

Apemen overturned

Human Evolution: The grand experiment, vol. 3—untold stories of human evolution

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Audio Visual Consultants Inc., St. Louis, MO, 2024

Human Evolution: The grand experiment, vol. 4—nine categories of overturned ape-men

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Peter Line

The work involved in writing and compiling material for these books would have been substantial.

Volume 3 is 279 pages (seven chapters) and focuses on a category of overturned apemen described as apemen created using bones of non-primate mammals. Some of these chapters have a useful timeline chart of significant events, as well as a section on lessons learned. The latter highlights mistakes made and what can be learned from them. Also, some have a useful summary table of the discoveries, with the initial and later interpretations.

Volume 4 is 249 pages (23 chapters) and focuses on other categories of rejected apemen. The last chapter includes a post-postscript section giving a synopsis of the associated video series.

Volume 5 (which is not reviewed here) is a 433-page bibliography of volumes 3 and 4.

This review is in two parts (volumes 3 and 4), followed by the conclusion.

Volume 3

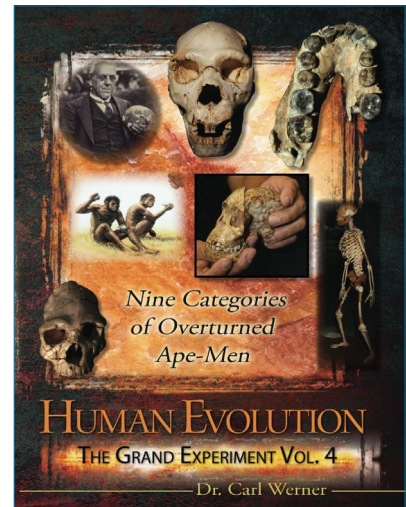
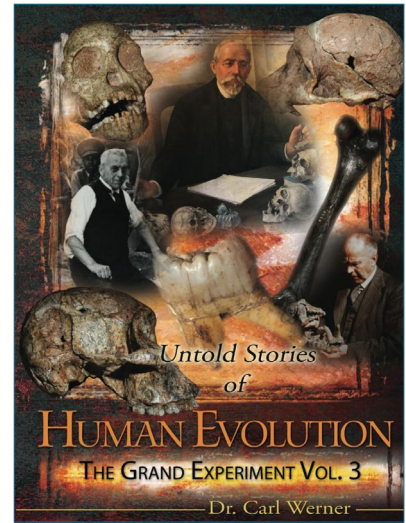
The apeman from Mount Hermoso

Chapter 2 focuses on Florentino Ameghino from Argentina and his apeman *Tetraprothomo argentinus*. It consisted of a femur and a neck bone, the first cervical vertebra (atlas). From examining the leg bone, Ameghino concluded that *Tetraprothomo* was a biped with “an erect posture based on the angle of the femur” (p. 9). Concerning the neck bone, as soon as Ameghino saw it he “concluded it was not a human neck bone but from the ape-man *Tetraprothomo*” (p. 12). However, when scrutinized by anthropologist Aleš Hrdlička, the neck bone was found to be non-fossilized and within the range of modern humans. The fossilized leg bone turned out to belong to a procyonid (member of the raccoon family). The latter is rather ironic since Ameghino was regarded as an expert on South American procyonid fossils. It seems that, in his desperation to find an apeman, Ameghino suspended rational judgment.

Nebraska Man

In chapter 3, the story of *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii* (aka Nebraska Man) is told (figure 1). Readers may be familiar with this apeman, as its identification was such an egregious error—or was it? According to Werner: “... it appears that Dr. Osborn, Dr. William Matthew, and Harold Cook *knowingly* promoted a pig’s tooth as an apeman to counter the ever-growing influence of William Jennings Bryan” (p. 81).

Only after the famous Scopes trial in 1925 was over did they reveal their error, even though they had been



aware several years earlier (even before the Nebraska ‘apeman’ discovery) of the similarities of human and ape teeth to pig teeth found at Snake Creek, Nebraska. Having the whole debacle meticulously documented is important, as a reminder of the lengths some people will go to in promoting the false idea that we are just evolved apes.

Australopithecus prometheus

Chapter 4 could have been titled ‘The many errors of Raymond Dart’. According to Werner, Dart made two major fossil discoveries, the Taung Child, called *Australopithecus africanus*, and a supposed apeman,



Figure 1. The Nebraska Apeman was based on a tooth that was later shown to have belonged to a pig. Illustration credit: *Untold Stories of Human Evolution*, vol. 3, p. 79 (used by permission).

called *Australopithecus prometheus* (p. 90). Regarding the Taung Child (discovered in 1924), Werner excellently illustrates how its so-called “human characters” were actually immature ape characters (pp. 92–95). The *A. prometheus* partial skull piece (MLD 1) was discovered in 1947 (p. 102) and published in 1948. *A. prometheus* was the species name later assigned to the ‘Little Foot’ skeleton (StW 573) by Ron Clarke, but the discoveries of Dart preceded this, and so Dart’s skull piece (MLD 1) remains the holotype of *A. prometheus*.¹ Dart’s portrayal of the australopithecines as “carnivorous, cannibalistic, head-bashing and head-hunting ape-men”

(the killer-ape hypothesis) was used in the opening scene of Stanley Kubrick’s 1969 movie: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (p. 120). To make his *A. prometheus* apeman more human-like, Dart reconstructed its pelvis by inserting pelvic bones associated with *A. prometheus* (MLD 7 and MLD 8) into a plaster copy of a modern human pelvis (pp. 106–108, 142–145). In addition to the questionable pelvic reconstruction, Dart made many other errors in interpretations of *A. prometheus*, including that it controlled the use of fire, and used bone and stone tools (figure 2). Also, Dart overestimated the brain size of *A. prometheus* (p. 138), and some of

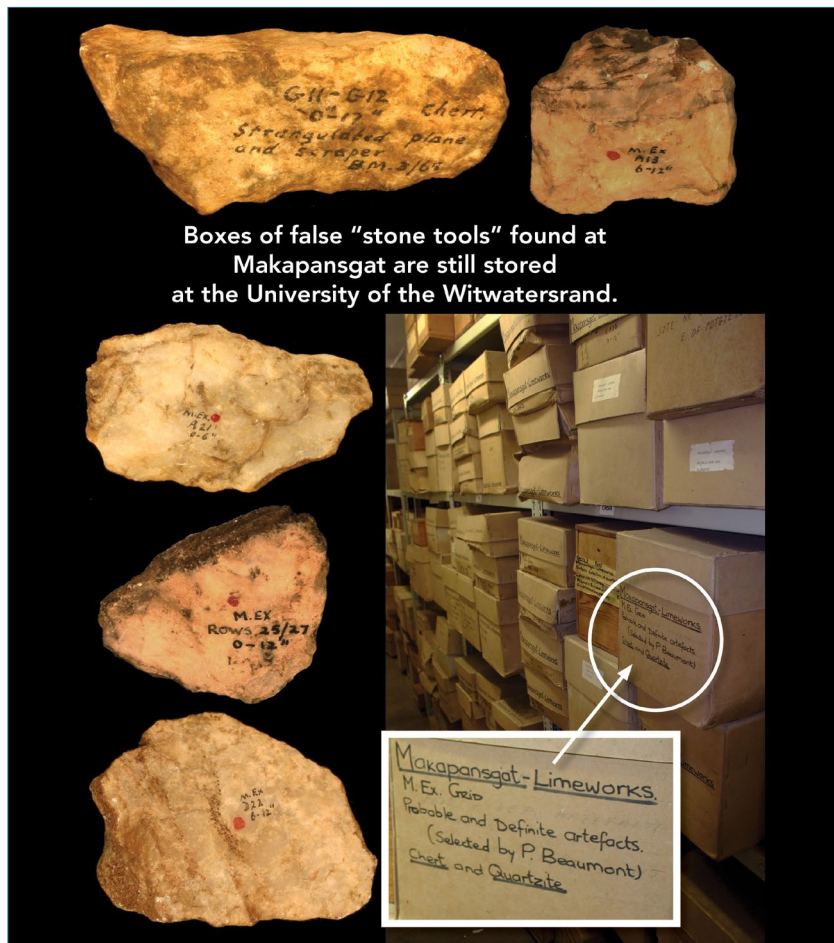
the bones he attributed to his apeman were later revealed to have belonged to other animals (p. 161; see figure 3).

The Orce apeman

In chapter 5, we learn that the Orce apeman appears to have been made up of bone fragments (one skull and two arm bone fragments, plus a tooth) from a variety of hoofed mammals. The skull fragment was discovered in 1982, endorsed by experts, and promoted in 1983 as “a 17-year-old subadult ape-man, an animal partway evolved between *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*” (pp. 179–180). However, and embarrassingly, in 1984 the Orce skull fragment was revealed to have likely been from an ass; i.e., a donkey. Since then, interpretations have varied concerning what sort of hoofed animal it belonged to. Similar problems arose with an upper arm bone attributed to the Orce apeman, now thought to have been the lower leg bone of a hoofed mammal. The tooth found in 1995 was later suggested to be from a hippopotamus. Supposed stone tools found at the Orce site look more like random rocks. Werner makes a good point that artistic drawings of apemen (e.g., of Orce Man) “are not evidence for the theory of human evolution but are subjective interpretations of fossils and should be considered as such [emphasis in original]” (p. 202).

The Libyan apeman

Another embarrassing episode in the world of human evolution is described in chapter 6, that of Noel Boaz’s Libyan apeman. This supposed apeman consisted of a collarbone found in 1979, and a small skull piece and a lower leg bone (fibula) discovered in 1981. From these meagre fossil scraps, Boaz concluded that they represented the oldest apeman ever discovered, and the scientists involved determined that the creature was bipedal. The Libyan apeman suffered a humiliating



Boxes of false "stone tools" found at Makapansgat are still stored at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Figure 2. Raymond Dart and other scientists collected thousands of supposed stone tools at Makapansgat, South Africa, which were later revealed to be just ordinary rocks. Illustration credit: *Untold Stories of Human Evolution*, vol. 3, p. 133 (used by permission).

downfall when it was revealed that Boaz’s fossil collarbone was the fossil of a modern dolphin rib. To complete the humiliation, it was later revealed that the piece of skull bone may have belonged to a monkey and the fibula leg bone to a non-primate.

Volume 4

Apemen created from living human beings

Werner illustrates, in chapter 2, how people were falsely assigned to different species by evolutionary scientists based on skin colour or body shape. He uses diagrams from the past, depicting non-white races which

were falsely identified as evolutionary links between an ape and a white man (pp. 5–6). He mentions the racist and eugenicist ideas of leading evolutionist Ernst Haeckel, which were later incorporated into Nazism. He also tells the story of Holocaust survivor Marylou Ruhe. And he gives racist quotes from notable evolutionists of the past (pp. 11–12). This should be a reminder that ideas have consequences.

Apemen created from recently buried humans

Chapter 3 focuses on the Boskop Man (*Homo capensis*), described in 1915. It was not until 1958 that Boskop Man was revealed, not as an apeman

species, but as recently buried modern humans (p. 21). It is astonishing that the top paleoanthropologists of the day could have been so mistaken. These experts also believed other fossils were apemen, e.g., the australopithecines, but as Werner says: “How could they know these other fossils were apemen when they could not recognize a modern *Homo sapiens* skeleton?” (p. 24)?

Ameghino, whose ‘apeman’ *Tetraprothomo argentinus* was discussed earlier, is shown in chapter 4 to have promoted more apemen. Ameghino saw some human skeletons that had earlier been stored away in the basements of museums in Argentina. Somehow, he became convinced that they were fossilized apemen from millions of years ago and assigned them to five different species (pp. 25–27). However, when examined by an expert (Hrdlička), the supposed apemen were revealed to be unfossilized bones of recently deceased *H. sapiens*.

Apemen created by scientists misrepresenting fossils

In chapters 5 to 9, Werner discusses apemen created as a result of scientists misrepresenting fossils. One such specimen is the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal skeleton, discovered in 1908. It was left to Marcellin Boule, at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, to analyze the skeleton. Boule confirmed initial impressions that this was an apeman. However, after Boule died, and access to the skeleton was made easier, it was revealed that many of the features said to be ape-like were within modern human variation. This reinterpretation of the Neanderthals was later reflected in more human-like reconstructions, as opposed to the earlier more apish depictions (pp. 33–35). Werner does a good job illustrating how modern humans and Neanderthal bones are similar (p. 36). He also shows how the foramen magnum of the La

Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal was wrongly reconstructed to be more towards the ape position, as well as errors in Boule’s interpretation of the tibia, neck bones, and foot (pp. 37–39).

Next is the famous partial skeleton of Lucy, assigned to the species *A. afarensis*. Werner takes issue with the reconstruction of Lucy’s pelvis, as it made the upper iliac blades more human-like, after being more ape-like before alteration (p. 47). In humans, the upper blades are said to turn forward (i.e., curve around the sides of the body), whereas in apes they tend to be flat and jut out sideways. Werner also points out that the Lucy-type foot bones (i.e., of *A. afarensis*) do not fit the human-like Laetoli fossil footprints, the latter being the “strongest piece of evidence for Lucy walking upright on two feet” (pp. 49–50). To me, the most logical explanation for this is that the Site G and S Laetoli footprints were made by humans, whereas the more recently reanalyzed apish Site A footprints were likely from an optionally bipedal australopithecine, perhaps *A. afarensis*.²

Chapter 7 is about *Homo habilis*. Werner gives a brief history about *H. habilis*, as well as Phillip Tobias, who was involved in the naming of the species and many of the reconstructions. He discusses the most famous *H. habilis* specimen, the KNM-ER 1470 cranium, and how it was put together from 150 fragments, with the reconstruction team flexing the face down to an unnatural position (p. 58). This made the face more vertical and hence human-like, in addition to increasing the skull’s volume. Brain capacity estimates for 1470 have ranged from initially more than 800 cc to more recently 530 cc, the latter figure obtained when comparing the inner cranial wall of 1470 to a brain endocast of a robust australopithecine (pp. 58, 62; see figure 4). It seems 1470 was just another australopithecine.

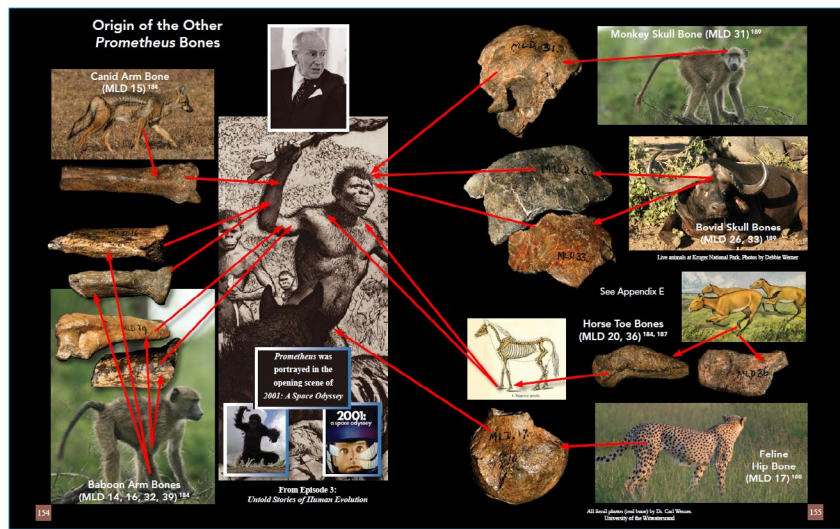


Figure 3. Many of the fossil bones Raymond Dart associated with his *Australopithecus prometheus* were misidentified. They were subsequently revealed to have belonged to a variety of different animals. Illustration credit: *Untold Stories of Human Evolution*, vol. 3, pp. 154–155 (used by permission).

There is then the ‘re-reconstruction’ of *H. habilis* skull StW 53. As initially reconstructed by Ron Clarke, it had a brain size of less than 480 cc and looked like an australopithecine (p. 65). But this small size went against its classification as *H. habilis* (by co-discover Phillip Tobias). So Tobias got someone else to reconstruct it, obtaining a skull 50% larger and thus making StW 53 a “large-brained apeman” (p. 65). The difference in size between the two reconstructions is excellently illustrated by Werner (p. 65; see figure 5). He quotes Clarke as saying that “it makes the Piltdown forgery look good” (p. 66). Comparing the StW 53 cranium with that of the ‘Mrs Ples’ *Australopithecus africanus*, it seems fair to conclude that StW 53 is most likely *A. africanus* (p. 67). Werner also illustrates how difficult it is to distinguish some *H. habilis* crania from *A. africanus* crania, which suggests they belong to the same australopithecine species (pp. 68–69).

The discovery of OH 62 in 1986, a *H. habilis*-assigned skull with associated leg and arm bones, further diminished the status of *H. habilis* as an apeman intermediate between Lucy (*A. afarensis*) and *Homo erectus*. This

is because its limb proportions were ape-like, and not intermediate between *A. afarensis* and *H. erectus* (p. 71). Even some evolutionary experts no longer believe any remains labelled as *H. habilis* belong in the genus *Homo*. Werner points out that many of the supposed *H. habilis* skulls are reassigned to *Australopithecus* by evolutionary paleoanthropologists (p. 72). Also, Werner gives “three examples [OH 7, OH 16 and OH 24] in which Dr. Tobias may have altered other skulls to embellish his theory about *Homo habilis* being a large-brained ape-man” (pp. 73–74).

Apemen created from monkey bones and ordinary apes

In chapters 10 to 11 Werner outlines how Dart (discoverer of the first *A. africanus* fossil, the Taung child) mistook monkey bones as belonging to apemen (p. 91). He describes how José Gibert mistakenly identified a monkey toe bone as the finger bone of an apeman (p. 96). As discussed in volume 3, Gibert was also accused of misidentifying a fragment from a donkey skull as being from an apeman skull (‘Orce Man’, see above).

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See Dr. Thackeray's interview in Episode 6 entitled, *Human Evolution Fraud in Europe*.

Video images by Debbie Werner

Figure 4. Placing a replica endocast of a South African robust australopithecine (530 cc) within the inner cranial wall of a cast of the KNM-ER 1470 *Homo habilis* cranium shows only a 2 mm gap between the outer region of the endocast and the inner cranial wall of 1470. This suggests the endocranial capacity of KNM-ER, usually stated as being 752 cc, is considerably overestimated. Illustration credit: *Nine Categories of Overturned Ape-Men*, vol. 4, p. 62 (used by permission).

Werner, in chapters 12 to 17, gives six examples of ordinary extinct apes that, in the past, were accepted as apemen (but now disproven): *Dryopithecus*, *Proconsul*, *Oreopithecus*, *Pliopithecus*, *Propliopithecus*, and *Ramapithecus*. To elaborate on one of these examples, *Pliopithecus antiquus* was an extinct gibbon-like ape, mistaken as an apeman when only the lower jaw fossil was known (pp. 98–99). Later, after a more complete skeleton of *Pliopithecus* was found, it became clear it was just an ape.

Apemen said to be created from human remains more than 2,000 years old

In chapter 18, Werner documents how Cro-Magnon Man, now undisputedly recognized as a modern human by almost everyone, was, for almost a hundred years, portrayed as an intermediate animal between apes and modern humans (pp. 131–137).

Chapter 19 is about *H. erectus*. The Java Man story, involving Eugène Dubois, and how the first *H. erectus* fossils were found in Java, Indonesia, including the Trinil 2 skullcap, is

briefly retold. Some decades later von Koenigswald announced that further *H. erectus* skulls had been found at Sangiran, Java, making it a “hot spot for ape-men discoveries” (p. 141). More skulls were also found on the banks of the Solo River near Ngandong, Java, in the early 1930s, which, although named *Homo soloensis* (aka Solo Man), were later incorporated into *H. erectus* (p. 142). Even today there is ambiguity of how evolutionists classify these specimens, with one of the latest designations being as a subspecies of *H. sapiens*; i.e., as *Homo sapiens soloensis*.³ During roughly the same period, *H. erectus* skulls were also found in China. These were referred to as ‘Peking Man’.

Werner points out that in 1943 Franz Weidenreich published photos comparing skulls of Java Man (*H. erectus*), Solo Man (*H. erectus*), and modern human (Australian Aboriginal, *H. sapiens*), with the latter human cranium similar to the *H. erectus* ones (p. 144). This should have been evidence enough that they were all fully human, but, as Werner points out:

“... scientists who espoused the theory of human evolution at that time were of the opinion that Australian Aborigines were *not* human, but were evolutionary throwbacks, sub-human, and human predecessors (which is not true). In this view they believed all three skulls were ape-men” (p. 144).

In 1984, a nearly complete *H. erectus* skeleton (including skull) was found in Kenya, called ‘Turkana Boy’. From the neck down, the Turkana Boy skeleton looked like a modern human. Hence, this is a problem for evolutionists as, in the words of Werner: “How could a creature which is supposed to be an intermediate between apes and humans have a modern human *body form*” (p. 146)?

Werner discusses brain size in *H. erectus* and the discrepancies in their measurements. He argues that an illusion has been falsely created by scientists “that *Homo erectus* has a small brain by choosing the smallest measurements of the most incomplete *Homo erectus* skulls” (p. 154). Werner raises an important question about the Turkana Boy skull reconstruction. If he is correct, it may have wrongly made

“the face more protuberant, like an ape” (p. 162).

Heidelberg Man (*Homo heidelbergensis*) is discussed in chapter 20. According to Werner, while some evolutionists see *H. heidelbergensis* as an apeman, bridging the gap between *H. erectus* and Neanderthals, other evolutionists believe all of these are *H. sapiens* (pp. 166–167). Werner outlines disagreement among paleoanthropologists as to what to call individual *H. heidelbergensis* fossil skulls; i.e., what species they belong to. He argues that this disagreement could mean they “have no clear definition of what constitutes the differences between *Homo erectus*, *Homo heidelbergensis*, *Homo neanderthalensis*, and *Homo sapiens*”, that “they simply represent variations within the species *Homo sapiens*”, and that “human evolution did not occur” (p. 174).

Apemen falsely created from robust australopithecines

Werner gives several examples of robust australopithecines falsely promoted as apemen in chapter 21. I will briefly discuss one example, that of the *Paranthropus robustus* specimen TM 1517 from Kromdraai, South Africa, discovered in 1938. Robert Broom reported the face of this robust australopithecine as ‘remarkably flat’, when, in fact, it protruded far out like a gorilla, and later wrongly reported the skull as being ‘man-like’ (p. 184). As Werner points out, scientists today reject Broom’s apeman claims about *P. robustus* (p. 185). When looking at the appearance of the robust australopithecine skulls, as excellently illustrated by Werner, it almost beggars belief that two of the leading paleoanthropologists of that time (Broom and Leakey) could think that these creatures were somehow links between ape and man.

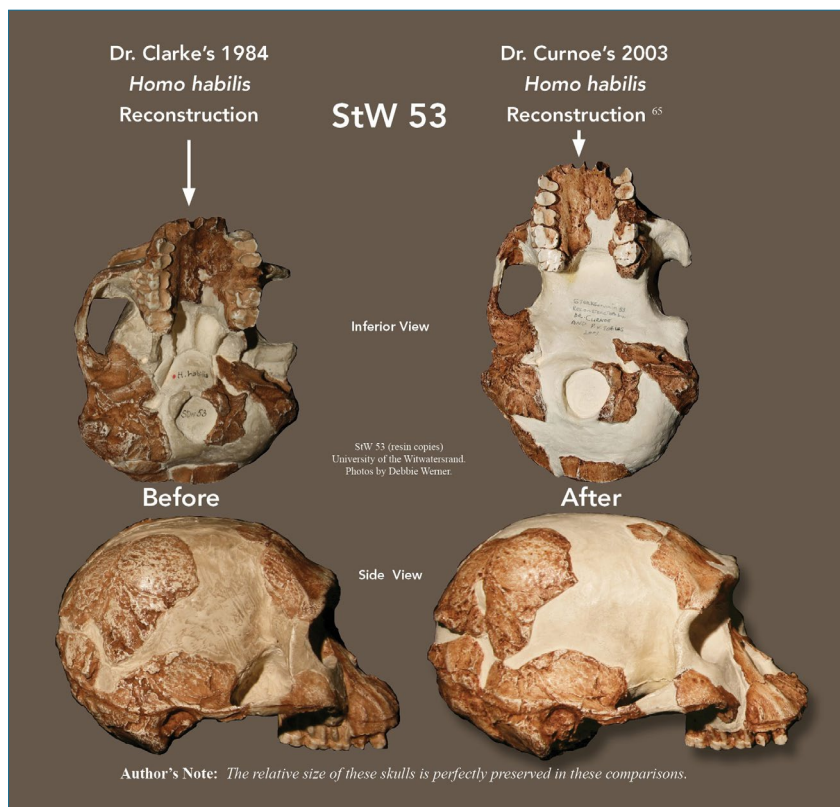


Figure 5. As initially reconstructed by Ron Clarke, *Homo habilis* skull StW 53 had a brain size of less than 480 cc and looked like an australopithecine. This small size went against its classification as *Homo habilis* by co-discover Phillip Tobias. So Tobias got someone else to reconstruct it, obtaining a skull 50% larger and thus making StW 53 a ‘large-brained ape-man’. The difference in size between the two reconstructions is excellently illustrated by Werner. Illustration credit: *Nine Categories of Overturned Ape-Men*, vol. 4, p. 65 (used by permission).

Other important issues

In chapter 22, Werner discusses other issues, such as lack of transparency and access to the original fossils. He shows how restricted access to original fossils, such as Lucy, is not just a thing of the past. Disturbingly, Werner illustrates how a copy of Lucy’s pelvis appears to have been altered to make it look more human-like (pp. 201–204). Another example of limited fossil access is the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal Man, which allowed errors in reconstruction by Marcellin Boule to go undetected for 43 years (p. 205).

Also, Werner presents two examples where black and white photographs of fossil skulls/pieces were inadequate to reveal the presence of significant

irregularities. In the first example, Werner shows how gaps filled in with black resin allowed the Turkana Boy skull to have its face moved outward—to make it look more like an ape’s (pp. 206–207). The black and white photographs of the skull published in the 1993 monograph of the discovery were not sufficient to reveal the problem, which became apparent with colour photos.

In the second example, Werner illustrates how the official photographs (black and white) of the type specimen of *H. habilis* (OH 7) hide what is revealed in colour photos, that certain fragments may not have belonged to the skull (pp. 208–209). As Werner points out, this could make the type specimen for *H. habilis* invalid.

Much of the remainder of chapter 22 involves answering the question of whether human evolution is scientific, particularly given the lack of access to the original ‘apeman’ fossils by other researchers. Werner also discusses some of his own experiences (or those of his crew) of being denied access to the original fossils. From this Werner concludes:

“It is clear from the author’s experiences and the experiences of other scientists that many original fossils currently being promoted as ape-men are not available for verification. Since the definition of science requires verification (repeatability), this situation renders most currently accepted ape-man fossils as non-scientific” (p. 214).

Conclusion

Volumes 3 and 4 are invaluable documentation of human evolution stories, events, information, and facts that serve as a reminder of how an obsession with finding ‘apemen’ can lead to consequential misinterpretations of the evidence, or worse. Werner’s detailed documentation of the evidence, some of which would likely not otherwise see the light of day again, ensures this information is available to future researchers and students. Because it is so beautifully illustrated, with excellent figures, as well as easy to read, apart from being a must-have resource in the library of anyone interested in human origins, it also serves as a great coffee table book.

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