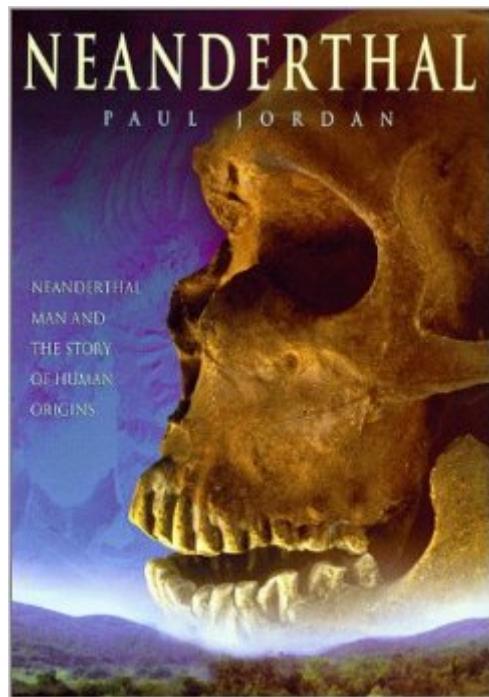


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# Neanderthal



## Synopsis

Neanderthal man has a legendary status. His stocky, hairy, human-like figure, with heavy brow and receding chin, lumbers clumsily around in our collective imagination. But do we know who Neanderthal man really is? Was he our direct ancestor, or was he perhaps a more alien figure, not in the line of modern human descent at all, genetically very distinct - the victim rather than the driving force of the spread of humankind across the globe? The original Neanderthal bones were unearthed to great scholarly excitement in the Neander valley in Germany in the mid-19th century. This work brings together all the research into *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*; into his world, his technology, his way of life (and death, even his beliefs), his origins and his relationship with us.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book, as the title suggests, concentrates on Neanderthal finds, fossils, and tool-making, and it goes into a great deal of detail on the current state of our knowledge. In fact, I would say it's probably the most thorough discussion I've found of all the important Neanderthal finds, along with the many intermediate fossil discoveries that show the evolutionary progression of the Neanderthal line. These include finds such as the Spanish Sima de los Huesos fossils, and the Greek Petrolona fossils, both of which strongly seem to represent an early, archaic form of Neanderthal in their heavier brow-ridges and smaller (about 1200 cc) braincases. Along with these, there are discussions of the several classic Neanderthal finds from France and Germany, too. As I mentioned, the author goes into a fair amount of anatomical detail discussing and comparing the fossils from the many different sites, and so this book may be somewhat difficult, dry, and technical for the

non-specialist. Overall, however, it's a very thorough and detailed discussion of the state of our knowledge about this important homonid. The average reader, however, may find the author's prose a little turgid, and the overall technical level a little rough going, but in general, I can't fault the writing too much given the level of technical difficulty of the book. In addition to the comparative anatomy, the author also discusses Neanderthal tool-making and cultural artifacts, such as the Mousterian industry, and others. Given the difficulty of the book, I would recommend that many people read Richard Klein's *The Dawn of Human Culture* before tackling this book, unless you're already somewhat knowledgeable about human evolution.

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