



Public Lecture Offerings

Making Noise and Leaving a Mess: Why Did Early Hominins Make Stone Tools?

Hominins began making stone tools around 3.3 million years ago. Archaeologists largely agree that hominins made stone tools mainly to process food before eating it and to provide themselves with sharp edges for carving tools from wood and bone. But what if we are missing something? This lecture argues that there may be a hitherto undetected social signaling motive to early hominin stoneworking, as well as one with remarkable parallels in human behavior today.

Neanderthals: How Did They Survive, and Why Did They Become Extinct?

Neanderthals lived between 45,000–200,000 years ago in Europe and western Asia, surviving in the coldest habitats human ancestors ever inhabited. Why they became extinct is one of the longest-running debates in human origins research. This lecture discusses what we know about how Neanderthals survived. It argues that understanding Neanderthal survival is the key to understanding Neanderthal extinction.

Survival Archaeology: A New Perspective on Pleistocene Americans'

"Clovis Culture"

Paleoanthropologists have long debated who early humans and hominins were and how they relate to modern humans, but we know far less about how they survived long enough to reproduce. This lecture introduces "Survival Archaeology," a new approach that centers on how prehistoric peoples met survival challenges, illustrated through North America's late Pleistocene "Clovis culture."

Classroom Discussion Topics

- 1. Why Should We Study, Learn, and Practice Ancestral Survival Skills?**
- 2. What Will Be the 21st-Century Archaeology's "Big Questions?"**
- 3. Who Are You? How Living Humans Construct Our Identities and What This Means For Prehistoric Research.**