

## Darwin's Bodysnatchers: New Horrors

Aboriginal people deliberately killed to provide 'specimens' for evolutionary research

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Amalie Dietrich

**A gruesome trade in 'missing link' specimens began with early evolutionary/racist ideas. But this trade really 'took off' with the advent of Darwinism.**

In a previous *Creation* magazine we related evidence that perhaps 10,000 dead bodies of Australia's Aboriginal people were shipped to British museums in a frenzied attempt to prove the widespread belief that they were the 'missing link'.<sup>1</sup> Now a major item in a leading Australian weekly, *The Bulletin*, reveals shocking new facts.<sup>2</sup> Some of the points covered in the article, written by Australian journalist David Monaghan, include:

- US evolutionists were also strongly involved in this flourishing 'industry' of gathering specimens of 'subhumans'. The Smithsonian Institution in Washington holds the remains of 15,000 individuals of various races.

- Along with museum curators from around the world, Monaghan says, some of the top names in British science were involved in this large-scale grave-robbing trade.<sup>3</sup> These included anatomist Sir Richard Owen, anthropologist Sir Arthur Keith, and Charles Darwin himself. Darwin wrote asking for Tasmanian skulls when only four full-blooded Tasmanian Aborigines were left alive, provided his request would not 'upset' their feelings. Museums were not only interested in bones, but in fresh skins as well. These would provide interesting evolutionary displays when stuffed.
- Pickled Aboriginal brains were also in demand, to try to prove that they were inferior to those of whites. It was Darwin, after all, who wrote that the civilized races would inevitably wipe out such lesser-evolved 'savage' ones.
- Good prices were being offered for such specimens. There is no doubt from written evidence that many of the 'fresh' specimens were obtained by simply going out and killing the Aboriginal people. The way in which the requests for specimens were announced was often a poorly disguised invitation to do just that. A death-bed memoir from Korah Wills, who became mayor of Bowen, Queensland in 1866,<sup>4</sup> graphically describes how he killed and dismembered a local tribesman in 1865 to provide a scientific specimen.<sup>5</sup>
- Edward Ramsay, curator of the Australian Museum in Sydney for 20 years from 1874, was particularly heavily involved. He published a museum booklet which appeared to include Aborigines under the designation of 'Australian animals'. It also gave instructions not only on how to rob graves, but also on how to plug up bullet wounds in freshly killed 'specimens'. Many freelance collectors worked under his guidance. Four weeks after he had requested skulls of Bungee (Russell River) blacks, a keen young science student sent him two, announcing that they, the last of their tribe, had just been shot.<sup>6</sup> In the 1880s, Ramsay complained that laws recently passed in Queensland to stop Aborigines' being slaughtered were affecting his supply.

### **Angel of Black Death**

- A German evolutionist, Amalie Dietrich (nicknamed the 'Angel of Black Death') came to Australia asking station owners for Aborigines to be shot for specimens, particularly skin for stuffing and mounting for her

museum employers.<sup>7</sup> Although evicted from at least one property, she shortly returned home with her specimens.

- A New South Wales missionary was a horrified witness to the slaughter by mounted police of a group of dozens of Aboriginal men, women and children.<sup>8</sup> Forty-five heads were then boiled down and the 10 best skulls were packed off for overseas.
- Darwinist views about the racial inferiority of Aborigines (backed up by biased distortions of the evidence since shown to be false) drastically influenced their treatment. In 1908 an inspector from the Department of Aborigines in the West Kimberley region wrote that he was glad to have received an order to transport all half-castes away from their tribe to the mission. He said it was 'the duty of the State' to give these children (who, by evolutionary reasoning, were going to be intellectually superior) a 'chance to lead a better life than their mothers'. He wrote: 'I would not hesitate for one moment to separate a half-caste from an Aboriginal mother, no matter how frantic her momentary grief'.<sup>9</sup>

Such separation policies continued until the 1960s.

- The demand has not entirely abated. Aboriginal bones have still been sought by major institutions in quite modern times.

## Men of one blood

And where was the church in all this? It was much more influential back then, but it had already begun to be white-anted by the 'new thinking' about origins and was not prepared to take a stand on creation issues. However, the Apostle Paul's ringing declaration, backed up by the facts of human history revealed in Genesis, was that God had 'made all men of one blood' ([Acts 17:26](#)). This is now reinforced by modern biology as well. See also [The Fallacy of Racism](#).

The issue of these pilfered remains is becoming politically sensitive. There is now much pressure from Aboriginal leaders and others for the remains to be returned.

Aboriginal rage at this desecration of their ancestors would also be appropriately directed at the antibiblical thought patterns of evolution responsible for this outrage.

This phenomenon, of mild-mannered museum officials, respected scientists and mayors, for example, casually going about their daily respectable lives, while they were involved in monstrous acts justified by a scientific doctrine, was unparalleled in history to that point.

A similar horror reappeared in the 1930s, when the blatantly evolutionary doctrines of Nazism allowed the consciences of hundreds of doctors, scientists, psychiatrists and other officials to be seared as they set up the machinery to help nature eliminate the unfit. First, the genetically 'inferior'—the mentally and physically disabled. Next were gypsies, Jews and others. The rest of the story is well known.

Today, evolutionary thinking enables ordinary, respectable professionals, otherwise dedicated to the saving of life, to justify their involvement in the slaughter of millions of unborn human beings, who, like the Aborigines of earlier Darwinian thinking, are also deemed 'not yet fully human'.

[Link](#)

See also:

<http://creation.com/missing-the-link-between-darwin-and-racism>

<http://creation.com/racism-consequence-evolution>

<http://creation.com/the-scars-of-a-nation>

## List of Massacres of Indigenous Australians

[Wikipedia](#)

...Similar and contemporary comments on this issue can be found numerous places<sup>[3]</sup>. Frontier collisions and punitive expeditions against indigenous people on Australia's frontier were thus generally veiled in secrecy due to fear of possible legal consequences, especially following the **Myall Creek Massacre** in 1838.<sup>[4]</sup>

In cases where reports had to be written, the records can at times be seen as having been later destroyed. Recent studies into the most significant and notorious case of this kind, that of Queensland and its **Native Police Force**, show that all Native Police reports and monthly enumerations of patrols

originally stored in the Queensland Police Department went missing sometime after 1905 when the last station closed.<sup>[5]</sup> It is generally acknowledged that the European as well as indigenous death toll in frontier conflicts and massacres in Queensland exceeded that of all other Australian colonies, yet it is certainly not possible to map out more than a small percentage of the numerous massacre sites in Queensland. We can calculate in various ways the minimum amount of frontier 'dispersals' performed by the **Native Police Force** during half a century (as was indeed done recently by Dr Raymond Evans and Robert Orsted-Jensen based on a small portion of monthly native police summaries of now lost 'collision reports' stored in the archives). However, we will never be able to locate or describe in detail more than a small percentage of these events. Thus any attempt to list all events of this kind will of nature (at least in Queensland), be more deceptive than revealing.<sup>[6]</sup>

The concepts of invasion, frontier wars and massacres, although frequently mentioned and debated in the early Australian legislatures, has become a highly contentious issues in modern Australia. For discussion of the historical arguments about these conflicts, see the articles on the **History Wars** and in particular the section on the "**black armband**" **view of history**, plus the section on **impact of European settlement** in the article on **Indigenous Australians**. In total at least 20,000 indigenous Australians died from conflict and massacre with white Australians whilst between 2,000 and 2,500 white Australians died.

The following provisory list tallies a few of the better documented massacres of Aboriginal Australians, which took place mainly during the colonial period.

[Wikipedia List of Massacres](#)

Article on [Judith Monticone's Book \*Healing the Land\*](#) with Map of Massacres