

THE PATTERN OF HUMAN EVOLUTION: Studies on Bipedalism, Mastication, and Encephalization

Henry M. McHenry

Department of Anthropology, University of California, Davis, California 95616

INTRODUCTION

The recent and sudden proliferation of hominid fossil discoveries sparks new interest in human evolution, especially in the early part of the story. In the last decade the sample of pre-three-million-year-old australopithecines has multiplied by more than a hundredfold. A decade ago almost the entire East African Plio-Pleistocene hominid fossil record fit in a few cookie tins in a small safe; it now fills an entire room. Instead of isolated bits we now have samples of populations with most skeletal parts represented.

What follows is an account of recent refinements and revisions of our understanding about the pattern of human evolution, specifically the tempo and mode of the evolution of hominid bipedalism, the human dental configuration, and encephalization. Taxonomy, ecology, behavior, dating, and other topics have been reviewed recently elsewhere (14, 15, 16, 35, 72, 95, 98, 110, 204, 248, 255-257, 258, 286).

For over a century the prevailing view among evolutionists has been that bipedalism preceded encephalization (167). Lamarck (123), Haeckel (73), and Darwin (39) made this clear. The last decade of hominid fossil discoveries has made some surprising refinements in this view. Perhaps the most dramatic discovery is the pattern revealed by the 3.7 to 3.0 m.y. old *Australopithecus afarensis*: bipedalism is established, yet absolute brain size is about one third that of modern *Homo sapiens* and teeth are intermediate between pongid and hominid (110). Does this imply a complete mosaic? When and how did bipedalism evolve and was it completely established before the human pattern of dentition originated? When and through what

stages did human dentition evolve? Did *relative* brain expansion only occur in the last 3 m.y.? Why did it expand, and is there paleoneurological evidence of reorganization? Remarkable progress in human evolutionary studies over the last decade brings clearer answers and new questions.

BIPEDALISM

The last decade has been extraordinarily successful in terms of the number and quality of discoveries of Plio/Pleistocene hominid postcrania. When the author began research on this collection about a decade ago there were less than three dozen hominids known with postcrania and most of these were isolated scraps (160). Now the number stands closer to 300, spans a greater time range, and includes complete elements and a partial skeleton (181, 254).

The South African sites have produced a slow but steady flow of new hominid postcrania and several important new studies of the old material. The year 1972 saw the publication of *Early Hominid Posture and Locomotion* by John Robinson, who described and analyzed the old material in great detail (218). He proposed that the robust australopithecines were inefficient bipeds who retained tree-climbing adaptations in the hindlimb. The South African gracile hominids of Sterkfontein and Makapansgat, in his view, were efficient bipeds whose postcrania resembled later members of the genus *Homo*. Even though these views have attracted few supporters (148–151, 156, 162, 164, 167), the book stands as an invaluable source of information about these important hominids. Reanalyses of the shoulder (23, 184, 268, 270), elbow, (160, 167, 170, 175, 227–231), wrist (143, 144, 181), and metacarpals (47, 144, 218) of the South African australopithecines reveal how strikingly primitive or unique these hominids were in their forelimb. New studies of the hindlimb show that these creatures were bipedal (17, 26, 31, 32, 41–43, 46, 50, 76, 142, 148–151, 154–156, 159, 160, 162–178, 181, 212, 213, 218, 243, 254, 267, 269, 295–298, 300), but the morphology of the hip and ankle is uniquely different from *H. sapiens* (31, 32, 160, 163–167, 174, 176–178, 183, 186–190, 192, 218, 243, 246, 262, 271, 300, 303, 304). The meaning of these hindlimb differences is still subject to an unresolved and often contentious debate (148–151, 153–156, 181, 188–190, 262, 296–298, 300). New attempts to estimate body size of these South African hominids result in different estimates [ranging from 18 kg (151) to 37 kg (288) for *A. africanus* and 36 kg (168) to 80 kg (218) for *A. robustus*]. The author is most comfortable with 35 kg for *A. africanus* and 44 kg for *A. robustus*, with both species showing greater variability than *H. sapiens*, which probably reflects greater sexual dimorphism [females about two-thirds the size of males (160, 163, 168, 171, 181)].

A great leap in the quality and quantity of postcranial material came in the early 1970s with the collections from East Turkana, Kenya (129). The material provided fodder for new academic wars between those who recognized two patterns of postcranial morphology (and possibly gait) between 1.8 and 1.3 m.y. ago (41, 43, 45, 46, 176, 178, 290, 293) and those who considered all the material as undiagnostically different from *Homo* except in features related to muscularity and parturition (148–151, 155, 156, 289). The study of the East Turkana postcrania is made difficult by the fact that the two or more species that inhabited that lake shore between 1.8 and 1.3 m.y. ago did not leave their taxonomically diagnostic elements (skulls and teeth) associated with their postcrania, so one can never be sure a given femur is *A. boisei* or *H. habilis* or something else (129). The richness of the East Turkana material made appreciation of variability much easier: there is an extraordinary range of sizes and shapes of each element. The concurrent work at Omo produced a nearly complete ulna, together with other postcrania, which further confirmed the primitiveness of the forelimb in at least one species at 2 m.y. (66, 96, 180). Not all early hominid forelimbs were primitive, however. The Kanapoi humerus found in 1967, which is believed to be from beds that are 4 m.y. old, is perfectly modern in all details (160, 161, 170, 175, 203, 227–231). The 2 to 1.5 million-year-old Olduvai postcrania show the same variability: some elements are modern looking and some retain many primitive features (9, 40–44, 46, 49, 145, 146, 185–193, 212, 213, 244, 245, 291).

The discoveries at East Turkana were spectacular for the 1.8 to 1.3 m.y. range, but nothing could overshadow Hadar, Ethiopia, for the 3 to 3.5 m.y. age (105–111). Early knees added proof of bipedalism in human evolution predating *A. africanus* (105–111). Lucy appeared in 1974 with her 40% complete adult skeleton dating back to 3 or 3.5 m.y. ago (106, 108–111). The discovery of the First Family at the 333 location, which slightly predates Lucy, added a population of 13 individuals who apparently died together at the same time (106, 109–111). Some features of these *A. afarensis* postcranial remains include: 1. their striking resemblance to *A. africanus* despite diagnostically different dentitions and crania (181); 2. their adaptation to bipedality at this early date (110); 3. the primitiveness of some aspects of their limbs (181, 262); 4. the total lack of any diagnostic knuckle-walking adaptations in their hands (110); 5. the small size of the female (23 kg) compared to the male (51 kg) (171); and 6. the long pubis forming an oval-shaped birth canal which was wide from side to side but restricted from front to back (152). The last point means that theories on the lateral support system and its relationship to parturition and encephalization need revision (148–152, 156, 166, 167). It was once thought that the differences between the australopithecine and modern human hips were due to the demands of

the ever increasing brain size of the newborn in human evolution (135–137), which led to a lengthening of the load arm relative to the power arm of the gluteal abductors in the frontal plane (side to side) (156). The reconstructed Lucy (AL 288) pelvic girdle shows that the changes in the evolution of the human hip were not so much in the frontal plane as in the front-to-back dimension. Whatever the specifics of pelvic remodeling are, however, there is clearly a relationship between birth canal size and brain size in hominid evolution (114, 115, 135, 136, 138–140). A commitment to bipedalism in *A. afarensis* seems obvious from the extraordinary footprints found in the 3.8–3.6 m.y. ashes of Laetoli, Tanzania, showing all the features of modern hominids including a convergent big toe, heel strike, arches, and human-like proportions (25, 48, 125–127, 282). An additional set of footprints of a later hominid has been found at East Turkana (10).

Fossils are not all that is new in the study of bipedalism, however. Refined laboratory techniques of electromyography (67a, 99, 100, 242, 260–267), kinesiology (34, 267), and biomechanics (233, 234, 241) have yielded crucial information for the interpretation of hominid and hominoid locomotion leading to reinterpretations of what may have changed during those early years of our family. Energetic measures of locomotion of bipedal and quadrupedal gaits have cleared up many false impressions about the sequence of events leading to our ancestor's first steps (64, 65, 75, 157, 197, 219, 240, 250–252, 259).

This new evidence has led to many new interpretations of evolution of hominid bipedalism. Critical evaluation must concentrate on just a few of the most influential of these ideas, since they are the ones which get into textbooks and most pervasively influence general theories on human evolution.

One such influential theory is the idea that *Australopithecus* was identical to *Homo* in its postcrania except for features related to muscularity and parturition (289). This implies that the postcranium of *Australopithecus* had already evolved a long way from the last common ancestor of apes and man, having retained no trace other than muscularity and changes due to parturition of its nonhominid antecedents. But the case for primitive retentions and uniqueness is strong. From shoulder to toe some species of *Australopithecus* do have plesiomorphic (primitive) and automorphic (uniquely derived) traits not shared by the genus *Homo*. For example, the recently reconstructed shoulder of *A. africanus* from Sterkfontein has a plesiomorphic configuration of glenoid which sits at a pongid-like angle relative to the spine and axillary border (270). In its unreconstructed state it had phenetic affinities with *Pan* not *Homo* (23). The distal humerus of *A. robustus* also has many phenetic affinities to the apes and not *Homo* (170, 175). Details of the wrist such as the posterior position of the trapezoid facet on the capitulum or the lack of a third metacarpal styloid process in *A.*

africanus are clearly primitive (i.e. found in catarrhine primates in general but not in *Homo*) (143, 181). The shape of the *A. robustus* thumb metacarpal is strongly curved, robust, and unlike *Homo* in overall shape (217). The ulna is strongly curved and has *Pan*-like features not generally found in *Homo* (69, 96, 180). The australopithecine forelimb appears slightly longer relative to the hindlimb than is generally true of *Homo* (109). The foot phalanges are relatively long and curved in *A. afarensis* (106, 262).

Could these and other australopithecine traits of the forelimb imply a terrestrial locomotor behavior other than bipedalism? With available evidence from the hindlimb the answer is an unequivocal no. All diagnostic hindlimb specimens of *Australopithecus* show a complete reorganization for bipedalism, and forelimbs show no sign that they were used as a quadrupedal prop. The australopithecine hip is clearly incompatible with quadrupedalism (151). So what do the plesiomorphic traits of the forelimb imply? Perhaps some or all species of *Australopithecus* were more arboreal than *Homo* (23, 218). An alternative is that the adoption of bipedalism led to relatively rapid reorganization of the hindlimb, but a slower change in the forelimb resulting in the retention of many primitive features.

Another influential view sees *Australopithecus* becoming extinct on its own side branch without evolutionary connection to *Homo* (10, 11, 189, 190, 303). One version of this theme is expounded by Oxnard and colleagues: using sophisticated methods of analysis, they report that the *Australopithecus* postcrania are so unlike *Homo* that an evolutionary connection is unlikely (10, 11, 145, 146, 183–193, 303, 304). For example, the pelvic blades are rotated differently, the shoulder is unlike modern *Homo sapiens* (10, 11, 185, 190), and the talus of the foot is not like any living biped (10, 11, 145, 146, 186–193). These and other conclusions are derived from elegant and complex anatomical analyses which are more free from observer bias than other approaches and take into account variability and other factors that influence anatomical analyses. Those workers in the majority (i.e. those who believe *Australopithecus* was bipedal like *Homo* and ancestral to *Homo*) tend to ignore the challenge. Some criticism has been leveled at aspects of their approach, however (26, 28, 169, 292). Perhaps the source of much of the disagreement comes from equating phenetic resemblance or dissimilarity with taxonomic and phylogenetic affinity without dissecting out shared primitive traits from shared derived traits (55, 56, 59, 226, 248, 249). One should expect *Australopithecus* to share numerous primitive traits with its last common ancestor with the pongid evolutionary lineage, but taxonomic and phylogenetic affinities should be based solely on shared derived traits. A relatively long ischial shank or splayed iliac blades do link *Australopithecus* with Pongidae, but these are primitive retentions overshadowed by the much more taxonomi-

cally, phylogenetically, and functionally relevant traits such as lowered iliac blades, bipedally adapted knees, and feet with convergent big toes, short toes, and arches.

Theories on the origin of bipedalism itself are by their very nature important and speculative. They are important because they involve the first change that differentiated the hominid evolutionary lineage from the rest of the animal kingdom. They are speculative because they require reconstruction of so many unknowns, especially the morphology, behavior, and ecology of the last common ancestor and the first hominid. Darwin's view of the origin of bipedalism remains useful (39): bipedalism arose when our ancestors came "... to live somewhat less on trees and more on the ground," which was due to "... a change in its manner of procuring subsistence, or to a change in the conditions of its native country" (p. 135). More specific causes for the adoption of upright posture have been proposed such as carrying (78, 79, 80, 120, 153), display or warning (147, 216, 280), new feeding adaptations (57, 112), tools (120, 276-279), or a combination of these (221, 232). A conservative view is that the hominid ancestor maintained the typical hominoid foraging regime in a Miocene habitat in which food was becoming more and more widely dispersed and required greater terrestrial travel to harvest (81, 219, 220). Bipedalism could easily have been the mode of terrestrial travel for this arboreally adapted hominoid, as it is in all of the modern species of lesser apes, since modern hominoids are equally efficient as bipeds or as quadrupeds at normal speeds (251). Given the added advantage of free forelimbs, bipedalism for a small hominoid seems likely. An objection to this model is that bipedalism could only arise under special circumstances because it is presumably an inefficient way for a mammal to get about (153). Such an objection misses two important points, however: 1. our Miocene hominoid ancestor was probably *not* an efficient quadruped since modern hominoids are inefficient quadrupeds (251), and 2. hominid bipedalism is as efficient as average mammalian quadrupedalism at normal speeds (219). The first point was proved by Taylor & Rowntree (251), who tested two chimpanzees for energetic efficiency during bipedalism and quadrupedalism and found the surprising result that the two patterns used about the same amount of energy. Both gaits used 50% more energy than the average quadrupedal mammal. Such a result makes sense because the hominoid body is adapted to a certain style of arboreal locomotion which makes terrestrial gait energetically costly (251, 253). The second point is confirmed by recalculating the energy expenditure of humans and chimpanzees walking at normal speeds: the human energetic cost is about average for the mammals, but the chimpanzee still uses about 50% more energy per body weight (219). The adoption of bipedalism by a Miocene hominoid need not be taken as such an unlikely

event, especially given the fact that all lesser apes today are habitual bipeds (34, 267) and bipedalism can easily be adopted by modern chimpanzees in the wild (12).

A far more elaborate view is presented by Lovejoy (153) using information from a wide spectrum of sources including mammalian demography, ecology, and social behavior. At the core of the theory is the notion that bipedalism evolved in response to selection pressures on food carrying by monogamous males who provision their home-bound mates and their dependent infants. Unlike chimpanzees, so the theory goes, early hominids could produce more than one infant per 5.6 years per female as long as the faithful male would share in rearing responsibilities. Any complex hypothesis like this, especially one about hominid origins, will receive its share of petty criticisms of details which may add up to rejection of the whole edifice unfairly. On the other hand, complex hypotheses should be compatible with most relevant information available. The scenario is not likely to win over many anthropologists, ecologists, or primatologists familiar with mammalian and human mating systems; all available evidence indicates that early hominids were polygynous and not monogamous and that male provisioning of immobile females and offspring was unlikely. The living descendants of these early hominids are certainly not strictly monogamous; only about 20% of human societies today have laws prohibiting polygyny and these are usually recent and commonly broken in practice (97). Among all monogamous primates, sexual dimorphism is nearly absent, but in *A. afarensis* it is pronounced (106) (males may be nearly twice the weight of females), as one might expect in a polygynous species (141). All monogamous primates are highly territorial, with the adult male and female and their offspring forming the exclusive territorial unit (1, 287). *A. afarensis* apparently lived in much larger groups, as indicated by the 333 site of Hadar where apparently 13 individuals died together 3.5 m.y. ago (106). No monogamous primate species is known to have a male who provides food for the female and her offspring (287). Among modern hunters and gatherers the female does more than her share of the food gathering even while carrying an infant. Among the !Kung San (Bushmen) the female walks an average of almost 5000 miles in the first 4 years of a child's life while carrying the infant (132). The average female gathers an estimated 12,000 calories per day in food while the male averages only about 7,230 calories (97, 122). Nor is paternal care of infants limited to monogamous primates (20, 97). Decrease in birth spacing is hardly a sufficient cause for the origin of monogamy and paternal care. As Hrdy & Bennett (97) point out, a polygynous male with two females giving birth every 6 years would produce 1.6 babies for every one that a single female would produce with 5 year birth intervals.

MASTICATION

Evolutionists studying hominid dentition live at an exciting time, and we can appreciate their euphoria over the discovery of *A. afarensis* (105–111, 286). In so many traits this species fills the gap between the pongid and hominid patterns, proving that bipedalism preceded the evolution of many of the distinctive human dental adaptations.

The strikingly primitive pattern of the *A. afarensis* dental apparatus is clear when compared with Le Gros Clark's description of the total morphological pattern which distinguishes the dentitions of hominids and pongids (24). He asserted that these traits have high taxonomic relevance. In the intervening three decades, most authorities have agreed (21). All of the species of *Australopithecus* except *A. afarensis* clearly have the hominid pattern (24). *Australopithecus afarensis* fills the gap: in some respects it is hominid, in some respects pongid, and in others unique (106, 128, 281, 284, 285).

Of Le Gros Clark's total morphological pattern of hominid versus pongid dentitions, the most strikingly pongid characters of *A. afarensis* include straight postcanine dental rows, diastema, conical-shaped canines with sharp points, anterior and posterior attrition facets on the canines, canine cingulum and small talonid, strong canine sexual dimorphism, oblique first lower premolar, and very small metaconid on the first lower premolar (105–111, 128, 283–286).

One completely unanticipated and often overlooked peculiarity of *Australopithecus* is postcanine megadontia. Early describers may have occasionally mentioned the fact that the teeth appeared large relative to body weight, but usually mastication was studied by one set of experts and postcrania by another. Jolly (112, 113) and Wolpoff (288) were two of the first to explicitly examine the relationship. Pilbeam & Gould (209) put the study on firmer quantitative grounds in which they showed that all *Australopithecus* species had enormous cheek teeth relative to estimated body weight. They argued that relative to body weight, cheek tooth area in *modern* hominoids is relatively constant. One can explain the difference in size of cheek teeth in *Pan*, *Homo*, and *Gorilla* merely as an artifact of body size. Although their conclusion that all australopithecines are scaled variants of the same animal has been criticized (27, 29, 30, 116, 294), it is clear that all species of *Australopithecus* are way above modern hominoids in relative cheek tooth size. This is true for *A. afarensis* as well. The diagnosis of this species contained the statement that the species had relatively smaller cheek teeth (104), but this is true only relative to front teeth and not to body weight. Even without estimating body weight the relation holds; there are several australopithecine individuals with associated jaws and

postcrania (AL 288, TM 1517, Sts 7) in which general body size can be compared directly to tooth size for the same individual. Relative to postcranial size, the cheek teeth of *A. afarensis*, *affricanus*, and *robustus* are enormous compared to other hominoids. By analogy, Pilbeam & Gould (209) and others (58, 112, 113, 145, 274, 275, 288) make a case for a diet for *Australopithecus* especially high in vegetation. Bone crushing (247) and seed eating (112) seem unlikely from recent scanning electron microscope studies of enamel wear (222, 223, 272, 273). Meat was certainly part of the human diet by 2 million years ago (19, 98). Some dietary differences may have existed between species of early hominids (72).

The last decade has also witnessed the rapid accumulation of fossil hominoids of the Middle to Late Miocene, particularly those classified in the family Ramapithecidae (2-8, 51-54, 122, 194, 195, 205-208, 210, 235-239). As defined by Pilbeam (205-208), this family includes genera such as *Ramapithecus*, *Sivapithecus*, *Gigantopithecus*, and possibly other genera. These new fossils show that there was a whole radiation of Middle to Late Miocene hominoids characterized by their heavy chewing mechanisms. The mandibular corpus is thick and deep, the cheek teeth are relatively large, bunodont, and have much thicker enamel than is characteristic of the living African great apes. The faces are short, which gives leverage advantage to power of the bite, and the attachment areas for the muscles that move the jaw are rugose and heavy. If the postcrania is correctly classified (none of it was directly associated with gnathic elements), then it is clear that these forms were also postcanine megadonts like *Australopithecus* (205-207).

Surprisingly, the great increase of Ramapithecine gnathic material recovered in the last decade has not led to unanimity of opinion about the phylogenetic position of *Ramapithecus*. Some view *Ramapithecus* as the first member of Hominidae (117, 235-239), implying that the human evolutionary lineage diverged from the rest of Hominoidea before 16 m.y. Others place *Ramapithecus* on a side branch to extinction (33, 71, 179, 225, 301), noting that the genetic similarity between great apes and people (18, 225) precludes such an early differentiation of Hominidae. A compromise might be that an open-country adapted *Ramapithecus*-like form is the common ancestor of both great apes (or just African great apes) and people (207, 299). This compromise view is unlikely for several reasons, however: 1. the hominoid forelimb and trunk is a uniquely derived complex which is adapted for arboreal life (253-255) and only secondarily and still energetically inefficiently adapted to the terrestrial locomotion required for open-country life (251); 2. the many similarities among the dentitions of living great apes which are different from *Ramapithecus* would have to have evolved in parallel two or three separate times; 3. the resemblances in the masticatory apparatus of *Australopithecus* and *Ramapithecus* are most

probably the result of parallel evolution in that they represent a similar and separate hominoid solution to open-country life (33, 71, 179). The face of *Ramapithecidae* aligns this group more closely to *Pongo* (173, 208).

More detailed studies of hominoid dentitions may never resolve the issue of the status of *Ramapithecus* because hominoid teeth are so conservative (3). Faces and postcrania may be the most important elements to establish hominoid phylogeny. The author's and Corruccini's efforts to sort the teeth phylogenetically using multivariate analysis and cladistics lead to the conclusion that the common ancestor of *Pan*, *Gorilla*, and *Australopithecus* was unlikely to be *Ramapithecus* (33, 179). By this analysis the 5 to 5.5 m.y. old Lothagam jaw fragment is the earliest known fossil hominid with derived traits which are shared by later members of Hominidae (202).

ENCEPHALIZATION

Early evolutionists were mindful of the idea that the human brain evolved after many other human features had been established (39, 73, 123). Few predicted the completeness of the mosaic, however (167). Bipedalism almost completely preceded encephalization as did the evolution of most human dental features: Bipedal hominids lived on this earth for at least 2 m.y. before encephalization really began in earnest. Only in the last 2 m.y. has endocranial volume tripled in absolute size and doubled in relative size.

The last decade has brought an avalanche of new evidence. The claim that brain size in some 1.8 to 1.6 m.y. old East African hominids was significantly larger than brain size in *Australopithecus* (124) was dramatically confirmed by the discovery of the 1470 skull (129-131). Several useful reviews of hominid paleoneurology and encephalization have been published recently (61, 62, 70, 74, 86, 101, 102, 182, 215). Reliable endocranial volumes of all possible new Plio/Pleistocene hominids have been published by a single skilled investigator whose work forms the cornerstone of hominid paleoneurology today (82-92). Table 1 presents these endocranial volumes of the Plio/Pleistocene hominids with some comparative examples and body weight estimates made by the author from studies of the original postcranial fossils (168, 171). Also shown are two measures of relative brain size. The values for *A. afarensis* are based on early reports of the estimated cranial capacities of two *A. afarensis* endocranial casts which are approximately 380 cc and 450 cc (106, 118). Body weight estimates based on regression analyses (168, 171) for small *A. afarensis* postcrania (AL 288) and large postcrania (AL 333-3) are 23.0 kg and 51.2 kg, respectively.

Table 1 also presents two measures of relative brain size. The encephalization quotient (E. Q.) is the actual endocranial volume divided by the scaled body weight times 0.12 (101). The scaling coefficient is 0.67 which

Table 1 Endocranial volume, estimated body weight, and encephalization coefficients for fossil hominids and living comparisons

TAXA	Endocranial volume (cc)	Estimated body weight	E.Q. ^a		C.C. ^b	
			Actual E.Q.	As a percent of <i>H.s.</i>	Actual C.C.	As a percent of <i>H.s.</i>
<i>F. oregonensis</i> ^c (mountain lion)	107	28.8	1.0	14	10.1	10
<i>P. troglodytes</i> ^d	395	45.0	2.6	38	33.6	34
<i>A. afarensis</i>	415 ^e	37.1 ^f	3.1	45	36.9	37
<i>A. africanus</i>	442 ^g	35.3 ^f	3.4	49	40.0	40
<i>A. robustus</i>	530 ^h	44.4 ^f	3.5	51	45.2	46
<i>H. habilis</i>	636 ⁱ	48.0 ^f	4.0	58	53.3	54
<i>H. erectus</i> ^d	1,050	53.0	6.2	90	86.0	87
<i>H. sapiens</i> ^d	1,230	57.0	6.9	100	99.1	100

^aEncephalization quotient (101-104).^bConstant of cephalization (77).^cA carnivore which has a relative brain size close to the mammalian mean (214).^dFrom Pilbeam & Gould (209).^eFrom Johanson & Edey (106).^fCalculated from McHenry (168, 171).^gFrom Holloway (82).^hFrom Holloway (83).ⁱFrom Holloway including O.H. 7, 13, 25; KNM-ER 1470, 1805, 1813 (84-92).

fits the relationship between brain and body weight in a large sample of living mammals (70), although recent research shows the coefficient may be higher (158). The constant of cephalization (77) is the actual endocranial volume divided by the body weight scaled to the 0.23 power, which usually fits closely related animals better than does the 0.67.

One interesting fact to emerge from the study of these endocranial volumes and their size relative to scaled body weight is how long hominid brains stayed at a very small size. From almost 4 to about 2 m.y. absolute and relative brain size changed insignificantly. The relative endocranial volume of *A. afarensis* was only slightly above the level seen in *Pan* today, particularly if body weight is scaled by the coefficient 0.23 (constant of cephalization). What emerges is an image of a creature with a brain size much more like any other member of the suborder Anthroipoidea (where E. Q. = 2) than like *H. sapiens*. These were creatures with all the constraints of the animal world without language or agriculture. It is a false bias to treat them as humans.

Although it is clear from available evidence that a revolution in brain-size increase occurred about 1.8 m.y. ago, the relationship between time and endocranial volume is difficult to assess. A simple double logarithmic relationship (133, 134) is inappropriate (69). The evolution of brain size

since 2 m.y. appears gradual (35) but may in fact be punctuated with periods of rapid encephalization and periods of stasis (69, 302).

Studies of the reshaping of the brain in human evolution based on endocranial casts have been fraught with difficulty and controversy (61–63, 70, 86, 89, 93, 94, 101–104, 201). Especially difficult have been attempts to distinguish uniquely hominid shape characteristics. Dart's (36–38) early claim for a caudal position of the lunate sulcus in the Taung endocranial cast (hominid-like) is apparently based on incorrect identification of that sulcus (61, 62, 94). Other claimed shape differences also may not be valid such as relative height of the cortex and angle of the orbital surface of the frontal lobe (62, 86). For a review of this controversy the reader is advised to consult especially the works of Falk (61–63), Holloway, (85–94), Jerison (101–104), and Passingham (198–201). A recent review by Falk (61) concludes that "Features that distinguish hominid from pongid brains seem to be the result of allometry (i.e. determined by brain size) rather than the result of selection for qualitatively different neurological features" (61, p. 93). The details of neural reorganization can best be studied by comparative neurology of living animals, although careful studies of the exterior shape of endocranial casts are valuable (89).

The reason for encephalization in human evolution is not obvious. A concise review is given by Falk (61), who lists warfare (211), language (39, 63), tools and labor (39, 60, 119), hunting (80, 121), and heat stress (67) as five recent favorites. Caspari (22) and Sacher (224) suggest a relationship between encephalization and longevity. Gabow emphasizes population structure and culture (68). Although some or all of these "prime movers" may have been involved, language emerges as the most likely (61, 63, 196).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Over the last decade, the enormous proliferation of new information about the origin and evolution of human bipedalism, mastication, and encephalization has changed many old views, confirmed others, and added unanticipated details to knowledge about the pattern of human evolution. A few highlights reviewed here include:

1. As predicted by early evolutionists before evidence was available, bipedalism preceded encephalization in human evolution, although the extent to which the two features evolved separately is a surprise revealed by new discoveries of *A. afarensis* fossils and footprints. Adaptation to walking upright with a striding gait in this 3.6 m.y. old hominid is obvious, yet its relative brain size is only just above that of the modern chimpanzee.

2. The human dental pattern evolved at yet another rate as revealed by *A. afarensis*. An overall resemblance to *Homo* is clear, especially in the

somewhat reduced size of the canine, but in numerous other respects this earliest human species spanned the gap between pongid and hominid dentitions.

3. Although *Australopithecus* is a committed biped, it still retains a surprising number of primitive traits of the forelimb which link it to the common ancestor of apes and people. There are also many unique features of the hindlimb.

4. Sexual dimorphism in body size was stronger in *A. afarensis* than in *Homo*, implying a polygynous mating system if the universal pattern seen in living primates is true of this extinct species.

5. The pelvic girdle of *Australopithecus* was relatively narrow from front to back having a narrow conjugate diameter of the birth canal and laterally splayed iliac blades. The pelvic girdle became more rounded in *Homo*, possibly as a result of selection for a wider birth canal for larger-headed newborn, but also possibly for added efficiency of bipedal gait.

6. There are so many shared derived traits linking early *Australopithecus* with early *Homo* that it is very likely that these forms were in an ancestral-descendant relationship.

7. The origin of hominid bipedalism may not have involved extraordinary events, but could have arisen as an energetically efficient mode of terrestrial locomotion for a small-bodied hominoid moving between arboreal feeding sites.

8. The evolution of human dentition passed through an unexpected stage of postcanine megadontia in which cheek teeth expanded enormously relative to body size. This pattern may have evolved from a similar pattern in the Middle to Late Miocene Ramapithecidae, but more likely was an independent acquisition from a smaller toothed, forest-adapted hominoid.

9. Only in the last 2 million years has relative brain size increased rapidly in human evolution beginning with the appearance of *Homo habilis*. The pattern of this increase through time is not necessarily gradual nor is it demonstrably punctuated.

10. Reorganization of the hominid brain in evolution is nearly impossible to demonstrate from fossil endocranial casts. Comparative neurology of extant hominoids is a more likely source of information about reorganization. Language is the most likely single feature involved in both encephalization and neural reorganization in hominid evolution.

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