Conceptual Changes Between the 18th and 20th Centuries
Conceptual changes between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries

1859

UNITS

Before

Types—original, immutable, and static.

After

Evading populations—variable and changing.

VARIATION

Deviations from type—accidental, anomalous, or pathological.

Genetic variation is basis for change and adaptation by natural selection (differential reproduction).

INHERITANCE

Blending inheritance.

Particulate inheritance (Mendelian genetics).

RELATIONSHIP OF UNITS

Types arrayed hierarchically on a unilinear scale of perfection, that is, "Great Chain of Being."

Variable populations, multidimensionally.

TIME DEPTH

Recent creation of world.

Geological eras in millions of years.
Before 1859

types are original, static, and immutable
Units

After 1859

breeding populations are considered variable and changing
Variation

Before 1859

deviations from a type are considered accidental, anomalous, or pathological
Inheritance

After 1859

particulate inheritance

(Mendelian genetics)
Variation

After 1859

genetic variation is basis for change and adaptation by natural selection

(differential reproduction)
Inheritance

Before 1859

blending inheritance
Relationship of Units

Before 1859

types are arrayed hierarchically on a unilinear scale of perfection called a “Great Chain of Being”
After 1859

variable populations are seen to diverge multidimensionally
Before 1859

people believed in a recent creation of the world

(on 23 October 4004 B.C.)
After 1859

people begin to think in geological eras of millions of years
“Past images of our ancient ancestors were a mix of fact and fancy that often reflected the prejudices of the age as much as they did the fossil record.” – UNWP 02-27-89
MYTHICAL REFLECTIONS:
HOW WE SAW OURSELVES

Past images of our ancient ancestors were a mix of fact and fancy that often reflected the prejudices of the age as much as they did the fossil record. Early man has been portrayed at various times as a noble hunter, a simple bushman living in harmony with nature, a half-ape or a primitive version of modern man.

A 16th-century version: The noble hunter

Recent myth: The peaceful savage

An early evolutionary picture: Ape-man to man

No fossil evidence of stone recliners
Recent myth: The peaceful savage
An early evolutionary picture: Ape-man to man
Continue on to . . .

Main Characteristics of Anthropology

Prehistoric Cultures

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"Selam" aka "Lucy's Baby"