

Responses to *The Human Condition* Documentary Proposal

*The Human Condition Documentary Proposal** (2004), which was written by Australian biologist [Jeremy Griffith*](#), and coordinated by [Tim Macartney-Snape*](#) AM OAM, received marvellous endorsements from many of the world's leading scientists and thinkers, as documented below.

Professor Stephen Hawking, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, Cambridge University, world-leading physicist, responding through his secretary because he suffers from motor neurone disease: **“is most interested in your impressive proposal”** and **“please let us know further details in due course.”**

Professor Charles H. Townes, American Nobel Laureate and Templeton Prize-winning physicist: **“I will be glad to have further correspondence and discussion.”**

Professor Ian Barbour, American Templeton Prize-winning physicist and theologian: **“a fascinating proposal...I was indeed impressed.”**

Professor Richard Leakey, arguably the world's leading anthropologist: **“the ideas and thesis embodied in your proposal are concerns of mine and I support your effort to present them. Please let me know how I can be of any help.”**

Dr Roger Lewin, British prize-winning author of 20 popular science books, one of which, 'Complexity: Life at the Edge of Chaos' holds the honour of being voted one of the top 100 science books for the 20th century: **“The proposal is indeed impressive.”**

[Professor Harry Prosen*](#), leading American psychiatrist, former President of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, recently retired head of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin, responsible for the establishment of two departments of psychiatry in Canada and in the USA. Recently invited to be one of 500 Distinguished Life Fellows of the American Psychiatric Association and is listed in the 2005-2006 America's Registry of Outstanding Professionals. He is also psychiatric consultant to the Bonobo Species Preservation Society, and is assisting those working with one of the largest collection of captive bonobos in the world at the Milwaukee County Zoo: **“This is an incredibly important set of thoughts. I am aware of no other paradigm having ever been developed that answers somewhere in its great depths all the great questions like this one does. The Proposal is never out of my brief case. I read it over and over and it is I think one of the most astonishing and outstanding things of our time. It is a gift and I hope you don't give an inch to your detractors.”**

Professor Donald Johanson, American Professor considered to be among the most important and accomplished paleoanthropologists of our time: **“I have read, with great interest, your proposal that resonates with much that I have been thinking about. I sincerely hope that you will be able to bring this project to fruition. Time is running out for Homo sapiens.”**

Professor Phillip V. Tobias, South Africa’s world-leading and pioneer anthropologist: **“I am indeed most interested in what you are proposing...With my kindest regards and every good wish for the success of this enterprising undertaking and may I say, very necessary one.”**

Ian Frazier, best-selling American author of the ‘Great Plains’ and other books, and former staff writer at ‘The New Yorker’: **“I have taken a long time to respond to your documentary proposal because questions of the size you raise tend to stagger me (as they do most people) into silence...unlike you I can’t help but believe that human beings are almost irredeemably fallen and lost. (Almost, but not totally)...Reading your proposal has caused me to think about things I usually don’t. What you’re doing is admirable, and I wish you luck with your documentary.”**

Professor Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, world’s leading expert in ape-human communication with 25 years research with bonobos, including Kanzi, the first ape to understand spoken human speech, author of ‘Kanzi’s Primal Language’, ‘Apes, Language and the Human Mind’ and ‘Kanzi: The Ape at the Brink of the Human Mind’, Professor of Biology and Psychology, Director of the Bonobo Research Program at the Great Ape Trust of Iowa: **“I recognize the importance of the project and the problems in making a massive paradigm shift...I do think the issues [in the Proposal] deserve and demand public debate and discussion...I am willing to help in any possible way.”**

Professor Stephen Oppenheimer, MD, world-recognised expert in the synthesis of DNA studies with archaeological, anthropological, linguistic and other field studies to track ancient migrations; author of ‘Out of Eden’ and other significant books; qualified in medicine from Oxford University where he is a member of Green College: **“I have read through the material and viewed the DVD, both of which are very impressive. I particularly enjoyed the primatology section and Jeremy Griffith’s presentation. His promotion of the influence of prolonged nurturing on selection and development of adult behaviour was very persuasive, although I have some questions...My own interests interface with much that is covered in the proposal. I am particularly interested in the development of language and the brain...I would be interested to be involved.”**

Professor Friedemann Schrenk, German paleoanthropologist who co-directs the Hominid Corridor Research Project in Africa’s Malawi carrying out extremely successful hominid excavations. Professor and Head of the Paleoanthropology Department at Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum, and Professor of Palaeobiology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University. He also leads expeditions in search of early man in Tanzania and Kenya: **“I hope you will succeed with your Proposal, since I have never heard of anything comparable before. Also I have a feeling that the new way of thinking involved here could well lead to changes of approaches even in our respective scientific fields. I am very willing to help in whatever way I can.”**

Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Hungarian-born polymath; at Claremont Graduate University he is the Davidson Professor of Psychology and Management, and Director of the Quality of Life Research Center. He is also a former chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago. He has been thinking about the meaning of happiness since a child in wartime Europe and has devoted much of his life to the study of what makes people truly happy, satisfied and fulfilled. His research and theories have revolutionised psychology and have been adopted in practice by national leaders. He is the author of several popular books about his theories including the bestselling ‘Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience’: **“As an inveterate visionary I appreciate the ambition of your project. If done right, it might help bring about a paradigm shift in the self-image of humanity—an outcome that in the past only the great world religions have achieved...it is a worthy cause, and if I can help count me in.”**

Professor Peter Wills, theoretical biologist and Associate Professor of physics at The University of Auckland. He has previously held appointments in Australia, Germany and the USA. He is an outspoken commentator on many public interest issues and his work spans the fields of theoretical physics, complexity theory and biology including biochemical thermodynamics, molecular evolution and the evolutionary origin of genetic coding: **“I will do whatever I can to support this project. This is an important initiative to confront humanity with its terms of existence, to put us humbly in front of ourselves.”**

Professor Reuven Feuerstein, a world-renowned cognitive psychologist, known for his ground-breaking research in cognitive modifiability. He is currently Professor of Psychology in Bar Ilan University’s School of Education and Adjunct Professor at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College of Education in the US and is the founder and chairman of the International Center for the Enhancement of Learning Potential in Israel: **“I read your letter with great interest and admiration. The Human Condition Documentary Proposal and its four parts, all represent very important subjects part of which is also a very important component of my work. I would be very interested and honoured to take part in your very meaningful endeavour...I would certainly be happy to cooperate in whatever way possible to this very important enterprise...I [want] to bring this highly important message to a wider group of colleagues with hope to enlist their cooperation in the development and the dissemination of the Proposal.”**

Dr David J. Chivers, Doctor of Physical Anthropology based at the University of Cambridge where he is University Reader in Primate Biology and Conservation, Head of the Wildlife Research Group, Director of Studies in Veterinary Medicine and Biological Anthropology and University Lecturer in Veterinary Anatomy. His 1972 PhD study was on gibbons in Malaysia and since then he has organised research into the ecology and behaviour of rain-forest primates in Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh and Brazil. He has spent a total of 50 months in the field, supervised the theses of 20 research students, published extensively on the subject of primates and is a member of many learned international societies: **“I agree that this Proposal is a novel and exciting way of looking at the ‘human condition’. It certainly is a difficult issue, but a fundamental one. The sequence of discussion is so logical and sensible, providing the necessary breakthrough for this critical issue in our understanding of ourselves.”**

Dr Ian Player, famous South African conservationist, naturalist and philosopher: **“I think your project is very worthwhile. My life’s work has been in wild life conservation and wilderness. I believe you are on to getting answers to much that has puzzled and bewildered humanity for a long time. I have taken large numbers of people on foot into the African wilderness and your project would answer their most asked questions. I have met Jeremy and I am happy to help you in any way I can.”**

Dr Louise Leakey, Doctor of Palaeontology and member of Kenya’s renowned fossil-hunting family; leads annual field expeditions to the Turkana Basin where she has made very significant hominid discoveries, also constructing a research station at Koobi Fora: **“I will lend my support to your proposal. Thank you and keep me posted with things.”**

[Professor Walter Hartwig*](#), physical anthropologist and Chair of Basic Sciences at the Touro University—California College of Osteopathic Medicine. His research speciality is human/primate evolution. He has authored many scientific articles and book chapters on comparative anatomy, primate evolution and the history of sciences including a widely-cited research volume on the primate fossil record which is considered a key reference work for all anthropologists: **“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to consider your proposal for an extended documentary entitled ‘The Human Condition’...You have conducted a phenomenal amount of research into the many facets of this topic. I greatly appreciate the care you have taken to incorporate diverse points of view...I appreciate the attention that you have paid to the raw material, to the intended audience, and to us, your audience of ‘expert’ reviewers...Based on the degree of your research and the maturity of your proposal I believe that major media groups should clamour for the opportunity to produce The Human Condition. Congratulations on your fine concept and best wishes for its full and speedy production!”**

Dr Ian Tattersall, world renowned paleoanthropologist who serves as Curator in the Division of Anthropology of the American Museum of Natural History. Over the past 25 years he has extensively analysed the human fossil record and its integration with evolutionary theory, and has studied the ecology and systematics of the lemurs of Madagascar. He is also a prominent interpreter of human palaeontology and has authored a number of books on human evolution: **“Please be assured that I find the “Human Condition” project very worthwhile and am happy to support it in whatever ways I usefully can.”**

Professor Jeffrey H. Schwartz, eminent physical anthropologist who is a Professor in both the Department of Anthropology and Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh. He was recently elected President of the World Academy of Art and Science and is a Research Associate at both the American Museum of Natural History (New York city) and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (Pittsburgh). His widely published research involves the history, methods, theories, and philosophies in evolutionary biology, including the origins and diversification of primates: **“I found your project intriguing and provocative. There are issues vis-à-vis molecular and cell biology with which your presentation resonates, and which would be interesting to pursue further...I wish you the best of success with your endeavour.”**

Professor Patricia Glazebrook, Canadian Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Dalhousie University with interests in environmental philosophy, philosophy of science and technology and feminism. She is the author of three books and many journal articles: **“I have received, viewed and read, and given serious thought to your documentary proposal...Frankly, I am ‘blown away’ as the saying goes...Your work is absolutely important and I am excited, thrilled and inspired to have had an opportunity to learn about it...The ground-breaking significance of this work is tremendous...A scientific base for ethics is long overdue, and certainly welcomed by me! I have done substantial work on ethics of care, and already am inspired to write something that draws upon this material...The project is superb...The argument for an evolutionary state of integration entailing love-indoctrination is impressive and persuasive. Yet...the proposal is heavily informed by assumptions about gender roles. See for example, ‘Women nurturing is largely a female role’ (p.61)...There is in these claims a gender essentialism that may get in the way of the deep insights of this thinking (to call it a proposal seems silly, as it is a whole new way of thinking about human existence and the human place in the universe)...the arguments and views put forward in this documentary...absolutely should be made, should be required viewing for all high-school students, and should be disseminated as widely as possible to older audiences...I would myself like very much to be an on-going part of this project and associated with it...”**

Professor Peter H. Raven, world-renowned botanist, recipient of the US National Medal of Science, who has held many influential positions including Chair of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), US Government advisor and Home Secretary of the US National Academy of Sciences, and is currently Chair of the National Geographic Society’s Committee for Research and Exploration: **“I do find your proposal of great interest, and I would very much like to hear about it as it develops further.”**

Major [Dr William D. Casebeer*](#), a career intelligence analyst and soon-to-be Lieutenant Colonel in the US Air Force; formerly Associate Professor of Philosophy at the US Air Force Academy, he has a joint doctorate in cognitive science and philosophy. His publications are in the area of evolution and ethics, the neuroscience of moral judgment, and systems theory: **“The ideas you present are provocative, and many of them strike me as being spot-on...The issues you discuss are critical, and I’m heartened that you are surfacing them and grappling with them intelligently. I very much enjoyed viewing the DVD. If there’s anything I can do to help as you attempt to garner more support or interest, please let me know.”**

Sir David Attenborough, Britain’s most famous naturalist: **“I’ve no doubt a fascinating television series could be made based upon this--but...I shall be in my eighties and...hanging up my boots.”**

Martin Saunders, British filmmaker and described as ‘arguably the most experienced cameraman working’: **“I have now read the [Human Condition Documentary Proposal] document, watched the DVD, and have found the project very interesting. I would be pleased to meet with you...I remain committed to supporting this enterprise.”**

Vanessa Schulz, South African filmmaker now based in America, currently working on the documentary 'Africa Burning'; is the driving force behind a production company called '21st Paradigm' which is dedicated to raising public awareness on social, environmental and animal welfare issues and bringing change through grassroots action: **"I have read The Human Condition Documentary Proposal and think this is an incredible project...I think you're doing extraordinary work and if I can help you I will most certainly do so...Please keep me up to date on your progress and thank you for informing me of this worthy project."**

Jeff Swimmer, American award-winning documentary filmmaker, producer and director who has produced documentaries on both sides of the Atlantic, including BBC, PBS, HBO, Discovery, The History Channel and many others. He owns his own production company called Tango Films, and his directing and producing credits include science and adventure films, historical and investigative programs, profiles and off-beat topics: **"Thanks very much for sending me the proposal about the Human Condition film...It is certainly a fascinating and, as you point out, most timely subject."**

Dr Charlotte Uhlenbroek, British primatologist specialising in animal communication and popular wildlife presenter: **"Thank you for your Human Condition Documentary Proposal which I found very interesting."**

Cynthia Moses, American award-winning filmmaker, whose documentaries include 'The New Chimpanzees' and 'Living With Gorillas' for National Geographic Television; also a journalist and conservationist: **"I was delighted to receive your proposal...I would also be happy to meet with you...I have a great deal of experience producing films focused on the great apes...please let me know how things develop."**

Bruce Davidson, British filmmaker, director and photographer with extensive experience with great apes in Africa; his documentaries include the award-winning 'Mountain Gorilla: Pushing the Boundaries for Conservation'; and assisting with the production of 'Gorillas in the Mist' and 'Gorillas of My Grandfather': **"I have received The Human Condition Documentary Proposal written by Jeremy Griffith and coordinated by Tim Macartney-Snape. It is a fascinating document made all the more interesting given the time I've spent over the years working with great apes... It will be an absolutely fantastic project...It is truly wonderful to see something like this in the pipeline. I would be most grateful if you could keep me posted as to how everything develops from this moment on."**

Madelaine Westwood, British producer who owns and manages her own film production company specialising in natural history and conservation; co-President of the global conservation charity Filmmakers For Conservation, where she created the Great Apes Film Initiatives: **"Thank you for the opportunity to bring an extremely important subject into mainstream consciousness, via a documentary...The ideas expressed in the Proposal have significant implications for our understanding of human nature...serendipitously [my current project] is a documentary proposal for the cinema which highlights the implications for further understanding of bonobo behaviour and the implications for human beings and society...I would be very happy to meet you and discuss how a ground**

breaking idea of this nature may be taken forward. This is a topic of particular interest to me, so I hope that we may find ways to work together to bring the ideas to an international stage.”

James Hersov, South African producer and director who holds a Masters in Social Anthropology from Cambridge University; he is also a director of several public companies. His executive production credits include documentaries on the San Bushman, ‘The Great Dance—A Hunter’s Story’, National Geographic’s ‘Tracks—Tracking with the San of the Kalahari’ and ‘Eland Hunt’; also ‘Heaven’s Herds—Nguni Cattle, Nguni People’ and other documentaries for Discovery Communications Europe: **“I read (and watched) the proposal with great interest several times through. I do think that it is an important project and has great filmic (visual and narrative) potential and I would certainly be interested in being involved in the making of the series.”**

Robert Gardner, an internationally renowned and award-winning filmmaker and author whose works have entered the permanent canon of non-fiction filmmaking; was the Director of the Harvard University Film Study Center from 1957-1997: **“Allow me to add my distant voice to the chorus of ringing endorsements for your project.”**

John H. Heminway, fellow Royal Geographic Society, trustee Leakey Foundation, trustee emeritus African Wildlife Foundation, member The Explorers Club, renowned author, award-winning director, producer and TV host; considered one of America’s foremost experts on Africa: **“I think your proposal is absolutely fascinating...[Jeremy Griffith’s] theory is superbly reasoned, original and very arresting...It touches on the essentials of life today, and challenges those who believe faith trumps science. I will discuss the concept with my colleagues.”**

Dr Dame Daphne Sheldrick, Founder and Trustee of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust which is dedicated to the protection and preservation of Africa’s Wilderness and its denizens, particularly endangered species. She is recognised as probably the world authority on both the African Elephant and the Black Rhinoceros and has an in-depth knowledge of animal psychology and behaviour. Her work in this field has been recognised with, amongst others, an MBE in 1989, inclusion in UNEP’s elite Global 500 Roll of Honour in 1992; an Honorary Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery by Glasgow University; and in 2006 an appointment to Dame Commander of the British Empire by the Queen: **“I have no hesitation whatsoever in endorsing “The Human Condition” as an extremely enlightening, and valuable, project. I found it a fascinating read and very enlightening in highlighting the underlying reason for so many contradictions in the Human species. It makes perfect sense and having reared so many members of the Animal Kingdom, including some 75 elephants, who are so very human in many ways, but without many of mankind’s complex negative traits, I think that a documentary on the Human Condition will be a very great step forward in enabling us to understand ourselves.”**

Professor Martin Prozesky, Professor of Comparative and Applied Ethics at the University of Natal and considered one of South Africa’s leading ethicists; a former Dean of Humanities and founding Professor of a prominent South African ethics centre, he has authored several books and is a well-known speaker: **“I’ve now been able to have a good look at your [Proposal]**

especially in connection with the moral sense, and have no hesitation in supporting the project as a very important, timely and valuable initiative on an issue of critical importance for our common future.”

Professor Marc Bekoff, American Professor of Organismic Biology at the University of Colorado, an animal behaviourist and conservation biologist whose research interests include social behaviour and social organisation; co-author with Jane Goodall of ‘The Ten Trusts: What We Must Do To Care For The Animals We Love’, he has also written ‘Minding Animals: Awareness, Emotions and Heart’ and most recently ‘Animal Passions and Bestly Virtues: Reflections on Redecorating Nature’ with a Foreword by Jane Goodall: **“This is a most amazing project. It is strongly interdisciplinary, visionary and forward-looking...Many of the ideas fit in smoothly with my own research...I look forward to working on this wonderful, ground-breaking and revisionary documentary.”**

Professor Mary Midgley, Emeritus Professor of the University of Newcastle and described as Britain’s most visible moral philosopher: **“I am greatly impressed with the wide scope of this investigation...I will be glad to take part in it.”**

Professor John (Jack) W.K. Harris, one of the foremost paleoanthropologists in the world, he is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers University and Director of the Koobi Fora Field School in Kenya. His widely-published research includes the changing patterns of early hominid behaviour between 2.5 and 1.5 million years ago, and he has over thirty years experience of field research in Kenya, as well as Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zaire and Mozambique: **“I am very supportive of the Proposal by Griffith and Macartney-Snape to produce a documentary film on the Human Condition. My colleagues here at Rutgers University and the National Museum of Kenya involved in field research at Koobi Fora, Northern Kenya would be willing to participate.”**

Professor Paul Taçon, former Principal Research Scientist in Anthropology at the Australian Museum, he is currently Professor and Research Leader at Australia’s Griffith University where he continues his research in anthropology and archaeology. He has published many books and has had extensive media involvement: **“Thanks for sending the highly impressive proposal. It is a fantastic proposition and would make an excellent documentary series. I am very interested in being involved and am very supportive of both the basic hypothesis and the larger proposition. Indeed, the documentary dovetails nicely into much of my own work...Please let me know how I might best be involved in The Human Condition.”**

Professor Henry de Lumley, Director of the Institute of Human Palaeontology at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, highly awarded pre-historian, author and scientific filmmaker. Throughout his career he has led many cave explorations at pre-historic sites throughout the world, including a team of archaeologists and paleoanthropologists who discovered pre-Neanderthal human remains. He created a renowned laboratory to study prehistoric human remains, their origins and ancestors: **“Thank you for the booklet and DVD ‘The Human Condition’ which has me particularly interested and which allows an address of the meaning of man. I would be**

grateful if you could inform me of your work in the future and to let me know your future reflections. Your work and publications will be very useful in the library of our laboratory.” (Translated from French)

Professor Dolph Schluter, President of The Society for the Study of Evolution and Director of the Biodiversity Research Centre at the University of British Columbia, whose personal research investigates the ecological forces responsible for the origin of species and the evolution of differences between them: **“I found the Human Condition Documentary Proposal ambitious and thought-provoking. I do believe that the study of evolution can shed light on the human condition, and I would encourage biologists to investigate your proposal.”**

Professor David and Mrs Ann Premack, Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, and his wife and colleague. His contributions of over 50 years have advanced psychological science’s comparative understanding of cognition, and its understanding of the nature of animal and human minds, including introducing the concept of ‘theory of mind’. Together with his wife and long-time collaborator, his most famous contributions stem from his ground-breaking studies on comparative cognition and symbol use in chimpanzees. They are the authors of many papers and books including ‘The Mind of an Ape’ which won the American Psychological Association Award for Excellence: **“Your topic is of utmost interest and importance; you’ve assumed a heavy responsibility in tackling it, and we look forward to your progress.”**

Dr Dame Anne McLaren, eminent reproductive biologist at the Department of Zoology at the University of Cambridge. She has nearly 60 years of internationally-renowned experience in mammalian reproductive and developmental biology and was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1993: **“I was interested in your ambitious plans for “The Human Condition” project and wish you and your project well. I was particularly interested in the attention that you paid bonobos, which have always struck me as being of quite extraordinary importance and largely overlooked in comparison with chimpanzees.”**

Dr Fiona Wood, named Australian of the Year in 2005, a plastic surgeon who became world renowned for her invention of ‘spray on skin’ for burns victims. She is Director of the Royal Perth Hospital Burns Unit, Clinical Professor with the School of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Western Australia and Director of the McComb Research Foundation: **“I congratulate you on your ambitious undertaking. It is always challenging to take debate into an area which generates strong emotions. I will be most interested in your progress—maybe a step in the education of our society towards understanding that we can develop into a society based on the integrity of each individual. Good luck.”**

Richard Johnstone-Scott, Department Head of Mammals at Britain’s Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, responsible for overseeing management of two of their species of great apes, the Sumatran Orangutan and Western Lowland Gorilla; he has worked with great apes for over 40 years: **“Many thanks for your proposal, which I found extremely thought provoking...I am fully supportive of such a worthwhile project...There is no questioning its importance and value, and I sincerely hope that Durrell Wildlife can be involved in some way.”**

Professor Jordi Sabater Pi, Professor of Psychology at the University of Barcelona and the University of Madrid, considered the most fecund of contemporary naturalists and a leading authority on primates in the wild. His anthropological pioneering work includes captive and field studies of mountain gorillas and baboons, and was one of the first people to study bonobos in the wild. He also laid the foundations of the study of Animal Psychology or Ethology in Spain: **“Concerning your Human Condition Documentary Proposal, I will lend my support to it as I found it very interesting. I was in Central Africa for 35 years and my interest in Central Africa and the origins of the human condition are very important to me.”**

Dr Simone Pika, Doctor in the School of Psychology at Scotland’s University of St Andrews who studies the social communication of human and non-human primates with a special focus on underlying processes of social cognition and the evolutionary roots of language. Her current projects centre on social communication in bonobos: **“Being a scientist, I know that the diversity of hypotheses and ideas and their careful investigation is crucial for the scientific discussion, its development and the origin of revolutionary thoughts. Your proposal is therefore very interesting and seems to be well researched and I am very happy to help in further discussion, especially concerning bonobo communication.”**

Professor Bettyann Holtzmann Kevles, Professor in the Department of History at Yale University whose research interests include the history of primatology and theories of female animal behaviour; she has authored a number of books, including ‘Thinking Gorillas: Testing and Teaching the Greatest Ape’ and ‘Watching the Wild Apes: The Primate Studies of Goodall, Fossey and Galdikas’: **“Thank you for sending me your proposal or the Human Condition documentary. I have edited several books about Bonobos and find them endlessly fascinating and indeed, very like ourselves. Your material broadens the realm of our evolutionary cousins, and thus extends the possibility of humanity rising to the challenges of survival. I will gladly support the project in any way I can.”**

Professor James E. Waller, Professor of Psychology and widely recognised scholar in the field of Holocaust and genocide studies; his academic specialisation includes experimental social psychology and the history of psychology and science. His most recent book is “Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing”: **“The Proposal is certainly cutting-edge...it is a timely and very engaging project...Please let me know in what ways I can lend support or be of help as the proposal develops.”**

Professor Howard Gardner, Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Harvard University; Adjunct Professor of Neurology at Boston University School of Medicine, and Senior Director of Harvard Project Zero; author of 15 books including ‘Leading Minds’, ‘The Mind’s New Science: A History of Cognitive Revolution’ and ‘Changing Minds: The Art and Science of Changing our Own and Other People’s Minds’: **“I completely concur with other readers that this is an impressive project, which could be influential.”**

Professor David Papineau, Professor of Philosophy at King's College London working on issues in epistemology, philosophy of science, and the philosophy of mind and psychology; he has written a number of books including 'Theory and Meaning', 'Thinking about Consciousness' and 'The Roots of Reason'; also past President of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science and past Editor of the 'British Journal for the Philosophy of Science': **"I read the Human Condition Documentary Proposal with much interest, and very much hope it comes to fruition. Do keep me posted on its progress."**

Dr Emma Mbua, Head of Palaeontology Division and a Senior Scientist at the National Museums of Kenya; she earned her doctorate at the University of Hamburg, Germany and is now an authority in the evolution and origin of modern humans with particular interests on the modernisation process in the last 0.6 million years: **"I have read the Human Condition Documentary Proposal and must admit that the topic is fascinating. Do keep me posted on the future development of the program."**

Dr Vera Walraven, Belgian primatologist who studies the cognition and behaviour of bonobos and chimpanzees: **"I have not had the opportunity to go through the whole proposal in depth yet... however...I support many others' opinion that this documentary should be made. The ideas explained are not only fascinating but also show that there is still hope for Homo sapiens. Never has any scientific breakthrough been achieved without having to fight strong opposition, and this documentary may well play an important role in doing so with regards to the human condition. As of next year I will have more time to spare and would be very happy to support you in whatever way I can to make sure documentary can be materialised."**

Professor Harold Morowitz, eminent American biophysicist, Professor of Biology and Natural Philosophy and science writer: **"I am impressed by the magnitude and importance of the project."**

Professor George V. Coyne, leading American astronomer who holds and has held many influential positions and who is also an ordained Catholic priest: **"I have finally had time to review your ambitious documentary proposal...I support your project and would be happy to do whatever is within my capacities to help see it realized."**

Professor Philip J. Regal, American Professor of Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour with a major research interest in the bonobos: **"Your proposal deals with extremely important matters and is unusually thoughtful. I like what I have seen. It could open up much-needed discussions."**

Dr Arthur Janov, a world-leading psychologist, best-selling author, and founder and director of a major psychotherapy treatment and research center: **"I am interested. Let me know about your progress."**

Joseph Chilton Pearce, a specialist in early child development and author of many books including the American best seller 'Magical Child', he has written and lectured internationally on human intelligence, creativity and learning: **"This Proposal should itself be published as a book**

and made available on a mass scale...I am simply overwhelmed by this Documentary Proposal...I find it astonishing and impressive...I want to thank you so very much for getting it sent to me. I have learned a great deal from it and consider it invaluable...What a splendid writer Jeremy is!! The whole affair has lifted my spirits."

Professor Brenda Benefit, American Professor of Anthropology and Head of a Department of Sociology and Anthropology; whose research focuses on the evolution of Old World monkeys and apes in Africa: **"I read this Proposal and cannot not support it."**

Professor John Partridge, American Professor of Philosophy specialising in ancient philosophy, whose teaching includes literature and the philosophy of emotions: **"This project has a fascinating topic and a breath-taking scope. At a time when science is under attack in the US, I think this project is very timely and, of course, of tremendous importance. I would be happy to assist in whatever way I can."**

Professor James S. Chisholm, Australian Professor of Anatomy and Human Biology, an expert on child development and a humanist with interests in evolutionary psychology and cultural psychology; a member of the Editorial Board of the US journal 'Human Nature': **"I read the documentary proposal straight through with growing enthusiasm...I believe your message is critical and would love to contribute in any way I could...I will also urge 'Human Nature' to ally with your project in whatever way works best."**

Professor Alan Dixson, British Professor of Evolutionary Biology at New Zealand's Victoria University of Wellington, who has expertise in evolution, primatology and sexual behaviour and is published in over 100 articles, papers and books. His eminent career includes posts such as scientific advisor to the BBC Natural History Unit, Director of Conservation and Science for the Zoological Society of San Diego and Head of the Medical Research Council Group on Development and Integration of Behaviour at Cambridge University: **"This is most interesting--I enjoyed the DVD very much and I can see this is a serious venture...potentially a fascinating documentary, and a very worthwhile concept...of potentially wide interest to the viewing public."**

Jason Merchev, journalist, author and founder of 'Values of the Wise', a San Diego based organisation dedicated "to bringing great thinking to life": **"The words in Camus' quote in Part 4 of the Proposal are like hot iron, and Jeremy Griffith is pounding on the issue of our core nature like a blacksmith! I hope this documentary gets made."**

Professor Samuel P. Oliner, Professor of Sociology at Humboldt State University and Founding Director of the Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behaviour Institute based in California. His entire family was killed in the Holocaust and he survived through the altruism of Polish peasants. Having made a life long study of altruism, he lectures widely on the subject, also on racism, anti-Semitism, war and genocide: **"I have learned a lot from the Human Condition Documentary Proposal, as well as from your comments [in our shared interview on the Jason**

Merchey program]. **Good luck in your valuable research...the topic [of the Proposal] is an important one that needs to be disseminated...and I hope that your documentary will come to fruition soon."**

Dr Tim Davenport, Biologist and Director of the Southern Rift and Southern Highlands Conservation Programmes in Tanzania, set up by the Wildlife Conservation Society:
"Fascinating!...The Proposal is both important and very exciting...Many thanks for encouraging me to read your Proposal more thoroughly, especially Part 4. I would certainly support what you are trying to do, and would greatly appreciate being kept up to date on progress."

Dr Montserrat Colell, Spanish primatologist, Professor in the Department of Psychology, Psychiatry and Clinical Psychobiology at the University of Barcelona whose research includes cognition and social behaviour and ecology in great apes and diverse species of monkeys:
"Thank you a lot for giving me the opportunity of knowing about your project. I find it really impressive, a great effort of synthesis and the idea underlying it is worth supporting. I wish you the best of luck with your project and please, let me know more about the development of it. I'm especially concerned about the question of consciousness; presently we are working with primates in regard to self-recognition, social learning's and culture behaviour. I'm sure that your project will do well!"

Professor John Hedley Brooke, pre-eminent British Professor who is a world authority on the relationship between science and religion: **"I have looked through the materials and find them extremely bold and wide-ranging. This is a courageous enterprise and I am of course sympathetic to attempts to bring scientific and religious insights into contact...The underlined message on the last page, that science is the liberator of humanity, ought to appeal to the scientists but the text is also quite hard-hitting in suggesting that scientific progress itself has been hampered by a refusal to engage the question of the human condition."**

Professor Clancy D. McKenzie, MD, psychiatrist and Professor of Integrative Medicine at Capital University of Integrative Medicine in Washington DC whose teaching focuses on developmental aspects of neurobiological disorders, and the integration of psychological and biological factors as they pertain to serious mental and emotional disorders: **"I find this [Human Condition Documentary Proposal] undertaking most fascinating, and very worthwhile in terms of understanding the human condition and contemplating how it changes and ultimately how to move toward empathy and compassion."**

Dr Richard J. Bird, British psychologist, chaos theorist and author: **"I received the material on The Human Condition and read it with much interest...I agree with the general thrust of what you are trying to do and that it is a difficult task to get sufficient momentum to alter the current paradigms in science...I look forward to hearing of your further moves towards your objectives."**

Professor Robert Sussman, leading American anthropologist specialising in primate behaviour: **"I found it very interesting...I would be happy to discuss this further with you."**

Professor Kerry Bowman, Canadian Professor of Ethics, medical ethicist and conservationist actively involved in primate research: **“Thank you for your fascinating proposal, it covers deep and important questions...it all appeals to me very deeply...Please let me know if I can be of any assistance with this very important project.”**

Dr Jo Thompson, American biological anthropologist and primatologist with expertise in bonobos: **“You have undertaken quite a feat, but a worthy cause, something not taken on by the weak minded. I find your proposal presents a fascinating philosophical leap that will certainly arouse academic debate, which hopefully will further this science...Please keep me in the loop as it develops...I commend and support your endeavour!”**

Dr Brian Hare, Max Plank Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, an evolutionary anthropologist researching human and nonhuman primate behaviour and cognition: firstly from Dr Hare’s communication coordinator, Vanessa Woods: **“Brian is interested in participating”**, then subsequently Dr Hare responded saying: **“I too share your enthusiasm for sharing with others the importance of research on human evolution...”**, and in a further communiqué: **“good luck with the project!”**

Dr Les Christidis, Assistant Director of Research and Collections at the Australian Museum with 25 years of experience in scientific research mostly as Senior Curator at Museum Victoria. He is the author of numerous scientific publications on the evolution and systematics of birds: **“I found your proposal to make a documentary series about the biology of the human condition very interesting and thought-provoking, and look forward to viewing the final product.”**

Professor Gordon Burghardt, Alumni Distinguished Professor in Psychology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Tennessee; he is co-editor of ‘The Cognitive Animal’, past president of the Animal Behaviour Society, and editor of the ‘Journal of Comparative Psychology’: **“I did receive the Proposal and read it with interest. I may not agree with it all but the issues are important and the Proposal worthwhile. I did not respond immediately as there is lots to digest...I would be interested in exploring the topic.”**

Dr Thomas Suddendorf, Australian Associate Professor of Psychology whose research interest is the development and evolution of representational capacities in children and primates, with a focus on cognitive understanding of self, time and mind: **“Thanks for the impressive Proposal. The topic is profound and interesting. Let me know more in due course.”**

Professor Temple Grandin, American Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University and arguably the most accomplished and well-known adult with ‘high functioning’ autism in the world; also a renowned professional designer of humane livestock facilities; and ranked no. 31 in *Time Magazine*’s 100 most influential people of 2010 in the Heroes category: **“I completely endorse the materials on the significance of nurturing. What you have said about the bonobos makes a lot of sense to me. I also strongly agree about negative entropy being the ordering force**

in the universe. However there are some abstract ideas about consciousness that I don't understand and agree with."

Professor Robert A. Hinde, British award-winning biologist whose early studies of animal behaviour included mother-infant interactions in primates, his many books have greatly influenced ethology, psychology, psychiatry and the social sciences. He is an Honorary Fellow of the British Psychological Society and the Royal College of Psychiatrists: **"This is an exciting project, which aims to get to the heart of the basic problems of humanity. The present malaise of the world is in part due to neglect of the problems that this project aims to address, most especially those concerned with the bases of ethics."**

Maria Teresa Abelló, Spanish biologist and Curator of Primates at the Barcelona Zoo whose research includes the study of maternalism in bonobos and other great apes; Vice Co-ordinator of the Gorilla EEP (European captive breeding programme): **"The Proposal seems to me really interesting as I think that by observing other primates we really can understand our behaviour, and probably the reason why our social system is breaking down and we are losing our humanity. Please let me know if I can be of assistance."**

Dr Nobuyuki Kawai, Japanese psychologist and primatologist at Nagoya University: **"As a psychologist and a primatologist, I am interested in the contents of the Proposal...I have experience with chimpanzees and macaque monkeys and I would like to give a helping hand to the Proposal, if there is anything I can do. I look forward to hearing of its progress."**

Dr Jef Dupain, leading European primatologist working in the Congo on the conservation of bonobos: **"I read with great interest through your documentary proposal on 'The Human Condition'...I like very much the set up...congratulations with the excellent document!"**

Barbara Bell, one of the most experienced bonobo caretakers in the world: **"It sounds as though this is a huge project that will take a lot of energy from a lot of people. Let me know how I can be of further help to you."**

Jacinta Williams, Cincinnati Zoo Primate keeper who has worked with primates most of her life and with the great apes for most of her career including several years with bonobos: **"I want to help you in any way I can."**

Professor Vicki K. Bentley-Condit, American Professor of Anthropology; a primatologist who studies nonhuman primate social behaviours and has an interest in human evolution and the biological basis of human behaviour: **"I found the Proposal to be quite interesting. I hope you will keep me informed."**

Dr Richard Parnell, experienced British primatologist specialising in the social organisation and interaction of lowland gorillas: **"the proposal lives on the coffee table in our field office, and**

I frequently pick it up and go over a paragraph or two whenever I have the chance...It is a fascinating document.”

Inogwabini Bila-Isia, Congolese bonobo conservationist, currently involved with the World Wildlife Fund Democratic Republic of Congo Program, previously Field Conservation Director of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee: **“I feel that this Proposal is a great document and very important...[it] sheds light on some fundamental issues related to our presence as human beings... even though some of the concepts therein developed may seem very disturbing for lazy minds that are common for most of the humanity. However, I do believe that these types of challenging thoughts will become widespread in the century and that the ‘Human Condition Documentary’ is pioneering such debate...This documentary has to go through to its end...As such, I would provide any support to see the master piece come through, of course within the limits of my strengths, resources and time.”**

Professor William A. Rottschaefer, American Professor of Philosophy with interests in the epistemic relationship between science and religion and in the biological and psychological basis of morality: **“I am very interested in your project. It addresses some serious and important issues of theoretical and practical import. If I can be of help in furthering the project, please let me know.”**

Howard Bloom, American scholar, author and science innovator: **“It was an astonishing document to read. I felt you were reading my brain...I’d be very willing to participate.”**

Dr Purity Kiura, Head of the Archaeology Department at the National Museums of Kenya with a Doctorate in anthropology: **“I have read the Human Condition documentary proposal that you sent to me and highly approve of it... If I can be of any help, please let me know.”**

Professor Gregory Peterson, American Professor of Religion and Science with special attention devoted to the biological and cognitive sciences: **“I would be willing to participate in the project...I should add that I would be hesitant to endorse all aspects of the project...I think the topics the documentary covers are important and I would be excited to contribute to such a conversation.”**

Dr Francis Thackeray, leading South African palaeontologist: **“very interesting...would be willing to participate...[if there is] a formal agreement...and thank you for the opportunity...may I congratulate you on your proposal.”**

Professor Daniel Povinelli, American Professor of Science specialising in cognitive evolution and primate psychology: **“this project looks an important work, seems to squarely intersect with our research here...look forward to hearing more about it as it develops.”**

Dr Captain Edgar Mitchell, famous American Apollo astronaut, scientist and founder of the Institute of Noetic Sciences: **“The Human Condition documentary series is interesting and of importance to not only our understanding but also toward human betterment.”**

Professor Stephen G. Post, American Professor of Bioethics, Philosophy and Religion: **“This is such great material.”**

Professor Gunther Stent, pre-eminent American molecular biologist, neurobiologist and science historian: **“I would be glad to meet with you and discuss this project with you.”**

Professor Julian Chela-Flores, Venezuelan Professor of Theoretical Physics: **“this area of knowledge deserves more attention from both scientists and humanists. I am convinced that your present effort, and that of others, will contribute to a constructive dialogue between science and the humanities. Please keep me informed of your progress.”**

Professor Niles Eldredge, eminent American palaeontologist at The American Museum of Natural History: **“I am very much interested in this venture.”**

Dr Peter Beaumont, prominent South African archaeologist: **“I certainly agree with the Leakey quote that knowing our past best enables us to confront the future. And, in Part 1, that there is evidence for directionality in human evolution. Please keep me informed.”**

Professor John R. Searle, American Professor of Philosophy of Mind and authority in the field of consciousness: **“The project looks interesting and important...I am certainly interested in the project.”**

Dr George Schaller, American zoologist, naturalist and famous author: **“very stimulating to read, and the subject is obviously important and little covered by the media in any form...The insights and ideas are fascinating and pertinent and must be developed and disseminated.”**

Professor Alison Galloway and Professor Mary Ellen Morbeck, distinguished American biological anthropologists and co-authors: **“Your proposed documentary promises to focus attention on critical aspects of human evolution. We especially are interested in your discussion of the role of nurturing and mate selection by females.”**

Professor Stacey E. Ake, American biologist and philosopher: **“I have thoroughly enjoyed the DVD and text of the proposal...could I show the preview episode to [my] students...please know you would be very much welcome to speak at [my university].”**

Professor Douglas Rushkoff, American Professor of Communications, social and media commentator, prolific author, award-winning documentary maker and advisor to the UN on world culture: **“I’ll attempt to publicize your work among my network...because it is in line with my own thinking and work.”**

Professor Peter L. Benson, American social psychologist considered one of the leading contributors to the fields of child and adolescent development: **“I too think you are exploring important ideas. I would be glad to be involved in further conversations.”**

Professor Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, American Professor of Anthropology with expertise in primate socio-biology and behaviour: **“I am very intrigued by your project in which I see much of interest and value.”**

Professor Denis R. Alexander, British immunologist who lectures and broadcasts widely on the subject of science and religion: **“thank you for the proposed TV documentary series on ‘The Human Condition’. The materials look most interesting and I have read them with interest. If I can be of further assistance please let me know.”**

Richard Heinberg, American author, journalist, educator and lecturer: **“impressed...I was quite prepared to be sceptical, but found the evidence and logic as presented to be compelling...Griffith makes a strong case for humans as natural co-operators...he offers a strong counterpoint to the ‘selfish gene’ discourse...I would be happy to appear in the film.”**

Dr James Prescott, American developmental neuropsychologist and cross-cultural psychologist: **“Your proposed documentary is rich in material...will look forward to your placing human spirituality/morality on a firm natural biological foundation.”**

Margaret Klenck, American Jungian Psychoanalyst and commentator: **“[A] fascinating and thought-provoking project. I am grateful for your argument that we must open up a dialogue among science, religion, psychology and human experience...please keep me informed.”**

Dr David Mbora, Kenyan scientist working as the Croasdale Fellow in Vertebrate Biology at Dartmouth College, USA; Co-Director of the Primatology and Ecology Field School in Kenya; he has studied the behavioural ecology of the Tana River primates in Kenya: **“I found the ideas espoused in the Proposal and the accompanying DVD stimulating intellectually, and I agree that this is a project that needs to be undertaken. Please let me know if I can be of assistance in any way.”**

Professor Gerald Holton, distinguished American Professor of Physics: **“impressive...You have evidently taken on a huge subject, and fortified your argument with wide study.”**

Dr Kenneth Ford, former director of the American Institute of Physics: **“I have looked at, and much admired and enjoyed, the pilot DVD that you sent. You are clearly embarked on a most ambitious project which has the potential to be exceedingly enlightening.”**

Ms Amy Dixon, Team Leader of Primates at Auckland Zoological Park, New Zealand: **“I have just completed reading your proposal, what a feat! I really do appreciate the scope and ambition of what you have put together and I look forward to seeing the outcome. I fully support your project and think it is very worthwhile.”**

Michael Mendizza, American author, educator, documentary maker and founder of a learning center focusing on nurturing in human development: **“Your documentary project is impressive...I share your concern and vision...I encourage you to do what you are doing and more...I will be happy to support your effort any way you see fit.”**

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