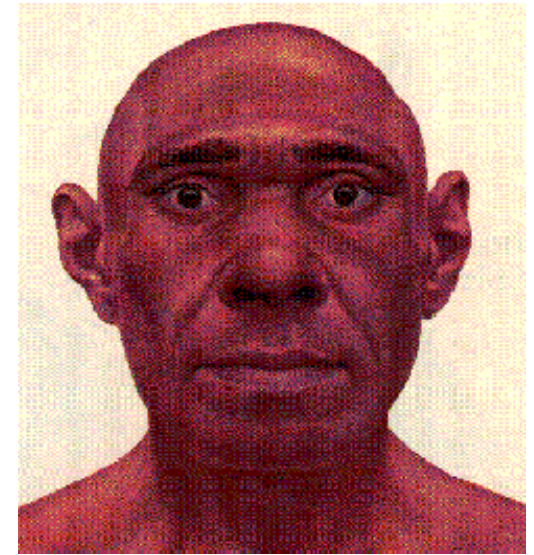
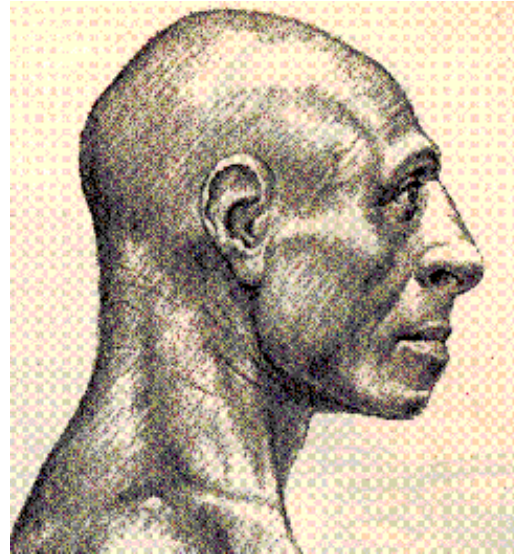


# The Misinterpretation of Neanderthal Man



↑ The two drawings above are the work of scientific illustrator Jay Matternes, from the October issue of *Science* 81.

← The picture on the far left is based on the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal skeleton, discovered in France in 1908. It was published in *L'Illustration* in 1909, and in the *Illustrated London News* about a week later. It was done by Frantisek Kupka, based on the work of Marcellin Boule. The caption read, "An Ancestor: the Man of Twenty Thousand Years Ago." The picture on the left is an illustration that appeared in *Early Man*, Time Life, 1965.

Marcellin Boule's reconstruction of the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal skeleton was very biased. This evaluation was done at the turn of the century when Darwin's theory had come to acceptance by most of academia. It was expected that fossil men would be more primitive and therefore they were interpreted as such. In the book *Guide to Fossil Man* by M. H. Day, an evaluation of Boule's evaluation, is given on page 34.

"Boule's reconstruction is faulty in a number of respects... these conclusions owe more to preconceived notions than to a dispassionate anatomical appraisal."

Erik Trinkaus, in *Scientific American* wrote an article showing the power of the Neanderthal morphology (The Neanderthals. *Scientific American*. 118-33, December 1979). Comparing some of the muscular and skeletal features of modern man and Neanderthals. He shows Neanderthals to be well adapted and not primitive. He also comments on Boule's faulty biased interpretation.

"To summarize, Boule and others were mistaken: Neanderthals were not less human than modern man... It is now clear that the Neanderthals had the same postural abilities, manual dexterity and range and character of movement that modern men do... The skeletal robustness evidently reflects the Neanderthal's great muscular power."

In the illustrations above, note how the same type of fossils can be interpreted in two completely different ways. The two illustrations on the left are biased turn of the century interpretations that have been used to support the evolutionary scenario. The two illustrations on the right (from the same type of fossils) show the complete humanity of Neanderthal man. Neanderthal man is simply a variation of man and a descendant of Adam.