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A READER'S JOURNAL:

Childhood and Human Evolution

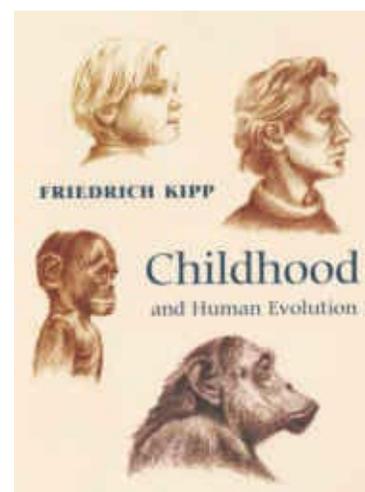
by

Friedrich Kipp

Translated by John Michael Barnes

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Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2007



This book attracted me for a couple of reasons.

One is that the author was inspired by Rudolf Steiner's works on evolution, and two because of my research work in the science of doyletics(1). In this review I will focus on the pre-1980 research that Kipp presents about the role of childhood in human evolution, much of which Barnes says in his Foreword, "has been validated by research carried out since this book was first published in 1980."

Kipp makes it clear that he intends to overthrow the commonly held darwinian views that humans are descended from primates. Rather he offers the view of Ernest Haeckel that primates are branches of the human family tree which proved to be dead ends or rather the "live ends" of primates in the lower animal kingdom which have no hope of ever evolving into human beings.

[page 2] Since Haeckel's times, numerous fossils have been found of hominids who, to judge by the shape of their skulls, can somehow be classified as intermediary between apelike and contemporary human forms. The opinion is often expressed that the discovery of such intermediate forms constitutes the solution to the riddle of human evolution. But this is by no means the case. For the question often arises as to whether these fossils are genuine transitional forms or belong to diverging evolutionary branches. More importantly, in documenting morphological changes, these forms say nothing about how — that is, through what factors — the human mode of existence became possible. The mammals, each according to its own family and species, are highly adapted to very specific environmental conditions; they are firmly tied to their ecological niche. This is also true of the apes, including the anthropoid apes. But it is not true of human beings. In counter-distinction to the animals closely related to us, we are not bound to a specific habitat, nor are we specialized in any particular direction. In our human bodily form we are the least adapted of all earthly creatures because in the course of our evolution we have made ourselves increasingly independent of outer conditions.

Kipp lays out the problem:

[page 2] How were our human ancestors able to avoid ecological specialization, what enabled them to maintain and even enhance their many-sidedness? We

inhabit the same planet as all the animals and are therefore subject to the same outer conditions. How did human beings become increasingly able to liberate themselves from external constraints and to confront their surroundings with insight and creativity? We see this as the central problem of human evolution. And this question cannot be solved merely by drawing connections between apes and the human being as is customary today.

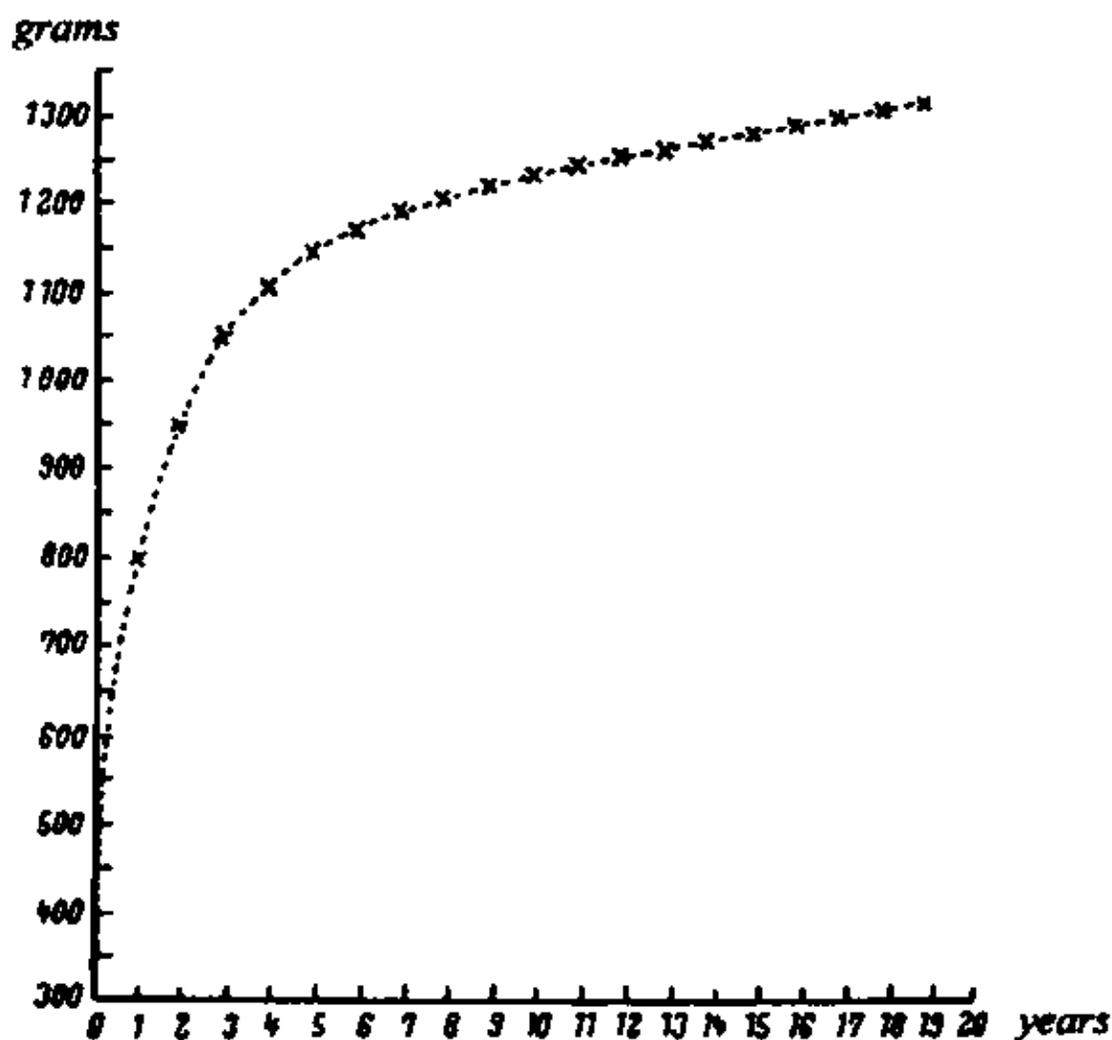


Figure 5: Increase in the weight of the brain in human children (according to numbers given by Rossle and Roulet in Saller, 1964).

Kipp sees the key to understanding human evolution lies in the long childhood of humans compared to all the other mammals. What is it that happens during this long childhood which makes humans unique? I have suggested in my two essays (See footnote.) it is the development of the neocortex(2) that occurs during the first five years of human existence. (See Figure 5 from page 22.) The neocortex provides us with the ability to store and retrieve cognitive memories(3) which provides the basis for all of our non-instinctual learning capabilities. Primates and even lower animals may have some ability to store visual and auditory events in their brains, but their smaller neocortex provides minimal capability compared to the full-size neocortex of the adult human

being. It is the large neocortex that allows humans to live in all areas of the Earth while animals fill various ecological niches which they are restricted to live in or die. (See)While the human neocortex is developing the human child must be tended closely for it to survive whereas in the animal kingdom, even higher primates are able to survive at very much earlier ages.

[page 3] Human childhood and youth — extending over a long period of many years — constitute an extraordinary phenomenon. Whereas most mammals complete their postnatal development in a short time and rapidly reach a stage at which they are equipped for independent life, human beings require many years to achieve adulthood. No animal of comparable size takes a similar length of time. Only a few months after their birth, the offspring of most mammals are already developed to the point where they become independent of their parents and are able to live on their own. By comparison, what an unfinished and helpless creature the human being is at this age!

The existence of feral children who were raised in the wild by animal parents (See page 17 passage below) shows that it is possible for human babies to survive in the wild, but, lacking the training that comes from a normal childhood in a family, they walk on all fours and resemble a wild animal in capability more than a human. If such a child is found and brought into civilization after the age of five, the necessary doylic memories of walking erect on two legs and recognizing and speaking words, among many other things, have not been stored, and their subsequent re-integration into society will be slow and painful, requiring very cognitive memory efforts for simple tasks that are mitigated by unconscious doylic memory control. We walk and talk naturally without conscious effort of the process of walking and talking -- we focus our conscious effort on where we are walking to and what we are talking about. A feral child learning to walk must provide enormous conscious effort simply to move its legs and maintain its balance; to talk requires equivalent effort just to sound the words. To talk requires a feral child of ten, say, more effort than a civilized child of the same age to learn a new language which has strange phonemes. The feral child must form all the phonemes it speaks for the first time! Except for grunts and yells it learned on its own, it will have no natural phonemes stored as doylic memories.

Members of the animal kingdom achieve their early independence through the specialization of organs (teeth, limbs, jaws, etc.) And through innate or instinctual modes of behavior. Lacking such specialized adaptations, human children must undergo a longer period of training than animals have these innate abilities upon birth.

One of the amazing revelations by Kipp was that the extraordinary results obtained in studies of primates which seem to indicate near-human capabilities are obtained only with young primates! This pertinent information is glossed over by the researchers who seem to have a Darwinian axe to

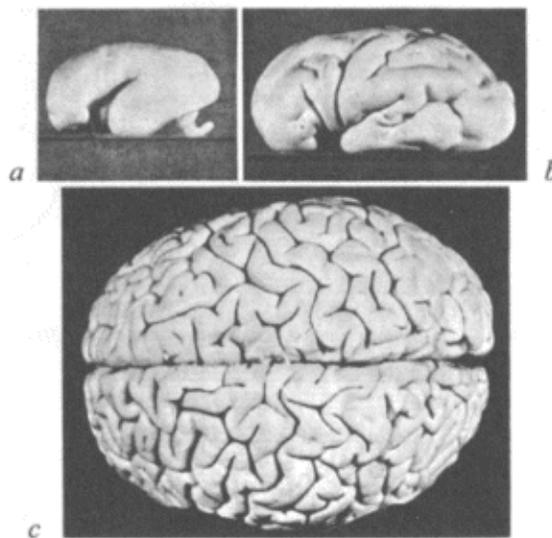


Figure 4: Ontogeny of the human brain (from Saller, 1964).
 (a) Human child, 4 months old;
 (b) 6 months old;
 (c) adult.

grind and highlighting such data unasked would serve to dull the axe. Kipp points out the two life phases of the primates:

[page 13] The two phases in the life cycle of the apes present a radical difference: The *youthful phase of behavioral plasticity*, reminiscent in many ways of the openness of human children, contrasts with the *psychological rigidity of adulthood* in which inherited, species-specific reactive patterns dominate entirely. *In the first phase a certain affinity with human behavior is undeniable; in the second, the apes turn decisively away from the human direction and pursue a path corresponding essentially to that of the other mammals.*

The open, formable behavior of young apes is a most remarkable phenomenon when one considers how little comes of it in the end.

A researcher in the science of doyletics would be led to suspect that the open, formable behavior of young apes happens during a period when they are still able to store doylic information. We know from extensive research by Doyle Henderson and his colleagues in the last quarter of the twentieth century that human doylic information is no longer stored past five years old leading to what is called the Memory Transition Age (MTA). Whether an MTA exists in animals can only be guessed until such research proves it, but we see in these behaviors of young apes that an MTA of from two to five years old is a strong possibility.

[page 14, 15] It would exceed the framework of this book to report in detail on these experiments. One point, however, should be stressed: *such extraordinary results can be achieved only with young anthropoid apes!* The animals used in these experiments are generally between two and five years of age; *they have not yet reached sexual maturity.* After this point, when they have entered the rigid adult phase, apes are no longer suited for such experiments.

The evaluation of these experiments naturally changes immediately when we consider that they were conducted with *young animals* still in their open, affable phase of behavioral plasticity. The "intelligent behavior" shown is a diminishing capacity, and little of it will remain in the mature phase.

In this next passage, Kipp gives us some evidence that feral children have difficulty walking upon being returned to civilization. It would be useful to comb all the data of Singh and other workers with these feral children to examine whether they have passed the memory transition age and compare the relative walking facility of those below five and above five years of age. Doyletics would predict greater facility for those feral children taught to walk below five. In the next passage we see that a feral child of eight years old had a lot of difficulty.

[page 17] How does the impulse to achieve uprightness arise in the child? There are reports of so-called "wolf children," of human children who were "adopted" at an early age and raised by a mother wolf (see, for example, J.A.L. Singh, 1964). When these children were discovered at about eight years of age, they moved about rapidly on all fours. When taken into human society, it was extraordinarily difficult for them to learn to walk upright. One may remain skeptical about such reports, but there are many convincing examples that point to the fact that human children learn through imitation. The imitation of older people is integral to upright walking, for it stimulates the child's own will to seek the upright position.

Kipp's phrase "human children learn through imitation" is explained by the science of doyletics simply: children acquire doyles by imitating those around them. Walking upright is one of those acquisitions. A feral child, lacking such examples of vertical walking in their pre-MTA (< 5), would subsequently have no doylic memories to provide them with unconscious erect-walking capabilities. Learning to walk vertically past the MTA would thus be extraordinarily difficult, exactly as the case cited above by Singh indicates.

[page 18] As is apparent from the way children learn to stand and walk, human existence already distinguishes itself in its most elementary achievements from that of the animals. Everything that human beings attain bears the signature of individual effort. At the time when the child learns to walk, the brain is still relatively small and unfinished. It would seem plausible that this is so because the finer configuration of the cerebrum requires the activity of the child.

Kipp's last sentence I would restate this way, "In a normal child the growth of the brain accompanies and fosters the increasing diversity of activities of the child." One should also note that before the MTA, every original event in a child's life is stored as a doylic memory in the root brain which does not increase in size as dramatically as the upper brain (neocortex) does. See Figure 4 above. Around three years old, the neocortex reaches operational size for storing the first cognitive memories and spends the next two years storing an increasing numbers of cognitive memories until by the MTA of five is reached at which time, no more doylic memories are stored as all future events in a child's life are stored as cognitive memories.

In the next passage Kipp recognizes that walking and speech is acquired during early childhood, but the memory transition which occurs at five years old from doylic memory storage to cognitive memory storage is a seamless one because of the two-year period from three to five when both types of memory are stored. The progressive greater cognitive memories and fewer doylic memories stored during this transition is the reason that the existence of the MTA has been unnoticed by researchers. It was not until the advent of the science of doyletics predicted its existence, that one is able to view the evidence for its transition and do definitive research. The entire field of childhood development is rife with possibilities for original research in the light of the predictions of the science of doyletics.

The whole area of language development before and after the MTA is a pregnant area for research. We know from many reports that native speakers of one language who are exposed to the phonemes of a second language before the MTA speak the second language naturally while those to the second language post-MTA do not. Kipper notes the importance of early (i.e., pre-MTA) learning of a language:

[page 26] *Speech* is another ability acquired in childhood. In mammals vocal expression, like the capacity for movement, belongs to the inventory of innate behavior. By contrast, speech has to be learned and requires the effort of the individual. In the course of their second year, children begin to imitate the sounds and word formations that they hear in their surroundings. They soon understand how to use them as names. Again a period of intensive effort and practice is necessary for children to acquire the many words of their native language, the ability to formulate sentences, etc. Our linguistic abilities are perfected in later years. However, the acquisition of our native language takes place mainly during childhood.

Even though the ability to speak foreign languages lasts through our adult years, the ability to pronounce a novel phoneme acquired post-MTA requires conscious execution as I found to my embarrassment in Germany when I tried to say "Zauber Reich" (Magic Kingdom) and it came out as "Sauber Reich" (Clean Kingdom) because making the "TZ" sound for Zauber is not a pre-MTA phoneme for me but it is for native German-speakers. In a recent trip to Austria I became aware of this process again when I had started to order a "Topfen Strudel" but Del ordered it before me. The way she said it sounded okay to me, but when we got an apple strudel instead of a cheese strudel, I realized that the way Del said "topfen" sounded to the waitress's ear as "Apfel" or "apple". I would have consciously pronounced it correctly, but I did not consciously hear and note the mispronunciation on Del's part. This is all due to my learning German at age eighteen, well past my MTA of five.

[page 28] Those who emigrate to foreign countries are capable of adapting to very different conditions. We retain our ability to learn foreign languages for a long time. The rigid condition that begins with physical maturity in animals hardly occurs in human beings.

Kipp would have been more accurate if he had said that the rigid condition is hardly *noticed* in human beings. The ability to store novel phonemes as natural speech rigidly disappears post-MTA, but is hardly noticed by anyone who has not studied the tenants of the twenty-first century science of doyletics.

If you look at the cover of this book, you'll find a remarkable illustration of the fact described in this next passage. The juvenile ape in the lower left corner resembles the adult human (upper right) than it does its own adult ape (lower right).

[page 35] In today's zoos it is often possible to see not only adult apes but also their young. One can observe that their heads are rather human in appearance and that this similarity increases the younger they are. In the scientific literature E. Selenka (1898) was the first to point out, using accurate drawings of skulls, that the heads of anthropoid apes in their early childhood stages are much closer to the human form than in adulthood. The hypothesis of human descent from the apes would not have led one to expect these findings but rather their opposite -- apelike forms in human children — of which, however, there is no evidence whatsoever.

The structure of the ape's adult head provides very strong jaw muscles for the grasping functions of the head. Kipp explains how the need for these grasping functions disappears for human beings.

[page 46] *This liberation of the head from its grasping functions is only possible because the child is cared for and protected for many years.*

Kipp is led by the evidence to conclude that extended youth for human beings is not an ancillary effect of evolution but at the root of how we have evolved to our present condition.

[page 47] We are thus led to conclude that a long period of postnatal development is intimately connected not only with our spiritual but also with our physical attributes as human beings. *Extended youth* is not a secondary, accessory phenomenon; it is rather the basis, the *fundamental prerequisite* for the process of

human evolution.

Given the preponderance of evidence to the contrary as regards human evolution, why does the Darwinist theory still hold all life evolves based on random mutation or natural selection? There is no doubt some cherished paradigm that has been ritualized into dogma and anyone who goes against it will be anathematized and ousted from the Sacred Halls of Science.

[page 52, 53] This Neo-Darwinist theory, to which the majority of biologists currently adhere, assumes that all organic evolution of earth can be explained as resulting from "random mutation" on the one hand and natural selection on the other (see B. Rensch, 1947 and E. Mayr, 1967). The dogmatization of this theory has reached an advanced stage. Whoever expresses reservations or points to phenomena that cannot be explained in terms of random mutation and natural selection is soon stigmatized as unscientific.

Kipp points to the lack of ecological adaptation in humans; this is a prominent factor which puts Neo-Darwinian theory to the lie:

[page 58] The lack of ecological adaptations in the human body, of which Klaatsch rightly says that it contradicts Darwin's views and is therefore "difficult to reconcile with the rules of probability," is extremely characteristic. *[fn: The form of the human foot, also, cannot be regarded as an ecological specialization. It is connected with upright posture, which led to new degrees of freedom. In evaluating the formation of the foot, one should consider the achievements of the foot in indigenous people or in acrobats or dancers. There is hardly a foot in the animal kingdom capable of such versatile movement.]* This exceptional phenomenon can only be understood in connection with a protected youth that relieved the human being of the necessity of adapting to external conditions.

Kipp's point is that humans are protected from the struggle for existence and are thereby free to become independent of their ecological niches.

[page 59] Humanity has freed itself from the immediate ties with nature that bind all other creatures. In the course of our evolution we have gained increasing autonomy in how we form our own existence. -- Those who concern themselves with questions of evolution must ask: Can this emancipation from the bonds of nature have resulted from the same factors that have caused the other creatures to adapt to their environment? Hardly. The emancipation of human life could only occur because there was a barrier against the pressure to adapt. *This barrier was formed by the protection of childhood and youth. It is the necessary precondition for the fact that human beings were able to free themselves from natural constrictions and become autonomous beings.*

On page 96, Kipp summarizes for us his holistic understanding of the human being as following from the seminal act of standing erect from which these abilities naturally ensued:

- 1) the ability assume a cognitive relationship to experiences,
- 2) release of the head from grasping functions
and a switch to speech-making and thought-making processes
- 3) and free use of the hands which fostered neural development.

Even our teeth are laid out so as to allow speech-production. We would be unable to talk if we had large gaps between our teeth as some lower animals do.

Animals must do whatever their limbs and organs permit them to do. A polar bear cannot survive in a rain forest, even without its hairy coat, it would be unable to climb trees. A monkey's tree-climbing adaptations would be useless in the Arctic reaches where the polar bear thrives. Goethe recognized this in the early nineteenth century:

[page 111] Goethe characterized the difference between human beings and animals in the following way: "Animals are taught by their organs; human beings teach theirs and control them" (Maxims and Reflections). In a more drastic formulation he says: "Animals are tyrannized by their limbs." In a letter to Wilhelm von Humboldt (3/17/1832), Goethe writes: "The ancients said that animals are taught by their organs. I add: human beings likewise; but we have the advantage of being able to train our organs as well." Seldom have so few words shed so much light on the essential relationship between human beings and animals. More importantly, they provide an important clue to an understanding of what it means to be a human being.

When one thinks, certain electrical and chemical processes take place in one neural system in the area of the brain. No one would deny that. But to conclude from the above observation that *all thinking proceeds from those electrical and chemical processes* would be an illogical fallacy. It is, however, a prevalent tenet of materialistic science today that thinking is only a result of those electrical and neural processes that they have discovered. It is sheer *hubris* for materialist scientists, who could never create a human being (or even a computer⁽⁴⁾) to think *original* thoughts, to state that all human thoughts originate in materialistic processes. This is patently obvious to me and should be for any right-thinking scientist from now on.

Kipp makes his case that thinking is a spiritual act which only culminates in those electrical and chemical processes in the human brain. One can only chuckle at his concluding thought, "Scientific materialism is the result of inadequate self-observation."

[page 114] When brain physiologists conclude that certain electrical and chemical processes occur in the brain's neural system when thinking takes place, they are of course correct within the context of their field of research and their methods of investigation. However, the content of the thought belongs to a completely different realm from the simultaneously occurring physiological processes (I refer here to the writings of the neurologist J.C. Eccles, 1975, 1982). The thought content is a spiritual act. In the human personality spiritual and material events are correlated; they are connected with each other. The materialistic doctrine, which attributes reality to the physiological processes alone but not to our spiritual activity, has absurd consequences. For the assertion that thinking is nothing more than the neural activity of the brain can only be made with the aid of thinking. A purely physiological system, however, can never decide whether physiological processes are the only existing reality. Proponents of the materialistic view use their thinking to reach conclusions that negate its very existence. They are so careless in their assertions that (without even being aware of it) they rely upon their thinking to make decisions — thereby assigning it a role, which, in their own

opinion, thinking could never play. Scientific materialism is the result of inadequate self-observation.

There seems to be hope for a change coming from physics, the most materialistic science. It seems that the paradoxes of quantum mechanics are forcing physicists to consider that the world we live in is infinitely more complex than we have ever dreamed. The work of [David Bohm](#) with his concept of the implicate order allows for multiple explicate orders which would comprise the materialistic world, human thought, and human consciousness, among other things. He has offered no proof of a spiritual world, but it is plausible that the source of human thought could also exist in the implicate order.

[page 115] There can be no external proof of the spirit. Such a proof can be attained only within oneself and through one's own spiritual activity. It is then rooted in conscious experience to the same degree as an empiricism based on the facts of sense perception.

In my essay [Art Is the Process of Destruction](#) I carefully point out the distinction between creation as the *appearance of something unprecedented in the world* and creation as *replication*. Art, true art, acts as the former and shopping mall art acts as the latter. Kipp makes a similar distinction between thoughts which are recalled memories and thoughts which appear "out of the blue" or original thoughts.

[page 115] In connection with the role of the brain in thinking I would like to draw attention' to an experience confirmed by self-observation. There is a 'big difference between thinking a thought content that we are familiar with and can recall from memory and thinking new thoughts that we are acquiring for the first time. Remembering thoroughly familiar thoughts generally causes no difficulty; they have already somehow been engraved into our neural system. These imprints, called "engrams," are not yet fully understood. It is quite different when we seek to comprehend a thought for the first time, for example a mathematical proof. Such a thought is not already lying available in the brain. We have to make an intense effort and bring all our intellectual activity to bear when dealing with a new cognitive content that we have never explored before. In such a case, the thought content is not simply delivered as a finished product by the brain but is "instructed" or "structured" into it so to speak. The activity of making a new thought our own is a prototypic process. The dictum "human beings teach their organs" is therefore also valid in the realm of thinking.

No member of the animal kingdom can have an I-ntention and therefore no experience of becoming an "I". Only human beings have an I-consciousness and can therefore have an intention. As such we are always in a process of being and becoming.

[page 116] The evolutionary path that humanity took led to individualism or, one could also say, to the experience of becoming an "I." In contrast to all other creatures on earth, human beings have no finished, defined way of life but must work on themselves to form and develop their mode of existence. In this sense, our human "I" consciousness, or "I" experience has an empirical character; it is a primal experience rooted in the consciousness of our own activity. As human beings, we begin to engage in this activity at birth, and we continue to engage in it

throughout our lives in order to shape our existence. This is a path that has no end. It is in our human nature to be in a state of becoming, but we must make an effort to renew the forces of becoming that lie within us.

No mechanistic approach to life or artificial intelligence can explain or create an "I" -- it is that undefinable, but intimately human part of us. Even so, the technological advances of the mechanistic approach has convinced so many people to listen to all of their elaborate theories, even those which have nothing to do with human qualities. The loss of meaning to human life has pervaded our societies and our very mode of thought and it has led to a dehumanizing of human experience. Authors like Kipp are brave enough to attack the mistakes of the mechanistic-minded masses and set them to looking at human life from a human perspective from now on.

[page 118, 119] The one-sidedly mechanistic approach of contemporary science has not been without effect upon our attitude toward life and upon our understanding of who we are as human beings. It can shed no light upon our place in the ordered whole of nature or on the spiritual aspect of our being. It has led to the loss of meaning that is becoming more and more pervasive in the lives of civilized humanity. This treatise is an attempt to clear away some of the misinterpretations in the field of human evolution that have resulted from incomplete consideration of the facts and to prepare the ground for a more adequate understanding of the human being.

Are we human beings to be replaced by mechanistic devices of our own making such as is portrayed in the 2001 science fiction movie [A. I. Artificial Intelligence](#)? Or are we going to build our technological devices to supplement and assist living human beings? The problem with Darwinian evolutionists is that they argue from a materialistic basis which in its extreme, means that life and consciousness formed as a byproduct of purely materialistic processes over long periods of time. This is the source of *hubris* that leads some scientists to believe that they can create a human being or a computer which will have the abilities of a human being. Kipp's books lays out the evidence that human beings are unique creatures with abilities to receive intuitions and inspirations which no animals can and no computerized machinery ever can. We are spiritual creatures temporarily endowed with a physical body on the Earth and we still have connections to our spiritual origins via the intuitions and inspirations which arrive at important times in our lives to in-form our thoughts in ways that no amount of calculation or computing could ever achieve. Given the choice of the largest computer in the world or a human baby, which would you choose? Your answer will reveal a lot about yourself as a human being.

----- *Footnotes* -----

Footnote 1. See my two essays on doyletics and evolution: [Doyletics — A New Science](#) and [The Childhood of Humanity](#).

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**Footnote 2.** The neocortex is the structure in the brain that differentiates mammals from other vertebrates and it is assumed that the size of neocortex is a key factor is directly related to intellectual capability.

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Footnote 3. Cognitive memory is what we ordinarily call just "memory" but the "cognitive" modifier is required to distinguish the visual/auditory memories stored in the neocortex from the bodily states stored in the root brain which we call "doylic memories".

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**Footnote 4.** The act of calling computers "thinking machines" has completely obfuscated the truth about those calculating devices. Computers do not "think" when they do their amazing feats; they calculate, they analyze, they make decisions according to a preplanned scheme. Even the large IBM computer which beat the Russian Chess Master Boris Spassky in the famous chess match was simply analyzing every possible move to make the best choice according to a preset decision matrix. At no point could the computer receive an inspiration or intuition as a human being could.

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