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From Lucy to Language

In 1974, in a remote region of Ethiopia, Donald Johanson, one of America's most promising young paleoanthropologists, discovered "Lucy," the oldest, best-preserved skeleton ever found of an erect-walking human. This discovery prompted a complete reevaluation of previous evidence of human origins.

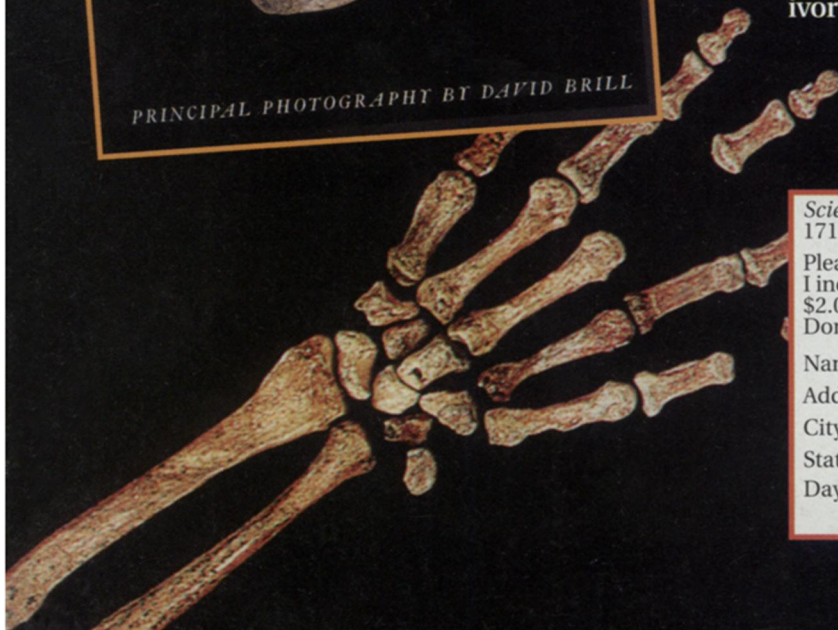
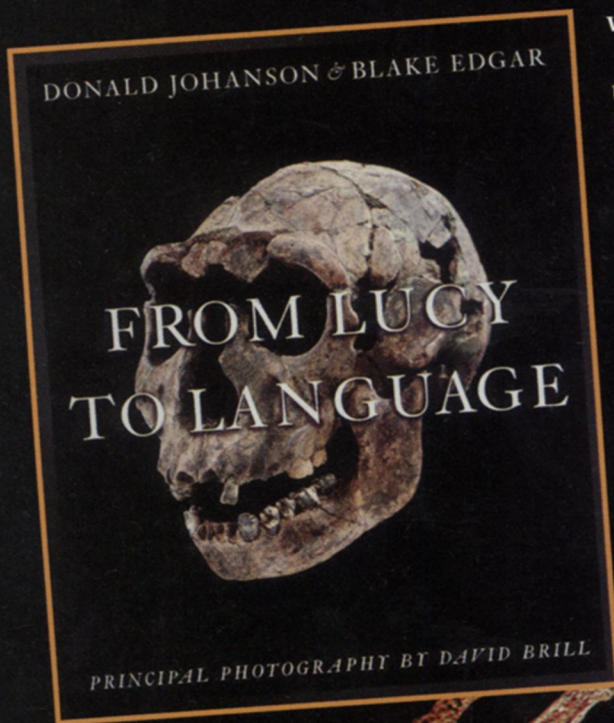
In the years since this dramatic discovery, Johanson has continued to scour East Africa's Great Rift Valley for the earliest evidence of human origins. In 1975, his team unearthed the "first family," an unparalleled fossil assemblage of 13 individuals dating to 3.2 million years ago; in 1986, at the Rift's most famous location, Olduvai Gorge, this same team discovered a 1.8 million-year-old partial skeleton that necessitated a reassessment of the earliest members of our own genus *Homo*.

From Lucy to Language is a summing-up of this remarkable career and a stunning documentary of human life through time. It is a combination of the vital experience of fieldwork and the intellectual rigor of primary research. It is the fusion of two great writing talents: Johanson and science writer Blake Edgar.

From Lucy to Language brackets the time between bipedalism and human language. **Part I** provides answers to the basic questions of human origins. What are our closest living relatives? What is race? Why did consciousness evolve?

From Lucy to Language is an encounter with the evidence. Fossils like Lucy have become a talisman of sorts, promising to reveal the deepest secrets of our existence. In **Part II**, the authors profile 50 of the most significant early human fossils ever found. Each specimen is displayed in color and at actual size, most of them in multiple views. The authors also present the stone tools, which evidence increasing sophistication over time; the earliest stone, clay, and ivory art objects; and the culminating achievement of the dawn of human consciousness—the magnificent rock and cave paintings of Europe, Africa, Australia, and the Americas.

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