

ARCH/BIOANTH LUNCH TALK

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2018, 12:00PM
SOC SCI 1, 261

DR. JASON E. LEWIS

RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROFESSOR - TURKANA BASIN
INSTITUTE, STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

AN EARLIER ORIGIN FOR STONE TOOL MAKING: IMPLICATIONS FOR COGNITIVE EVOLUTION AND THE TRANSITION TO HOMO

The discovery of the earliest known stone tools at Lomekwi 3 (LOM3) from West Turkana, Kenya, dated to 3.3 Ma, raises new questions about the mode and tempo of key adaptations in the hominin lineage. The LOM3 tools date to before the earliest known fossils attributed to Homo at 2.8 Ma. They were made and deposited in a more C3 environment than were the earliest Oldowan tools at 2.6 Ma. Their discovery leads to renewed investigation on the timing of the emergence of human-like manipulative capabilities in early hominins and implications for reconstructing cognition.

Dr. Jason Lewis is a researcher who studies human evolution, archaeology and physical anthropology. He is originally from Pennsylvania and attended the now infamous Dover Area High School, which in 2005-2006 was embroiled in a very important intelligent design/evolution court case. He went on to receive his Bachelors and Master's degrees from the University of Pennsylvania in 2004 and his PhD at Stanford University in 2011. He is a Research Assistant Professor and Assistant Director at the Turkana Basin Institute, and a lecturer in Stony Brook's Department of Anthropology. Jason's research deals with the evidence of human behavioral and morphological evolution through the study of hominin and other mammal fossils. He is co-director, with Dr. Sonia Harmand, of the West Turkana Archaeological Project, which is reconstructing the activities of the earliest stone-tool makers in West Turkana's ancient landscapes. He is also a collaborator with the Koobi Fora Research Project, led by Meave and Louise Leakey.

