm down a bit. But I was wrong . . . White’s self-righteous stance surfaced [in the field] . . . leading him to be “unspeakably rude and arrogant to others” (Morell 1995, p. 477). Similar conflicts are not uncommon—in this field, “Squabbles over credit for discoveries and permits to work at key sites are common” (Dalton 2006, p. 269). An example Dalton cites is competitors of Johanson and Taieb highlighted a potentially inflammatory passage in a book Johanson published. Their goal was to upset the Ethiopian authorities to cause paleoanthropologist Don Johanson and Maurice Taieb to be banned from research in Ethiopia. The ploy was successful—they were banned for a decade. Morell concludes that, like Wolpoff, Richard Leakey also “assumed that White would eventually outgrow this behavior. Instead, “Richard himself became a target” (Morell 1995, p. 477). For example when Richard Leakey explained his concerns about White’s interpretation of a fossil, Professor White “started shouting at me, calling me a dictator, said that it was a disgrace that I should be in charge—all this rubbish . . . he wanted to have nothing more to do with me, and finally walked out of my office and slammed the door” (Morell, 1995, p. 478). Many anthropologists have concluded that because humans are “a bloody aggressor,” the outcome of the survival of the fittest battle, they should not be surprised by this behavior. Leakey’s critics view him as the leader

of a small clique of researchers that are trying to build its own scientific empire in East Africa; a clique of what Tim White terms “academic loyalists” devoted to Louis Leakey’s stubborn adherence to unfounded theories about man’s origins. Critics also say that a favorite Leakey theme—that man is innately a cooperative and food-sharing creature rather than a bloody aggressor—is at best only thinly supported by available evidence (Holden 1981, p. 739).

The Leakeys have been at the center of this war for the last half-century. And unfortunately, for several reasons paleoanthropology has a ‘history of being dominated by individualists, and the late Louis Leakey, perhaps the most colorful of them all, bore major responsibility for enlarging the endeavor by drawing in the public’s interest—and along with that, money’ (Holden 1981, p. 737). When Louis Leakey’s son, Richard, was invited as a guest on Walter Cronkite’s television program to discuss evolution and creationism as an “ardent anticreationist,” Richard agreed to appear (Morell 1995, p. 520). This ploy to get him on the show turned out to be a ruse—Cronkite actually did not want Richard to rail against creationism but rather to pit him and Johanson against each other to debate their radically different opinions about *Australopithecus afarensis* and other putative hominids. On the show, it turned out that Johanson was less interested in an intellectual exchange to achieve a better understanding of human evolution than he was in attacking those with whom he disagreed. Some people felt Richard Leakey came out better in this exchange. Shortly after the Cronkite show, the National Geographic Society—the Leakeys’ main source of financial support—turned down Richard’s grant for funds to support his Koobi Fora fossil exploration research and for new explorations north and west of Lake Turkana (Morell 1995, p. 523). --- **To Be Continued In next Issue**

Psalm 14:1 - The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*