

## Re: selection criteria for obesity

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**From:** Charles (*lmno\_at\_mindspring.com*)

**Date:** 12/23/04

Date: Thu, 23 Dec 2004 04:46:37 GMT

"Pauline M Ross" <pmross@ross-software.co.uk> wrote in message  
news:m0uis0l8ge8skt6333tsq2g15ibvdl87ak@4ax.com...

> *On Wed, 22 Dec 2004 01:06:27 GMT, "Charles" <lmno@mindspring.com>*

> *wrote:*

>

>>> *[firstjois]They may not have had all the fine points of female anatomy*

>>> *just*

>>> *right but this is a better depiction of pregnancy than obesity. Note the*

>>> *arms.*

>>

>>*[Charles]I must respectfully disagree. This has nothing to do with the*

>>*old tendency*

>>*of men in anthropolgy to make definitions of this or that. This Venus is*

>>*an obese woman. Maybe I should have said it like this: This Venus is an*

>>*obese woman who may also be pregnant. Pregnancy very rarely protrudes*

>>*sideways. [Snip]*

>

> *I have to agree with you. I find it interesting that anyone would*

> *defend the nothing-but-pregnancy line for the Venuses, because anyone*

> *who has seen an obese woman and a slim-but-pregnant woman can surely*

> *see the difference. The fat Venuses I have seen are \*clearly\* obese,*

> *although there are some which are skinny (and visibly non-pregnant),*

> *too.*

do you have any ideas about the selection criteria for obesity? why such a  
phenomena would continue & apparently even be desirable, in our hss line?

>

>>*Of course, none of us can say whether a female of this sort was the norm*

>>*for*

>>*30,000 ya, but we know that at least one person looked like this in order*

>>*for the artist to have depicted her. [Snip]*

>> *My point is that these Venus statues are \*evidence\* that obesity*

>>*existed.*

>

> *Yes, exactly. And your point that the large human brain is evidence*

> *for continuous abundance is also a good one.*

thanks! I have fought that fight in the past and got no-where, or have been looked at as some sort of pariah. If we are generalists, then I don't see any particular reason why we would have to starve....

>  
>>> *[firstjois]Agriculture what? 170,000 ya?*  
>>*[Charles] oh, its just a thought, a speculation. Suppose that agriculture*  
>>*was*  
>>*invented/discovered way back then and we just haven't yet found any...*  
>>*harrrrumph!... evidence!*  
>  
> *Colin Tudge wrote a small book about this idea a while back – called*  
> *something like 'Neandertals, Bandits and Farmers'. He proposed that*  
> *some kind of low-level of agriculture (weeding, pruning and defending,*  
> *say) could have been going on for a long time without leaving a mark*  
> *on the archaeological record. He dated it to 40 kya, but it could*  
> *easily go back a lot further than that.*

thanks for this reference. I have never read anything by Colin Tudge. Will seek some literature on next library visit. ... and yes, it occurred to me that if we are fat 40 kya, why shouldn't we also have been fat at the beginning of our species... 170 +/- kya. ? And one thing that might make us "fat" is an increase in domesticated, cooked vegetable matter... such as a yam. and if we got yams, why don't we also have the "seed" for agriculture. (pun intended). Maybe hss has always been scratching around in the earth.

>  
> *I find it interesting that 'agriculture' is known to have arisen a*  
> *number of times independently in far-flung parts of the globe within a*  
> *few thousand years. Even groups widely thought to be pre-agricultural*  
> *(like the Australian Aborigines) had eel-farms and such like. Call me*  
> *cynical, but I don't believe in coincidences. Far more likely, to my*  
> *mind, that some kind of pre-agriculture was practised universally by*  
> *early modern humans, and simply intensified to noticeable levels at*  
> *different times.*

yes, that is my point. Whatever that creature was that left Africa, he and she also carried with them the ability to grow things. it was only when the population increased that we suddenly find towns and villages and cities... not because agriculture was invented. I know, it is a bit of a heresy to think such, but I don't believe anything on first glance.

>  
> *There is also the issue of fire, which could potentially have been*  
> *used to manage the environment in a pre-agricultural way, and dates*  
> *back to before the advent of Hss.*

maybe our children's children will have the complete picture, and have details that elude us, such that they will perfectly understand how fire and food and brain and birthin' babies all fits together.

sci.anthropology.paleo: Re: selection criteria for obesity

warmest  
charles

>  
> *Nice to have a proper thread about paleoanthropology on this group :-)*  
>  
> --  
> *Pauline Ross*