

Not so optimized? Human evolution was ‘totally accidental’

Archaeologist Ticia Verveer recently posted a thread on Twitter showing that customer complaints go way back. And I mean way back. Verveer [referred](#) to a letter inscribed on a 3,700-year-old Babylonian clay tablet. In the letter, Verveer writes, “The copper merchant Nanni details at length his anger at a sour deal, and his dissatisfaction with the quality assurance and service of Ea-nasir. Nanni complained that the wrong grade of copper ore has been delivered after a gulf voyage and that there was a misdirection and a delay of a further shipment.” Damn, some things never change.

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Certain features of human behavior recur regardless of culture. Does that mean that we are in some sense fine-tuned by natural selection to be a particular kind of creature? Nope, says Ian Tattersall, a paleontologist.

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The notion that evolutionary forces sculpted humans in a certain way is misleading. In fact, he says, it’s the biggest misapprehension about human origins. “We can basically blame evolution for our shortcomings and look upon ourselves as somewhat optimized, and therefore not have to change our behaviors,” he told Nautilus. “We are not the product of perfectionizing. We are, in many ways, totally accidental. That to me is the big lesson. If we’re accidental, then we have the responsibility to exploit our own abilities in the most responsible way.”

Read full, original post: [The Biggest Misapprehension About Human Origins](#)