



PLEISTOCENE COALITION NEWS

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- Challenging the tenets of mainstream scientific agendas -

A past century to reassess

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Pages 1-23: An increasing number of professionals and amateurs alike are becoming less and less trusting of what they hear from the scientific establishment regarding anything related to human prehistory

—and for good reason; *the status quo is pushed while conflicting evidence is blocked*. It could not be put in simpler terms. Critical thinkers, independent researchers, and alert scientists and professors the world over are beginning to realize that it is time for serious reassessment.

Page 4: What happens when archaeology is biased against Indigenous cultural histories it claims to explain? Learn about Native American and First Nations backlash. [Click to read more »](#)

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Carolina bays / the Younger Dryas impact event

By George Howard

Carolina bays specialist,
BA, Political Science

My improbable and unexpected role in the Younger Dryas impact hypothesis began with an interest in the Carolina bays.

Carolina bays are long-recognized but little appreciated geological phenomena comprised of tens of thousands of shallow, symmetrical, elliptical depressions. Some are now lakes, but the vast majority of them are wetlands or dry basins that sweep across the entire North American eastern seaboard and have been recently identified in Nebraska and Kansas.

Like the hands of a clock pointing inward, the radial long axes of the Carolina bays, when plotted together, generally point to common locations in the U.S. Midwest and Great Lakes regions.

Faircloth. He asked me one morning for USGS Topo Quads of his vast farms in eastern North Carolina, which were promptly delivered to us at the Hart Senate Office building by

courier from the Survey. When the senator unfurled the quads my eyes fell immediately on dozens of green dotted-line ovals, some small and others large, covering thousands of acres of his land. It was my first look at the Carolina bays. I'd read the unusual term previously in my work with wetlands, but it was a pleasure to see them for the first time from above (**Fig. 1**).



Fig. 1. Carolina bays in Bladen County, North Carolina. An anomalous rim of brilliant white sand generally concentrated on the southeast side characterizes bays.

I first learned of the bays in 1995 from my boss at the time, junior U.S. Senator Lauch

Lauch then told me that when he was a boy in the 1930's,

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Carolina bays / Dryas event (cont.)



The author giving testimony to the U.S. House.

"When the senator unfurled the quads my eyes fell immediately to the dozens of green dotted-line ovals, some small and others large, covering thousands of acres of his land. It was my first look at the Carolina bays."

serious scientists were convinced the bays were "meteor holes"—craters created by something from space. Only later did I realize how right the senator was. A number of very credible, old school geologists, including Dr. William Prouty, longtime chairman of the Geology Department at UNC, published for decades contending there was more to bay formation than wind and water, and that surely, all bays had formed at the same time from some type of cosmic impact.

A review of the ancient argument and research papers convinced me it was a classic debate where one side, in this case the wind and water crowd, had an agenda greater than the simple exploration of the origin of Carolina bays. In keeping with the geological dogma of "Uniformitarianism," they seemed to believe that the catastrophic claims themselves were *a priori* dismissible.

Then, a friend taking a long postponed geology class at University of North Carolina asked for some help. I offered to type some notes for him on the subject of the Carolina bays, from which he could then sketch out a term paper. Twenty-seven pages later, I had a nice summary of bay science to date. Not long afterward, I posted the essay on the Internet where it became a top hit and caught the attention of Dr. Richard Firestone, an established scientist at California's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, a Nuclear research facility, and Dr. William Topping, an eccentric archeologist in Michigan. They contacted me to share a fascinating connection between our research. Their unlikely microscopic investigations of end-

Clovis sediments suggested a blast had occurred **over the Great Lakes Region** in geologically recent (human) times. And were astonished to discover that other scientists had reached the same conclusion after viewing Carolina bays from those aerial photographs sixty years before.

A couple of years later, Firestone and Topping published a highly speculative but important paper in the *Mammoth Trumpet* called "Terrestrial evidence of a nuclear catastrophe in Paleo-Indian Times." The paper was a welcome and brave attempt but suffered from the "carpenter's bias"—as a nuclear scientist, Firestone's hammer seemed to find a nuclear nail at every turn. Although Firestone and Topping were correct about the event, most of their early speculation about the cause of it has not survived into the recent publications. Nuclear supernova or not, the idea that Clovis layers contained magnetic materials of an anomalous high-energy genesis was a testable hypothesis.

It was not until 2005-2006 that the Firestone and Topping article attracted the proper attention and follow-up it warranted. Enter Allen West, a successful private sector geophysicist who contacted Firestone and asked his permission to "walk-back" and expand upon the earlier work. An affable and meticulous polymath, West was perfectly suited to the wide-ranging demands of the subject. Retired, he had the mix of time and money needed, and he lived in Arizona, home of high-tech research facilities and key paleo-sites. With Firestone, he even dashed off a wonderfully speculative book that still attracts rave reviews, *The Cycle of Cosmic Catastrophes*.

Just as importantly, a team of other scientists, several of whom had struggled before with troubling aspects of the North American Pleistocene-Holocene story—or impact

chemistry—began to correspond and collaborate with Firestone and West in the investigation. These included Ted Bunch, a former NASA section chief; Jim Kennett, a member of the prestigious National Academy; Al Goodyear, who is pushing back the age for the settling of North America; Wendy Wolbach, who did breakthrough work on the cosmic impact that contributed to the dinosaur extinction 65 million years ago; and Luann Becker, a key scientist on space missions to Mars. All of those successful scientists ran large labs pushing the boundaries of their respective disciplines and took a surprisingly unselfish interest in the subject. Their early support for investigating end-Clovis sediments for enrichment with blast materials would distinguish the claims from then on.

Also around this time, I volunteered to perform the hot and grueling collection of field samples in the Carolinas with a friend David Kimball to search for impact materials for the research group. This allowed us significant and continued access to the studies underway, despite our lack of scientific credentials. And for better or worse, I also began to develop a well-deserved reputation as a gadfly to the critics, and unabashed supporter of the proponents just as I write to you today.

The strategy of the research team was ingenious to the degree that it now seems obvious: they would test well-dated and non-controversial Clovis paleo-sites for the exotic materials, thus avoiding a replay of "dating controversies" so well documented here by the Pleistocene Coalition. The success of this approach has been borne out over time. The dating of the material found has remained largely unquestioned and only increases in confidence with additional sites.

> [Cont. on page 3](#)

Carolina bays / Dryas event (cont.)

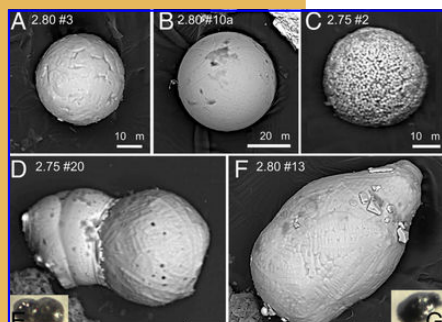


Fig. 2. SEM images of magnetic impact spherules from Lake Cuitzeo, Mexico, most recent YDB paper. **A-B:** Magnetic impact spherules with dendritic surface pattern. **C:** Framboidal pyrite spherule. **D:** Collisional magnetic impact spherules. **E:** Light micrograph of same magnetic-impact spherules. **F:** Teardrop-shaped spherule with dendritic pattern. **G:** Photomicrograph of same MSps. *PNAS* paper (March 5, 2012) available online at: <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2012/03/01/1110614109.full.pdf+html?with-ds=yes>

"Nuclear or not—the idea that the Clovis layers contained materials of an anomalous high-energy genesis was a testable hypothesis—and sure to attract attention."

The first journal article, "Evidence for an extraterrestrial impact 12,900 years ago that contributed to the megafaunal extinctions and the Younger Dryas cooling," was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (*PNAS*) in 2007, follow-

ing an extensive multidisciplinary introduction that spring at an Acapulco meeting of the American Geophysical Union. That paper was a rare opportunity to present a radical catastrophic explanation for persistent controversies such as the fate of the North American megafauna and advent of agriculture during the Younger Dryas. Catastrophic interpretations of recent human history had simmered for years in the grey literature but experienced difficulty reaching the bookshelves of the academic libraries.

I can report to my fellow travelers in the Pleistocene Coalition the deep satisfaction of challenging conventional scientific wisdom in the "proper" journals. Our combination of team credibility, compelling physical evidence, and lucid presentation of the YDB (Younger Dryas Boundary) hypothesis has, in some gracious degree, won over some science's gatekeepers. However, no one on the YDB team was properly prepared (how could you be?) for the whiplash of positive attention that greeted the publication of the evidence, followed by fierce criticism.

Following the predictable media attention, first challenge came from Clovis' archeology's eminent doyen, C. Vance Haynes, who offered this well justified observation in a May

2007, *Nature* news story: "If their geological analysis can be replicated by another group," he said, "it would make it believable." Dr. Haynes, who had kindly assisted the team by allowing critical access to the black mat at Murray Springs, was correct. To expound on Carl Sagan's chestnut: Extraordinary claims, backed by extraordinary evidence, still require extraordinary confirmations. Fair enough. My own personal perspective was comforting. I had seen the evidence replicated before. Firestone replicated Topping, next West replicated Firestone, and then, Kennett and Bunch replicated West, and so on. So surely confirmation would come from independent teams.

However, what ensued was not nearly so clear-cut. A wide range of unpredictable findings, confirming and conflicting, agnostic and suggestive, outright attacks and fawning imitation, emerged following the original 2007 publication. It was a fog of publication that led to more confusion than clarity for those attempting to follow the subject (even me). Not surprisingly, a posse of hard core critics quickly assembled. Led by Nicholas Pinter and Robert Ishman, both of the University of Illinois, Carbonale, an *ad-hoc* team of critics published a coordinated series of papers to undermine the YDB impact hypothesis. Pinter and Ishman's approach was to claim each of the impact markers were misidentified as other more prosaic materials. Nanodiamonds became grapheme; and exotic melted-and-quenched metallic bits were dismissed as the accumulation of a gentle rain of cosmic dust. Most infuriating, they accused the co-authors of the *PNAS* paper of misidentifying novel carbon spherules infused with nanodiamonds. They claimed they were simply insect feces—or "bug poop," as the press wrote. Aware of the hundreds and hundreds of hours of ex-

pensive, tedious and professional TEM research, it was excruciating for me to see the lab scientist co-authors of the papers accused by less-qualified tomato throwers of claiming diamonds to be "bug crap." I also knew from experience that each of the YDB researchers were too competent and careful to make mistakes of that magnitude.

As science will do in the case of the true advances, however, a wave of confirmation began to build, albeit more quietly. As I have recorded and will continue to refine at the Cosmic Tusk (www.cosmictusk.com), there has been no shortage of major confirmations. To date, there have been 48 papers (**Fig. 2**), talks, and posters by the YDB research group and 16 by independent researchers who confirmed the evidence, although some have speculated about alternate origins, which is a proper part of the scientific debate about a new hypothesis. This wealth of publications overwhelms the 10 papers, talks, and posters by the critics, who frequently claim that no one can duplicate the YDB research. That spurious claim is supported by the science press with an ugly degree of ignorance and dismissal, which seems to be the "new normal" for our increasingly contentious society.

Until Part II...

GEORGE HOWARD is an expert on the phenomena known as Carolina bays. His blog (above) investigates the bays and other impact-related phenomena (both proven and unproven) with a focus on the proposed Younger Dryas Event. Howard is president of Restoration Systems, one of the country's most successful ecosystem mitigation and restoration firms. His background also includes six years as a political staffer in the U.S. Senate where he was taught to write by five-term Senator Jesse Helms.

Decolonizing Pleistocene archaeological research in the Americas

By Paulette Steeves PhD candidate, anthropology

“Academic literature based in decolonizing theory and practices has discussed American archaeology’s colonial habits of inventing the histories of the colonized as a praxis legitimizing the power of the colonizer and illegitimizing the Indigeneity of the colonized.”



“In the world today, there is a common held belief that thousands of years ago, as the world counts time, Mongolian nomads crossed a land bridge to enter the Western Hemisphere, and became the people known as the American Indians. There is, it can be said, some scanty evidence to support the myth of the land bridge. But there is enormous wealth of proof that the other truths are all valid”⁸

American Archaeology has been critiqued by scholars for historical discourses supporting a nationalist construction, and the fields’ exclusion of the “others” whose histories they create. These are histories such as the greatest myth ever told and enforced through American archaeology—the Clovis First paradigm of initial Indigenous peoples’ migration to the Western Hemisphere as being no earlier than 11,200 years ago.

It is not my intention to offer yet another overall critique of the field. However in addressing the need to deconstruct the “Holy Grail” of American archaeological

myths, it is necessary to speak honestly about how this myth became embedded in the dominant discourse.

Academic literature based in decolonizing theory and practices has discussed American archaeology’s colonial habits of inventing the histories of the colonized as a praxis legitimizing the power of the colonizer¹⁰ and illegitimizing the Indigeneity of the colonized.

Foucault discussed the role of anthropological and archaeological knowledge production and the power of discourse in shaping worldviews. He stated that “a discourse is not an innocent intersection of words and things.”⁴ Archaeology has played a leading role in knowledge production upon which the history of the Americas and Indigenous peoples is based. The education of the dominant American populace, designed through historical policies of Indigenous erasure has influenced racial and discriminatory practices which have historically affected and continue to affect Indigenous peoples at all levels of their social and political life.

“Prehistoric archaeology, as practiced upon indigenous cultures, is founded upon and underwritten by a series of deep-seated colonialist and negative representational tropes of Indigenous peoples developed as a part of European philoso-

phies of imperialism over the last 2,500 years.”¹⁰

American archaeological paradigms have historically minimized Indigenous habitation timeframes. This is reflected in the dominant discourse, and guarded Clovis First paradigm claiming first migration at 11,000 to 12,000 YBP. The power and privilege of “official position” structures of American knowledge production such as archaeology, have kept any possibilities of an earlier first migrations to the Western Hemisphere from being accepted as legitimate.⁹ The accepted discourse on the timing of the initial migrations to the Western Hemisphere is a site of struggle within American archaeology which reproduces colonialism through the power of institutional position and authority.

“Scholars have not examined how Western portrayals of Indigenous people have furthered colonialist agendas”¹⁰

Not all American archaeologists or scholars supported the Clovis First paradigm as evidence in the following quote:

“Evidence from a number of archaeological sites distributed in the western part of the hemisphere from the Yukon into South America now indicates a minimum possible date of 40,000 years for the earliest entry

> [Cont. on page 5](#)

Decolonizing American archaeology (cont.)

“The world-renowned African paleontologist Louis Leakey was called a crazy old man when he announced that the Calico site in California dated to at least 200,000 years before present.”

of man into the North American continent”⁶

Historically, archaeologists who claimed they had found sites in the Americas older than 12,000 YBP were called crazy. They were academically demolished, publicly destroyed, and fired. The renowned African paleontologist Louis Leakey was called a crazy old man when he announced that the Calico site in California dated to at least 200,000 years before present.² In discussing the unilinear initial migration theory, Stanford et al, are open regarding the lack of proof.

This unilinear theory of New World origins became so rooted in scientific and public thinking that it evolved into “fact” without the benefit of proof.¹²

In an academic science that seeks to understand early human histories the question becomes why? Why was finding or discussing possibilities of earlier archaeological sites, and habitations a forbidden and academically dangerous pursuit in American archaeology? Why for such a long time were earlier sites in the Western Hemisphere automatically deemed as “controversial” and denied? Why did so many American archaeologists not question or critique the aggressive blocking of academic pur-

suits, and the obvious need to test an untested Clovis First hypothesis? Why the decades of silence and complicity in a field that is built on open dialogue and discovery of the human past?

Archaeology in the Americas



Fig. 1. The author giving a talk titled, “Turning the Earth of a Colonial Terra Nullius,” at the Graduate Student Colloquium—*Indigenous Spaces: Pushing the Boundaries of Histories, Bodies, Geographies, and Politics*—hosted by the Collaborations on Indigenous Studies Project at Columbia University, New York City, February, 15, 2012. Seated at the table is Cree academic, Matthew Wildcat, from Canada. The colloquium was a daylong event with ten speakers from across the United States including Hawaii. Photo: Trevor Reed, Columbia University.

has always demanded a strict adherence to quantitative data and western methodologies. However an untested Clovis-first migration story based on a single lithic (stone tool) technology, and conjecture of migration routes and times were accepted for over 80 years. Why? Likely there are many reasons why, including, but not limited to, historical-social-political processes embedded in American archaeology, contemporary politics and embedded praxis of power, control.

“The older the evidence of human occupation, the stronger the claim to indigeneity.”¹¹

Over the last 30 years archaeologists have published evidence from sites which pre-date 11,000 to 12,000 YBP, such as Monte Verde, Meadowcroft, Pikimachay, and Cactus Hill. My research shows that there are minimally over 600 sites which have been excavated, recorded, dated, and published in both North and South America, that pre date 12,000 YBP.

“If spatial temporal “gaps” exist in the record, if a site is found in an area where none have been found previously, that is 10,000 or 50,000 years older than it “should be”, that is grounds for attention but not for a priori dismissal.”³

Though my research is focused on archaeological site interpretation and the historical debate on the initial peopling of the Western Hemisphere (**Fig. 1**), it intersects with a socio-political process of knowledge production, and contemporary colonization epistemologies of power and control. To allow that Indigenous people have been present in the Western Hemisphere for a much greater time is to solidify their claims to Indigeneity, to support possible ancient ancestral links to homelands and material heritage. According to Gathercole and Lowenthal there are benefits from or denied from relics of the past, these benefits they

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Decolonizing American archaeology (cont.)

When the past is hidden, colonized people are left in an empty void, shattered by the delusions of Eurocentric tenets of belief which deny a legitimacy of civilization prior to colonization."

argue, distinguish the few from the many, the rich from the poor, mainstream from minority and, male from female.⁵

What is often not discussed in anthropology literature is the impact of a sustained denial of history. When the past is hidden, colonized people are left in an empty void, shattered by the delusions of Eurocentric tenets of belief which deny a legitimacy of civilization prior to colonization.

Work at the Derbert archaeological site in Eastern Canada has grown to include the Mi'kmaw community.⁸

"The Mi'kmaw set their highest priorities in understanding their culture and history, to bring healing to both the individual and the community. ... Transferring cultural knowledge, language, and community histories to the next generation is critical to the health and well being of individuals and communities."⁸

There is a well recorded history of ethnocentrism and racial epistemologies in American archaeology. To fully comprehend the Clovis First/Pre Clovis argument requires an open discussion of historical political ideologies in American archaeology. The history of the Indigenous past of the Western Hemisphere is more a product of powerful ideologies based in a colonial past than it is of the known archaeological record. Power to create and write history is the ultimate weapon of oppression.

Further research into the possibilities of deeper time frames for the initial habitation of the Western Hemisphere, emancipated from historical political boundaries,

and rhetoric of processes of colonial nation building, may enrich the archaeological record and expand the global history of human migrations, while offering archaeologists and anthropologists the opportunity to begin to right past wrongs of their predecessors¹ and decolonize their own field.

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¹¹ Scarre, C., G. Scarre, J., Bendremer, and K. Richman. 2006. Human subjects review and archaeology: a view from Indian country. *The ethics of archaeology*. 97-114. New York. Cambridge University press.

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Website:

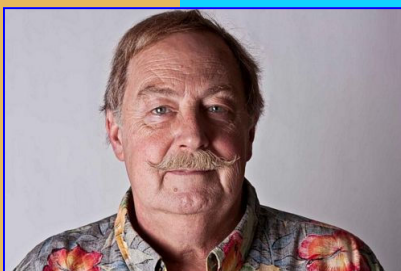
[Western Hemisphere Indigenous Peoples Pleistocene Data Base \(whippdb.com\)](http://WesternHemisphereIndigenousPeoplesPleistoceneDataBase(whippdb.com))

See the *Member news* section page 16 for Steeve's upcoming presentations. She will be giving talks in Anchorage, Berlin, and San Francisco, among other places.

Who was Red Crag Man?

By Richard Dullum

"Around Stope's time in history [turn of the 20th century], the antiquity of man in Britain or Europe was not decided, with as many scientists for as against the idea of pre-glacial human habitation."



In the beginning of this series ([PCN March-April 2011](#)), we were introduced to an artifact called "The Red Crag Portrait" through Michael

Cremona and Richard Thompson's book, *Forbidden Archeology*, a 900-plus

page excavation of the literature of modern paleoanthropology from its beginnings in the 19th through the 20th centuries.

Forbidden Archeology lists and discusses hundreds of scientific reports and professional journal papers which were virtually unknown to the academic community or the public of today, providing evidence for human

habitation on virtually every continent millions of years earlier than evolutionary theory would predict.

The Red Crag Portrait represents one of the discoveries of the past that suggests a truly ancient history of humans on the

planet. It was recovered *in situ* from one of the most important geological formations in Britain, the reddish stained sands, pebbles and clay of the Red Crag Formation. This formation also

contains an abundance of Pliocene fossil mollusks which, from bottom to top, tell the story of a gradually cooling marine environment about to plunge into a Pleistocene Ice Age.

From 5.5-2.5 million years BP (before the present), this shallow marine incursion

over East Anglia laid down layer after layer of sediment and shells, incorporating one—a *Pectunculus glycymeris* specimen—with a

cleverly scratched representation of a smiling human face, arranged on the shell symmetrically beneath a hole in the hinge, very likely for a cord (**Fig. 1**).

Pierced, carved shells have been universally worn through the ages by humans who make their homes near the sea. Henry Stope—who first presented this find—realized that by itself it was not proof of Pliocene Man but awaited discoveries by others that might confirm man's presence during this very early time.

Around Stope's time in history, the antiquity of man in Britain or Europe was not decided, with as many scientists for as against the idea

of pre-glacial human habitation.

According to Darwin, man should have originated in a tropical, lush environment, where most apes live today.

As the science of paleontology uncovered, Europe and Britain had been at one time

before the Ice Ages home to tropical plants and animals.

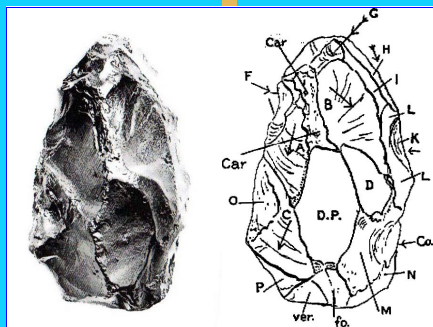
Dryopithecus fontani, an extinct Miocene (15-8 MyrBP) ape believed to be in the line of human evolution

had been discovered in France, Spain and Hungary, not Africa.

Into this unsettled evolutionary picture, J.R. Moir introduced his humanly-worked flints, found beneath (i.e. older than) the Crag deposits in East Anglia, which were comparable to Acheulian industries found elsewhere but dating to at least 2.0-2.5 MyrBP.

Found in the 'brickearth' representing Red Crag deposits, these also occurred at several other sites Moir excavated around Suffolk, near Ipswich, England (**Fig. 3**). Finds of humanly-worked flint tools were made by

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Figs. 2a & b. Example of Rostro-Carinate chipped-flint implement from beneath the Norwich Crag. a.) Fig. 1 excerpted from Plate 1 of Lankester's *Test Specimen of the Rostro-Carinate Industry found beneath the Norwich Crag* (1914), b.) Fig. 4 schematic study of the implement excerpted from Lankester 1914 (*ibid*).

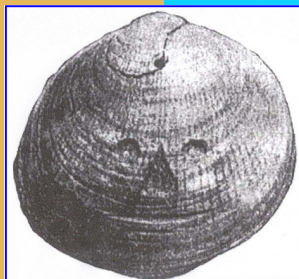


Fig. 1. The Red Crag "portrait" engraved on a fossil bivalve shell (*Pectunculus glycymeris*); photo by Marie Stopes, 1912.

Red Crag Man (cont.)



Fig. 3. Discoveries of ancient tools were made in the clay pits and ancient river gravels in the south-eastern part of England. Suffolk County is in red with Norfolk above and Essex and Kent below.

"What hominid in the human line could have been responsible for Acheulian-like tools nearly a million years previous in the UK?"

Benjamin Harrison of Ightham in Kent to the south of Ipswich in the high terrace river gravels. They were comparable in appearance to Moir's brickearth flints.

Norwich Crag specimens, found further north along the coast, which date to 2.0 Myr BP, contained rostrocarinate hand-axes (**Fig. 2**), judged by Sir Joseph Prestwich to "be indisputably of human manufacture."

A 1923 International Commission was convened to study Moir's finds, concluding the flints were humanly worked and there could be little doubt that man had occupied Tertiary Britain.

It appears that *Homo erectus* made the first Acheulian tools found in Lake Turkana, Kenya, around 1.75 Myr BP, and that these tools show up in Europe and Asia as early as 1.5 Myr BP. What hominid in the human line could have been responsible for Acheulian-like tools nearly a million years previous in the UK?

Moir's finds came from under the Crag formations, as well as in it, so the dating could be even earlier—by millions of years perhaps. Humanly-fashioned stone tools practically diagnostic of the presence of *Homo erectus*, show up in deposits such as the English Red Crag Formation, a Pliocene deposit, with an age of 5.33-2.6 Myr BP!

It would appear that some hominin with the toolmaking abilities of *Homo erectus* was in Britain during the Pliocene. If, indeed it was *Homo erectus*, he was also responsible for the 'Portrait' piece, and, so, shell carving must

be added to his repertoire of accomplishments, exceeding in artistic expression his descendants for the next two million years.

This whole business of deciding who Red Crag Man was, is not helped very much by the mainstream evidence for man's origins, which would need to push the age of *erectus* back at least a million years.

Fortunately for mainstream archaeology, their predecessors did a good job of using only the evidence that fits their evolutionary picture of man's origins, and keeping conflicting evidence out of sight, that is until *Forbidden Archeology* was written.

Now, we have available to us a much more complete record of the discoveries made by many scientists in the formative period of paleoanthropology that point away from the standard evolutionary picture we're all so familiar with today.

With that evidence now in view, we can plainly see a body of work equal to or even exceeding in size, quality, and especially antiquity the body of work that supports the mainstream evolutionary scenario.

We have examined in detail, the work of one such disregarded scientist, J.R. Moir, to find his evidence stacks up equally well to any standard of the profession expected of today's archaeologists. His studies of human origins point toward an origin of humanity lying so deep in the past it boggles the mind.

Moir was one of a host of professionals working at the time who discovered evidence of man in the Pliocene and earlier from all reaches of the globe. Most, if not all

of these were ardent believers in evolution, and understood its principles quite well, but they also understood the relationship of evidence to theory, and that the latter must follow the former.

At some point around the turn of the 20th Century, it was tacitly decided by paleoanthropology as a whole, that evolution was correct as regards human origins.

Java Man was found in 1899, the hailed missing link, the transitional species on the line to man. His age was middle Pleistocene, therefore, any earlier evidence of ancient humans had to have something wrong with it. From then on, conflicting evidence was picked apart by any means possible, and was simply not allowed to stand.

In Cremo's book, many of the previously unknown discoveries, if accepted, would alone furnish enough proof to call into question the mainstream view of human origins. Moir's work may certainly do just that, as well as that of many others. For all the evidence we now know exists about our remote ancestors, the face of Red Crag Man could well look like us.

Reference

Cremo, M. and R. Thompson. 1993. *Forbidden Archeology*.

RICHARD DULLUM is a surgical R.N. working in a large O.R. for the past 30 years as well as a researcher in early human culture. He is also a Vietnam vet with a degree in biology. Dullum has written six prior articles for *Pleistocene Coalition News*.

Under my opinion...**Breaking the Clovis barrier**

By Tom Baldwin

For most of the 20th Century and on into this the 21st the ruling paradigm of American archaeology has been that Clovis Man

reaches of the past.

There is a problem with this tentativeness however, for it has implications that they

do not seem to have thought completely through.

You see, there was a reason for

have had to swim or come by boat.

In essence theirs was a tale similar to that of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Papa Bear's porridge was too hot, Mama Bear's too cold, but thirteen thousand-year old Baby Bear's was just right.

At that time conditions were ripe and there very probably were humans that used that window to migrate to the New World. They may even have been the Clovis People. However, they just were not the first to come.

If one studies archaeological literature today one will find scientists bravely speaking of sites they have found here in the Americas that are 15,000 to 30,000 years old, each of them hoping that their find will be the seminal one, each wanting theirs to be the site of the First Americans.

Therein, however, lies a problem. If men did indeed first get to the America's 15,000 to 30,000 years ago then they made their crossing under the most extreme of conditions because 20,000 years ago ice volumes peaked. Ice volumes were almost at their highest point in the last half million years.

The dates being touted as those of the "new" First

> [Cont. on page 10](#)

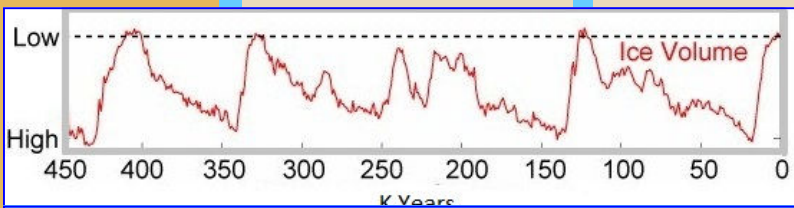


Fig. 1. Times when conditions were at their best for a Bering Strait Land Bridge crossing from the Old to the New Worlds. These are represented by the lowest dips in the figure at circa 13,000, 125,000, 325,000, and 425,000 years ago.

"While Clovis-first is being relegated to the dustbin of archaeology, these scientists are making only tentative steps away from these dates, and seem fearful of straying too far into the dim reaches of the past."

(about 13,000 years ago) was the first to people this continent.

While there are still diehard adherents out there who cling to that theory, more and more its well deserved death knell is being sounded, and the date for human arrival in the Americas pushed back and back.

Main Street archaeologists now freely and openly speak of dates that are thousands of years older than Clovis. This is something they would never have done a decade ago—not if they valued their grants and funding.

Yet, while Clovis-first is being relegated to the dustbin of archaeology, these scientists are making only tentative steps away from these dates, and seem fearful of straying too far into the dim

Clovis. In its own way it made some sense. The archaeologists who had formulated it had talked to their geologist friends who told them that about 13,000 years ago conditions were about as good as they get for man to cross from Siberia to North America across Beringia Land Bridge.

The Ice Age had ended, the weather had warmed, the glaciers were in retreat, but the land bridge had not yet been flooded by the sea.

People could make the crossing on foot and not have to endure an Ice Age winter in the process.

These geologists told the archaeologists that if man came a few millennia earlier, he would have had to face much harsher weather conditions. If he had come a few millennia later he would

Breaking the Clovis barrier (cont.)

"Those times when conditions were at their best for a Land Bridge crossing were about 13,000, 125,000, 325,00, and 425,000 years ago."

Americans relate to a time when a crossing from Siberia to North America was not impossible but would be at its most inhospitable.

So when were conditions ripe for folks to make a crossing?

A study of the Pleistocene shows us that there were several cycles of warming and cooling. When the planet is warming and the glaciers are shrinking—times when the Goldilocks principal is at work—conditions will be at their best for a land crossing from Asia.

If we consider **Fig. 1** we can see that during the last half-million years those times when conditions were at their best for a Land Bridge crossing were about 13,000, 125,000, 325,00, and 425,000 years ago.

The next question to ask ourselves is which of those windows did early man use to make his crossing? That is a subject that geology can't help us with, but on which archaeology can shed some light.

There are two major and extensively studied sites of early man in the Americas. The first is Calico Early Man Site. Test after test have come in indicating that man inhabited the Calico Mountains and the shores of Pleistocene Lake Manix (both near modern day Barstow, California) some

200,000 years ago.

Then in Mexico there are the Hueyatlaco/Valsequillo sites which have been extensively discussed in this newsletter over our last few issues. Dates for the sediments there come back in the 300,000 year range and possibly older—much older.

The First Americans must have crossed during the 325,000 year ago window, and/or maybe the one before that too.

Conclusion

We argue that the breaching of the Clovis barrier should not be heralded by a trickle of ages and sites which are just a few years earlier than the standard mainstream fare. Ice Age cycles argue that man could have been here far earlier than that. So, let the flood gates open.

There are a whole host of Pleistocene lakes that lay across the Great Basin of the United States. There are also huge ancient shell middens in South America that are begging to be studied. The list goes on.

This is the Pleistocene Coalition. We urge that not Holocene soils (0 to 12K years in age) but Pleistocene soils should now become the place where archaeologists go in search of evidence of the First Americans.

We believe that they will find what they are looking

for and in the process show that early man was much smarter and adaptable than is currently believed.

TOM BALDWIN is an award-winning author, educator, and amateur archaeologist living in Utah. He has also worked as a successful newspaper columnist. Baldwin has been actively involved with the Friends of Calico (maintaining the controversial Early Man Site in Barstow, California) since the early days when famed anthropologist Louis Leakey was the site's excavation Director (Calico is the only site in the Western Hemisphere which was excavated by Leakey). Baldwin's recent book, [*The Evening and the Morning*](#), is an entertaining fictional story based on the true story of Calico. Along with Virginia Steen-McIntyre and David Campbell, Baldwin is one of the core editors of *Pleistocene Coalition News*.

The graphics of Bilzingsleben series

Scientific misconduct over ancient artifact studies and why you should care

Part 5: Gestalten

By John Feliks

Like in the old days of structuralist psychology, most approaches in science entail an early stage where everything is broken down into bits and pieces and studied to the nth degree through specialization. It is an excellent method for appreciating the profundity of what makes up even the smallest of structures.



"The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

-Albert Einstein

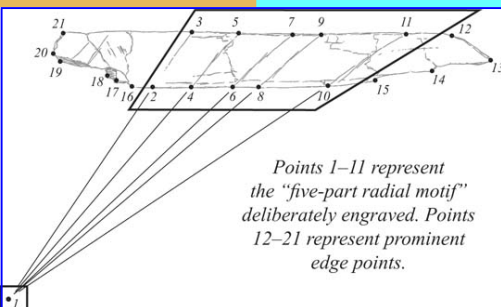
Unfortunately, this is often where 20th-21st Century science stops dead in its tracks. It adds one observation to another yet by some adopted

the sums of parts—like working a jigsaw puzzle with the unreasonable stipulation that one may look only at the pieces and not consider that there might actually be a picture.

In psychology, the idea of looking at the whole picture is known as Gestalt. Similar to Plato's *Theory of Forms* or *Ideas*, Gestalt goes beyond simple or even complex details to focus on the unified whole. Parts are regarded understandable only in context of the whole. Ever since bedazzlement by Darwin, this perspective has disappeared from the science community.

The 400,000-year old mammal-bone engravings from the site of Bilzingsleben in central Germany (Figs. 1-7, on *Artifact 2* of six) are best seen as Gestalts. If one looks at them as

[Cont. on page 12](#)



Points 1-11 represent the "five-part radial motif" deliberately engraved. Points 12-21 represent prominent edge points.

Fig. 1. Numbering system used for the geometric studies of Bilzingsleben *Artifact 2* as seen in Figs. 2-7. The "straight edge studies" presented at the XV UISPP Congress in Lisbon, 2006, were censored by the evolutionary community for five years. Prior to these studies—which mathematically demonstrated a coherent radial whole or Gestalt—all writers without exception described the piece as a series of "parallel" lines.

exploration of meaning or even awareness of possible larger structures that extend beyond

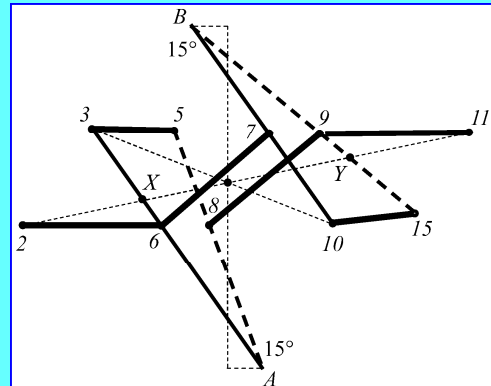


Fig. 2. Two essentially identical triangles in an asymmetric context demonstrating the Gestalt principle of "closure." The numbers are simply abstracted from Fig. 1. See Fig. 7 for the complete Gestalt. Closure is where apparently isolated parts are perceived as complete figures often discovering a symmetry where asymmetry is expected. Study of *Artifact 2*, a 370,000-year old mammal bone engraving from Bilzingsleben, Germany.

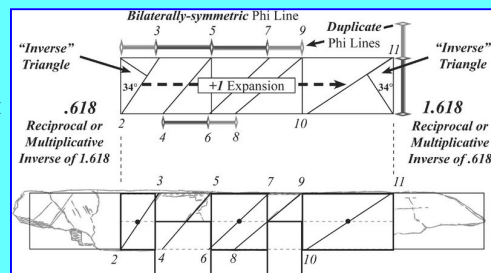


Fig. 3. Inverse triangles in *Artifact 2* showing a mathematical unity. From *The Graphics of Bilzingsleben Part 2, Phi in the Acheulian*. Zoom in for details.

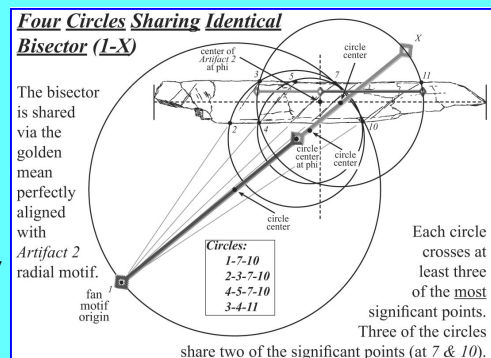


Fig. 4. Four circles sharing identical bisector IX. All such studies presented at the XV UISPP were attempted to be censored on the grounds that they had "no scientific merit." Zoom in for details.

Gestalten (cont.)

individual bits they appear to be meaningless scratches—which is exactly how evolutionary scientists perceive

works are so creative, subtle, and precise that they undoubtedly represent the apex of a very long and complex

if we accept Bilzingsleben *Homo erectus* as people with similar capabilities and temperament as our own rather

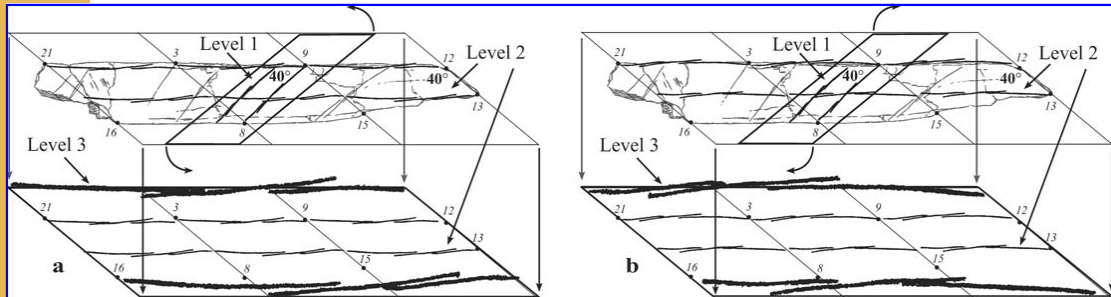


Fig. 5. Two rotational studies (**left rotation; right rotation**) of the same central sequence of engraved lines as in Fig. 2a only here interpreted as parallel as opposed to subtly radial. The test was to see how the central engraved lines related to the whole artifact. These particular studies were partly inspired by J.S. Bach's "mirror fugues," *Contrapunctus 12 & 13*, where one fugue is a retrograde inversion of the other—yet both work. Like in Fig. 2a (the 3D vertical z-axis; 2-11 and 3-10 are the x and y axes—not points X and Y which are a different study—the three axes meeting at what is essentially the geometric center of the artifact), the Escheresque 3D ambiguity in this test was a natural outcome of exploring geometrically without a goal. Further, if one draws vertical lines between like-numbered points one will discover that the upper points reproduce on the lower plane without any deviation despite an illusion otherwise. Finally, the parallel lines, e.g., 3-8, 9-15, transfer exactly without alteration and show the correlation in thirds between parallels and the enlarged three-part motifs of Level 3. This study demonstrates a unity of form in the whole artifact (as it was preserved) where a multidimensional Gestalt transcends the details.

"When Mania and Mania first published their discoveries from Bilzingsleben in English, they unhesitatingly suggested that the artifacts demonstrated not only abstract thinking in Homo erectus but also a 'concept of the world.'"

them (see Part 2: [Censoring the World's Oldest Human Language](#)).

However, if one looks at the engravings in the context of their whole configurations something changes; they quickly reveal multidimensional levels of human ingenuity in the highest artistic, mathematical, and philosophical sense.

Contrary to the ape-man image of *Homo erectus* promoted to the public by the science community while it aggressively *blocks* conflicting evidence, the people who made the Bilzingsleben engravings were working well beyond the obvious. The

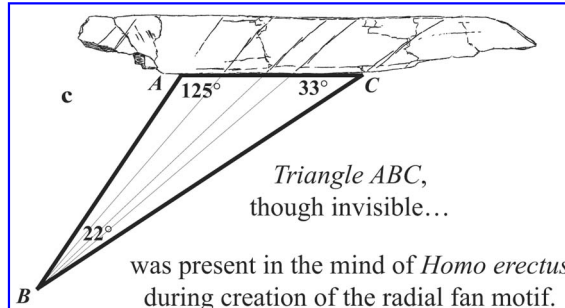


Fig. 6. Applying the Gestalt principle of "closure," invisible triangle ABC was present in the mind of *Homo erectus* during creation of the radial fan motif of Bilzingsleben Artifact 2. This study (UISPP, 2006, *Graphics of Bilzingsleben* presentation Slide #40 and published Fig.12c after censorship) revolves around the idea that all human thought is based on associations between abstract points in physical space with the minimum unit forming a triangulation (a two-point line segment is only perceived as a line from a third vantage point) grasped intuitively by means of mental representations at any conceivable level of *miniaturization, magnification, or reach* ("reach" in the sense that whatever can be conceived of either already exists or will eventually. Triangulations are external or internal such as inverted representation on back of the human eye.

tradition. This tradition no doubt had a developmental history spreading over hundreds of years at least. And

than as a somehow more intuitive race (though possible) then by comparison with our own mathematical and philosophical histories, this was more likely a history of a thousand years.

When Mania and Mania first published their discoveries from Bilzingsleben in English, they unhesitatingly suggested that the artifacts demonstrated not only abstract thinking in *Homo erectus* but also a "concept of the world" (Mania, D., and U. Mania. 1988. Deliberate engravings on bone artifacts of *Homo erectus*. *Rock Art Research* 5 [2]: 91-107).

> [Cont. on page 13](#)

Gestalten (cont.)

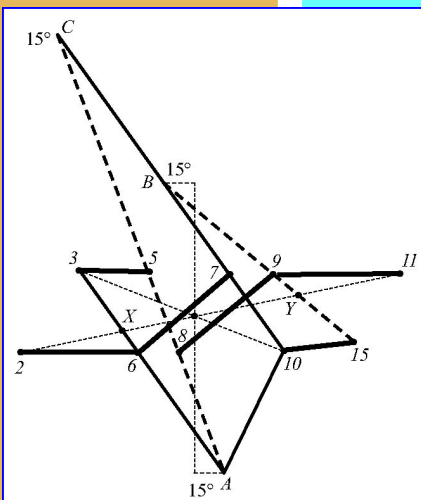


Fig. 7. A completed Gestalt interpretation of Artifact 2 as seen partially in Fig. 1 presented as Slide #46 of 112 at the XV UISPP Congress, 2006. Note that angles A, B, and C are all 15°. This study along with 50 similar was censored from publication for five years by the UISPP (International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences) as well as by Elsevier's *Journal of Human Evolution*—as the team of anonymous reviewers under physical anthropologist and editor Susan Anton, NYU, deemed it of no scientific value. Of course, their *non-scientific motive* is clear to anyone understanding the religious nature of the evolutionary paradigm. This study and all of the other studies presented in *The Graphics of Bilzingsleben* were not treated by *JHE* as empirical evidence which must be taken into account while assessing the intelligence of *Homo erectus* but as a threat to the paradigm. However, I wish to publicly state that I did not submit the studies to *JHE* to taunt them but because of recommendation by leading anthropologist Randall White, Anthropology, NYU, who was already aware of the corrupt actions of the UISPP. It was White who first mentioned anthropology's problems in 1995 when my first geometries were censored by *Current Anthropology*. White was followed by other authorities. Since anthropology's agendas have cultural repercussions outside of anthropology they must be fought especially since they include aggressive promotion of a religion as science.

However, skeptics were not budged. For them, evolutionary predispositions are so engrained as to prevent them seeing anything other than crude scratches by ape people barely conscious in the modern sense of the word. There are no attempts to perceive Gestalts because in this community there is simply no place for them.

Instead, and unbelievably so, critics actually compare the profound Bilzingsleben engravings to the work of chimpanzees. This is despite the fact that the artifacts are from a context including such markers as: "microlithic" tools; wood, bone and antler tools; huts and campfires.

But this is how blinkered perception is engendered when scientific ideology becomes religious. For habitual lack of objectivity, that ideology has spread through the entire scientific community blitting out critical thinking as it spreads. Even intelligent people are afraid to challenge an ideology with

backing from a seemingly unanimous academic hive and are further dissuaded by the added deterrent of fanatic

ics such as outspoken biologist Richard Dawkins who publicly demean anyone challenging the ideology through use of propaganda techniques such as name-calling or *ad hominem*.

The defense against challenging evidence is *this crude* because it is not seen as a part of scientific process but as a *threat* to the paradigm. Real science, of course, doesn't behave this way. The evolutionary community is in trouble on many fronts despite how few realize it and evidence against cognitive evolution is not one of the fronts they were prepared to defend, hence, their only alternative—suppression of evidence.

Why is evidence against cognitive evolution so feared? It is because acknowledging modern-human level creativity in *Homo erectus* people releases them from their use as transitional ape-people; and once that happens the evolutionary community is left with little more than a few enigmatic bones of prehistoric apes and humans held up to support a six million-year evolutionary sequence. Have no concern regarding genetics either; since they have not been able to produce indisputable fossils they attempt to build cases analogically in bits. No scientist should ever accept atomistic proxies to fill in for missing Gestalts. When one 'hominid' is debunked, they simply change focus to another (See, [Ardi: How to Create a Science Myth](#), PCN #3). It is part of a history of promoting an un-testable paradigm through diversion.

When *The Graphics of Bilzingsleben* provided systematic geometric evidence that the engravings were made by intelligent people the studies were *immediately* censored as there is little means

to counter the idea of prehistoric geometers in the light of straight edge proofs. Lines created by use of a straight-edge are impossible to attribute to apes or even ape men. As quoted in Part 1, [Proof of straight edge use by Homo erectus](#), it was predicted to the author *in advance* after the evidence was presented at the XV UISPP Congress that the archaeology community would do everything in its power to discredit the studies as they demonstrated by falsifiable means the community's error in its assessment of *Homo erectus*.

One final word on Bilzingsleben Gestalts. The tolerances applied are not only transparent but many of the claims hold true even if the images are altered. If one goes so far as to change various line lengths or certain point position interpretations or otherwise distorts the images the special qualities are often simply pushed to another location. It is similar to how a fossil clam distorted through metamorphosis is still easily recognized as a clam. This is the concept of Gestalt. The unity of the configurations is high and possibly well-thought-out and tested on wood before committed to the archival medium of bone. Possible draft versions on wood might also explain why these engravings appear to have, for the most part, no errors or corrections.

JOHN FELIKS has specialized in the study of early human cognition for nearly twenty years using an approach based on geometry and techniques of drafting. Feliks is not a mathematician; however, he uses the mathematics of ancient artifacts to show that human cognition does not evolve. One aspect of Feliks' experience that has helped to understand artifacts is a background in music; he is a long-time composer in a Bach-like tradition as well as an acoustic-rock songwriter and taught computer music including MIDI, digital audio editing, and music notation in a college music lab for 11 years.

Member news

This nano-diamond-rich layer is consistent with the Younger Dryas boundary layer found at numerous sites across North America, Greenland, and Western Europe.

Jim Bischoff, geochemist emeritus, U.S. Geological Survey, sent the latest evidence for a comet or asteroid impact in the Americas 12,900 years ago which his 16-member international team just published in *PNAS*

Evidence from central Mexico supporting the Younger Dryas extraterrestrial impact hypothesis

ABSTRACT We report the discovery in Lake Cuitzeo in central Mexico of a black, carbon-rich, lacustrine layer, containing nanodiamonds, microspherules, and other unusual materials that date to the early Younger

biotic changes independently recognized in other regional lake sequences. Collectively, these changes have produced the most distinctive boundary layer in the late Quaternary record. This layer contains a diverse, abundant assemblage of impact-related markers, including nanodiamonds, carbon spherules, and magnetic spherules with rapid melting/quenching textures, all reaching synchronous peaks immediately beneath a layer containing the largest peak of charcoal in the core. Analyses by multiple methods demonstrate the presence of three allotropes of nanodiamond: n-diamond, i-carbon, and hexagonal nanodiamond (lonsdaleite), in order of estimated relative abundance. This nanodiamond-rich layer is consistent with the Younger Dryas bound-



Fig. 1. Sites of the study: Lake Cuitzeo, Mexico; Petén Itzá, Guatemala; La Chonta Bog, Costa Rica; Lake La Yeguada, Panama; and Cariaco Basin. These sequences display evidence for the YD climate episode although not all regional lakes provide such evidence. (SI Supplement Fig.2 of the *PNAS* paper.)

- **Jim Bischoff's team—new paper in *PNAS***
- **Dragos Gheorghiu's Monte Velho, Land-Art and book update**
- **Dragos Gheorghiu new edited book**

(Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences).

The open-access paper is available at:

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2012/03/01/1110614109.abstract>

It can also be downloaded from our webpage at pleistocenecoalition.com

Authors: I. Israde-Alcántara, JL Bischoff, G Domínguez-Vázquez, H-C. Li, PS DeCarli, TE. Bunch, J.H. Wittke, J.C. Weaver, R.B. Firestone, A. West, J.P. Kennett, C. Mercer, S. Xie, E.K. Richman, C.R. Kinzie, and W.S. Wolbach

Dryas and are interpreted to result from an extraterrestrial impact. These proxies were found in a 27-m-long core as part of an interdisciplinary effort to extract a paleoclimate record back through the previous interglacial. Our attention focused early on an anomalous, 10-cm-thick, carbon-rich layer at a depth of 2.8 m that dates to 12.9 ka and coincides with a suite of anomalous coeval environmental and

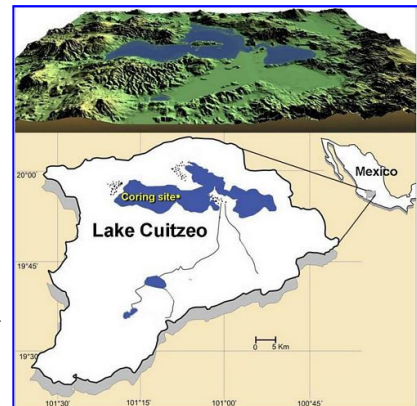


Fig. 2. Lake Cuitzeo, State of Michoacán, Mexico. **Top:** Digital elevation model of the lake. **Bottom:** Map showing lake's location, with drainage basin in white and the coring site in yellow. (SI Supplement Fig. 1 of the *PNAS* paper.)

> [Cont. on page 15](#)

Member news (cont.)

“We have examined multiple hypotheses to account for these observations and find the evidence cannot be explained by any known terrestrial mechanism.”

ary layer found at numerous sites across North America, Greenland, and Western Europe. We have examined multiple hypotheses to account for these observations and find the evidence cannot be explained by any known terrestrial mechanism. It is, however, consistent with the Younger Dryas boundary impact hypothesis postulating a major extraterrestrial impact involving multiple airburst(s) and and/or ground impact (s) at 12.9 ka.

Address correspondence to Jim Bischoff

jbischoff@usgs.gov.

JIM BISCHOFF is Geochemist emeritus, USGS. During his distinguished career of over 40 years he has specialized in the geochemistry of marine and lake sediments, seafloor geothermal systems, hydrothermal ore deposits, and climate change. He has made contributions in carbonate diagenesis, lunar geochemistry, pore-water chemistry, the Red Sea geothermal system, and the plate tectonics of the Gulf of California. His experimental work with

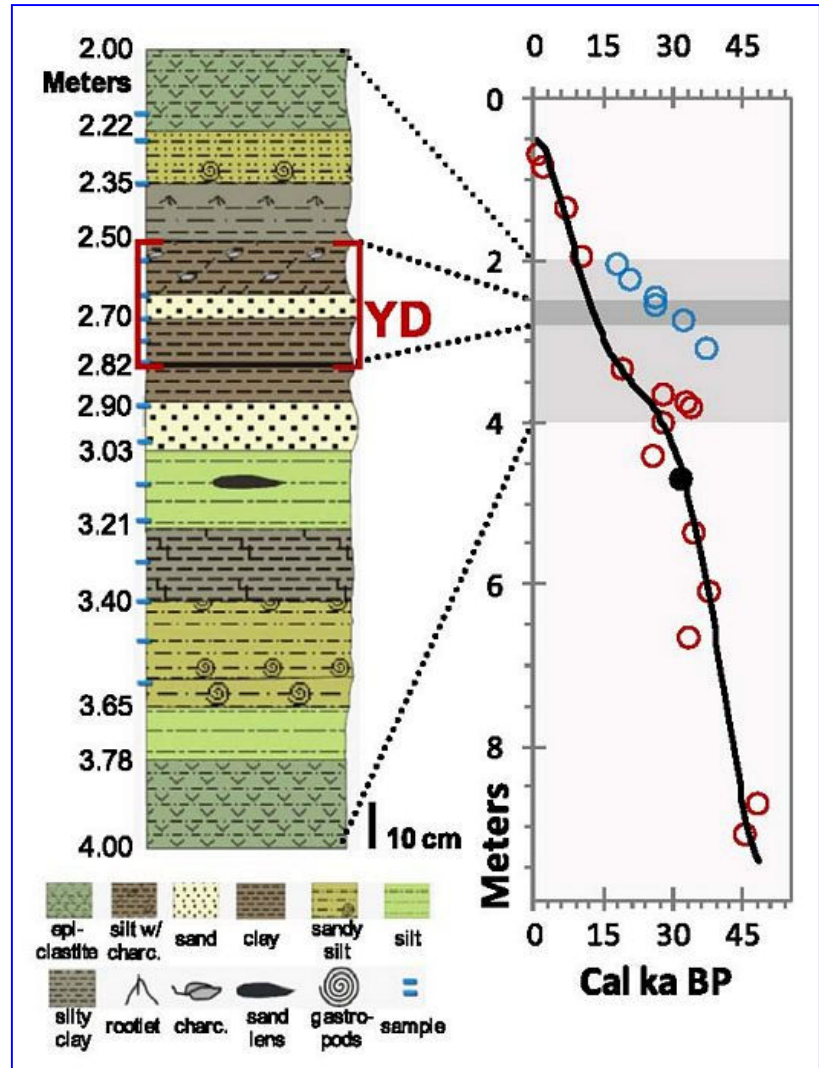


Fig. 3. (Left) Lake Cuitzeo lithostratigraphy from 4.0 to 2.0 m. Red brackets indicate the carbon-rich layer corresponding to the YD. Blue tick marks at left indicate sample depths. (Right) Graph of calibrated 14C dates. A regression polynomial (black line) of accepted dates (red circles) and tephra date (black dot); blue circles are excluded dates. Error bars are less than circle widths. Dark gray band denotes YD interval; lighter gray band corresponds to interval between 4.0 and 2.0 m. Cal ka BP, calibrated kiloannum before present; char, charcoal. (Fig.1 of the *PNAS* paper.)

the “temperature of squeezing effect” is now the basis for all pore fluid diagenetic studies. Bischoff managed the USGS participation in the DOMES program (Deep Ocean Mining Environmental Study) in the equatorial Pacific and organized several oceanographic expeditions to the SE Pacific. Later

work led to the prediction of massive sulfide deposits at seafloor discharge sites of heated seawater and eventual discovery of the famous black smokers and massive sulfides by an expedition using the research submersible *Alvin*.

Member news (cont.)

“For many years, Gheorghiu has attempted to tackle the difficult subject of understanding the spirituality of prehistoric people through experimental archaeology.”

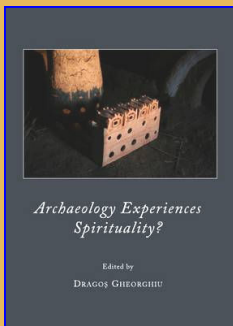
Dragos Gheorghiu—experimental archaeologist and artist and professor of cultural anthropology and

prehistoric art at National University of Arts, Bucharest, Romania—sent an update on some of his latest work.

For many years, Gheorghiu has attempted to tackle the difficult subject of understanding the spirituality of prehistoric people through experimental archaeology. His work involves such universal and timeless human experiences as perceptions of landscape and the experience of fire, to name only two. Gheorghiu’s “Landart Transformations” is a project at Monte Velho, Portugal (photos by Radu Damian). It is a visual representation of a prehistoric hill fort or *castro*. The idea is in part to help observers from a distance get an actual sense of place in three dimensions.



MONTE VELHO: Land Art (The Reconstruction of the prehistoriccastro) by DRAGOS GHEORGHIU. Photo by RADU DAMIAN



Gheorghiu’s second update revolves around his most recent specialist anthropology volume titled, [*Archaeology Experiences Spirituality?*](#) Gheorghiu is the book’s editor and author of one of the chapters. From the Introduction:

“What method should we use to approach spirituality? Are we still dependent on quantitative methods? ...How much of the spirituality of the Past is still accessible today?”

The book offers seven case studies to help support the idea

of an archaeology of spirituality including attempts to approach the “mystic” experience of ancient peoples. The chapter most directly connected to the Pleistocene is the one by Chantal Jègues Wolkiewiez (See *PCN* Issues #14 and 15) on the experience of light at Lascaux Cave, in France.

Although the book discusses the scientific observations of its authors, the primary subject revolves around how the authors’ own experiences of the research provide additional, or

perhaps even primary, insight. Other chapters are by George Nash, Emília Pásztor, Jacqui Wood, and Herman E. Bender.

DRAGOS GHEORGHIU is the author, editor and co-editor of multiple books on archaic technologies as well as the signs and symbols of material culture. He has done pioneering research in the field of cognitive archaeology not only by recreating artifacts and using ancient techniques, but also by re-enacting the use of space, water and fire in attempts to reproduce perceptions common to all people and to help create a more direct connection to the past.

Member news (cont.)

Paulette Steeves presentations on decolonizing archaeology

Upcoming conference presentations on decolonizing archaeology, by Paulette Steeves

April 20th, 2012: Shifting Tides Anxious Borders: A Graduate Student Conference in Transnational American Studies (April 20-21, 2012). Binghamton University; Binghamton, NY. (3:15 p.m. Panel 6: Historical Spaces & Temporality: Paulette Steeves: *Turning the Earth of a Colonial Terra Nullius: Decolonizing Indigenous History*).

September 21-23, 2012: Decolonize the City. Epistemic Racism: American Academies and Museums. Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation; Berlin, Germany (Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung: Gesellschaftsanalyse und politische Bildung e. V. Franz-Mehring-Platz 110243 Berlin).

November 8-11, 2012: Chacmoll Conference: War and Peace: Conflict Resolution in Archaeology. Paulette Steeves: *Turning the Earth of a Colonial Terra Nullius: Decolonizing Indigenous History*. Uni-

versity of Calgary; Alberta, Canada.

November 14-18, 2012: AAA Annual Meeting, Borders and Crossings. San Francisco, CA: Indigenous Spaces: Pushing the Borders and Boundaries of History, Bodies, Geographies, and Politics.

12-Angry Men, starring Henry Fonda

A superb classic film for teaching critical thinking attitude and skills

Juror #10:

"I don't understand you people! I mean all these picky little points you keep bringing up. They don't mean nothin'."

- *12 Angry Men*

12-Angry Men is a film that should be seen by children, older students, and adults "before" they're exposed to mainstream science propaganda. Unfortunately, most modern kids are bombarded with TV programs and the overblown rhetoric of outspoken science personalities before they ever have a chance to develop critical thinking skills. Teach them *first* to think for themselves. -jf

EXCERPTS:

Juror #8:

"According to the testimony, the boy looks guilty... maybe he is. I sat there in court for six days listening while the

evidence built up. Everybody sounded so positive, you know, I... I began to get a peculiar feeling about this trial. I mean nothing is that positive. There're a lot of questions I'd have liked to ask. I don't know, maybe they wouldn't have meant anything, but... I began to get the feeling that the defense counsel wasn't conducting a thorough enough cross-examination. I mean... he let



too many things go by."

Juror #9:

"This gentleman has been standing alone against us. Now he doesn't say that the boy is not guilty, he just isn't sure. Well it's not easy to stand alone against the ridicule of others, so he gambled for support and I gave it to him. I respect his motives. The boy is probably guilty, but - eh, I want to hear more. Right now the vote is ten to two."

Bob McKinney 1933-2011, Classic Valsequillo Project colleague

By Virginia Steen-McIntyre Ph.D, Tephrochronologist (Volcanic ash specialist)

"Bob was an expert in the use of thin-sections and the petrographic microscope.

Thin-sections are paper-thin slices of rock or stabilized sediment samples mounted on glass microscope slides."

Robert G. McKinney, a successful Houston consulting geologist in the oil and gas field and member of the Classic Valsequillo Project team since 1997, died of complications following elective surgery this past December.

Bob was to have written an article for the January-February issue of this newsletter, demonstrating through microscopic analyses of the sediment layers exposed at the Hueyatlaco site that the proposed younger "inset beds" of Mike Waters, used to assign a much younger age for the bifacial tools at Hueyatlaco, do not exist.

Bob was an expert in the use of thin-sections and the petrographic microscope.

Thin-sections are paper-thin slices of rock or stabilized sediment samples mounted on glass microscope slides.

The petrographic microscope is a light-polarizing microscope, where the microscopist can opt to view a



Fig. 1a (above), **1b** (below). Photomicrograph of McKinney slide 6-3-r-03 (SM sample 04-SM-6/3-R, Irwin-Williams' Unit B by marker 9.5 m on Waters' 2004 profile). In the center is a cross-section of a weathered grain of mica with a relatively transparent curving shard of volcanic glass attached to or lying next to its left side. In Fig. 1a, the tan color is a clay weathering product that formed over a long period of time as the fresh crystal fragments decomposed.



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Bob McKinney 1933-2011 (cont.)

"There are no slides of relatively fresh-looking minerals, as one would expect to see if a series of sedimentary beds in a much younger channel deposit occurred at the site."

specimen with either plane-polarized light (light background) or with crossed polarizers (black background) (Fig. 1a, b).

Figure 1 is a photomicrograph of Bob's slide 6-3-r-03 (SM sample 04-SM-6/3-R, Irwin-Williams' Unit B by marker 9.5 m on Waters' 2004 profile). He identifies the sample as a "poorly cemented sandstone with fine glassy matrix." A grain count shows: "20% quartz, 30% feldspar, 0% calcite, 20% detrital glass, 10% ferromagnesium minerals, 20% groundmass." In the center of view is a cross-section of a weathered grain of mica with a relatively transparent curving shard of volcanic glass attached to or lying next to its left side. The mica crystal is composed of very thin layers of mineral and is split in the middle. The middle is filled with the transparent mounting medium. The rest of the view displays weathered mineral crystals and grains of various sizes. The black "blob" at lower right is an opaque mineral of some kind, probably magnetite. Three large crystals can be seen at upper right, upper left, and lower left. They are all deeply crazed, and the fissures are outlined in a dark brown material. The crystals themselves are also coated with a tan substance. In both cases, this is a clay weathering product that formed over a long period of time as the fresh crystal fragments decomposed.

All of Bob's photomicrographs show crystals with an equal degree of weathering

or even more-so. There are no slides of relatively fresh-looking minerals, as one would expect to see if a series of sedimentary beds in a much younger channel deposit occurred at the site.

I will be placing what we have of Bob's thin-section work on [my PC webpage](#), along with my comments on the photomicrographs. A lot of good information there!

Below are some McKinney quotes, taken from e-mails to me and others:

"The clastic material beneath the Hueyatlaco [ash] and a thick section of lacustrine clays is typical of a cross-bedded arkosic, fresh water tuffaceous sandstone.

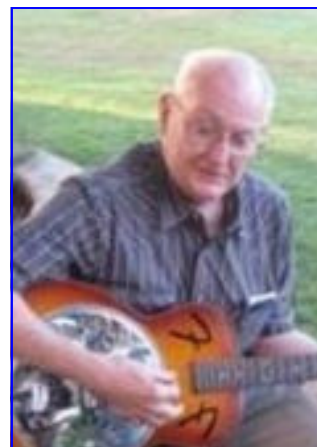
"Samples taken across a supposed channel cut by a [much] younger inset sequence do not show any appreciable differences in grain size, texture or composition that would support that hypothesis. And careful analysis of diatom assemblages across the presumed inset also fail to substantiate the hypothesis. In short, the presence or absence of an inset channel makes no difference as far as age determination is concerned, and attempts to impugn thirty years' work by qualified investigators are not substitutes for good data." -June 2011

"My position is that we (every party) have been kept from discovery of significant facts by systemic malfeasance on the part of

INAH and other interests that, for some reason, do not want the truth to be discovered. Many unsuccessful attempts to get permits, missing or destroyed fossils, direct interference with attempts to bring drilling and logging equip-

ment to the site and other such nonsense have kept serious investigators from discovery of vital data. We are left in the position of lacking sufficient information to reach valid conclusions regarding the age of artifacts at the site. Period.

"From my perspective you, Hal and Sam came the closest to significant discovery only to be challenged and debased by non-scientific interests with little or no understanding of your methods. This is unfortunate for each of you and the furthering of discovery. It is also unfortunate to the point of maliciousness that Marshall [Payn] has spent significant sums of money to promote discovery only to be stymied by self interest on the part of presumed serious investigators. What a show." -June 25, 2011, e-mail to VSM



Avocational archaeology

To clean, or not to clean... that is the question

By Virginia Steen-McIntyre Ph.D, Tephrochronologist (Volcanic ash specialist)

You find a well made worked lithic, a beautiful piece, *in situ* (i.e. in a sediment layer). Do you lovingly remove it from its sediment nest, clean and prepare it? Most of you

hearth, bones, organic artifacts made of wood, rope, or cloth), diatoms, pollen grains, phytoliths (siliceous plant remains), weathering products, carbonate coats, etc. An age for an artifact

what sedimentary layers they came from unless you've taken a series of photos during the removal process. But some evidence for age still may remain—provided you haven't already scrubbed the piece clean!

from the lower levels on the debris fan at the Calico site in California (200kya)¹ is a good example.

It is best in such special cases to remove a block of sediment with your prize still embedded in the middle of it. You can then carefully

remove the "dirt" from the top half of the artifact, but leave it still "*in situ*" and display it that way. By doing so you preserve sedimentary material that specialists like Sam VanLandingham (diatoms) can sample and check under the microscope for evidence of age. There is also the possibility of microscopic amounts of genetic materials being left on cutting edges if the artifact was used to kill or butcher game.

What of artifacts already long removed from the ground? There's no proof

Flagstaff Stone, Arizona

One good example is the Flagstaff Stone (**Fig. 1**), now being re-examined in a modern lab using state-of-the-art laboratory equipment. A small bit of the matrix in which it was found still clings to it, and a series of reddish weathering products cover (are younger than) some scribed markings, definitely not produced by nature. A preliminary microscope exam in the field in the early 1980s suggested the piece was old, "considerably greater than 24,000 years" and perhaps as much as "250,000 - 300,000 years."² It will be interesting to see what results come out of the laboratory study.

Benekendorff piece, Ohle gravel pit, Germany

Then there is the photo of an

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"Some evidence for age still may remain—provided you haven't already scrubbed the piece clean!"



Fig. 1. The Flagstaff stone. Photograph provided by Jeff Goodman.

would, and display it in a collection of your most prized specimens. But in so doing, you may likely have destroyed your only chance for dating the tool!

This is not as important with surface finds, they can be any age, but it becomes critical for an artifact dug from an intact sediment layer. That sediment layer (perhaps at the time only "dirt" to you) may harbor clues to the age of your piece in the form of organic matter for 14C dating (which can involve charcoal from a

To clean or not to clean (cont.)

“A few miles upstream from his [Charlie Hatchett’s] site, a team of professional archaeologists had collected Clovis points from fine-grained sediments overlying (younger than) the gravel layer. That would make the gravel layer as old as or older than Clovis.”

artifact with adhering matrix submitted by Ursel Benekendorff (**Fig. 2a, b**). It was collected from a pile of sorted gravel brought up in a drag-line bucket through water from sediment layers several meters below the modern land surface. Not exactly *in situ* but the next best thing to it. Note the adhering coarse-sand matrix and the reddish iron stain. Before the pit was flooded, such a sediment layer was observed in basal gravels of the Elster glacial moraine.³ Age of the moraine and the artifacts it contains? 423-478 kya.⁴

Hatchett piece, Texas

Finally, there is Charlie Hatchett’s prize piece (**Fig. 3a, b**). Charlie collected it several years ago *in situ*, from a stream-gravel bed in the Austin, Texas area. A few miles upstream from his site, a team of professional archaeologists had collected Clovis points from fine-grained sediments overlying

(younger than) the gravel layer. That would make the gravel layer as old as or

older than Clovis. And the artifacts collected from the gravel layer? They would

have to be older than the gravel layer itself. Perhaps much older!

Charlie didn’t photograph the artifact in place and the vari-

ous steps he used to remove it, so he has no physical proof the tool came from

that Clovis-or-older gravel layer (he knows better now). But he didn’t scrub the artifact clean, either, and that those tiny flecks of pinkish-white carbonate on the flake scars tell an exciting tale!

Here’s what can be said:
* A stream gravel deposit is composed of *older* rock fragments (including artifacts), perhaps much older, that were originally from somewhere else.
* Many rocks in Charlie’s gravel deposit (natural clasts as well as artifacts) show flecks of carbonate on their surfaces, leftovers from a more complete carbonate coat that was physically removed in the rough-and-tumble fast-water currents that brought the gravel to its present position, then dropped it.

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Fig. 2a. Ohle pit stone, showing the obverse or main side and reverse side [Photos by Ursel Benekendorff].



Fig. 2b. Ohle pit stone, showing the obverse or main side and reverse side [Photos by Ursel Benekendorff].

To clean or not to clean (cont.)

“Very important: Flecks of that carbonate coat adhere to the surfaces of flake scars. That means the tool was shaped before the carbonate coat was deposited. ...It usually takes a long time to form a significant carbonate coat.”

* Very important: Flecks of that carbonate coat adhere to the surfaces of flake scars. That means the tool was shaped *before* the carbonate coat was deposited; that is, the flake scars (and artifact) have to be *older* than the time interval when the carbonate coat was forming, possibly by soil-forming processes in a wetter climate than present. It usually takes a long time to form a significant carbonate coat.

All this suggests (but doesn't prove) that Charlie's artifact could be very old, much older than Clovis.

The Austin area has several outcrops of caliche/ calcite and carbonate-rich sediments. I'm not that familiar with the geology there, but it might be interesting for some earth-science and archaeology students from the local university to spend a few weekends in the field checking these outcrops for artifacts.

With good evidence that the Mexican El Horno site is more than 1.3 million years

old⁵ no reason why some type of *Homo* was not living



Fig. 3a. Hatchett piece, obverse and reverse, from the Austin, Texas area. Photos by Charlie Hatchett.

and hunting in Texas a long, long time ago!

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¹ Bischoff, J. 2011, Upholding the 200,00-year-old dates for Calico, *Pleistocene Coalition*



Fig. 3b. Hatchett piece, obverse and reverse, from the Austin, Texas area. Photos by Charlie Hatchett.

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