

# ARCH/BIOANTH LUNCH TALK

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2019, 12:00PM  
SOC SCI 1, 261

## DR. JAY S. RETI

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### *THE DAWN OF ARCHAEOLOGY: RECONSTRUCTING TECHNOLOGY AT THE 3.3 MILLION YEAR OLD SITE OF LOMEKWI, WEST TURKANA, KENYA*

The field of archaeology begins as early human species leave behind traces of their material culture. Currently, the oldest evidence of hominin cultural material is a stone tool assemblage dating to 3.3 million years ago from the site of Lomekwi in Northern Kenya. This is important because at 3.3 million years old, these stone tools predate our genus, the genus Homo, by over 600,000 years. Prior to the discovery of Lomekwi, many thought that stone tools were characteristic only of the genus Homo, but this discovery pushes stone tool production farther into the human evolutionary past. What behaviors do these stone tools suggest of early hominins? How did foraging strategies change with the advent of lithic implements? How are these early technological strategies related to later stone tool technological systems? This talk will focus on the methods and implications used to reconstruct this early time period of stone tool production and the complex hominin behaviors associated with them.

Dr. Jay S. Reti is a Paleoanthropologist with over a decade of field experience in East Africa. His research focuses on experimental approaches to archaeology in order to understand early stone age technologies, their evolution, and what they can quantitatively say about hominin cultural variability, landscape use, and economic strategies. As the newest



member of the West Turkana Archaeological Project (WTAP), Jay is investigating how the earliest recorded stone tool technology was produced and developing methods to statistically compare these production strategies with later Oldowan production strategies. His previous research into Oldowan stone tool technology from Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania and Koobi Fora, Kenya suggests that complex economic decisions led to early cultural variation in Oldowan producing hominins.