

Re: Cameron & Groves latest book positive about AAH

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Philip Deitiker <Donevenask@worlnet.att.net> wrote in message
news:<zRxdd.727384\$Gx4.90097@bgtncs04-news.ops.worldnet.att.net>...

> johnSPAM@wilkins.id.au (*John Wilkins*) says in

> news:1glz94z.1usd13rlgr222N%johnSPAM@wilkins.id.au:

>

>> *Algis Kuliukas <algis@RiverApes.com> wrote:*

>>

>>> *A new book by Colin Groves and co-worker David Cameron*

>>> *'Bones, Stones and Molecules' has recently been published.*

>>> *It's largely based upon a parsimonious reconstruction of*

>>> *hominoidae phylogeny based on cranial bony features.*

>>>

>>> *Interestingly, it is rather openly supportive of a certain*

>>> *controversial hypothesis.*

>>>

>>> *"... Nor can we exclude the Aquatic Ape Hypothesis (AAH).*

>>> *Elaine Morgan has long argued that many aspects of human*

>>> *anatomy are best explained as a legacy of a semiaquatic*

>>> *phase in the proto-human trajectory, and this includes*

>>> *upright posture to cope with increased water depth as our*

>>> *ancestors foraged farther and further from the lake or*

>>> *seashore. At first, this idea was simply ignored as*

>>> *grotesque, and perhaps as unworthy of discussion because*

>>> *proposed by an amateur. But Morgan's latest arguments have*

>>> *reached a sophistication that simply demands to be taken*

>>> *seriously (Morgan 1990, 1997). And although the authors*

>>> *shy away from more speculative reconstructions in favour*

>>> *of phylogenetic scenarios, we insist that the AAH take its*

>>> *place in the battery of possible functional scenarios for*

>>> *hominin divergence." Cameron and Groves (2004:68)*

>>>

>>> *Cameron, David W; Groves, Colin P (2004). Bones, Stones*

>>> *and Molecules ("Out of Africa" and Human Origins).*

>>> *Elsevier (Sydney)*

>>>

>>> *Any comments anyone?*

- > >
- > > *How many possible scenarios can we construct? Logically, I*
- > > *mean, consistent with the evidence?*
- >
- > *Do a search on this group and ape theories, you can come up with*
- > *many, I even have them classified by type.*
- >
- > *The major flaw is that a hypothesis should attempt to lead the*
- > *data, in any matter. Basically what the authors are saying is we*
- > *accept that 'savannah ape' and 'mosaic ape' are viable*
- > *'hypothesis' which have led to certain types of analysis, then*
- > *of course we should throw AAH in so that it can also lead*
- > *analyses.*
- > *Big problem is however what do you test.*
- > *Africanus – savannah, but who says it is ancestral to human*
- > *Afarensis – woodland, but who says it is ancestral to human*
- > *Human – MRCAs into the central forested regions of Africa, but*
- > *who says that its ancestors in the Pliocene/Pleistocene*
- > *transition always lived there.*
- > *Anyone can throw anything on the table, but without something*
- > *to test one's hypothesis with, it is really a moot point. Frankly*
- > *I thought McGinnis' capital ape theory has some merit before he*
- > *had not dragged into never-never land.*
- > *Let's not forget my cannibalistic ape theory, :^).*
- >
- > *Everyone has a different opinion about these things. I live*
- > *almost entirely on protein derived from fish and from oils*
- > *derived from fish, not out of desire but out of necessity. If*
- > *anyone should support the AAH then I should. But I find it*
- > *highly problematic in a key respect.*
- > *If it is true that every theory can provide some support, and*
- > *if it is also true that early on in human evolution, no matter*
- > *where they evolved they were moving into diametrically opposite*
- > *habitats, then the total selective attraction of any given*
- > *habitat must have been less than the generally selective*
- > *attraction of a habitat and other variations of the habitat.*
- > *Therefore it is very difficult to picture human evolution as*
- > *being a monotonous scheme of adaptation to one habitat.*
- > *Secondarily, as far as I know, in discussions I personally had*
- > *with Morgan in 1997 she goes by the logic that 'Something*
- > *suddenly must have changed, look at the fossil record'. She*
- > *looks at the fossil record and she sees 'sudden changes' I look*
- > *at the fossil record and molecular information and I see gaps in*
- > *the fossil record that need to be filled. IOW, the AAH*
- > *hypothesis tries to lead the discussion of morphological*
- > *evolution with the concept that the record is complete enough to*
- > *reconstruct hominid evolution. I find that very faulty logic.*
- >
- > *There is support for AHH (aquatic hominid hypothesis) is a*
- > *certain specific form of evidence.*
- > *1. The pMRCAs of human, chimps and gorilla are all to the same*

- > *proximal parts of africa considering the mid pliestocen*
- > *environment of africa it is likely these were more Jungled*
- > *habitats.*
- >
- > *2. The molecular spread evidence is strongly suggestive of*
- > *ubiquitous of early 'dugout' technology, and the age of hand-*
- > *axes in the record suggest that dugout technology might predate*
- > *our species. However it is unlikely this technology predated 1*
- > *mya.*
- >
- > *3. The oldest groups of exoafricans and the HG/tribes in africa*
- > *are dominated by pygmies and negritos, largely coastal or*
- > *lowland dwelling peoples. Again most of these coastal dwelling*
- > *short stature peoples are expert fashioners of boats, dugouts,*
- > *etc.*
- >
- > *4. The health benefits of all fish diet suggest evolutionary*
- > *adaptation. Problem however is the healthiest fish are cold water*
- > *fishes, and shellfish consumption could potentially negate that*
- > *benefit. There is certain evidence now emmerging that in many*
- > *people essential fatty acids from fish suppress obesity, by*
- > *suppressing the apetite for fats. This coupled with the pygmy*
- > *stature may suggest a selection for smaller, ligher people who*
- > *needed smaller trees for dugouts to get around during the middle*
- > *stone age. IOW there could be feedback in the between the diet*
- > *and growth patterns, that if the individual is subjected to fish*
- > *oils at a young age there maybe triggered differences in growth*
- > *so that the individual is more adept for a*
- > *maritime/coastal/riparian lifestyle.*
- >
- > *5. Of course the alternative is if those signals are missed then*
- > *this individual would grow in accord with a non-'aquatic'*
- > *bordered habitat. Potential inherited flexibility in the growth*
- > *response.*
- >
- > *6. I don't see any hominids found along the great rift valley,*
- > *that from a strict evolutionary perspective would shuttle into*
- > *homo. What I do see is a potential separate line of hominid*
- > *evolution in east and west africa.*
- >
- > *7. Thermodynamics of selection for exploitation of the*
- > *rainforest with unlimited water and sunlight, plus the stability*
- > *of the central/west african rainforest over geological periods*
- > *might be an impetus for generally adaptive evolution. The*
- > *exploitation would of course involve sampling from many*
- > *resources like rivers, lakes and streams as well as honey*
- > *collection, fruit collection, hunting etc. But catching fish,*
- > *for example as teh biaka do is far easier compared to*
- > *blowdarting monkeys from the canopy. Therefore it is possible*
- > *that the early protein supply in the rainforest was largely fish*
- > *until more superb hunting evolutionary traits appeared.*

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- > *Exemplary of this is on these survivor shows, most of the wild*
- > *caught protein sources are, in fact, fish. Fish and shellfish*
- > *are relatively easy to catch without specialized tools.*
- >
- > *I can go on.*
- >
- > *The point I would make is that arguing with AAH versus other ape*
- > *theories is akin to arguing from extremes, and even now the*
- > *proponents are still arguing about wading as a preselection for*
- > *bipedality, etc. Whereas the evidence I see is that after*
- > *hominids _Already_ existed, and after there was extensive*
- > *diversification to many habitats some hominids remained in the*
- > *jungled environment and adapted to various resources so that*
- > *they could compete well with canopy and ground dwelling sister*
- > *species (chimpanzees and gorilla) after breakthroughs in tool use*
- > *and general adaptations were made, protohumans probably*
- > *successively exploited the aquatic environment. However a*
- > *critical breakthrough were transport technologies that created*
- > *safe aquatic mobility that really thrust selection of humans*
- > *toward aquatic resources.*
- > *I don't like creating extreme arguments and then debating from*
- > *extremes as science sometimes does between various competing*
- > *camp. I see the 'truth' of these issues at the intersection of*
- > *perspectives. Nowhere does it apply more than with humans who*
- > *are generally adaptive, and suggested the need to adapt to many*
- > *habitats was more 'selective' over the long period than the need*
- > *to adapt very well to a specific habitat. As you imply once one*
- > *begins from the extreme perspective one can gather many together*
- > *with similar validity. The basic problem is one comes to the*
- > *conclusion that since each theory contradicts the others, only*
- > *one _could_ be true, or more likely none could be true.*
- >
- > *Marc argued for many years claiming the fallacy of Savannah*
- > *hypothesis, the fallacy of the SAT may be true for the*
- > *pliocene/pliestocene transition, but it does not logically mean*
- > *that AAT should garner more support, the only thing it really*
- > *tells one is that idealized theories are frequently false.*
- > *He never got this point.*
- > *The other issue is that incoming data should lead our*
- > *formulation of theories, and even if I support a mosaic ape*
- > *theory with increasingly aquatic/maritime abilities I still see*
- > *the present state of homo origin from a strictly physical point*
- > *of view to be dismally lacking of evidence. From my point of*
- > *view erectus could have evolved 2 mya or 4.5 mya as a species*
- > *and there are no clear indicators which is likely more correct.*
- > *Until this essential deficiency is resolved, speculating about*
- > *ape theories and leading bad data with speculative hypotheses is*
- > *rather useless.*
- >
- > *As you can see Algis continues to _force_ his opinion here*
- > *despite numerous times people here claim they are tired of these*

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- > various 'shell games' of information. He kind of defeats the
- > cause of his argument by making rigid claims about aquaticisms
- > requirement of being the bipedal selector, and he would get far
- > more support if he broadened his perspective and looked for
- > other possible scenarios.
- >
- > --
- > Philip

Thankyou Philip – I have to confess this is the first contribution to SAP that I have ever copied to my Notebook for later re–consideration.

This doesn't necessarily mean I agree with it, but I do think it shows up the quality of the average post to this forum (including mine).

Richardf