

Re: Origin of Clothing

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I hate to stoop to simplicity, but everything (damned near!) builds nests.
HS puts one on and carries it withhim and changes it daily !

tadchem wrote:

- > *Strange Creature wrote:*
- > > *The idea that there is a complete transition from*
- > > *black to white with no shades in between, is a*
- > > *phenomenon intrinsic to American history, if not*
- > > *the Sahara desert.*
- >
- > *Actually it is at best a rare event and at worst an oversimplification.*
- >
- > > *Basic selection factors at*
- > > *least as far as I have heard, with respect to*
- > > *skin color, tend to fall under skin cancer,*
- > > *vitamin D production, and possible camouflage*
- > > *during hunting or gathering.*
- >
- > *Early humans started breeding at puberty and generally were done by the*
- > *time they had lived long enough to develop adult skin cancer – little*
- > *selection pressure there.*
- >
- > *Natural camouflage usually involves the development of patterned*
- > *pigmentation to confuse the outline (silhouette) or background-matching*
- > *coloration.*
- >
- > *Vitamin D production (which selects for light skin) would have been*
- > *important in climates where sunburn (which selects for dark skin) was*
- > *unlikely .*
- >
- > > *The amount of near ultraviolet radiation that*
- > > *falls upon the earth, tends to depend relatively*
- > > *heavily upon the angle that the sun is in the*
- > > *sky. A small level of cloud cover will only*
- > > *scatter and diminish it very slightly, however*
- > > *a heavy level of cloud cover will often*
- > > *reduce it to a greater extent. Also, snow*

sci.archaeology: Re: Origin of Clothing

- > > glare will tend to reflect ultraviolet
- > > radiation off the ground and also magnify the
- > > level of ultraviolet radiation presented by
- > > the environment.
- >
- > Local weather and climate is important. The UV index in Seattle is
- > *much* lower than it is in Fargo (at about the same latitude) because
- > the cloud cover at Seattle is almost always *heavy* due to geographical
- > considerations, while that at Fargo is nearly always light to none –
- > again for geographic reasons.
- >
- > > The sun will of course,
- > > produce little ultraviolet radiation at
- > > night.
- >
- > Duh!!! The sun's UV output is nearly constant, 24/7. You just aren't
- > *exposed* to it at night.
- >
- > > I am not sure what level of UV
- > > output that a campfire will put forth.
- >
- > There is effectively no UV output from a cool wood flame.
- >
- > > Man probably left Africa for at least the
- > > southern part of Eurasia about 1 to 3
- > > million years ago.
- >
- > Homo erectus migrants left no surviving descendants. The earliest
- > African emigrants to leave surviving descendants left about 70,000 BCE
- > and moved along the shores of the Indian Ocean to the east, leaving
- > enclaves along the way (e.g. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Malaysia, the
- > Philippines).
- >
- > > Man did not colonize the most northern
- > > parts of Eurasia, at least for during the
- > > highth of the ice ages, if not the
- > > interglacials, until at least the past
- > > 50,000 or so years, or only slightly
- > > longer. Lack of extremely ancient evidence
- > > for man in North and South America might
- > > at least possibly indicate this.
- >
- > The last glaciation of the PLeistocene (about 10,000 to 15,000 years
- > ago) lowered the sea level 100 +/- 30 meters – enough to permit a
- > stroll from Siberia to Alaska along the coast.
- >
- > > Man did not go on long ocean voyages
- > > until the last 50,000 to 70,000 years
- > > or so. Lack of extremely ancient
- > > evidence for man in Australia might
- > > tend to indicate this.

- >
- > *The lowered sea levels of the Ice Ages would have allowed foot traffic*
- > *from Asia to New Guinea and Australia.*
- >
- > > *However, lighter*
- > > *skin will be able to produce more*
- > > *vitamin D to protect against rickets,*
- > > *for those early humans who had not*
- > > *inferred the immediate idea, of possibly*
- > > *eating animal livers in order to*
- > > *compensate.*
- >
- > *I think it is rather patronizing of you to assume that malnourished*
- > *early humans might NOT think to eat every part of the animal they*
- > *could. Two words: "British Cuisine" They eat tongue, kidneys, blood,*
- > *liver, spleen, stomach, heart, 'haggis', etc. – by *tradition*. The*
- > *tradition arose locally; it wasn't imported by the Romans.*
- >
- > > *This produces the question with*
- > > *regard to how long ago humans*
- > > *started wearing clothing in northern*
- > > *climates to protect against heat*
- > > *loss in winter, and possibly*
- > > *provide at least a temporary*
- > > *immediate short term protection*
- > > *against some, less powerful animal*
- > > *bites in some areas.*
- >
- > *So far there have been no indications in the archaeological record that*
- > *Neanderthals (who lived in northern Europe before the advent of*
- > *Cro-Magnons) ever produced clothing.*
- >
- > > *a heavy skin might also reduce*
- > > *the speed of a human while*
- > > *running, and decrease protection*
- > > *against overheating during*
- > > *periods of high exertion, unless*
- > > *they are shedded (which if they*
- > > *were not highly treated skins,*
- > > *might also, still be eaten by*
- > > *predators if one does not return*
- > > *and recover them fast enough).*
- >
- > *It would also be a liability when fishing. The high prevalence of fish*
- > *bones, the total inability of humans to synthesize their own*
- > *omega-fatty acids (essential for neurological development) which are*
- > *abundant in fish, and the use of perspiration as a thermoregulation*
- > *mechanism would argue for early humans spending a lot of time in/near*
- > *water.*
- >
- > > *Another fundamental problem with*

sci.archaeology: Re: Origin of Clothing

- > > *wearing at least animal skins, is*
- > > *the potential for attracting large*
- > > *predators from their smell if*
- > > *they are not treated in some*
- > > *fashion.*
- >
- > *The body odor of unwashed humans would more than compensate. Even now,*
- > *only those predators (Bengal Tigers, wolves, cougars, etc.) that are*
- > *unable to find other food and are nearly starving will consider eating*
- > *a foul-smelling human.*
- >
- > > *If a human were to wear a large*
- > > *amount of thick clothing, this*
- > > *would only leave part of the*
- > > *body available to produce*
- > > *vitamin D from sunlight, disposing*
- > > *the wearer to possibly become more*
- > > *susceptible to rickets over time.*
- >
- > *Duh!! Even humans accustomed to northern climes are likely to go nude*
- > *in the summer. They only dress against the cold when it *IS* cold.*
- >
- > > *The question exists, with regard*
- > > *to how long, that might have presented*
- > > *an additional selection pressure upon*
- > > *humans in northern climates, and what*
- > > *effects that might have had*
- > > *upon human physiology among its*
- > > *different variants.*
- >
- > *"Variants?" Do you mean "populations?" 25,000 years is only from 1000*
- > *to 2000 generations. Although this is more than enough to produce*
- > *changes in a population when deliberately selective breeding is*
- > *involved, it seems scarcely enough to produce a notable change in the*
- > *physiology of a species when the stochastic effects of 'natural'*
- > *selection are the only effective pressures – unless of course some*
- > *punctuated evolution as selective pressure on a single trait (such as*
- > *susceptibility to Yersina bacteria) becomes predominant.*
- >
- > > *How far*
- > > *back did clothing go, within*
- > > *the archaeological and*
- > > *paleontological record, as*
- > > *we now know it?*
- >
- > *The earliest evidence (so far) for tools specifically used to make*
- > *clothing (i.e. needles) is Upper Paleolithic – about 25,000 years ago*
- > *(France):*
- > *http://anthro.palomar.edu/homo2/sapiens_culture.htm*
- > *The earliest fossil rag heap dates to 22,000 years ago (Russia).*
- >

sci.archaeology: Re: Origin of Clothing

- > *This is substantially after the first appearance of Cro-Magnon*
- > *('modern') Man.*
- >
- > *Tom Davidson*
- > *Richmond, VA*