

From "Worst to Worse to Bad to Good to Better to Best"? A look at Progress⁶

The general perception of earliest man casts him as an animalistic brute, struggling to survive against the elements. Many look at the agricultural revolution as the first great step toward becoming "civilized." How do we define PROGRESS? Write your definition here:

Progress

Three concepts must be understood to put progress into perspective:

1. **Standard of living** refers to a measure of what we have relative to what we need for subsistence. This can be easily measured; it is very objective.
2. **Quality of life** refers to the degree of satisfaction we feel about our lives. This becomes very difficult to measure; it is very subjective.
3. **Style of living** refers to somewhat of a mixture of the two. This is what we think we need to be happy. This can only be measured by the individual.

New studies question if the move from hunter-gatherer to farmer put man onto a Selective path of progress, only seen in certain areas—could it be that some sacrifices were made in the sake of progress? Or that new problems accompanied more complex societies?

1. Hunter-gatherers generally worked fewer hours of the day; they only did what they needed to do to survive.
2. Hunter-gatherers generally had a more varied and healthier diet; farmers ate the same crops and foods.
3. Hunter-gatherers left their trash and germs behind; agricultural societies incubated disease.
4. Hunter-gatherers lived as relative equals; agricultural societies led to the division of people by class and gender.

Where do we stand today? Are our lives better ?

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