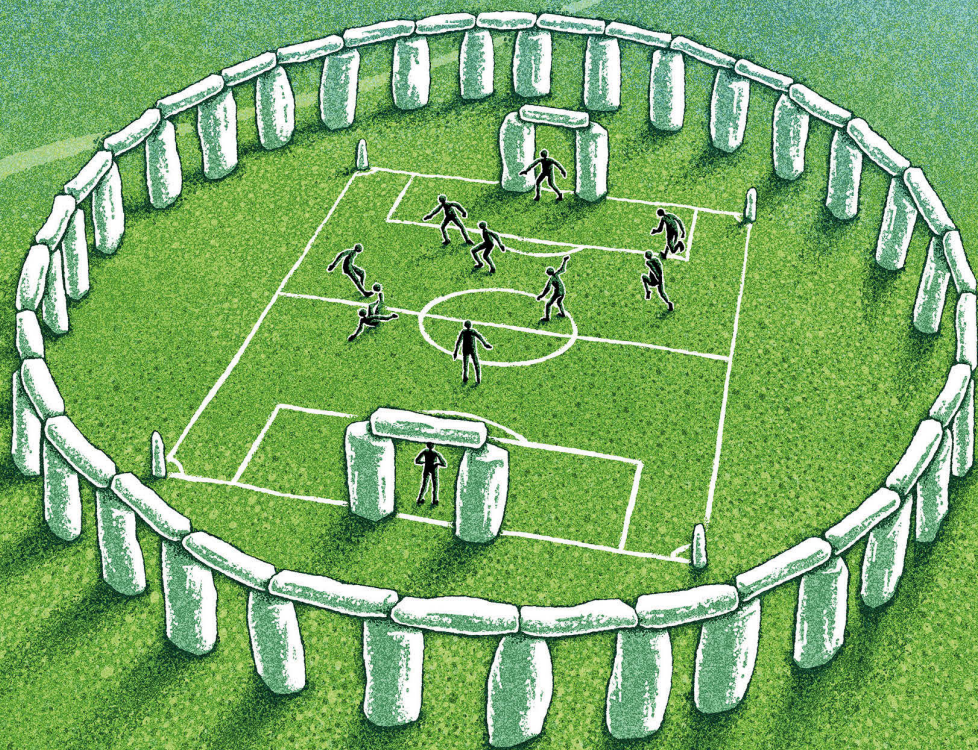


# Man the **Footballer**

## HOMO PASSIENS

The Missing Link in Human Evolution (Arguably)



**Mike McInnes**  
With a Foreword by Irvine Welsh

Man the Footballer  
HOMO PASSIENS

*This book*  
is dedicated to Hugh Carter  
whose vision and love of football were  
critical to its evolution.

The contents of this book were carefully researched. However, all information is supplied without liability. Neither the author nor the publisher will be liable for possible disadvantages or damages resulting from this book.

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Meyer & Meyer Sport

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## Praise for

### MAN THE FOOTBALLER: HOMO PASSIENS!

“This is hilarious!”—Editor of Howler Magazine, New York Review of Football Literature

“This is fantastic! I think I may have trouble *not* taking this seriously!”—Professor David Kilpatrick, historian at New York Cosmos and Professor of Language and Literature at Mercy College New York

“This appears to be totally brilliant!”—Robert Sapolsky, world-leading evolutionary biologist and author of “Junk Food Monkeys”

“Wow, what an extraordinary production! And I love the pictures.”—Professor David Spieglehalter, Cambridge Centre for Mathematical Sciences

“Very clever and very funny! But I was raised to believe that humanity evolved through the development of the use of hands, which not only enabled the creation of tools, but also the ability to handle and pass an ovoid object (the egg of course being the basic building block of life). Thus, *Homo leaguiens*, I would suggest, is clearly the most advanced species of the genus *Homo*!”—Professor Tony Collins, International Centre for Sports History & Culture, De Montfort University

“Looks fascinating!”—Professor John Hughson, Professor of Sport and Cultural Studies and Director of the International Football Institute

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“Very cute! But you forget to mention the Many Worlds Interpretation according to which Hibs’ success in next year’s Champions League is assured, at least in some alternative dimension (possibly Leicester). Unfortunately, when confronted with observers, a collapse into a more normal state is nearly certain.”—Professor Graeme Ackland, School of Physics & Astronomy, University of Edinburgh and Institute for Condensed Matter and Complex Systems

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Many thanks also to Ian Dewsbery for his wonderful work in producing the Homo Passiens Taverns Map.

Words cannot express my gratitude to my publisher, Maria Hampshire-Carter, for her belief in this mad book, for her insight, for her support, and for her patient editing of such a crazy mixture of lunacy, science, nonsense and general football infanity.

# Foreword (or Forward)

BY IRVINE WELSH

*Now I get it! Homo sapiens is a recently arrived imposter in the evolution of the genus Homo – a mountebank, a charlatan, a confidence trickster, a fraud, a fraudster, a rogue, a villain, a scoundrel, a quack! All that academic stuff about consciousness, language, civilisation, farming, technology, science, philosophy, music, literature, poetry, art – and so on – emanating exclusively from (and created by) Homo sapiens is evolutionary hogwash!*

It all came, not from *Homo sapiens* – as this recently arrived pathological lying subspecies claims endlessly and repeatedly in schools, in text books, in literature, in countless evolutionary and cultural journals, and in all institutions of higher learning – but from the original and founder species *Homo passiens* – Man the Footballer!

Standing on two legs – bipedalism – as a locomotive strategy is frankly nuts! No sentient species would voluntarily choose to adopt such a ludicrous hodgepodge of anatomical features, with a ground speed of less than half that of a lazy geriatric predator, with no effective body armour or protection, with no offensive claws worthy of the name, with lettuce-crunching teeth that would be rejected by even the most docile herbivore, and with such a narrow pelvis and hinged legs below – which ensures that bipedal locomotion is a form of translocation so shaky, so wobbly and unstable, that an anatomical engineer would consider that this form of locomotion had been perversely designed to stagger, to stumble, to collapse, to topple over or fall down in any chase to

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catch a prey, or escape from a predator, and in any evolutionary design school it would be rejected as the work of an indolent student of evolution who had spent their whole study time in the cafes, betting shops, bars and dancing clubs of their university town.

Bipedalism is so stupid and unstable that humans have actually invented games to take advantage of it – and to effect falls – such as in rugby league, rugby union, and National League football. If we had four, or even *three* legs, these games could not exist. Infants fall down. Toddlers fall down. Children fall down. Juveniles fall down. Adults fall down. And elderly adults frequently die from falls. No sensible architect would design a building with only two supports!

In war zones, mines are laid not to kill, but rather to disable one limb and render the victim immobile, and therefore impose a burden on the opposing forces. If we had chosen to sacrifice only *one* of our four legs and become tripedal, we would have significantly improved our survival chances. The people and ancients on the Isle of Man, Sicily and Japan have a long and noble association with tripedalism; if you go there you will learn exactly how much superior is that form of locomotion compared with our witless evolutionary selection of bipedalism. Since there is a long and successful industry of manufacturing sticks into extra third legs (known as walking sticks – actually stability sticks) for bipedal humans to improve locomotive efficiency, why was it that we did not select a tripedal or *quadrupedal* solution to improve survival and locomotive efficiency and safety?

Four legs are better than three. Three legs are better than two. So why have we – the *Homo* species – most bizarrely selected for locomotion on two legs only? The reason? Football!

No other explanation, no other reason for our absurd, derisory, farcical anatomical mix of primate foetal features interwoven with – bundled with – such a patchwork of semi-adult characteristics that result in a neotenous half-foetal/half-adult complex – a clownman – *Homo passiens* – but a clown so *beautifully* engineered and so *exquisitely* formed to express Bipedal Football: flat brow, domed head, opposable goalkeeping thumbs, knock-knees, a flat and levered foot with outstep and instep, and finally – and fantastically – non-opposable big toes and a big greedy brain of such absurd and poetic linguistic and sensorimotor beauty, that billions of fans will follow their dream-team, enter the lucid REM dream-game, sing their dream-songs, call their dream-chants, and neuropower their gamma-wave electrophysiology, fire their mirror forward and reverse neuro-modulations, seeking both dopamine-reward facilitation and opiate emotional homeostasis via transcendence and lucid suspension of entropy, at every available opportunity.

Now I get it about the evolutionary nonsense I was taught in biology classes, a romantic fiction about the clever intelligent species *Homo sapiens* that appeared suddenly from nowhere around 200,000 years ago, and supposedly gave rise to our big brain, and to consciousness, language, farming, civilisation, technology, science, literature, art and poetry. RUBBISH !

*Homo passiens* – we, the neotenous, upright, bipedal species, with narrow pelvis, opposable thumbs, knock-knees, flat cushioned and levered foot, non-opposable big toes, are the nominate superspecies that gave birth to the big intelligent and embodied bipedal brain – an evolutionary anatomical joke, but an evolutionarily poetic joke, an anatomical *franken*-freak, an anatomical *franken*-clown, and a weird evolutionary farce that made us what we are and what we do, every Saturday of every

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week, when the dream-game is played (and which we miss every alternate Saturday).

We opposable-thumbed, we two-legged, we two-footed, we non-opposably big-toed, and we neotenously brained evolutionary absurdity – *we* are the true source of human consciousness, intelligence and cognition.

We may be on the lower rungs of evolutionary science, but we are rapidly ascending, and with our eyes firmly on the prize of the Premier Division, and recognition as the true founder and future species of the genus *Homo*. We are happy to share our knowledge of neoteny, of the lucid REM-wake dream-game, of dream-song and dream-chant physiology, of dopamine/hopamine, opiate/hopiate, vasopressin and hypno-oxytocin hormone metabolism, and of the consciousness of the football, expressed as pre(pro) cociousness.

If we fail to do this, *Homo sapiens* will rapidly degenerate and disappear from the evolutionary record, just as suddenly as that subordinate species appeared, and as surely as the thousands of species and subspecies that have come and gone in the many extinction events of the past.

## Dear Football Fans and Football Geeks

WELCOME TO THIS SERIOUS NONSENSE !

*Man the Footballer: Homo Passiens* is a fun book. It is not to be taken seriously. But it does use some principles drawn from the evolutionary and cultural history of mankind such that, if it were true, it would fit in with a crazy hypothesis that humans evolved bipedalism (walking on two legs) to play football.

Two very important principles in this respect are “neoteny” and “ludeny”. The theory of neoteny was around for more than a century before being developed by the real-life American biologist and author Stephen Jay Gould. The theory is that we humans keep our infant genes and anatomy throughout our lives – we do not metamorphose into an adult form like other primates, such as chimpanzees. This shows strongly in our facial features and our flat baby faces. If our jaws extended forwards and our brows angled backwards – like they “should do” – we would not be able to head a football! Neoteny also explains other oddities, such as our lifelong curiosity, inventiveness and nosiness. Simply put, we never fully grow up.

The next important real-life theory is ludeny. This was thought up by the Dutch cultural historian Johan Huizinga. You can read all about it in his original book *Homo Ludens*. It is based on the idea that all human culture – technology, science, language, literature, art, music and poetry – stems from adult “game-playing”. The

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Latin word *ludens* is derived from *ludus* which refers to sport, play, school, and practice.

It isn't difficult to connect the two theories. Humans (as far as we know) are the only species in which the adults still play games – which neatly brings us back to the subject of bipedal football, known to be the largest and most universal form of game-playing we know of. If football were a country, it would be the largest in the world with around 2.5 *billion* citizens (fans and players), and its annual turnover would exceed that of the world's largest economy – the United States of America. Once you accept that *Homo passiens* is the original species of the genus *Homo*, you will never be the same again. You will know that *Homo sapiens* is a derivative, an offshoot, and as your primal unconscious mind already knows, bipedal football expresses the deepest essence of what it is to be human. You will know that your children and grandchildren will grow up in a football environment, and will become *Homo passiens*, or the sibling species *Femo passions*, to become football players and/or football fans. You will learn that *Homo passiens* and *Femo passiens* predate *Homo sapiens* by about two and a half million years, and you will discover all about football anatomy, physiology and psychology, and the genes, glands and hormones that characterise this wonderful bipedal football species.

You will meet Professor Gordon P. McNeil in the pages of this book, Professor of Archaeology and Paleoanthropology at St Andrews University, Fife, Scotland, and you will admire how brilliantly and persistently he demolishes the concept proposed by Professor Yuvel Noah Harari in his twenty-first-century book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, in which Harari makes

the outrageous claim that humans express no genes for football! This is a massive own goal and the greatest *faux pass* in the history of science. This is what Harari said:

*“Evolution did not endow humans with the ability to play football. True, it produced legs for kicking, elbows for fouling and mouths for cursing, but all that this enables us to do is perhaps practise penalty kicks by ourselves. To get into a game with strangers we find in the schoolyard on any given afternoon, we not only have to work in concert with ten teammates we may never have met before, we also need to know that the other players on the opposing team are playing by the same rules. Other animals that engage strangers in ritualised aggression do so largely by instinct – puppies throughout the world have the rules for rough-and-tumble play hard-wired into their genes. But human teenagers have no genes for football. They can nevertheless play the game with complete strangers because they have all learned an identical set of ideas about football. These ideas are entirely imaginary, but if everyone shares them, we can all play the game.”*

Harari may have taken *sapiens* science to a new level of understanding, but he failed to examine the role of *passiens* as our founding species, and he missed the critical role of “neoteny” in our evolution, without which we would not have developed our juvenile, curious, innovative, endlessly creative minds that characterises our strange bipedal, foetalistic, semi-adult species. Professor McNeil couldn’t ignore the comment that we have “no genes for football” and curtly elbowed the claim in the following letter.



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*Dear Professor Harari*

*Never in the history of evolutionary science, either before or after Charles Darwin, has an eminent and respected academic of evolutionary history been so erroneous in his or her analysis of the underpinning, founding seed and driving forces of the evolution of the genus Homo. With respect, Professor Harari, a penalty kick requires a goalkeeper and a goal; the species Homo exists as a socially and environmentally constrained species, or it is simply not human. A penalty kick – far from being a solitary and introverted illustration of human conduct – is actually one of the highest expressions of bipedal neotenous culture and behaviour of the genus Homo.*

*If an elbow is not an anatomical and physiological instrument of high-value fouling, then what may it be? A Stephen Jay Gould spandrel or exaptation? An evolutionary by-product? Or an adaptation for which there is no clear fitness or survival advantage? No! The elbow of the Homo species is not some kind orphan anatomical offshoot without significant function, rather it is an exquisitely engineered evolutionary skeletal instrument for violently inhibiting opponents during open bipedal neotenous football play.*

*A recent and seminal paper, published in the Journal of Passienic Sciences found, through a series of elegant studies conducted at the Sep Blatter Faculty of Forensic and Passienic Anatomy at the University at Visp, in the canton of Valais, that a set of related elbow and hip genes and gene sequences correlate with both elbow and hip*

*hit-plasias (ELB-HIT alpha-1 and HIP-HIT beta-2), and these are expressed in the teenagers of Homo sapiens, Homo passiens and Femo passiens, most potently of all in Homo passiens professional football players, with the highest expression occurring in defenders who have secured the most yellow and red cards during highly-charged contests (particularly during Derby matches between local rivals).*

*So indeed, Professor Harari, since you raise the issue, evolution did produce elbows for sophisticated gain of function fouling, and now we have plenty of beautiful genetic information that confirms that.*

*With the greatest respect, and acknowledging your excellent work in a number of fields, it must be stated that your attempt to intervene in the field of bipedal neotenous football is indicative of a degenerative and profoundly unfruitful adherence to a “sapiens” mindset that is long out of date, and which denies bipedal neotenous football as the generative seed and driving force of human evolution.*

*With a view to finally establishing whether indeed Homo passiens is the original founding species of the genus Homo from 2.5 million years ago, and Homo sapiens is a recent and derivative species from 200,000 years ago, I challenge you to a debate in the town of Stenhousemuir in the Forth Valley, Stirlingshire, Scotland. A suitable time would be during the Forth Valley Festival of Passienic Culture and Arts, held annually in that town, which attracts many thousands of football fans, academics and student visitors from around the world. As a World*

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*Archaeology Heritage Status Area, Stenhousemuir is the spiritual home of prehistoric football archaeology and artefacts, and is therefore a highly appropriate venue to hold an international forum and invite public discussion on whether bipedal neotenous football is the true seed and driving force of human evolution, so that this issue may be finally settled—for all time.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Professor Gordon P. McNeil*

*Departments of Anthropology and Palaeontology*

*St Andrews University*

*Scotland*

# The Passiens Taverns

## AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

The “Passiens” taverns are the hallowed sites of colourful conversations between the Author and Professor P. McNeil in the current day, as well as the arguable more erudite discussions between scientists, philosophers, absurdists and surrealists from all walks of life over the last couple of hundred years. All the taverns have names that both recognise and pay tribute to their role in “passienic” matters over the centuries, as well as pub-names by which they are better known within the football-fan fraternity (as listed below). The link between football and the rich passienic discourse within these inns and taverns is not coincidental.

Most of the taverns are dotted around the Scottish city of Edinburgh, with others in Glasgow, Stenhousemuir and County Durham. On the following page is a map that will help you find them on your sociocultural tour of mankind’s footballing past, present and future. And if you visit on any Saturday during the dream-game season, you may just find yourself drawn into conversation with our protagonists.

Albert Camus Bar, also known as the Standing Order  
*62–66 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2LR*

Arthur’s O’on Bar, also known as the Ochilview Bar  
*76 Tryst Rd, Stenhousemuir, Larbert FK5 4QJ*

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Dreamsong Bar, also known as Bennets Bar

*8 Leven St, Edinburgh EH3 9LG*

The Femo Passiens Tavern, also known as The Sheepheid Inn

*43-45 The Causeway, Duddingston Village, Edinburgh EH15 3QA*

Fitba' Petrosphere Bar, also known as All Bar One

*50 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9BY*

Football Absurdity Bar, also known as the Café Royal

*19 West Register Street, Edinburgh EH2 2AA*

Football Infanity Bar, also known as Milnes

*Rose St/35 Hanover St, Edinburgh EH2 2PJ*

Homo Ludens Bar, also known as the Alexander Graham Bell

*128 George St, Edinburgh EH2 4JZ*

Jock Jones Legs, also known as the Eden Arms

*8 Staindrop Rd, West Auckland DL14 9JX*

Johan Cruyff Tavern, also known as Deacon Brodie's Tavern

*435 Lawnmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2NT*

Lev Yashin Arms, also known as Mathers

*1 Queensferry St, Edinburgh EH2 4PA*

Lionel Messi Tavern, also known as the Abbotsford Bar

*3-5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR*

Opposable Thumb Arms, also known as Clarks

*142 Dundas Street, Edinburgh EH3 5DQ*

Football Lucidity Bar, also known as the Horseshoe Bar  
*17–19 Drury Street, Glasgow G2 5AE*

Robo Passiens Bar, also known as the Central Bar  
*7–9 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 8LN*

McCrae's Battalion Bar, also known as the Athletic Arms  
(Diggers)  
*1–3 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh EH11 2JX*



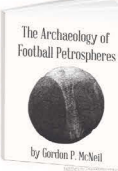
The Opposable Thumb Bar (0.2 miles)



- ▶ The Arthur O'on Bar, Stenhousemuir (30 miles)
- ▶ The Football Lucidity Bar, Glasgow (50 miles)



The Lev Yashin Arms



The Fitba' Petrosphere Bar



McCrae's Battalion Bar (0.3 miles)



The Dreamsong Bar



The Homo Ludens Bar

Quantum Football Vaults, Leith  
(3 miles)



The Robo Passiens Bar, Leith  
(1.2 miles)



The Moai Tavern (0.4 miles)



The Football Absurdity Bar



The Lionel Messi Tavern



The Football InFanity Bar



The Johan Cruyff Tavern



Femo Passiens Tavern  
(1 mile)

The Jock Jones Legs,  
County Durham (122 miles)



The Albert Camus Bar

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## ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL KICKSHIP TIES OF FOOTBALL

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April 2017**

On any day, but particularly on any Saturday, of any week, of any month, of any year, stretching both far into our past and also infinitely into our future, an ancient and deeply beloved ritual takes place, in every hamlet, every village, every town, every city and every metropolis around the world; a ritual that describes and defines what it is to be a *human being* – with flat face and brow, domed head, two arms with opposable thumbs, narrow pelvis, knock-knees, and the ability to stand upright on two flat and levered feet, with non-opposable big toe, moving by forward kicking each leg in

sequence, whilst standing or pivoting on the other foot, and from time to time utilising this curious locomotive facility to kick a moving object, known as a ball, usually in the direction of a region of space defined by a rectangular skeletal or wooden construct, comprising two upright posts some eight yards apart, supporting a horizontal bar eight feet from the ground, and known as a goal, and whenever the ball passes between the posts and beneath the bar, a goal is scored.

This lovely ritual usually takes place on a flat field of ground, often (although not always)

with grass underfoot, on a rectangular pitch, one hundred yards in length and fifty in breadth, marked into precise geometric patterns, and divided into two halves, which define the rules of the cultural practice.

The participants divide into two teams, based on social “kickship” ties (as opposed to kinship ties), usually comprising eleven individuals, known as players (collectively, as teams), on each side. One player from each team, known as the goalkeeper, is selected to protect the aforementioned goal. The goalkeeper is allowed to use his hands and opposable thumbs to catch or deflect the ball, to avoid a goal being scored between the posts and beneath the bar. Outfield players may kick or head the ball to propel it towards – or into – the goal. Only if the ball crosses the side-lines may outfield players throw or shy the ball into play, using their opposable thumbs; otherwise, if they handle the ball at any time, an offence or foul is committed.

The outfield players are organised into defence, midfield and forward positions, although these are flexible, and they can adopt any position to reflect the flow of play. An official known as a referee, with allegiance to neither team, regulates the play of both, according to an agreed set of rules that may also vary over time.

This ancient and beloved ritual is the *most universal expression* of two-footed, bipedal game-playing in human culture. It confirms our neotenous and curious evolutionary history, which means that we never fully become adults as a species, and we play games from birth to death – a practice not found in any other species we know of.

Both sexes play and love the Game – male and female. The sibling species are *Femo passiens* and *Homo passiens*, and the billions who follow the Game around the world, are known as football supporters or

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football fans. Infants, children, juveniles – and those we call adults – attend the Game, or follow it electronically on radio, television and the internet, in newspapers, magazines and other literature, and expend large sums of their income on doing so. Apart from the high cost of attendance, they choose to purchase team flags, banners, pendants and items of clothing that carry team colours and team badges. If Football was a country, it would have the largest population in the world, and its economy would exceed that of the world's current largest – the United States of America.

Science has discovered that every football fan present at, or viewing or listening to a game, enters a unique blend of physiology and psychology, known as a super-lucid wake-REM dream-state. It is

characterised by the manifestation of specialised gamma-waves, along with expression of dopamine goal award-seeking, combined with dopamine-generated emotional homeostasis.

No other game-playing or artistic practice, no musical event, painting, sculpture, literature or poem, reaches or compares to the extraordinary electro-wave field levels as the highly charged game of football when attended by thousands of fans, where a super-lucid, pass, move, block, tackle, save or goal may reach such beauty of articulation that a fan gamma-wave electromagnetic storm crescendo is released across the stadium, that is sufficient to light a small town, and that may be viewed from, and measured by, satellites in distant space.

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# CHAPTER 1

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## Introducing Man the Footballer: *Homo passiens*

A spectre is haunting the university corridors, the libraries, the classrooms and lecture theatres, the journals, the laboratories, the field stations, the professors, the academics, and students of evolutionary biology. A spectre that challenges and revises, and yet simultaneously upholds and maintains the fundamental principles of evolutionary science, originally outlined by Charles Darwin in his famous book *On the Origin of Species* published in November 1859.

Evolutionary science is having a nervous breakdown. A new evolutionary discipline has emerged in recent years, one that threatens to challenge and defeat some of the most basic notions of what it is to be *Homo* – or human – and of why the human brain is shrinking for the first time in our evolutionary history. This discipline is known as bipedal neoteny, as discovered and articulated by Professor Gordon P. McNeil at the University of St Andrews in Scotland; it states that the species known as

## Man the **Footballer** – HOMO PASSIENS

*Homo* actually consists of two species, or subspecies – not one as previously taught in all disciplines that inform evolutionary science – and that *Homo sapiens* is the subordinate and not the nominate, or founder, species. The nominate species is *Homo passiens* (perhaps better termed, Man the Footballer), which predates *sapiens* by millions of years, and falls under the category “superspecies”. Our ancestor primates descended from the trees around 5 million years ago, became fully functioning bipeds from around 2.5 million years ago, and thereafter their brains grew steadily until some 200,000 to 100,000 years ago. However, *sapiens* may be dated to only around 200,000 years ago. The growth of the large human brain predates *sapiens* by more than two million years, and is directly correlated to the earlier appearance of *Homo passiens* in the record.

In early 1992, Professor Gordon P. McNeil and his team from St Andrews, working in East Africa, announced the discovery of an almost complete skeleton of a young man, dating back to 0.9 million years ago. In his statement to the press, Professor McNeil said that this young man had the physique of an athlete, that he was certainly right-sided, and that his athletic stature and the injuries he had received during life reminded him of a young professional footballer in his prime. “*Homo passiens*,” he smiled. “Man the Footballer”. He named him Gordon, not after himself but after his favourite footballer, Gordon Smith of Hibernian and Scotland, the famous right-winger of the great 1950s team.

The joke was quickly passed around the world’s media: that humans had evolved bipedalism to play football. But it was soon forgotten. Professor McNeil did not immediately follow up his suggestion that the bipedalism expressed in football had played a significant role in evolution, or indeed that football was the

## Introducing Man the Footballer

initiating and driving force of language, civilisation, culture and everything that we associate with being human. In fact, it was another decade before news of this astonishing discovery and its implications for the science of evolution began to gain traction in the various fields of evolutionary science, and to attract a new generation of scholars to the hypothesis that *Homo sapiens* was merely a subspecies of the genus *Homo*, and that *H. passiens* was actually the original founder and nominate species.



*Artist's impression of athletic, right-sided "Man The Footballer" based on skeletal remains from 0.9 million years ago, unearthed in East Africa.*

I was introduced to the Professor by friends in the winter of 2010. They were involved with a group of radical journalists, musicians, writers, scientists, poets and ageing fanatics of Hibernian Football Club who regularly met in the Albert Camus Tavern in George