



# The Major Features of Evolution

*George Gaylord Simpson*

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## **The Major Features of Evolution** George Gaylord Simpson

from Wikipedia: George Gaylord Simpson (June 16, 1902 - October 6, 1984) was an American paleontologist. Simpson was perhaps the most influential paleontologist of the twentieth century, and a major participant in the modern evolutionary synthesis, contributing *Tempo and mode in evolution* (1944), *The meaning of evolution* (1949) and *The major features of evolution* (1953). He was an expert on extinct mammals and their intercontinental migrations. He anticipated such concepts as punctuated equilibrium (in *Tempo and mode*) and dispelled the myth that the evolution of the horse was a linear process culminating in the modern *Equus caballus*. He coined the word *hypodigm* in 1940, and published extensively on the taxonomy of fossil and extant mammals. Simpson was influentially, and incorrectly, opposed to Alfred Wegener's theory of continental drift. He was Professor of Zoology at Columbia University, and Curator of the Department of Geology and Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History from 1945 to 1959. He was Curator of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University from 1959 to 1970, and a Professor of Geosciences at the University of Arizona until his retirement in 1982.

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