Anthropology 455

Human Biology of Pacific:
Australia

Australia

Geography/Climate
Climate Change

30,000 ya
20,000 ya
15,000 ya
10,000 ya

Aboriginals

Early Explorers

1606 Captain Willem Janszoon (Jansz) Dutch East Indies Company

"...savage, cruel, black barbarians who slew some of our sailors".
Luis Vaez de Torres, 1606

- Spaniard
- Torres Strait: between New Guinea and Cape York Peninsula

"...very corpulent and naked. Their arms were lances, arrows, and clubs of stone ill fashioned."

Jan Carstenz, 1623

Captain Jan Carstenszoon charted the Gulf of Carpentaria

"...the most arid and barren region that could be found anywhere on earth; the inhabitants too, are the most wretched and poorest creatures that I have ever seen in my age or time."

Macassans (Macassar and Sulawesi)

William Dampier, 1697

- New Voyage Round the World
William Dampier, 1697

“the miserablest people in the World ... they were tall, straight bodied, and thin, with small long limbs. They have great heads, round foreheads and great brows. Their eyelids are always half closed, to keep the flies out of their eyes.”

James Cook

“these people may truly be said to be in the pure state of nature, and may appear to some to be the most wretched upon the earth; but in reality they are far happier than ... we Europeans.”

First Fleet 1788

Governor Phillip

Governor Macquarie, 1816
Australian Prehistory

- Dating issues
- Nature of colonization
- Australian skeletal remains
- Origins of modern humans

Megafaunal Extinctions

Sunda/Sahul
Early Sites in Australia

- Nauwalabila (55,000 - 60,000 years old)
- Malakanunja (45,000 - 61,000 years old)
- Devil's Lair (45,000 years old)
- Lake Mungo (61,000 or 40,000 years old)
- Jinmium, Queensland (50-116,000 years)

Thomas Huxley (1870)

...stature and limb proportions (absolutely slender legs), skin color (some shade of chocolate-brown), hair which is raven-black, fine and silky and never woolly, large teeth with marked alveolar prognathism, and a markedly dolichocephalic cranium with prominent brow-ridges.

Tasmanians
Origins of Aboriginals

Joseph Birdsell

- Trihybrid theory
- Negritos
- Murrayians
- Carpentariaans

Human Fossil Record for Australia

- H. erectus?
- African moderns?
- Asian moderns?
- Ngandong (Java) Homo erectus (50-100 ka)
- Niah Cave, Borneo ~40 ka
Talgai

- 1918
- 11,650±100 years BP

Keilor near Melbourne, 1940
- 12000±100
- Robust group?

Kow Swamp
- 13000±280, 9590±130
Mungo 1

24700±1270

Mungo 3

Alan Thorne

"robust" group (Kow Swamp, Keilor, Cohuna, Cobool, WLH-50) from Indonesia

"gracile" group consisting of Lake Mungo 1 & Lake Mungo 3 from southern China
**Homo erectus connections?**

Franz Weidenreich  
*Homo erectus*, Indonesia  
Wadjak I, Java  

![Wadjak skull images]

**Niah Cave, Sarawak**

![Niah Cave images]

39,820±1012

**Mungo 3**

- Thorne et al (1999) 57,000-71,000 ?
- mtDNA (Adcock et al. 2001)
WLH50

- Willandra Lakes Hominid 50
- sw New South Wales
- 30,000 years?

Alan Thorne

"robust" group (Kow Swamp, Keilor, Cohuna, Cobool, WLH-50) from Indonesia
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