

ARMCHAIR EXPLORATIONS

THE STORY OF US: 4 MILLION YEARS IN THE MAKING

Presented by **Dr. Michael Wallach**

This three-part series is the story of how our species of human came to be, what is our nature, and what separates us from the rest of the animal kingdom.



PART 1: FROM THERE TO HERE

JULY 19TH

Second Wednesdays of
the Month

1:00–2:00 pm

Pavilion Theater—2nd Fl.
443 River Road
Highland Park

PART 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF BEING HUMAN

AUGUST 16TH

To Register:

@ Email Daniel Carr at
dcarr@parkerlife.org or

📞 Call Daniel at
(732) 565-2496

PART 3: THE ESSENCE OF BEING HUMAN

SEPTEMBER 13TH

Sign up for the entire series.

Attendance is FREE but
space is limited.

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PART 1: FROM THERE TO HERE

JULY 19TH



Part 1 presents an introduction to modern evolution theory with emphasis on new tools like cladistics and molecular biology that have revolutionized construction of the tree of life. From there it will explore the evolution of Homo sapiens — us — from our 4,000,000-year-old ancestor to our emergence as a new species some 300,000 years ago. The talk will conclude with a discussion of hot-off-the-presses research showing that Homo sapiens and Homo neanderthalensis (Neanderthals) not only coexisted, but interbred, proven by the fact that segments of Neanderthal DNA is found in the DNA of all modern humans.

PART 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF BEING HUMAN

AUGUST 16TH



Part 2 discusses the seven characteristics of modern humans: walking upright, making and using tools, having a particular body type, large brains, a complex social organization, language, and manipulation of the environment. The central theme of the talk is the question, “What exactly is human culture, and how did it evolve?”

PART 3: THE ESSENCE OF BEING HUMAN

SEPTEMBER 13TH



For more than 30,000 years, humans have been creating works of art in an astounding range of genres, including painting, sculpture, music, and architecture, but why? Art does not add function. Art does not enhance utility. A room is just as functional if there is no art on the walls. A plate is just as useful if there is no decoration. Part 3 presents and discusses the proposition that human beings have a fundamental need for personal and emotional expression. Art is the way to do that. It is the uniquely human appreciation of aesthetics that is the essence of humanity. It is what separates us from the rest of the animal kingdom.

DR. MICHAEL WALLACH

is a retired cell biologist. He holds a B.S. degree from Syracuse University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania/Wistar Institute. From an early age, his grandfather, a true Renaissance



man, inspired him to take the time to appreciate the world around him whether it is catching earthworms in the park, or the mysteries of the night sky. That curiosity developed into what Michael calls, “The joy of learning.”

Dr. Wallach conducts a monthly lecture series at Parker, where

he is a resident, and at Parker at Stonegate assisted living facility. He enjoys public speaking, and is an instructor at Rutgers University’s Osher Lifetime Learning Institute. However, Dr. Wallach’s real passion is instilling in others the joy of learning.

Parker is pleased to present this program as a community service. All opinions and program content presented are solely the responsibility of the speaker. Parker does not endorse or recommend any products or services that may be offered by any speaker or business.