

# Breaking the knowledge filter

*The Hidden History of the Human Race*  
by Michael A. Cremo &  
Richard L. Thompson  
Govardhan Hill Publishing,  
Badger, California, 1994

## Alex Williams

What do you do with a report like this:

‘In December of 1862, the following ... report appeared in ... *The Geologist*: “In Macoupin county, Illinois, the bones of a man were recently found on a coal-bed ... ninety feet below the surface.” The coal ... is ... 286 [to] 320 million years old’?

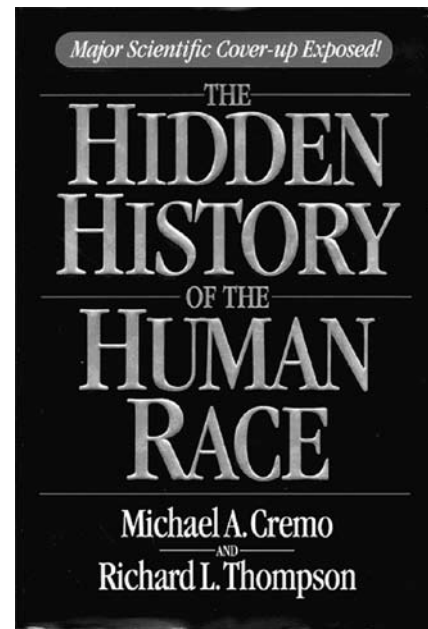
Creationists would hope for a full investigation. Evolutionists would not give it a second thought. This demonstrates the workings of the ‘knowledge filter’. Evidence that fails to fit the ruling paradigm goes undocumented and uninvestigated and is quickly forgotten. In contrast, finds which conform to accepted theories are thoroughly investigated, extensively reported and safely enshrined in museums (pp. 149–150).

Creomo and Thompson are Hare Krishnas, but highly professional in their fields (author/editor and mathematics Ph.D./evolutionary biologist respectively). *Hidden History* is an abridged popular version of a larger technical book entitled *Forbidden Archaeology*. The book is impressive (well written, illustrated, edited and presented) and has 22 critical commendations cited at the beginning, plus three negative reviews—including Richard Leakey, who thinks it is ‘pure humbug’. Berkeley Law Professor, Philip E. Johnson, wrote the Foreword,

favourably citing their declaration of bias (their Vedantic worldview) as a necessary part of any modern study of the past.

They describe and illustrate how the ‘knowledge filter’ has profoundly corrupted our understanding of human history. Before 1890, evidence of human fossils and artefacts was discussed in academic circles in a much broader time frame than today. However, after Eugene Dubois’ discovery of Java Man in 1891, and its widespread acceptance as a transitional ape-man, a change began to occur—any such evidence that pre-dated the Middle Pleistocene date of this ‘missing link’ began to disappear from view. In some cases this was unintentional, and in others it was an intentional move to preserve academic credibility. For example, an international commission of inquiry set up by the International Institute of Anthropology in the 1920s to investigate stone tools found in the Red Crag formation near Ipswich, England, concluded that they were genuine human artefacts at least 2.5 million years old (p. 38). Even Louis Leakey supported this conclusion as late as 1960, but you will not read about it today. And well documented finds of advanced stone tools in Canada, Mexico, and California in Pleistocene and Miocene deposits have never been successfully discredited, but the reputations and jobs of the founders have been lost, and the materials sidelined.

The first part of the book lists 131 such fossil and artefact finds of apparently modern human origin that are older (they accept the uniformitarian time scale) than supposed modern human ancestors. This is not just a rag bag of dubious reports but a compendium of well documented cases (in the main) that were scrutinised by experts at the time, but eventually fell victim to the ‘knowledge filter’. The second part of the book is a critique of evidence



that has been ‘accepted’ through the ‘knowledge filter’. They provide in-depth critiques of Java Man, Piltown Man, Beijing Man, then take a side trip through ‘living ape-men’ reports (Yeti, Sasquatch, Bigfoot etc) and finish by showing that not everything that comes ‘out of Africa’ fits the paradigm—the ‘knowledge filter’ is still at work today. They conclude:

‘the total evidence, including fossil bones and artefacts, is most consistent with the view that anatomically modern humans have co-existed with other primates for tens of millions of years’ (p. 266).

So what are creationists to make of all this? Our worldview puts *Homo sapiens* contemporaneous with all other forms of life on Earth, so we are not surprised by any of this ‘anomalous’ evidence. Our concern is with the *loss* of such evidence. Creomo and Thompson point out that this is a universal hazard in all paleoanthropological studies—once the object is ‘collected’, the evidence (the-object-in-its-setting) is destroyed. Does this book remedy that loss? Or merely draw our attention to it? Certainly it succeeds in the latter. Creationists need to be aware of this book. As to the former question, perhaps only specialists in the field could answer it.

Meanwhile, what do we do with

the 'evidence' they present? I think the correct path to take is to not use it if there is any doubt about it. It is a pity, but I think that a policy of scrupulous honesty and transparency will carry us much further than sensational claims that do not survive further critical analysis.

But perhaps we can gain some ground from this study. Cremonesi and Thompson point out that when the high standards for accepting evidence through the 'knowledge filter' are applied to very many of the 'accepted' fossils and artefacts, they fail the test. Since the whole field of human origins has been corrupted by the 'knowledge filter' and by the very process of doing the work (i.e. digging up the evidence) it may be time for a ruthless spring-clean. If anything at all survives the clean up then perhaps that might tell us more truly where we are up to.

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