



PLEISTOCENE COALITION NEWS

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The bones of Calico

Recently, the Pleistocene Coalition received copies of two official communications regarding the Calico Early Man Site in Barstow, California. We reproduce the communications below with only personal references deleted. They concern possible human bones discovered at Calico during the site's early years.

The first is to the Friends of Calico and its Board of Directors. The second is a response from the Federal Bureau of Land Management, the governing body under which the site is operated in the United States. The Pleistocene Coalition was informed because this issue has been caught up in red tape for the past several years.

The topic of very early humans in the Americas from c. 30,000–300,000 years ago has been the subject of controversy for several decades. Unfortunately, the general public is not aware of the evidence for early entries of this kind since such data are routinely blocked from publication through the United States anthropological community which is pre-committed to the idea of no

early peoples in the Americas.

However, due in part to efforts of the Pleistocene Coalition, it is becoming increasingly known that such evidence exists. Apart from this breaking news on Calico, this issue of the newsletter contains further examples of how evidence of early Americans has

been kept from traditional scientific discourse through behind-the-scenes peer review and other methods.

Scientists attempting to bring this evidence forward through traditional scientific venues continually meet the same roadblocks. They have no recourse when their empirical evidence is blocked from publication as long-experienced by PC founding members Virginia Steen-McIntyre (volcanic ash specialist) and Sam VanLandingham (diatomist). However, those of Native American descent do have a form of legal appeal, namely, the Native American Graves Protection and

Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) passed by Congress in 1990 and signed into law by then



Calico Early Man Site in Barstow, California. Photo courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management.

President George H. W. Bush. The Repatriation Act is at the crux of the two letters reproduced. It is a difficult area as it relates to possible conflicts of rights between native peoples and popular institutions such as museums in the United States. The coalition is not taking a stand on this issue at present but is simply reporting that an action has begun to have evidence of possible human bones from Calico brought into scientific discourse. The bones in question may not be human, but until a genuine scientific study is conducted American citizens will never know the full story. –JF

Letter to Friends of Calico and Directors

From Ren Lallatin

Geologist; Native American Mohawk, Cherokee, Choctaw

Monday, December 27, 2010

Dear Pres. Vedborg and the Friends of Calico Early Man Site Board of Directors,

I am writing this to you as a Native American and a direct descendant of ancient peoples that inhabited this land. I am speaking in behalf of those ancient voices that were silenced so long ago.

What I officially request is that the FOC Board of Directors immediately undertake proper study and legal care of

the bones recovered from the Calico Early Man Site excavations and curated for ~40 years at the San Bernardino County Museum.

As you know, Native Americans are very sensitive to the exhumation of our graves, even by those who are sup-

> [Contd on page 2](#)

The bones of Calico (cont'd.)

"By May, 2008, nearly a year after the 2004-2007 research permit had expired, the bones had still not been addressed, even though it was supposedly a Calico EMS research priority."

posedly "authorized", without court orders or legal warrants, to exhume our dead. That was the reason for the institution of the Native American Repatriation laws regarding proper treatment and eventual repatriation of burial remains, especially human bones.

I am, of course, referring to two separate sets of bones that have been housed and curated at the San Bernardino County Museum for the last 40 years or so.

1) The many bone fragments, curated, now catalogued and stored in baby food jars in the regular collection

2) The about 4 inch long by 1 inch wide, greenstick fractured bone with joint still embedded in the matrix, which is stored separately in the museum vault, and may be human.

I first learned, from [a] professional archeologist. . . that bones had been recovered at the Calico EMS just after I arrived at the site in 2005. I was shocked by the scientific and legal negligence of the facts that the bones had NEVER been studied for scientific data, like speciation and 14C dating, in the 40 years since they were recovered. I was also quite distressed to learn that if the big bone in the vault is human, it had never been addressed through legal channels under the Native American Repatriation Act.

[The] Former FOC Board President and Co-Project Director[s]...had made it a first priority to address the bones in their written 2004-2007 research permit with the Bureau of Land Management. Since 2004, the BLM has certainly had written

knowledge through the research permit of the presence of bones in the EMS collection.

By May, 2008, nearly a year after the 2004-2007 research permit had expired, the bones had still not been addressed, even though it was supposedly a Calico EMS research priority...So here we are, January 2011, and the bones still are not addressed and the laws complied with. The Calico collection has now been fully catalogued. I have seen the computerized catalogue entries on the bones...There is even less excuse not to comply with the laws now.

I am requesting, through your authority as the FOC Board of Directors, that you all DIRECT the proper identification, study and dating of the bones through an independent, impartial research facility - NOT biased personnel of the San Bernardino County Museum - and return with written reports on all the bones by the May, 2011 FOC meetings.

I ask that the following tests, at a minimum, be done:

1) Identify the bones as to genus and species, if possible. Are there Miocene-aged reworked Barstow Formation fossil species?

2) Determine, for certain, whether or not DNA tests are possible on the bones, especially the large, greenstick fractured bone still partially imbedded in matrix

3) Date, using 14C, on especially the large, embedded, greenstick-fractured bone

4) If the 14C age of the big bone or any other human

bone exceeds the outer ~45,000 year reliability of 14C dating, resort to other dating methods to determine reliable dates for the bone.

5) If the big bone, or any other of the bones are human, instigate the proper legal dialogues with the BLM and the tribes in compliance with Native American repatriation laws.

The longer this is delayed for 40 years since the bones' recovery, and especially with the big bone locked in the vault and hidden away, the more suspicious this looks. The more the bones are not addressed, the more negligent everybody is, including FOC, SBCM and the BLM.

I am asking you now to finally address the bones and care for them in the proper scientific and legal ways.

Deal with the bones once and for all, and let the scientific, legal and social facts, not opinions or excuses, speak for themselves. After 40 years of being hidden out of sight and dismissed as "irrelevant" and "inconvenient" or "too expensive", the true facts, hard data and legal realities of my ancestor's bodies deserve to be heard, whatever the outcomes may be.

I will ask the FOC Board for a written copy of the full report on the bones at the public Friends of Calico general membership meeting, May 2011.

Sincerely,

Ren Lallatin,
Mohawk, Cherokee, Choctaw

> [Contd on page 3](#)

The bones of Calico (cont'd.)

"The longer this is delayed for 40 years since the bones' recovery, and especially with the big bone locked in the vault and hidden away, the more suspicious this looks."

- Ren Lallatin, geologist

RESPONSE FROM THE U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BLM (Stephanie Damadio) message to De Schroth re Calico bones 11-01-19

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "sdamadio@blm.gov" <sdamadio@blm.gov>

To: "Schroth, Adella" <aschroth@sbcm.sbcounty.gov>

Cc: ...

Sent: Wed, January 19, 2011 9:16:50 AM

Subject: Calico EMS bones study

Dear Dee,

Any requests for the study of museum collection materials that originated from BLM land that require the loan of materials and/or destructive testing requires BLM permission.

Loans

BLM museum collection may only be loaned with written approval from the appropriate authorized BLM official to facilities and institutions that comply with 36 CFR 79. BLM collections may not be loaned to individuals. Loans must be to a facility, institution or agency that will be responsible for the security and return of the collection as well as maintain the collections to professional standards. Anyone interested in a study that requires loan of the materials, needs to provide me, as the BLM authorized representative for museum collections issues in California, with:

-a written summary of the proposed research design

-time line for the proposed research

-the individual/individuals involved, their roles in the project and their qualifications/professional affiliations

-how the project will be funded if there are testing costs

-catalog numbers of object or sample

-security parameters for the materials

Destructive Analysis

Numerous scientific analysis and research methods are an appropriate use of museum collections, including methods that destroy or alter an object or specimen (i.e., Carbon14 dating, thin sectioning, metallography, neutron activation, DNA testing, etc.). Generally, the agency official shall not allow uses that would alter, damage, or destroy an object in a collection. However, destructive analysis may be allowed if such use is necessary for scientific studies or public interpretation and the potential gain outweighs the potential loss of the object. Destructive scientific uses should be limited to unprovenanced, non-unique, non-fragile objects, a sample of objects drawn from a larger collection of similar objects (36 CFR 79.10(d)5) or a small portion of a large object taken from the least visible portion. Destructive analysis of BLM California collections must be approved by myself as the BLM California authorized representative for museum collections issues. Requests for destructive testing should include the following information:

-artifacts or specimens to be sampled

-tests or analysis to be done

-use of the data

-time frame required to complete the analysis

-amount of sample to be consumed

-catalog numbers of object or sample

-details of disposition of data and sample remains after analysis is complete

After the appropriate information has been reviewed, and any additional clarifications made, I will contact the Museum for information on the amount and condition of the materials to be re-searched. After consultation with the Field Archaeologist for the area where the collections originated, a decision on the request/requests will be made and communicated to the requestor.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (916) 978-4650.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Stephanie

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Ren Lallatin, MA, and author of the letter to the Friends of Calico is a geologist researching at Calico Early Man Site for the past four years. She is Native American Mohawk, Cherokee, and Choctaw.

Blocking data: At the editor's desk

by Virginia Steen-McIntyre

Tephrochronologist (volcanic ash specialist)

"The reviewers felt that your article did not have enough documentation to support your conclusions and a longer format is needed to discuss your ideas and conclusions and to present your data.' ... This for a short geological note that discusses weathering phenomena!"

In two previous issues of *Pleistocene Coalition News*, diatomist Sam VanLandingham shared his experience of data block concerning the age of the Dorenberg skull and bifacial artifacts from the Valsequillo area of south central Mexico (greater than 80ky as determined by diatom biostratigraphy.) An unethical reviewer and outright lies played their part there. Another source can be found at the editor's desk. If the editor finds a submitted manuscript too controversial for comfort, it can be rejected outright, before it has a chance to reach reviewers. My recent experience with data block comes in here.

Hueyatlaco site, weathering characteristics

At the first El Hombre Temprano en América (Early Man in America) symposium in Mexico City (2002), I gave a talk on using weathering characteristics of volcanic ash and pumice layers to rough-date an archaeological site by use of the microscope alone (1). A companion piece could have pointed out certain features of the sediment in general exposed in the trench walls that might hint of age. I decided to write down these more general geologic observations as a short note to help archaeologists working in the area identify potential very early sites before a shovel of dirt was moved.

I submitted the first manuscript to *The Mammoth Trumpet*, a semi-formal venue for mainstream archaeologists in August,

2002, "Geologic Observations at Hueyatlaco, a Late Mid-Pleistocene Archaeological site, Valsequillo Area, Puebla, Mexico." It was rejected November 5. One of the coeditors wrote, "Unfortunately, we will have to decline publication of the article. We both feel that it does not fit well within *The Mammoth Trumpet*."

I later submitted a manuscript covering similar material but with a different emphasis to the *Geology* Section of *Current Research in the Pleistocene*, a more formal publication (February, 2003, "Geological Observations at Hueyatlaco Archaeological Site, Valsequillo Area, Puebla, Mexico".) It was rejected June 30, 2003. The secretary for the Center Study of the First Americans wrote, "Thank you for submitting your article to *Current Research in the Pleistocene*, Volume 20. We appreciate your interest; however we cannot accept your article for publication. The reviewers felt that your article did not have enough documentation to support your conclusions and a longer format is needed to discuss your ideas and conclusions and to present your data." ... *This for a short geological note that discusses weathering phenomena!* (The note was less than two pages long; the list of references cited more than two pages, single spaced).

At first, the *CRP* article sounds like reviewers made the decision. Perhaps. Except the same person was

editor of both it and *The Mammoth Trumpet* at the time. You can read the rough drafts on [my Pleistocene Coalition webpage](http://my.PleistoceneCoalition webpage) and on my website (<<http://www.valsequilloclassic.net/>>, home page, "Unpublished Data" box at right).

Were the reasons given for the rejection of the articles the actual reasons they were turned down? I think not. It's the association of that geologic data with those "impossibly old" artifacts in the Valsequillo region that is the problem!

Valsequillo sites, geology

Still not resolved (in late January) is another manuscript problem, this one apparently the result of simple miscommunication. It concerns the last manuscript of Harold E. Malde, staff geologist for the classic Valsequillo Project. (The Stratigraphic Debate at Hueyatlaco, Valsequillo, Mexico, H.E. Malde, V. Steen-McIntyre, C. Naeser, S. VanLandingham.) Hal submitted it in early 2007 to the editors of a memorial volume honoring paleontologist Charles Repenning, our murdered colleague (see abstract). It apparently was accepted at the time, but we don't have the details. Hal died of leukemia in November of that year, and his papers, in the process of being archived at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, would be difficult to access at this time.

> [Contd on page 5](#)

Blocking data—at the editor's desk (cont'd)

"Were the reasons given for the rejection of the articles the actual reasons they were turned down? I think not. It's the association of that geologic data with those "impossibly old" artifacts in the Valsequillo region that is the problem!"

"Evidence from vertebrate fossils, from early uranium-series dates, from later zircon fission-track ages and (U-Th)/He measurements, and from recent diatom studies imply that the principal archaeological site, Hueyat-laco, could be as much as 400,000 years old."

Abstract

As a tribute to Charles Repenning, we review the history of investigations at the Valsequillo archaeological area south [of] Puebla, Mexico, from the early 1960s to 2006. Evidence from vertebrate fossils, from early uranium-series dates, from later zircon fission-track ages and (U-Th)/He measurements, and from recent diatom studies imply that the principal archaeological site, Hueyat-laco, could be as much as 400,000 years old, Hueyat-laco rests unconformably on Xalnene tuff (basaltic ash) dated at 1.3 million years by whole-rock argon analysis. This finding differs greatly from a 40,000-year chronology reported by Silvia González of Liverpool John Moores University, UK, and we judge that alleged footprints described by her in the Xalnene are marks left by quarry operations.

As the second author, I took responsibility for seeing this very important paper through to completion and into print. Queries to the editors were met with vague replies: Yes, the volume was still in the works. Did our manuscript meet with their approval? Any revisions needed? No answer.

Alarmed by this silence, co-author Sam VanLandingham began checking internet sources early this past summer. Sure enough. He found reference to an article that had been accepted for publication in the Repenning volume. A direct e-mail by him to the editors brought this stunning reply: "We received

information regarding possible misappropriation of others' work relative to the manuscript. It is our opinion that editors should not become involved in such a dispute, so we decided not to accept the manuscript." The manuscript had apparently been rejected back in 2007, before Hal's death, on the basis of unsubstantiated gossip, but we only discovered this fact three years later!

It turns out that the problem centered around the illustration of a Hueyat-laco trench profile that we had included to show the position of Sam VanLandingham's diatom samples. We had been denied permission to use the provisional stratigraphic contact lines that originally appeared there, and the illustration for the manuscript still had them. I quickly sent the editors the profile sans lines (See thumbnail at the top of the VanLandingham webpage located at <<http://pleistocenecoalition.com/vanlandingham/index.html>> for a version that can be enlarged to show details), and again the way appeared open for the manuscript to be considered for publication in the Repenning volume. But it still had to be sent out for review, and now we were working under a tight deadline.

I was asked to recommend objective reviewers, and it took a bit of scrabbling to find some (most researchers have strong feelings about the Valsequillo sites, pro or con), but we were able to come up with three; a geologist, a geographer, and an archaeologist. Review copies of the manuscript were not forthcoming from the editors, and so I sent them copies myself. Unnecessary

as it turns out: another miscommunications. Learned January 30 that only one of the reviewers I had suggested would be selected, and that the editors would choose a second one. Both now apparently have their review copies and are aware of the deadline.

Will the Malde manuscript eventually see print? In the Repenning volume? Elsewhere? Will it die on the vine? Time will tell. Meanwhile, I'll keep you posted here in the *Pleistocene Coalition News!*

References:

- (1) Steen-McIntyre, V. 2006, Approximate Dating of Tephra Using the Microscope: "Seat-of-the-Pants" Methods to Roughly Date Quaternary Archaeological and Paleontological Sites by Associated Pumice and Volcanic Ash Layers in Concepción Jiménez López, J., S. González, J. Antonio Pompa y Padilla, and F. Ortiz Pedraza, Coordinators, *El Hombre Temprano en América y sus Implicaciones en el Poblamiento de la Cuenca de México, Primer Simposio Internacional* [Early Man in America and Implications in the Peopling of the Valley of Mexico, First International Symposium], Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia [INAH], México D.F., México, 274 pp., 155-165.

VIRGINIA STEEN-MCINTYRE, Ph.D, is a tephrochronologist (volcanic ash specialist) involved in preserving and publishing the Palaeolithic evidence from Valsequillo since the late 1960s. Her story first came to public attention in Michael Cremo and Richard Thompson's book, *Forbidden Archeology* (1993), and in the Bill Cote television special, *Mysterious Origins of Man*, hosted by Charleton Heston (1996).

Tetela 1 scribed bone: Oldest American artwork yet?

By Virginia Steen-McIntyre

"By that time the nearby Hueyatlaco site, excavated in the same indurated Valsequillo gravel unit, had been dated by uranium-series and fission-track methods to roughly 250ky."

In our last issue, the "mastodon and mammoth" one, we challenged the idea that the recently reported Vero Beach mammoth engraving was the only, or even the oldest evidence for the coexistence in the Americas of humans and these massive Ice Age beasts.

There we introduced Tetela 1 (Fig. 1), the scribed piece of fossil mastodon bone that may be older by far than the recently reported Vero Beach mammoth engraving. Tetela 1 is covered with animal engravings (Fig. 2 on following page), including the profile view of a double-tusked mastodon-like creature (probably *Ryncotherium tlascaiae*) and above it a dynamic figure with spears (?) entering the body that some call a tapir and others a ferocious feline.

The artifact was collected by Professor Juan Armenta Camacho on the Tetela Peninsula, north shore of the Valsequillo Reservoir, State of Puebla, Mexico during the spring of 1959 (Fig. 3 on following page) Juan spied the large bone fragment weathering out of a low bank of indurated sediment (Valsequillo gravels) some 50 m north of what was later to become the Hueyatlaco archaeological site.

Only back in the laboratory, when the fossil bone was being cleaned, was the artwork discovered.

Realizing its great importance, Armenta kept his discovery secret and spent many months examining the piece, consulting with various experts, and performing

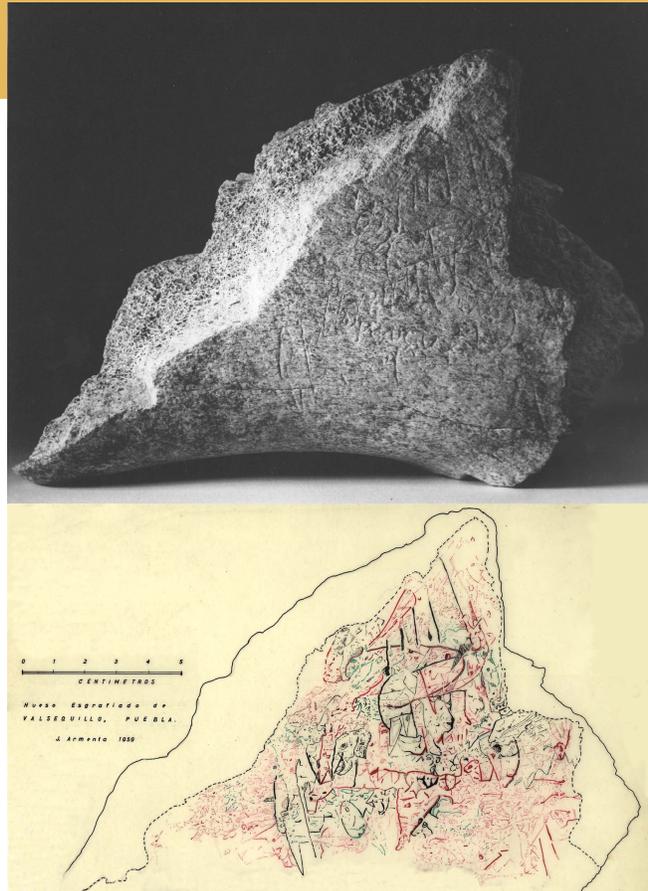


Fig.1. Tetela 1 engraved mastodon bone discovered by Professor Juan Armenta in 1959. The artifact was featured in *LIFE* magazine and *National Geographic* as well as being displayed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. B/w photo: David Hiser.

laboratory tests on fresh and fossil bone (Armenta Camacho, 1978, especially pp. 95-110. See my Pleistocene Coalition webpage for both the original monograph and the English translation. See also Hardaker, 2007 Chapter 1.3.

The public debut of Tetela 1 created a lot of excitement, both in Mexico and abroad. *LIFE* magazine picked up on the story early, when it was believed the engravings could be as old as 30,000 years (1960). It was exhibited at the Smithsonian for a while (Hardaker, 2007, P. 15.) Later it appeared in an article on Early Man in the

National Geographic (1979). By that time the nearby Hueyatlaco site, excavated in the same indurated Valsequillo gravel unit, had been dated by uranium-series and fission-track methods to roughly 250ky (Szabo et al., 1969; Steen-McIntyre et al., 1981). These early dates were considered "impossible" by the site archaeologist, Dr. Cynthia Irwin-Williams, who ignored them in favor of a ca 22ky 14C date for a worked stone flake from the Caulapan barranca site a few km to the northeast, and a tentative correlation by me between a volcanic ash deposit

> [Contd on page 7](#)

Tetela 1 scribed bone (cont.)

Tetela 1 disappeared while in storage at a government facility in Mexico City.

near Hueyatenco and an ash flow dated at ca 30ky on the flanks of Iztaccihuatl volcano to the west.

Tetela 1 disappeared while in storage at a government facility in Mexico City. It cannot at this point be sampled and dated directly by U-series or other means. Neither can any adhering matrix be examined for diatoms, those microscopic phytoplankton that Sam VanLandingham has used so successfully to rough-date the Hueyatenco artifacts (2010 and cited references). If and when this can be done, a date in the order of 250-350ky is not impossible. After all, the Atepitzingo 1 engraved elephant bone with an elegant horse's head "hidden" among the other lines (Armenta monograph Figs. 75 and 76;

ranca as a possible bone pendant dated to that age range.



Fig. 2. Drawings by Juan Armenta of several figures present in the Tetela 1 engraved mastodon bone. Armenta 1978.

Conclusion

Juan Armenta's collection of artifacts contained several fossilized scribed bones (see his monograph). More should be awaiting, still buried, in the indurated badlands sediments surrounding the Valsequillo Reservoir. Perhaps it is time for scientists to take another look?

References

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from Valsequillo, Puebla, Mexico). Published privately with aid from the American Philosophical Society and the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation, Puebla, Mexico; 125 pp; 1,000 copies.

Hardaker, C. 2007. *The First American: The Suppressed Story of the People Who Discovered the New World*. New Page Books, a Division of The Career Press Inc., Franklin Lakes, N.J., 319 pp, ISBN-13: 978-156414-942-8, ISBN-10: 1-56414-942-0.

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Steen-McIntyre, V., R. Fryxell, and H. E. Malde. 1981. Geologic evidence for age of deposits at Hueyatenco archaeological site, Valsequillo, Mexico. *Quaternary Research* 16: 1-17.

Szabo, B. J., H. E. Malde, and C. Irwin-Williams. 1969. Dilemma posed by uranium-series dates on archaeologically significant bones from Valsequillo, Puebla, Mexico. *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* 6: 237-44.

VanLandingham, S. 2010, The Power of Diatoms, *Pleistocene Coalition News*, v. 2, issue 2, March-April, pp. 1-3.

VIRGINIA STEEN-McINTYRE, Ph.D, is a tephrochronologist (volcanic ash specialist) involved in preserving and publishing the Palaeolithic evidence from Valsequillo since the late 1960s.



Fig. 3. Professor Juan Armenta discoverer of the Tetela 1 engraved mastodon bone at Valsequillo in 1959 (jf crop).

Steen-McIntyre 2010) was collected in the same bar-

ranca as a possible bone pendant dated to that age range.

LESSONS OF A RENEGADE RESEARCHER

On suppression in science

By Sam L. VanLandingham, Ph.D. Consulting Environmentalist/Geologist

"Science can be as dogmatic as religious orthodoxy, and the scientific community also can be overly protective of its own 'holy relic,' the status quo."

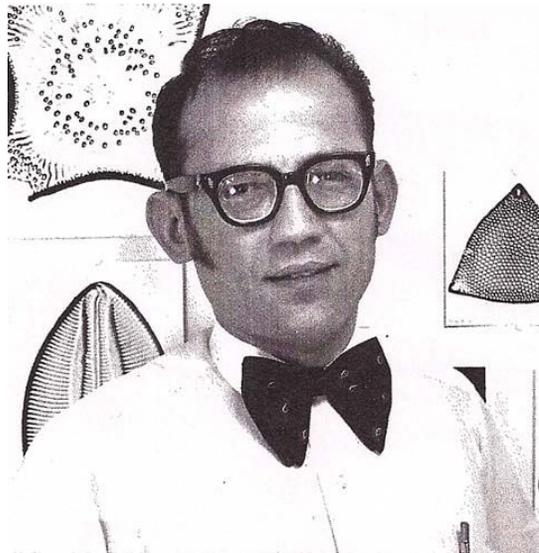
"Orthodoxy or dogmatic belief systems can prevent new inspirations and can stifle the force of wonder in science which leads to the experience of new discoveries."

If success in the field of science is measured by holding permanent positions in institutions, corporations, government services, or universities, then those like me have been less than successful. However, according to forensic anthropologist Clyde Snow, the most successful scientists are those who become experts, not advocates.

When scientists become advocates for a particular theory or idea, they often become trapped by their own belief system, and their full scientific growth cannot occur. Science can be as dogmatic as religious orthodoxy, and the scientific community also can be overly protective of its own "holy relic", the status quo. Ironically, science is supposed to dispel dogma, but examples of persecution by the scientific "Inquisition" abound. Although the threat of actually being burned at the stake has passed, an iconoclastic scientist, like myself (or Galileo), now can suffer a kind of career "death." One would think that the scientific establishment, having been proven wrong so many times, would become a bit more humble, and admit

they don't know as much as they think they do.

The following are recollections in my 50-plus year



Sam VanLandingham, in his younger days!

quest as a research scientist. They clearly demonstrate the widespread suppression by the scientific community of ideas which might be a threat to its own entrenchment.

Plate tectonics

In high school, I was impressed with the work of Alfred Wegener and his theory of continental drift (the precursor of modern plate tectonics). As early as 1620, Sir Francis Bacon was impressed with the match between the opposing shores of the Atlantic. In 1858 Snider¹ illustrated how South America and Africa were united in late Carboniferous times, over 250 million years ago (see Fig. 1). By observing similarities of the Atlantic coast lines of Africa and South America in their geography textbooks, elementary school children

could easily see how continents might have drifted apart. However, most geologists took a very dim view of continental drift until approximately 1960.

As a geology student at Texas Tech University (TTU) in 1957, I chose continental drift as the subject of my stratigraphy class term report. But my professor was displeased that I would be so enthusiastic about such a "questionable" theory, and my grade of C- was much lower than I probably deserved. The professor placed all the graded reports on a table outside his office, so that they could easily be re-

trieved by the students. By the time I arrived to get my report, it was gone, but its fancy and expensive binder remained. In the 1950's, very few readily accessible copying machines existed, and theft, camera, or copying by hand often was used, if anyone wanted a copy of a document. Evidently, some fellow student did the most convenient thing and simply took my report. It was the only one known to be missing. Bizarre!

Within ten years of my term report, striking new evidence for continental drift was presented in the modern concept of plate tectonics. This caused an abrupt paradigm shift in geology. By the 1960's, new evidence had convinced most of the original critics of continental drift that those few remaining

> [Contd on page 9](#)

Lessons of a renegade researcher (cont'd.)

"One would think that the scientific establishment, having been proven wrong so many times, would become a bit more humble."

geologists with skepticism about plate tectonics now were worthy of ridicule. By 1970 the geological establishment was already belittling the provincialism and dogmatism which had

Carl Sagan² indicated that some of the earth's commercially extracted natural gas may be primordial and not of biological origin. If some natural gas could be of primordial origin, couldn't this

tion that most of the chemists who have analyzed natural petroleum in detail considered a biological origin unlikely. Nobel Laureate Sir Robert Robinson⁵ claimed that, ".... all of the argu-

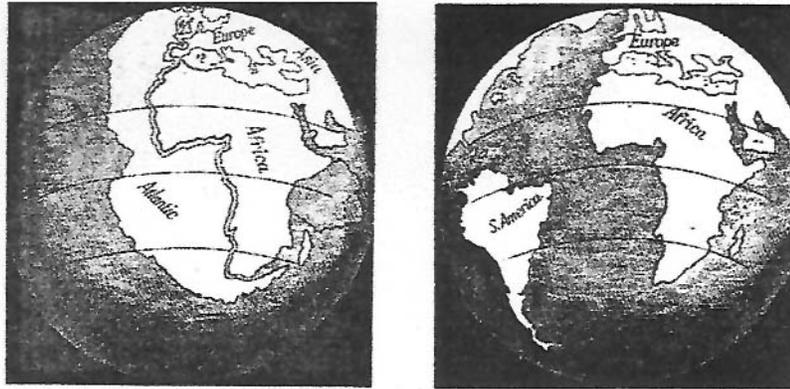


Figure 2. Maps published by A. Snider in 1858 to illustrate continental drift.

plagued the geological sciences in the nostalgic, quaint "pre-plate tectonic era."

Origin of oil and gas

Although the idea was thoroughly ridiculed in the 1950's, a few scientists back then believed in the possibility of natural production of oil and gas from non-living sources. Such a subject appeared to be ideal for an assigned term report in my petroleum geology class at TTU. However, my class professor wouldn't permit a report on this controversial topic. He admonished students that anyone who wished to be employed as a petroleum geologist must abandon ideas about inorganic oil and gas or be laughed out of the business.

Today the likelihood of naturally occurring "inorganic oil and gas" is still considered doubtful by many. In spite of this, such noted scientists as

also be true of oil? Thomas Gold, a respected astronomer and professor emeritus at Cornell University, maintained for many years that oil was renewable, primordial, and continually being produced under tremendous pressure in the depths of the Earth. As this oily primordial "syrup" migrated to the surface, it was attacked by bacteria, giving it the appearance of an organic substance dating back millions of years³.

Gold⁴ indicated that other planetary bodies (Jupiter, Uranus, Neptune, Saturn, and Titan), which were constructed of solids similar to those of Earth, also had petroleum on them. This peculiar statement is not so shocking in view of the hydrocarbon rain and atmospheres with hydrocarbon molecules associated with these bodies. Even more remarkable is Gold's asser-

ments from the constituents of ancient oils fit equally well or better with the conception of a primordial hydrocarbon mixture to which bioproducts have been added."

Doomsayers to the contrary, the world contains much more recoverable oil than was believed 20 years ago. Many petroleum engineers and geologists find it difficult to explain how the Middle East has more than doubled its oil reserves in the past 20 years, despite few new discoveries and a half century of intense pumping. Some geologists have suggested that the estimated 660 billion barrels of oil in the region could not be derived entirely from dead plants and other organic sources.⁶

Pennz-Energy Company's Eugene Island 330 oil field, deep in the Gulf of Mexico,

> [Contd on page 10](#)

Lessons of a renegade researcher (cont'd.)

"More likely, the essay for admission to Graduate School contained some of my iconoclastic ideas with which the examiners (like my geology professors) did not agree."

might be compatible with Gold's ideas. Upon its discovery in 1973, Eugene Island behaved like a "normal" oil field. After production peaked at about 15,000 barrels per day (bpd), it slowed to about 4,000 bpd in 1989. Suddenly Eugene Island began to rapidly refill, perhaps from some continuous source miles below the surface. In 1990 the United States Department of Energy granted \$10 million to investigate the Eugene Island phenomenon with its anomalous geological formation and production history. The grant funds have been exhausted and many questions are left unanswered, but good indirect evidence indicates a link to a very deep-seated system of migrating oil, possibly a primordial and nonbiological source. In 1999 Eugene Island was producing about 13,000 bpd and reserves had increased from 60 million to 400 million barrels. Some would view Eugene Island as simply an anomaly of nature, but it is likely that this oil field has a deeper meaning in more ways than one.

Woes of a wayward writer

A few weeks after successfully completing work on my BS Degree in Geology at TTU in 1958, I took the university's test for admission to graduate studies in geology. The results indicated that I had flunked the essay part of the test. Although admission had been granted to me on a provisional basis, it was judged that I would "not be able to do the research writing required for a

thesis in science and should enroll in a remedial composition or technical writing class." A strange situation, since I already had received fairly good grades in four courses in English composition at TTU. Moreover, my first scientific manuscript recently had been published in a respected journal, and several of my other manuscripts had been accepted for future publication. These were the first of well over 100 scientific articles and books, totaling over 7,000 pages, to be printed during my long career.

Upon leaving TTU without attending Graduate School, I already had more scientific work in print than some of my former professors. What was my writing "problem" at TTU? Could it be that I received better than deserved grades from incompetent English teachers and possessed some strange gift for writing which was not recognized by the examiners? More likely, the essay for admission to Graduate School contained some of my iconoclastic ideas with which the examiners (like my geology professors) did not agree.

Ridicule about inorganic oil, continental drift, and other issues had been intense under some of my professors and classmates at TTU. I endured similar derision for over a year as a graduate student at the University of New Mexico (UNM) before leaving the study of geology forever in 1959.

This is an abbreviated version of the corrected and reprinted

paper originally published in T. Parks (editor), 2009, *Mosaic, A Summer Anthology of Good Reading*. Marble Press, 244 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2847, New York, NY 10001, p. 29-42.

For the complete updated paper see: <http://pleistocenecoalition.com/vanlandingham/index.html>

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Data blocking by threat and intimidation

By Michael A. Cremo

"Shortly before the lecture, the chancellor of the university cancelled the talk because of pressure from sources inside and outside the university who did not want me to speak."

My work focuses on archeological evidence for extreme human antiquity, evidence that contradicts the currently dominant theory of human origins. I documented this evidence in my book *Forbidden Archeology* (Cremon and Thompson 1993). After the book was published I made presentations about the evidence to academic audiences and the general public. In both cases, I have experienced attempts by scientists to block the presentations.

Let's start with academic audiences. In 2007, I was on a lecture tour of universities in Russia. Professors had arranged for me to speak at Tyumen State University. Shortly before the lecture, the chancellor of the university cancelled the talk because of pressure from sources inside and outside the university who did not want me to speak. The director of a local branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences offered to let me speak there and asserted no one would influence him to cancel the lecture. Buses brought students and professors from the university to hear me speak. The professors told me that

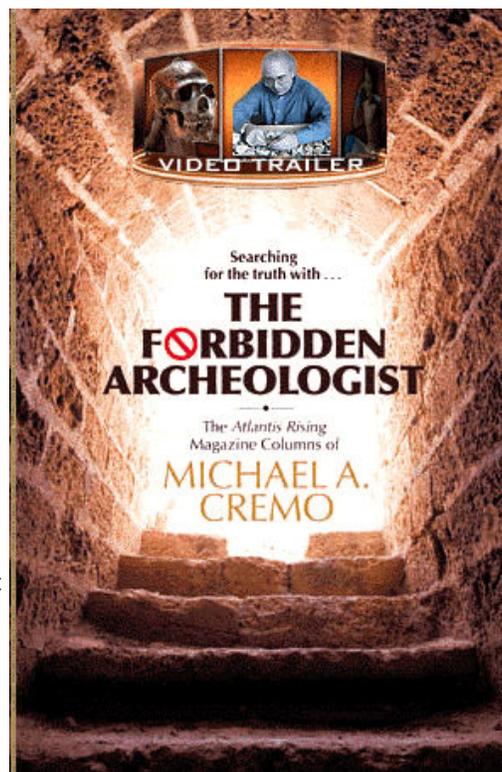
more people came than would have come if the lecture had been held at the university. I recount this experience and some others in my new book *The Forbidden Archeologist* (Cremon 2010).

Now let's look at an attempt to block presentations to the general public. I fully documented the following case in my book *Forbidden Archeology's Impact* (Cremon 1998, pp. 467-534). In 1996, I was a consultant for a television documentary called *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, which aired on NBC. The producer, Bill Cote, of B.C. Video, had read my book *Forbidden Archeology*. He wanted to include in his show some cases from the book. I recommended the dating of the Valsequillo site in Mexico by Virginia Steen-McIntyre and her colleagues, who arrived at a surprising age of over 250,000 years. I also suggested to Bill Cote some cases involving even more extreme human an-

tiquity. One of them was the human artifacts reported by geologist J. D. Whitney from the California gold mining region. The artifacts were found in Tertiary formations (Whitney 1880). Some of the artifacts are in the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley. I advised Bill Cote about this, and he approached museum officials for permission to film them.

The responses from the museum officials were interesting. "At first we were told they could not make the time," wrote producer Bill Cote in a letter to me (August 26, 1996). "We countered saying we had plenty of time and could wait three or four months." Museum officials

> [Contd on page 12](#)



Data blocking by threat and intimidation (cont'd.)

"A report released by B.C. Video on March 4, 1996 reproduced messages from scientists calling the producers 'morons or liars' and demands that 'you should be banned from the airwaves.'"

responded with a letter claiming they had a shortage of staff and funds. The producers said they would pay all the costs involved in bringing the artifacts out of storage for filming, including overtime pay for the workers. The museum refused this offer. The producers continued to seek permission through various channels. "We patiently went all the way to the head of publicity for the University," explained Bill Cote in his letter, "but it seems the museum director has final say and she said no." Instead of new film of the California gold mine objects, the producers used the original nineteenth century photographs included by Whitney in his book.

The final program, in addition to segments based on *Forbidden Archeology*, also contained segments based on the works of others dealing with various topics. It provoked a storm of controversy among scientists. A report released by B.C. Video on March 4, 1996 reproduced messages from scientists calling the producers "morons or liars" and demands that "you should be banned from the airwaves."

On February 26, 1996 archeologist William Doleman of the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque, wrote to *MOM's* producer Bill Cote: "The portrayal of legitimate scientists such as myself as constituting a cabal of evil, evidence-suppressing con-

spirators is unforgivable. But the worst of your crimes lies in the failure to offer the public a balanced view that compares the overwhelming evidence in favor of evolution theory and conventionally-derived dates for man . . . with the dubious and poorly documented 'evidence' the whackos cite." In other words, he wanted to suppress the evidence.

Here I want to say a few words about how the knowledge filtering process operates. It is not that "legitimate" scientists like Doleman believe that they are hiding "true" evidence from the public and other scientists. Rather, when Darwinists encounter evidence that radically contradicts their expectations about human origins, they simply assume that such evidence must be "unsubstantiated . . . dubious and poorly documented" and that the purveyors of such evidence must be "whackos." If it were up to "legitimate" scientists such evidence would not be presented at all, and if presented, it would be done in a manner that makes it clear it is not to be believed.

The reactions to *The Mysterious Origins of Man* extended beyond individual expressions of negative opinions to the producers. Dr. Jim Foley organized a letter campaign directed at the executives of NBC and the sponsors of the program, which included: Coca-Cola, McDonalds,

Olive Garden, Toyota, Chevron, Kelloggs, J. C. Penney, Honda, Wendy's, General Motors, LensCrafters, Folger's Coffee, and M&M Candy.

If scientists who support dominant theories about human origins were outraged when the program was first shown, this outrage increased when they saw the following headlines from an internet press release from NBC, dated May 29, 1996, announcing a second showing of the program: "Controversy Surrounds *The Mysterious Origins of Man* . . . University Profs Want Special Banned from the Airwaves. . . . Program That Dares To Challenge Accepted Beliefs About Pre-Historic Man Will Be Rebroadcast June 8 on NBC."

Some scientists proposed boycotts, as shown in this message posted to internet discussion groups for archeologists and anthropologists by C. Wood on May 31, 1996: "Anybody know who the sponsors are? I would like to get an early start boycotting them. There's always the off chance that some of them will pull their sponsorship." Still others proposed pressuring the executives of General Electric, the company that owns NBC, to stop the re-showing of the program.

In the 1950s, the McCarthy-like campaign of intimidation might have

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Data blocking by threat and intimidation (cont'd.)

"The worst of your crimes lies in the failure to offer the public a balanced view that compares the overwhelming evidence in favor of evolution theory and conventionally-derived dates for man . . . with the dubious and poorly documented 'evidence' the whackos cite."

"NBC should be required to make substantial prime-time apologies to their viewing audience for a sufficient period of time . . . In addition, NBC should perhaps be fined sufficiently so that a major fund for public science education can be established."

been sufficient to keep NBC from airing the program again. At least, NBC may have been forced to accept demands that the rebroadcast of *MOM* begin with a segment in which a "responsible scientist" dictated to the public how they should see the show. But NBC aired the show again, without such a segment.

Partisan scientists thought NBC should be severely punished for airing the show a second time. On June 17, 1996, Dr. Allison R. Palmer, president of the Institute for Cambrian Studies, wrote to the Federal Communications Commission, the government agency that grants licenses to television broadcasting companies: "This e-mail is a request for the FCC to investigate and, I hope, seriously censure the National Broadcasting Company for crassly commercial irresponsible journalism that seriously violates the trust the public should have in materials that are touted as credible by a major network. . . . Last February they produced a program *Mysterious Origins of Man* that purported to be scientifically based, and received massive negative reactions from responsible scientists

representing numerous areas of science. Following this response . . . they chose to use the reactions of the reputable and responsible science community to generate viewer interest by distributing PR announcements implying that the content of their show was science that the 'establishment' did not want brought before the public." It is, however, patently clear that the "establishment" did indeed not want the scientific content of the NBC show brought before the public, and Palmer's letter to the FCC is excellent proof of this. Palmer's protest was based on the identification of science with his ideas and prejudices.

Palmer continued: "At the very least NBC should be required to make substantial prime-time apologies to their viewing audience for a sufficient period of time so that the audience clearly gets the message that they were duped. In addition, NBC should perhaps be fined sufficiently so that a major fund for public science education can be established." Copies of Palmer's letter were sent to the executives of NBC and were widely distributed on the internet to

Darwinist scientists, who were invited to send their own letters of support to the FCC. Palmer's attempt to get the FCC to punish NBC failed, but the very fact that such an attempt was made should tell us something.

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MICHAEL A. CREMONA is a long-time researcher on the topic of human origins and human antiquity. He is best known for his comprehensive volume, *Forbidden Archeology*, which he co-authored along with the late Richard Thompson, as well as for the controversial television special, *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, hosted by Charlton Heston.

Website: www.forbiddenarcheologist.com

Member news: Matt Gaton, Dragos Gheorghiu, and John Feliks had papers presented this week (February 1-4) at the Aplimat 2011 applied mathematics conference in Bratislava, Slovakia. The three papers were:

Probability and the origins of art: Simulations of the Paleocamera theory; The decoration of ceramic vases with Bézier curves templates in prehistoric Europe; and, The golden flute of Geisenklösterle: Mathematical

evidence for a continuity of human intelligence as opposed to evolutionary change through time. Matt's and John's papers were presented by Mauro Francaviglia, Professor of Mathematics at Torino Univ., Italy.

Stories from the cave

By Luann Udell

Artist, B.A., M.A.

"My feelings were hard to reconcile with then-popular theories. ... the-killer-ape's ancient heritage of aggression. Those beautiful images were just food animals."

"The final clincher: Gouges in the rock face made by spears and arrows 'proved' the images were used for target practice. No mystery. It was all about survival. Case closed."

I abandoned my dream to be an artist in my teens. Instead, I studied art history at the University of Michigan. I struggled with dates, details and dynasties, but I loved the art and the stories told about it.

When I returned to art years later, I found myself in an inspirational vacuum. What to make? Where to start? On a whim, I dug out my old college textbook: *Janson's History of Art*. I flipped through the pages filled with the art I'd studied and loved.

In 1970, history began with the birthplace of art: the Lascaux Cave. In my classes, I saw these images of horses, deer and aurochs as they may have been viewed 17,000 years ago: Larger than life. In the dark, lit by torches (a slide projector), on a cave (classroom) wall. They were hauntingly beautiful, and I became totally captivated, heart and soul.

My feelings were hard to reconcile with then-popular theories. Savannah Ape figured heavily, celebrating man-the-killer-ape's ancient heritage of aggression. Those beautiful images were just food animals. The mysterious markings and signs? Symbols of the hunt—kill shots, arrows and blood. Clearly, these images were used as sympathetic hunting magic. The final clincher: Gouges in the rock face

made by spears and arrows 'proved' the images were used for target practice. No mystery. It was all about survival. Case closed.

Additionally, the first edition of my *Janson's* textbook

a whole new life, one filled with imagination, story telling and passion.

My first Lascaux-inspired artwork—small quilts—looked like ancient textile fragments, work of the type



included *no women artists, out of thousands of illustrations*. (19 women were added in 1986.) Over half the human race curiously absent from its pages, except as nudes. The message? Early men made art to get food. Art was made by men. There was no place for me, a woman, in the story of Lascaux.

Undaunted, I persisted. A girl can dream, and so I did. If there was no place in art history for me, then I would invent one. I'd start with Lascaux, move on to ancient Egypt and then maybe hit the Bayeux Tapestry.

But it didn't happen that way. I began with the Lascaux Cave ... and never left. I had no idea I was entering

I imagined these 'invisible women' made. Soon I felt the need for something more. What if I added artifacts like those women might have used and treasured?

Woefully ignorant of prehistoric artifacts beyond arrowheads and the Venus of Willendorf, I invented my own. I wanted bone tools—sewing awls, simple fasteners, and buttons. Perhaps these women, like me, liked pretty things, too. A highly successful hunter-gatherer myself (I love to shop!) I could easily imagine my prehistoric counterpart: "Here's a grub, a good root, some berries... Hey, look! Sparkly pebble!" I needed rocks, beads and little horses.

> [Contd on page 15](#)

Stories from the cave (cont'd.)

"I needed rocks, beads and little horses.

I made them myself, with a new material, polymer clay, because it can be worked to imitate bone, stone and shell."

"And yet, one story isn't 'right' and another 'wrong.' Not only do different people see different stories, so do different times. ... Stories told in 1970 about Lascaux were different than the ones told today. The evidence did not change; we did."

I made them myself, with a new material, polymer clay, because it can be worked to imitate bone, stone and shell. I made the artifacts look old, worn smooth by the touch of human hands, lost and buried for 15,000 years, then rediscovered in our time. Intrigued by the mysterious cave markings—odd lines, smudged dots, handprints—I added those, too.

I told myself stories as I worked: With the stories came questions. Why do the horses always have noses, but no legs or tails? Why do they sometimes carry a handprint, but the fish never do? For an answer, I trusted my heart and followed my intuition. Years later, I found I had intuited better than I knew. The first time I saw the carved ivory Vogelherd horse, I was astonished. 30,000 years old and tiny, its delicate legs and tail were broken off—just as I'd imagined with my own little horses.

People constantly ask what the markings mean on my artifacts. I say, "What do *you* see?" Their responses vary. A musician sees musical notation. A historian sees ancient maps. A child, seeing white dots on a dark bear, exclaims, "It's a constellation!"

And yet, one story isn't "right" and another "wrong." Not only do different people see different stories, so do different times. Because we did the same thing with the original markings at Lascaux. Stories told in 1970 about Lascaux were different than the ones told today. The evidence did not change; we did.

The Aquatic Ape theory returns to favor, a story of survival not so dense with hunting and male bonding.

The birth of human art pushed back ever further, from 17,000 years to

50,000, even 150,000 years—or more. The oldest artifact, neither weapon nor tool, is a shell with a hole, to be strung on a sinew cord. A bead. Was its hole fashioned, or 'as found'? Who knows? I love that it's an object of adornment.

The 'arrow' markings at Lascaux? Perhaps blades of grass instead. The child's guess of 'constellation' is spot on: the marks in a bull's face may be a star map of the Pleiades—in the constellation Taurus! The 'target-practice' spear gouges in the cave walls? Made by another people who vandalized the images long after the original painters were gone. John Feliks' correlation between markings and the fossil record adds another delightful and astonishing possibility. What stories were told to explain those strange figures bound within the stone? We can only imagine.

The invisible are now seen—the handprints of women and children on cave walls, their footprints preserved in the dried mud. Old potsherds carry the fingerprints of their makers—*women*. Surprising? Not really. Pots began as baskets woven to store food. When smeared with clay to waterproof them, then heated during cooking, they became low-fired pots. Who wove baskets? Who gathered, stored, and cooked food? Women. One of the oldest known specimens of fiber work—a piece of string—was found at Lascaux.

The story of the paintings has changed, too. They were made during a period of profound and rapid climate change as the great glaciers of the last Ice Age were melting. These people saw their entire way of life rapidly changing. Perhaps the paintings were their way of

'calling the horses back.'

Maybe cave art *is* just about survival. But then, so is a cathedral. In the Lascaux Cave, I see an old story, and a familiar one—*because we're still telling it*. Like a message in a bottle from our distant past but not addressed to us. We cannot read it, though we sense its power. Are the paintings a call for help resounding through the ages? We may never know.

Yet these images, handprints and artifacts, connect me profoundly to these people of our distant past. Just as we do, they made and loved beautiful things. Just as we do, they told stories to make sense of their world, to find and define their place in it.

We are the animals that tell stories. And the stories we tell reveal so much about us, the storytellers. When we believe ourselves to be killer apes, we see spears and aggression. When we believe ourselves to be something else, something more, we see stars, and music. We see hope.

I can only wish our own response to the challenges we face today results in something just as beautiful, just as powerful, just as compelling and just as enduring as Lascaux. As I make my art, I ask...

"10,000 years from now, who will know the makings of *our* hands?"

And who will know the mysteries of *our* hearts?"

LUANN UDELL is a nationally-exhibited artist and writer with a B.A. in art history and an M.A. in education.

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THE DMANISI HOMINIDS

Part 2: Heights and Brains

By Alan Cannell
International Civil Engineer

This is the second in a series on the *Homo erectus* specimens (c. 1.8 million

shown that a lot can be gleaned from the choice of manuports. The mass distribution of Koobi Fora and Olduvai manuports, for example, indicated that the

relationship between height and brain capacity for men and women is thus: $y = x \cdot 1.82$ (as expected, capacity – or volume – is an added dimension and does not vary in

Type Specimen	Cranial Capacity cc	Height cm	H/Hfem	CC/CCFem	Relationship using	CC Est. HSS	CC Est. HE
Enlisted women	1260	163	1.0000	1.000	1	1260	804
Enlisted men	1449	176	1.0798	1.150	1.150	1449	925
D2282/3444	650	145	0.8896		0.910	1018	650
D2280	775	157	0.9632		0.966	1177	751
H Flores LB1	400	106	0.6503		0.821	576	368

Table 1. Height and cranial size comparisons between modern test subjects and the *Homo erectus* specimens from Flores island, Indonesia, and Dmanisi, Georgia, of the former Soviet Union.

the same proportion as height/size). These values are shown in the table at left (Table 1) along with data from the individuals from Dmanisi and *H.*

Manuports were found at the Dmanisi site, but no details are given ...other than a general description of size, most with a diameter of 5 to 10cm. This is a pity, as it has been shown that a lot can be gleaned from the choice of manuports.

years old) discovered near the village of Dmanisi, Georgia, in the former Soviet Union.

The description of the Dmanisi hominins often attributes certain "primitive" features to them, in particular their relatively small cranial capacity and size.

Based on various independent long bone measurements, the fossils of three Dmanisi individuals indicate that they were about 143-166cm in height (1). Stature estimates for a large adult individual were obtained from humeral, femoral, and tibial dimensions, yielding a range of 146.6cm - 166.2cm (average 157cm or 5' 2"). Stature estimates based on the length of the first metatarsal (D3442) gave a value of 143.0cm or 4' 8" for the small individual.

Manuports were found at the Dmanisi site, but no details are given of their mass distribution other than a general description of size, most with a diameter of 5 to 10cm. This is a pity, as it has been

choice of hoarded stones was influenced by throwing behavior and that sexual dimorphism led to two distinct distributions, suggesting that males were about 165cm or 5' 5" in height and females of about 145cm or 4' 9" – this at a time when there were very few early *erectus* postcranial fossils and this high level of sexual dimorphism was generally viewed as being "politically incorrect" (2). If the large Dmanisi individual is thus taken as a male and the small individual a female, then their size confirms the same prediction made by the Mass Distribution Analysis of African *erectus* manuport data from similar geological periods.

Sexual dimorphism also affects brain size. A study by Rushton in 1988 (3) on 6,000 US Army personal, measuring cranial capacity for enlisted men and women and comparing this to height, showed that, taking the female values as 1, men were on average about 8% taller (x) and with a brain capacity about 15% larger (y). The

floresiensis LB1 a (presumed) female skeleton that is often described as *erectus*-like.

When this relationship between size and cranial capacity is applied to the estimated heights of the Dmanisi and Flores hominins, this results in values of estimated modern homo cranial capacity (column CC Est. HSS). Thus a "modern" *Homo sapiens sapiens* woman of 145cm in height and normal proportions would be expected to have a cranial capacity of 1018cc. Scaling these values down to *erectus* levels, using the individuals D 2282/3444 as a baseline at the known value of 650cc, this model gives the *erectus* values in the final column (CC Est. HE). A Dmanisi *erectus* male of 176cm would thus have a brain size of around 750cc, (but I don't think anyone would dare suggest that he was smarter than the 145cm females). If the individual D2280 were slightly taller, say 160cm, the model gives a perfect fit with the given value of 775cc.

> [Contd on page 17](#)

The Dmanisi hominids (cont'd.)

"When dealing with cranial capacity of early man ... we should therefore be careful not to ascribe too much to cranial capacity differences that may simply reflect size and sex."

The model also works for the small female from Flores with an estimate of about 370cc – within 5% of the measured more modern value. A big strapping *erectus* youth, such as the Nariokotome Boy (KNM-WT 15000), would be expected to have a cranial capacity of around 900cc – which again fits the fossil data.

When dealing with cranial capacity of early man – *Homo* this and *Homo* that – we should therefore be careful not to ascribe too much to cranial capacity differences that may simply reflect size and sex. The small "primitive" crania of the Dmanisi hominins is thus probably a reflection of sexual dimorphism: three of the four may have been females. This includes the toothless

skull of "Old Man," which was considered a male because of the relatively thick brow ridges. However, there is a medical condition in elderly women known as "hot skull" that results in the thickening of the frontal parts of the cranium. Perhaps this old and toothless individual also suffered from a similar process which thickened the brows? Certainly he or she was cared for by others over a period of several years, and may have cared for these same others when they were small – as Grandmothers still do. If the vowels are correctly translated from Georgian, "Bubya" might therefore be a better name than "Old Man."

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AN AVOCATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY PAGE?

by Virginia Steen-McIntyre

There's an old saying that a three-strand cord is not easily broken. Can the same apply to a newsletter?

One of the original goals of *PLEISTOCENE COALITION NEWS* was to bring together for mutual appreciation the works of artists and scientists, two groups that rarely mingle professionally. But we are overlooking another major group in our search for truth in the early man field, one that would form the third strand in the cord, thus giving our newsletter a strong base: the avocational archaeologist.

Traditionally there has been little love between the pro-

fessional and the amateur archaeologist. "Pot Hunter" is just one of the epithets one hears in the halls of science, and it is often applied across the board. A pity. It is the avocational archaeologist who often makes the critical "first find" of an important new discovery, a point that may never reach the media in the follow-up professional news releases from museums and universities.

Perhaps this newsletter can help change that by establishing an avocational archaeology page, one where non-professionals can share their thoughts and ideas, as well as their photos of interesting artifacts and art pieces they have found, all without fear of harsh criticism by professionals or actual confiscation of their prize "in the name of science."

This need became evident to me when I tried to place my edited version of Ron Alexan-

der's "Driveway Archaeology" piece in the November-December issue. What to call it? Not a scientific article, not an art piece, but still an interesting idea that should be shared with our readers.

The addition of such a page could benefit us all. As the barrier comes down between the professional and the amateur real dialog and sharing can take place: new ideas about point-type distribution; new insights on fabricating techniques (many amateurs are also flint knappers and paleo-tool makers); new brains to pick! We professionals can do our part by suggesting how to document the position of an important find (photos, photos, photos!), how to photograph a piece (scale!), how NOT to clean the prize completely, and why.

As you can tell, we are only at the beginning stages of this idea. Interested? Contact me to share your thoughts.

"It is the avocational archaeologist who often makes the critical 'first find.'"

Pair of eyes or pareidolia?

By
Kenneth B.
Johnston

"Archaeologists must more carefully do the job they were trained to do and stop pulling the curtains closed so quickly on the public as if wizards of their own little Oz"

Note from the editors: Among other things, we at the Pleistocene Coalition are attempting to bridge gaps between the bureaucracy of academic anthropology and the more intuitively inclined interests of those who have reason to question the standard academic community, not the least reason being that historically those who question—and amateurs in particular—indeed often are the driving force behind change in nearly every science. However, we do receive a great many images sent to us which are purported to resemble animals in the real world, often called, 'sculptures.' While we remain open to the possibilities of anomalous evidence, at this stage we cannot publish images of such objects unless they are found in situ (within the sediment) and not surface finds. In the future, this may change. Meanwhile, we will publish well written, interesting articles such as Ken Johnston's one here, and provide a link to a website where his images can be viewed. Want to gain perspective on how one amateur collector sees the workings of academia? Read on.

As an amateur archaeologist my interest has been in crude and opportunistic coarse stone tools, especially hand-cobbles and finger-pebbles with little or no modification but with evidence of handling and/or use wear. This has led me to make very careful examination of the stone material I find in agriculture fields and construction areas near my home in Licking County, Ohio, and has lent me a unique perspective on the nature of artifacts in my locale.

Most recently, my interest has been in possible intended iconography in suspected Paleolithic flint artifacts.

Among archaeologists, there seems to be a limiting fear of being influenced by pareidolia, the psychological phenomenon of inferring meaning from random sensory data to the extent they will infer no meaning on objects or deny its possibility. Examples of visual pareidolia are seeing a dog in the clouds, a human face on the surface of Mars, the Virgin Mother on a grilled-cheese sandwich, or a feline head on a twelve pound block of flint with two eye sockets, two ears, nose, mouth, two drilled holes, standing upright in correct viewing orientation on its flat base. This item was found in context with other zoomorphic sculptures and which admittedly "looks just like a lion" according to a lithics analyst at a prominent U.S. lab. I mention the "lion head," my real-life example, tongue-in-cheek, because of the conundrum that archaeology needs to (figuratively) come to understand the difference between the clouds, Mars, a sandwich and a possible artifact. Such interpretation is precisely the job, in fact the duty, of the archaeological investigator.

Many professional archaeologists have told me that they are frequently approached by people who bring them items that they are convinced are artifacts, when, according to these archaeologists, they are objects of purely natural formation. This is often the way they gently dismiss me as one of the many misguided. I do not think all of these informal archaeologists are gravely naïve. Amateurs do not have the preconceived notions of what constitutes a stone "artifact" as formally educated and trained archaeologists. (I especially

like artifacts in the "children-found" section of the meetings I attend because they are the purest, least tainted by culturally mediated perceptual bias, pieces).

Each time a layperson raises these articles, questions are casually squelched rather than truly engaged. The possibility of new information for archaeology, to identify new artifact patterns and cultural sites, is killed. Is it not possible some of these people are on to something? Is it not possible that gut intuition, common sense and common reasoning can detect artifacts which are not already in a book or paper somewhere? Is the entire universe of North American stone artifact classification really completely known and now closed? For too many, it is so. It seems counter to any kind of real scientific or academic enterprise, but is plainly evident to many amateurs, who may have more time "in the field," so to speak, than professional counterparts. Archaeologists must more carefully do the job they were trained to do and stop pulling the curtains closed so quickly on the public as if wizards of their own little Oz. It is normal for the establishment to become somewhat provincial, but not in dreamland.

Publishing archaeologists tend to want "Data, data and more data" which is well enough for part of archaeology. However, when it becomes so exclusively data driven, archaeology also becomes reductive because it does not adequately consider art pieces, toys, manuports, opportunistic and idiosyncratic tools. How and where is the accounting for these items? There is far greater jeopardy to the pursuit of archaeological knowledge with exclusivity than with qualified interpreta-

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Pair of eyes or pareidolia? (cont'd)

"North American archaeology needs to reverse course and begin to breathe multiple tenets which will facilitate and expedite anomaly handling."

tion. The accepted taxonomy of the right-received wisdom of the establishment seems to be applied directly to artifact inputs, rather than accepting inputs, validating them and then letting valid inputs show us all the taxonomies (and non-taxonomies). "That does not exist because those have never been found" poses quite an intellectual dilemma when archaeology needs to be about resolving dilemmas.

In a rhetorical theory course in 1987 under William R. Brown at The Ohio State University, one of the reads was his paper, "Ideology as Communication Process," (Brown:123). Brown argues that "ideologizing" is the defining human activity, collaborating constructs of symbolic meaning to explain the world around us. For Brown, even science functions as an ideology, and this is no disparagement. He eloquently explains the scientific method in a way which makes it sound like a classic ideology. Ideologies, including all the sciences, must maintain healthy anomaly handling mechanisms, allow anomalous inputs, explain, correct for, or incorporate them, or else the ideology will fall. For Brown, "archaeology" would be an ideology, a way of shared understanding, like any other.

Problems arise when anomalies are not dealt with. Archaeology then becomes non-communicating for its key participants and constituents, a closed system in a vicious shrinking spiral. It, or at least part of it, will implode when anomalies reach a critical point where attention shifts to more cogent explanations offered by other ideologies. Examples include independent internet publishers, geology, engineering, genetics, linguistics and amateurs. This is happening now and regrettably the response from establishment

archaeology is heightened denial, defensiveness and even suppression, such as (1) a museum curator of archaeology raising his voice and belittling me in public while performing outreach on archaeology day, (2) a New England professor wanting to receive online hand axe photograph submissions but none from North America because "Hand axes do not exist in North America," or (3) corrupt peer reviews as experienced by Pleistocene Coalition members. Brown would say with the level of the "fire brigade" response from archaeology to anomalies, it is functioning as a *de facto* cult, indicative collapse.

Before it melts away with all the drama of Oz's Wicked Witch of the West, North American archaeology needs to reverse course and begin to breathe multiple tenets which will facilitate and expedite anomaly handling, perhaps by starting with replacing its "rightness" with the concept of "progressively less wrong" as described by Paul Grobstein:

"People in our culture, by and large, tend to presume that someone, somewhere knows what is 'right,' and that each individual's task is either to be that particular someone or to work as hard as they can to learn from that someone what 'right' is ... the mindset long predates science as a social activity, but ... science certainly encourages it, and so it is appropriate that science should contribute to correcting it ... In an enormous variety of distinct fields of inquiry the same general pattern is becoming clear: there is no such thing as 'right,' the very concept needs to be replaced with 'progressively less wrong.' The difference is far from semantic. 'Right' is measured by proximity to some fixed idea, 'progressively less wrong' by

how far people have gotten from where they started. It is the aspiration to be 'right' that leads to rigid hierarchical social organizations of all kinds, including educational systems. Wanting to be 'progressively less wrong' takes one (and societies) in quite different directions entirely: it encourages life-long inquiry by every individual, a respect for past wisdom and enthusiasm for contributing to future understanding, and an appreciation of the enormous value of interactions between unique individuals each of whom has unique perspectives to contribute" (Grobstein: 1993).

-Kenneth B. Johnston

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Website: <http://forsakenartifacts.com/2006/06/11/the-forsaken-artifacts-crude-stone-tools.aspx>



The Pleistocene Coalition

Prehistory is about to change

- Learn the real story of our Palaeolithic ancestors, a story about highly-intelligent and innovative people, a story quite unlike that promoted by mainstream science.
- Explore and regain confidence in your own ability to think for yourself regarding human ancestry as a broader range of evidence becomes available to you.
- Join a community not afraid to challenge the status quo. Question any paradigm promoted as "scientific" that is so delicate as to require withholding conflicting data in order to appear unchallenged.

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