

# Anthropologists, paleontologists, and archaeologists



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Walking Tall Anthropologists, Paleontologists, and Archaeologists all over the world have one common interest; learning about our ancestors and where they came from. Many believe that we have evolved from lower forms and that our closest " relatives" would be the primates of the world. Human beings actually do have a lot in common with the primate family such as, the need to be socially accepted with in a group, making of tools to get what is needed to survive, and in some cases walking up right or being bipedal. Walking on two legs, bipedalism, is one unique features that distinguishes humans and their immediate fossil ancestors from the chimpanzees, gorillas and all other non-human primates. Knowing that our ancestors might have been walking up right longer then we had originally expected would be a huge break through on where we came from and when we first started to evolve into modern day humans. Many signs of bipedalism have shown up all over the paleontologists maps in the past couple of decades. Examples such as John Hawks attention to the pelvis makes it easy to see the signs. Hawks points out the differences in the pelvis of a chimpanzee, a human being, and Lucy. A chimpanzee's pelvis is narrow and long, both signs of knuckle waking; while Lucy is still narrow it is more similar to human beings pelvis which is broad and short. " The width of the pelvis affects the muscular requirements of walking... The muscles that prevent the body from falling over attach to the lateral part of the ilium and to the femur, pulling the trunk upward around the hip joint. A wide ilium tends to increase the efficiency of these muscles. " (John Hawks, University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Paleontologists can tell if the remains that they have found was in fact bipedal just by delicate detail such as the pelvis. Another hypothesis known as the postural feeding, presented by Kevin Hunt in 1996, is an ecological

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model. This hypothesis gives examples of the arboreal food gathering postures of arm-hanging and vertical climbing, a shared adaptation and posture of apes, are common to influence anatomy. Hunt later states that eighty percent chimpanzees are bipedal when feeding. This would be the strength of his hypothesis, that, by adaptation, we would soon evolve into bipedal walking because of the feeding and gathering to survive, and with more positive results of standing upright the australopithecine would become more apt to walking and standing on two feet. The Behavioral Model, presented by Owen Lovejoy, focuses on social behavior that influences survivorship and birthrate. Human sexual behavior and anatomy are hypothesized as implying a monogamous structure, a social form. Provisioning behavior with the upper body used to transport food to a mate or offspring is seen as a strong selection factor for bipedality by improving offspring survivorship and increasing reproductive rate. Freedom of movement with the upper body would be a step in the right direction to encourage bipedalism. Many have thoughts and beliefs on why the first hominids decided to walk upright, and as of now all of the hypothesizes seem to be strong. The fact is no one is really sure why the our ancestors decided to walk upright, but they did. Whether it is for food gathering or survivorship bipedalism has helped our society evolve into this great world. Without the evolution of bipedalism, humans would still be limited to using their arms for protection by swinging in the trees instead of using weapons and gathering food for offspring. The hypothesizes listed above would be the strongest from modern days paleontologists because it breaks down the many different reason that " knuckle walking" would be more of a hindrance then walking on two feet. Bipedalism frees the upper body to carry weapons,

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food, tools, or even off spring that is why it is so easy to see that hominids could manipulate their bodies to walk tall.