

# Lucy Remains at College\*

by Tom Willis

\* Pun Intended

*Dr. Donald Johanson  
Brings His Unique  
Brand of "Science"  
to the University of Missouri*

On November 20, 1986 several CSA members had the rather dubious pleasure of joining 800 other folks at UMKC to learn why LUCY, a "3,000,000 year old" chimpanzee, was really our ancestor; rather than the assorted apes exhumed by the Leakey family. Donald Johanson, of Stanford University, opened with a few persuasive remarks about how all science is very tentative and "paleoanthropology" is even more tentative than most (All he has to work with are pieces of rock and lots of imagination).

Johanson reviewed the major fossil finds purported to be ancestors of Lucy (some folks call her Australopithecus, but I knew her personally). Then he showed pictures which supposedly supported his claim that Lucy (rather than Richard Leakey's assorted chimps) was our ancestor. His *evidence*:

1. Lucy's femur and pelvis, he claims, were *more robust* than most chimps indicating she "*could have walked upright*." Come now, I "could have been" president of IBM, but I wasn't. Chickens walk upright, but this does not seem to help them sire humans. And there is enormous variation in skeletal robustness due to genetic and dietary differences. Skeletal robustness is absolutely no proof an animal can walk upright, or of its intelligence or likelihood of begetting a human.

If you really need evidence of this, consider that the Budweiser Clydesdale horses have considerably more robust skeletons than do Arabians. But, no one argues that this improves the odds of Clydesdales giving birth to elephants!

2. After the composite shot of Lucy's fossil bones, Johanson showed a slide with three unlabeled knees (technically they were the lower end of three femurs or "femoral condyles," see illustration). Johanson explained that the left was a chimpanzee, the right a human. Then he argued that the one in the center (which he did not identify, but certainly implied was Lucy's) had an **angle** from the condyle between that of the chimpanzee and that of the human (Remember the knee ... it's a biggie).

Johanson concluded his carefully worded presentation with not one, but two state-of-the-art Humanist altar calls, paraphrased: "There is a common ancestor for man and apes, and a common destiny ... We can now control the destiny not only of ourselves, but of our planet."

He then opened for questions. After an embarrassing lack of questions from the audience of 800 (mostly students who were required to attend), we generously decided to help him out.

Roy Holt asked "How far away from Lucy did you find the knee?" It was very difficult, but Johanson did manage to remember that it was found "60 to 70 meters [over 200 feet] lower in the strata and two to three kilometers [1.24-1.86 miles] away." "Then, why are you so sure it belonged to Lucy?"

Answer: "Anatomical similarity." If that is "science" to Johanson, it is little wonder why he says it is so tentative.

Consider, even if the knee was Lucy's, it would hardly constitute evidence she was becoming human. No one seriously suggests large dogs are becoming bears. Remember, this creature was 3'6" tall, weighed about 50 pounds, had long arms, short legs and is believed by many paleontologists to have been a knuckle-walker. Its skeletal features are essentially chimpanzee! Furthermore, like dogs, there is enormous skeletal variety among apes. Even if someone does discover an ape with an angled femur, we would still know *nothing* of an ape's ability to walk upright, much less have human progeny.

I asked, "It is really quite easy to line up any artifacts in a purported evolutionary sequence (even utensils from my wife's kitchen can be arranged to prove forks evolved from spoons, yet all were created). If I come to you with a chimpanzee with slightly more "humanlike features" than your chimpanzee, what evidence would you offer to falsify my claim that my chimpanzee sired humans, not yours." I asked this to discover the evidence he really looks for to convince himself that some rocks (fossils) gave birth to humans. Bear in mind no one has ever seen *any kind* of animal give birth to *any other kind* (fruit flies becoming crippled and mosquitoes with resistance to DDT are illustrations of variety within created kinds). Incredible as it may seem, Johanson's answer was "Well, I suppose if I found human bones lower in the strata." In other words, all dead apes with "humanlike features" sired humans ... unless human bones can be found lower in the strata. For some reason dead apes have *no problem* doing what living apes have never done! Paleoanthropology is truly a fascinating science.

Dr. Johanson quickly terminated the meeting after only two or three questions. After the meeting, he recognized me in a small group. Obviously uneasy with his answer he said, "You're the one who asked *that* question." I confessed, and added that he had really given no answer, since his only proof of ancestry was homology (similarity) which is not proof of ancestry. He argued that homology was a very good proof, claiming that DNA homology between apes and humans had *proven our* close relationship. I responded that "similar structures nearly always have similar plans (DNA in this case). Similar bridges have similar blueprints. This hardly constitutes evidence that one sired the other, or that they were erected by tornados. Furthermore, eminent researchers such as Colin Patterson of the British Museum have stated categorically that molecular homology is *proving that evolution is anti-science*, because every attempt to come up with an evolutionary tree using molecular homology has resulted in a different tree." [According to "molecular homology science," everything evolved from everything ... but slowly, of course ... or quickly, if you're from Harvard.]

His reply: "If you don't believe in homology, then you don't believe evolution ... *and evolution is a fact!*"

Please refer to the last sentence in the first paragraph above. Note how easily an evolutionist can convert a very "tentative

science" into fact! It takes about an hour, and requires no additional evidence at all! One might pause here to note that:

**Viewing the fossilized bones of dead animals gives one absolutely no inkling of what their progeny looked like..., or even if they had any progeny! Furthermore, producing a picture in which the fossils of one dead animal are placed to the left of another with similar features, furnishes no more evidence that the one on the left sired the other, than lining up a living cat to the left of a dog (vastly more similar creatures than orangutans are to humans) furnishes any evidence that cats can sire dogs! The only "Proof" such pictures provide is that the producers of them believe evolution, or fervently desire that others believe!**

Let's really reflect on what transpired here:

1. Johanson offered "proof" that Lucy sired humans consisting of a robust femur and pelvis; and a knee with "humanlike" characteristics.

2. Only under precise questioning did he admit that the knee was found over a mile from Lucy. To the best of our knowledge this admission has *not appeared in print!* Roy did not ask the question because he already knew the answer, but because of the suspicions of M. Bowden, a British scientist. Many articles *and drawings* of the discovery site make no mention of the distance whatsoever and absolutely lead the reader to the wrong conclusion about their relative positions! Java-man revisited!

3. Confronted with the assertion that skeletal homology (similarity) between animals does not prove ancestral relationship, he changed the subject to molecular homology (in this case, DNA similarities).

4. Faced with Dr. Patterson's contention that molecular homology research clearly demonstrated that evolution was anti-science and anti-knowledge, Johanson simply resorted to dogma ... "If you don't believe in homology, you don't believe in evolution, and evolution is a fact!" [which means to him that, if you don't believe in homology, you don't believe in facts]. Presumably Dr. Patterson doesn't believe in facts either, because he certainly does not have any kind words for homology as evidence for evolution.

The more I study the thought processes of evolutionists, the more obvious it becomes "Why Johnnie Can't Read." These are the people who teach Johnnie's teachers!! We should be thankful Johnnie can find his way home from school.

What transpired here then is that Johanson gave a clear demonstration of our assertion that evolution has nothing whatsoever to do with science. Belief in evolution has to do with a humanist religious viewpoint (Humanism is the religion of all who have chosen to believe man rather than God). Johanson not only (deceptively) used bones scattered over a mile apart, he presented an argument he should know to be false. As an anthropologist Johanson should be fully aware that a large hip joint does not prove upright posture, much less does it prove higher intelligence or the ability to sire a human. Many competent anthropologists have carefully examined these and other "Australopithecine" remains and concluded Lucy could not walk upright!

*"But I myself remain totally unpersuaded. Almost always when I have tried to check the anatomical claims on which the status of Australopithecus [as a hominid] is based, I have ended in failure."*

*Famous British Anatomist, Lord Solly Zuckerman, as quoted in: Evolution: The Challenge of the Fossil Record, Duane T. Gish, p 150*

*"Although most studies emphasize the similarity of the australopithecines to modern man, and suggest, therefore, that these creatures were bipedal tool-makers at least one form of which (Australopithecus africanus -- "Homo habilis," "Homo africanus") was almost directly ancestral to man, a series of multivariate statistical studies of various postcranial fragments suggests other conclusions... Multivariate studies of several anatomical regions, shoulder, pelvis, ankle, foot, elbow, and hand are now available for the australopithecines. These suggest that the common view, that these fossils are similar to modern man or that on those occasions when they depart from a similarity to man they resemble the African great apes, may be incorrect. Most of the fossil fragments are in fact uniquely different from both man and man's nearest living genetic relatives, the chimpanzee and gorilla. To the extent that resemblances exist with living forms, they tend to be with the orangutan."*

*Dr. Charles Oxnard, ibid pg 150*

The above comments were based on *australopithecines* which were much more "modern looking" than Lucy.

Richard Leakey, Africa's most famous anthropologist, referred to Lucy as an ape who did not walk upright. See "**Australopithecus, a long-armed short-legged, knuckle-walker,**" Science News, 27 Nov. 1971.

Thinking the episode essentially over, I wrote most of the above material as an essay entitled "**Lucy Goes to College**" for the January, 1987 **CSA News**. The article received much attention and many requests for reprints. It was translated into at least two other languages, reprinted and distributed by several organizations, and discussed (and cussed) in several journals. For the most part, however, I remained out of the dialog, because I had already learned that the "fun" was just beginning.

Dr. Wayne Friar, a biologist at The King's College in New York read the "Lucy" essay shortly before Johanson visited his area. Dr. Friar and a colleague listened to Johanson's presentation and, based on my essay, one of them asked Johanson "Over how large an area did you find Lucy's bones?" He replied "Over an area no larger than this room [which wasn't very large]." Now a bit confused, Friar mentioned he had read a report claiming the remains were distributed over a larger area. Johanson replied that the report was in error. Undoubtedly suspecting he had been misled by my report, Dr. Friar wrote [to me], indicating "there must be some mistake." Both Roy and I talked to him. We asked him to recall as precisely as he could what he had asked, and what Johanson had replied. Immediately we realized he had asked the wrong question. I wrote him suggesting he write Johanson asking the following questions: 1. "How far from Lucy did you find the [knee you call] Hadar knee?" 2. "In the slide which you showed us comparing chimpanzee, human and Afarensis knee regions, which 'hominid' knee did you use?" 3. "In National Geographic for 11/85, a picture very similar to your slide appeared on page 593. Was this Lucy's knee or the Hadar Knee."

Johanson replied to Dr. Friar, and, as I predicted, he replied that the knee in the slide was the "Hadar knee-joint" and "was found roughly 2.5 km [well over a mile] from the LUCY site," and that "I believe the illustration in National Geographic... was, in fact, also the Hadar knee" ["the knee" was also in strata over 200 feet lower than Lucy]. Since Johanson was the feature attraction in that issue of National Geographic, it seems difficult to swallow that he would not be certain which knee was in the picture, the *Hadar Knee* is the one he always used.

**"The Hadar knee-joint was found roughly 2.5 km from the Lucy site..."**

Roy Holt also secured a copy of Johanson's book "Lucy - The Beginnings of Civilization." Like most books on "evolution research," this one contained no science, and was primarily a travelogue. But, there were some real interesting things in it. On page 154, we read,

*"The season was half gone and not one hominid had been found. I had not exactly promised hominids in my request for funds from the National Science Foundation, but I knew when I wrote up my grant proposal that if I did not include a strong pitch for hominids I would get no money at all; the likelihood of my being sent to Ethiopia to collect pigs' teeth was remote. Even so, the \$43,000 I was given was only a third of what I had asked for..."*

*"What does a young man do on his first expedition, when he is given a two-year grant and has exhausted most of it the first year and has not found what he went out to look for? He wonders what he will do the second year. He wonders if he may not crash, if he may not get a reputation for irresponsibility before his career gets properly started. He sweats."*

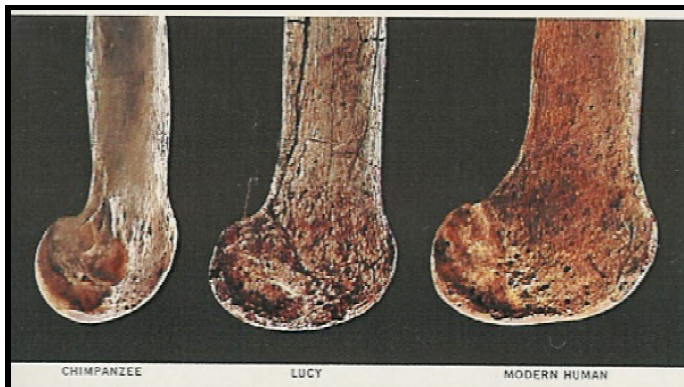
*"... I realized every day that all my money would be gone by the end of the year, whisked away on one spin of the wheel. Would I ever have a chance at another?..."*

*"Those thoughts so preoccupied me that when I was out surveying late one afternoon I idly kicked at what looked like a hippo rib sticking up in the sand... the upper end of a shinbone - of a small primate.... A monkey I thought... I noticed another piece of bone a few yards away ... also very small. Lying in the sand next to it was the other condyle. I fitted the two together and then tried to join them to the shinbone. They were the same size... and color. All three fitted perfectly. A rare find."*

This is the now famous knee ["femoral condyle"] that proves Lucy, found 2.5 km away, walked upright. There is much more, but surely even a casual reader should detect somewhat more fervent interest in money, prestige, career and finding proof of human evolution, than in objective truth. Claims about this ape knee have propelled Johanson from an unknown, recent anthropology graduate, to the Director of the Institute of Human Origins at prestigious Stanford University, and a highly paid traveling salesman of evolution.

Furthermore, we must consider the National Geographic article. The author, Senior Assistant Editor, Kenneth F. Weaver and illustrator, Jay Matternes have both been around this business awhile. They clearly labeled the knee as Lucy's four times on the same page, and wrote other sentences which not only reinforced this claim, but expanded on it, e.g., "*Australopithecus*

*afarensis, three-million-year-old Lucy - with major portions of her long bones preserved demonstrates virtually complete adaptation to upright walking" (emphasis added).*



The picture above (without caption) was shown to us immediately after one depicting Lucy's remains. No mention was made of any distance between Lucy's remains and the femoral condyle labeled "Lucy" above. This picture and caption appeared in National Geographic, November, 1985. The text identified the center fossil as being "Lucy's" four times on page 593.

In addition to this preposterous claim, page 564 of this issue consisted of a **25 inch** foldout of Lucy and the rest of "man's ancestors," complete with human genitalia, running in such perfect form that a Greek athlete would have turned green with envy. These authors were either completely ignorant of the source of the knee region (which is the crown jewel of Johanson's "long bone" claims), or they willfully compounded the deception by systematically labeling the bone as **Lucy's**.

Were they also ignorant of the views of many of the world's leading anthropologists (such as Oxnard, Zuckerman and Leakey) or did they simply close their minds and embellish the story, hoping to win further converts? One scientist playfully labeled this a "National Geographic Centerfold of Homo Jogger Man." Were it not so serious a matter, it truly would be funny. But it is also deliberate fraud! Anyone who is deceived by it could lose his life for eternity!

Space limitations preclude adequate documentation of the last element in this absurd charade, but I'll at least get it on the table.

Johanson has now added another obfuscating layer of fog to the issue by lumping some fossils found 1000 miles away into his "Australopithecus" classification. While Lucy and her neighbors were all three to four-foot tall apes, these new fossils are all **over five feet tall, and every characteristic seems to be 100% human.**

We have here the stuff of the all-time greatest evolution fraud. Piltown, Peking and Java man were all clearly mixtures of human and ape bones, but Johanson has outdone them all. Starting with an ape knee with an insignificant femoral angle, he parlayed them into an upright-running athletic ape, and then rolled in some completely human fossils to make his, now complete, "ape man," ignoring competent criticism from many quarters, and willfully misrepresenting his "discoveries" to thousands.

We are often told how honest and "truth-seeking" the academic community is, while "businessmen" are not nearly as

trustworthy. I would like to contrast Johanson's performance with my own personal experience in business.

While with IBM I helped develop a presentation about a major IBM product line (System/370). The presentation became so popular, IBM executives decided to film and distribute it. In order to accomplish this task, IBM para-legal computer experts used a verbatim transcript of the presentation to document every sentence that constituted, in any way, a claim about the products I was discussing. Not just performance or reliability claims, but even simple statements about how the product worked. I spent weeks in White Plains, N.Y. with IBM Systems Managers. IBM Product Test personnel were required to furnish documentation for **every hint of a claim about performance or function**. All this for a presentation intended for internal use in sales training, not even for customer viewing! In contrast, while Johanson did struggle to avoid a deliberate, documentable lie, he willfully deceived many competent listeners, and succeeded in having published a major "scientific" article in which views by many competent individuals were conveniently omitted, and his deception was embellished into a blatant lie. A businessman who presented material in this manner to sell *his* products would be charged with fraud... not paid an honorarium!

Remember, Johanson earns his living selling Lucy. By any reasonable standard Johanson **misrepresented the evidence ... and he did so for money and prestige!** He used the slick presentation style of a con-man to deceive at least two senior staff at Natural Geographic (who probably wanted to believe) and several competent scientists (who did not).

When confronted with an informed challenge, Johanson did not resort to evidence or reason, but to dogma ("evolution is a fact"). He closed the meeting with the standard humanistic altar call: "Join us scientists in controlling our destiny and in bringing about world peace."

Therefore, Johanson also vividly demonstrated our view that evolution is merely a popular system of *pagan religious mythology!* *Religious* because it requires *faith* that the "*gods*" of time, chance and the environment worked the miracles necessary to build the universe, create living things, and help apes sire humans. Then they suggest faith in *men* (former apes) to determine their own destiny. The religion is *pagan* because these objects of faith are false gods that manifestly do not have the ability to accomplish what evolutionists claim for them.

Time, chance and the environment have never created anything as complex as a pocket comb, much less anything as complex as

a living animal. And the idea that man can control his own destiny is so demented it hardly requires refuting. Johanson cannot even control whether it rains tomorrow, and his destiny is that he will be dead. To those who think we are progressing toward goodness, I remind them that, in the last 80 years the Soviets have killed some 60 million of their own countrymen, the Germans - 6 million Jews and blacks, the Chinese - 20 to 60 million, the Cambodians - 3 million, and the Americans ... well 25 million children have been killed by their own mothers!

If it can be argued that man is *evolving*, he is doing so by the creation model of history: **Man is "devolving," by choice, from a perfect beginning into an animal!** Rather than evolving **from** a primitive race, man has regressed into one!

Evolution, you see, is not Johanson's science. It is his religion... and his profession. Because his religion is false, dogmatically clinging to it has made a fool of him. His twisted presentation of the data indicates that greed (for prestige, as well as money) has apparently also made a prostitute of him. How tragic that our government and we parents pay for children to sit at his feet to acquire knowledge and wisdom. I wonder which of us is the greater fool? ... God knows!

**Tom Willis, President**

Postscript: This article has been attacked by evolutionists for years. At least one web site has been devoted to attacking me. The leader of this pack, one Jim Lippard, bases his entire analysis on one misquote and (willful?) misreading of my first article. We do not misunderstand and did not misquote or mischaracterize what Johansson said. **Lippard** focuses on one phrase where I said "we had not seen where Johanson had published the data" (a true statement when we made it). **Our** focus is on the **fact** that Johanson **does base his knee claims on a knee found over a mile from Lucy, he did not** make this clear in his book, he deceived two audiences (that we know of), National Geographic passed this deception on to millions, and Johanson's interpretation of the evidence is atrocious. Lippard also claims that Lucy had a knee joint and Johanson uses it. That is false, Johanson claimed Lucy's knee was too damaged and used the distant knee as his showcase proof of bipedalism. Read the Nov 1985 National Geographic and see for yourself!

For their side see: [www.talkorigins.org/faqs/knee-joint.html](http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/knee-joint.html).

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