



DO OUR ANCIENT ORIGINS PLAY A ROLE IN AESTHETICS?



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Dr. Charlene DeHaven is board-certified in Internal Medicine. During her training, she received the Upjohn Clinical Award for Outstanding Resident of the Year. Over the past 19 years, her professional activities have focused on improvements in skin aging and development of scientifically based skincare products. She has served as Clinical Director of INNOVATIVE SKINCARE since the company began in 2000. Her professional experience includes a broad spectrum of clinical practice in addition to corporate development, medical education, research, and age management. She had one of the first and largest anti-aging practices in the United States. She founded the Arizona Longevity Institute and was a founding member of the Kronos Longevity Institute. She developed clinical age management protocols for those institutions including protocols for mitigation of oxidative stress and other age-related parameters and advanced hormone replacement therapies. Dr. DeHaven has extensive media experience and has published and lectured worldwide on wellness, skin health and age management.

One of the most rewarding aspects of working within the aesthetic industry is being able to daily admire the diverse beauty of humans. While working to enhance the health of each individual's unique skin type, aesthetic professionals seldom have an opportunity to examine human history and origins.

We can deepen our aesthetic knowledge by understanding more about the history of our ancient ancestors. Let's learn more about our early origins and the role that ethnic variability plays in modern aesthetic medicine.

Where Did Humans Originate?

Humans originated in Africa in the Afar Locality of the Ethiopian Rift Valley. Here, anthropologists found the famous "Lucy" remains of the earliest evidence of man – or rather, woman -- to be discovered. While Lucy is our most recognized ancient ancestor, other ancestors have been found in the same area and in other areas throughout Africa.

Scientists estimate that Lucy was about four feet tall and walked on two legs. She resembles modern humans in many ways, although her brain was smaller and her facial features were quite different from ours. Nevertheless, Lucy (an *Australopithecus afarensis*) is believed to be a direct ancestor of our *Homo sapiens* species.

What is Human Migration?

Along with the finding of Lucy and other early human remains, migration patterns revealed much about where we traveled and settled. Scientists believe that early man began to migrate away from the Rift Valley about 200,000 years ago to settle in other areas of the world.

Early Man's Migration Timeline

- 200,000 years ago: Other areas of Africa, Asia Minor, Saudi Peninsula
- 50,000 years ago: Australia
- 45,000 years ago: Europe and Southeast Asia
- 20,000 years ago: Northern Asia, Alaska, and the Americas
- 15,000 years ago: Southern tip of South America
- 2,500-3,500 years ago: Philippines and Polynesia

***Homo Sapiens* Meet Neanderthals**

As *Homo sapiens* migrated to the Middle East, they encountered the Neanderthals – a similar, yet distinct species. Although interbreeding occurred between the two groups, more occurred at later times when both groups settled throughout Europe.

Many people today have traces of Neanderthal DNA (especially those with European heritage).

Ethnic Blending: Key Considerations in Aesthetics

In our modern times, humans may not cover vast areas of land by foot like our ancestors did, but we are still moving around the globe.

It is commonplace to live, connect, and procreate with others from different ethnic backgrounds. This *ethnic blending* has resulted in the blending of prominent skin tones and ethnic features.

In aesthetics, ethnic blending is a key concept. For example, a Fitzpatrick Type III skin type can be present in two individuals of very different ethnic backgrounds. The skin color may appear very similar but there may be very different responses to treatments. One may be of Asian background, with very sensitive skin. Another may be of European and African descent with much less

sensitivity but may be prone to keloid scars or other issues.

For these reasons, it is crucial to take an ethnic family history and take note of the patient's heritage to provide the best treatment for their unique skin.

Genetic Chromosome Analysis and Aesthetics

Genetic testing and analysis kits (like 23andMe or AncestryDNA) are a popular way to learn more about one's genetic heritage and even our likelihood of inherited health conditions.

With just a saliva sample, these kits can analyze DNA and provide an ethnic composition, find residual Neanderthal DNA, and identify probable ancestral origin and migration patterns.

What might this analysis and research tell us? As humans we are all nearly genetically identical – we are much more the same than we are different! But, it is the variations in our genes that determine how we look, predict our health, and, in large part, make us individuals.

The Beauty of Ethnic Variability in Aesthetic Medicine

As a leader in aesthetics, understanding the implications of ethnic variability is necessary for providing the best care for clients and patients. Because of ethnic blending and modern acceleration of migration, skin color and Fitzpatrick typing alone have become inadequate predictors of how an individual's skin will respond. The aesthetic professional would be wise to inquire about ethnic heritage. Always consider each client's unique characteristics to select the best treatment options and plans for them.

To learn more about ethnic variations in aesthetics and other topics, enroll in a professional course through [iS UNIVERSITY](http://www.isuniversity.org) (www.isuniversity.org) or [iS CLINICAL Education](http://www.isclinicaledu.com) (www.isclinicaledu.com).