Human Origins

Archaeology 131

Section: J100

Term: 2013 Fall

Instructor: David Maxwell
dma50@sfu.ca
Office hours: Friday 4:30 - 5:20

Discussion Topics: Ape Men? Cave Men? The Missing Link? Lucy? Olduvai Gorge? Many people think that human origins are shrouded in mystery, or far too confusing for the average person to understand. This course is designed to disprove this notion, offering an introductory survey of the basics of human evolution. We begin with a short discussion of anthropology and archaeology, cover excavation and dating techniques, and then evolutionary theory, including a short, non-technical discussion of basic genetics. Modern primates are also covered, prior to an exploration of the human fossil record, beginning with our earliest ancestors some 7 million years ago, and continuing right up to modern humans. We will also discuss modern human variation ("race"), the movement of people into the Americas, ethical issues such as the repatriation of human skeletons, and forensic anthropology.

Grading: Midterm exam #1   35%
Midterm exam #2   35%
Final exam   30%

Required Texts: John Steckley. 2012. Introduction to Physical Anthropology. Oxford University Press. Don Mills, Ontario.

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite: None

Notes: Breadth - Social Sciences/Science

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All students are expected to read and understand SFU&sqts policies with regard to academic honesty and student conduct (S10). These policies are available at the following web address: http://www.sfu.ca/policies/Students/index.html

Deferred grades will be given only on the basis of authenticated medical disability.