

Re: What is the Aquatic theory?

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From: Algis Kuliukas (*algis_at_RiverApes.com*)

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taxidea3@shaw.ca (Rick Wagler) wrote in message
news:<41c2a1f2.0409120840.4c5e7f7f@posting.google.com>...
> *algis@RiverApes.com* (Algis Kuliukas) wrote in message
news:<77a70442.0409020122.5456dd51@posting.google.com>...

[..]

>> *The point was to try to get people to think about it, to discuss it
>> and to investigate it. I'm doing that. I'm doing it because,
>> apparently every professional paleoanthropology departmental gead just
>> knew it was a load of crap and wasn't worth looking at, even though –
>> truth be known – they couldn't even tell you what it was. The fact
>> that I'm doing what Elaine Morgan has expected PAs to do is hardly a
>> damning criticism of her contribution. I admire her more than most
>> people who have written about human evolution.*
>>
> *Apparently so. I think she's a nice person too. But in order to do
> what she intended – get a new viewpoint established – she had to do
> something she is manifestly incapable of doing – present a genuinely
> provocative critique of prevailing theories and present new ideas and
> concepts in a challenging way. Whales are naked and so are we just
> doesn't cut it.*

She is a very nice person. She deserves far, far better than the nasty vitriolic abuse that has been heaped on her from some of the people here.

'Whales are naked so are we' is an astonishingly ignorant portrayal of her view.

Here a couple of points she made which, I think, are very strong indeed against the orthodox paradigm,:

"It has been repeatedly asserted (for example on the internet) that there was never such a thing as the 'savannah theory', that it was simply a straw man constructed by Elaine Morgan for the pleasure of knocking it down again, and that no reputable scientist can be shown ever to have used the phrase 'savannah theory'. The last part of that statement is true. I would no more have expected them to use that phrase that I would expect a Creationist to refer to 'the God theory'

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– their faith in it was too strong for that." Morgan (1997:14)

[She then follows with many examples which give the lie to this perverse attempt to twist paleoanthropological history]

"The original savannah model – though it did not stand the test of time – was argued in strong and clear terms. We are different from apes, it stated, because they lived in the forest and our ancestors lived on the plains...

... The new watered-down version suggests that we are different from the apes because their ancestors, perhaps, lived in a different part of the mosaic. Say what you will, it does not have the same ring to it." Morgan 1997:17–18)

Morgan, Elaine (1997). *The Aquatic Ape Hypothesis*. Souvenir Press (London)

[..]

> > *The "very poor research" is , what exactly? The four tiny errors on
> > Jim Moore's masquerading one-sided web site? Four tiny errors out of
> > hundreds of citations and claims. You could find as many errors in any
> > popular science book if you were obsessed enough to try to find them.
> > Do you have any others?*
> >

> *Your characterization of the quality of Elaine's research is bogus.
> The great overarching error of her work is that it represents a conclusion
> in search of evidence. This is why the substantial – not trivial –
> misreadings of sources are so blatant and so damaging.*

Rubbish. Tobias called them a 'series of superbly written books' and he was right. For someone who is not trained in the science of paleoanthropology she puts professionals to shame with her insightful summaries of the state of knowledge in such a wide range of areas.

She never presents a conclusion but, like Hardy, asks lots of questions. That was her aim – to stimulate a debate and, boy, has she succeeded!

> *What Jim has pointed out are
> not minor factual errors as you claim but substantial examples of her
> methodology.*

So, are you defending Jim Moore's shock-horror twisting of four (no just one really) errors, or what?

Take Jim Moore's number one revelation for an example: the famous Darwin misquote. It's just sleazy crap – exactly what you'd expect from the gutter press.

Have you read my expose on these yet?

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see <http://www.riverapes.com/AAH/Arguments/JimMoore/Quotes.htm>

What say you on that Rick? How can you defend what Jim has done?

What 'substantial examples of her methodology'? Can you be more specific, or give us a page cited example?

It's a popular science book. It's supposed to be entertaining to the lay person. Like Craig Stanford's 'Upright' it's written in a style that's more about keeping the reader's attention than being technically spot on in every sentence.

> *But since your hypothesis is precisely the same kind of*
> *enterprise it is, of course, only to be expected that you can't see this.*

All Hardy and Morgan ever did (and I am trying to emulate them) is to wonder aloud if there might be something in this thing. It's you guys who seem to just know a priori that it is wrong – even though there's been no real scientific investigation into it, and if pressed, none of you can even define what it is you're so sure is crap.

For me, I'm taking on board the criticisms that AAH proponents have been weak in coming up with timelines, linking it to the fossil evidence and coming up with testable predictions. I'm using the hypothetico–deductive method, perhaps for the first time, in an enquiry into bipedal origins.

That you have to tar me with the great, thick, sticky anti–AAH brush because I dare to suggest that it might be right says more about your lack of objectivity than it does mine.

> *As for citations and claims the first are few and far between and one*
> *cannot identify the source for most of her claims. Your attempted*
> *rejoinder to Jim that he does not give precise page references to*
> *a clearly identified article does not clear up the mess Elaine has made*
> *but merely indicates that you don't appreciate the problem.*

Morgan (1997) is as well a referenced popular science book as you might find. The criticism of her earlier work were more justified but even 'Descent of Woman' was far better referenced than Jim Moore's 'Claims and Facts' page.

See for yourself...

<http://www.aquaticape.org/aatclaims.html>

Not a single citation for 23 claims. It took me hours to trawl through trying to check them.

At least Morgan, Elaine (1972). The Descent of Woman. Souvenir Press (London)

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has 29 references.

But I know you'll defend your super hero... anthrosciguy!! (Saviour of the world from drippy wetness!)... under any circumstances. Such loyalty.

- > > *'No substantive position?' – really, Rick – it must be you who's been*
- > > *abducted by aliens. The very substantive position is the beauty at*
- > > *which a whole host of ape–human differences are explained away with*
- > > *consummate ease – we moved through water more than they did.*
- > >
- > *And your evidence is? BRING ON THE WHALES!! The AAT 'evidence' has*
- > *been examined in detail on this group and it is flummery. But that's*
- > *just my opinion.*

No. Stuff the whales!

Apes move in water bipedally – a bit of a clue there to our bipedalism.

Humans are more bouyant the fatter they are – a bit of a clue there to our increased adiposity.

Humans swim more efficiently when body hair is shaved off – a bit of a clue there to our unique nakedness amongst the primates.

This group is full of egotistical people who wouldn't admit they were wrong under any circumstances.

[..]

- > > *And this is your ample evidence from her five books – wow. You're just*
- > > *making it up or, actually, following the pied piper Jim Moore.*
- > >
- > *I've read two of her books and they are as Jim and many others describe.*

Which two?

- > *Very thin reads. A monument to unexamined alternatives. No substantial*
- > *examination of PA. Refusal to actually come to grips with central*
- > *concepts such as the nature of savannah environments and on and on.*

Well Tobias didn't think so.

[..]

- > > *Desmond Morris' Naked Ape is worse than Morgan's worst, and so are*
- > > *several others. Craig Stanford's 'Upright' is also pretty poor except*
- > > *from a point of view of historical commentary on the subject.*
- > >
- > *Well I won't debate Morris but I will say that I rather doubt that*
- > *Stanford's work is on a par with Elaine's no matter what the*
- > *shortcomings.*

Stanford's is excellently referenced but some of his arguments are facile in the extreme in my humble opinion.

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[..]

- > > *Jim was quoting from his Zenith article, I think. He likes to do that*
- > > *because it contains the weakest Hardy arguments.*
- > >
- > *He has responded to the NS piece. Which is the great Hardy piece*
- > *of theorizing. I can't imagine how the Zenith article could be weaker*
- > *unless he was losing it completely which you seem to hint at.*

Moore insists that Hardy said there was a twenty million years gap – even when I pointed him to the actual sentence in the New Scientist piece. He's clearly twisting to imply that the man's a fool. In the Zenith magazine, 17 years later, he and the editor manage to let twenty million slip through but it's clearly just an error. But can Jim give him the benefit of the doubt – no way. He clings to this dirt as a morsel of proof of AATer bad research methods.

[..]

- > > *Hardy said 'More aquatic' right? He said 'not as aquatic as an otter',*
- > > *right?*
- >
- > *And used what as evidence? If you don't understand the consequences*
- > *of an argument from analogy it's high time you found out. Or as*
- > *Jim helpfully points out it is a genuinely good idea to read an*
- > *article and not just surmise the contents from the title.*

That humans swim better than most terrestrial animals under water for one.

'Jim helpfully points out'? The fact that you have to stick up for your sleazy, twisting (no, lying is the word) super-hero, anthrosciguy, even on points like this, is informative, Rick. I have posted many quotes from Hardy's paper. Hell, I even scanned the entire Hardy article in full for my web site precisely so that people should read past the headline. It seems that most PAs haven't even read that much, though – they didn't have to because they'd heard all the gossip and rumor in the staff rooms and dismissed it over a coffee.

Enough.

Algis Kuliukas