

ARCHE Seminar Series 2023

Dr Emma Finestone presents

“Hominin behavior and ecology during the Oldowan: new insights on early tool–use”

Australian Research Centre for Human Evolution Seminar Series.

Abstract: The ability to make and use stone tools represented a key adaptive shift in our lineage. This likely began by 3 million years ago, when hominins routinely manufactured stone tools to process a wide range of food resources. Although stones have no inherent caloric value, their acquisition became increasingly central to hominin foraging for plant and animal tissue through time. However, many aspects of early stone tool behavior remain unclear, including the taxonomic identity of the toolmakers, their foraging strategies, and the ecological impact of cumulative culture.

Oldowan localities on the Homa Peninsula in western Kenya offer the opportunity to consider unresolved questions about early tool technology. The late Pliocene locality of Nyayanga (ca. 3 – 2.6 Ma) preserves among the oldest examples of Oldowan tools and large mammal butchery alongside the genus *Paranthropus*. Pleistocene localities Kanjera (ca. 2 Ma) and Sare-Abururu (ca. 1.7 Ma) provide evidence of diverse hominin behaviors in grassland-dominated ecosystems. Together, these discoveries contextualize the origins of technology and raise questions about the importance of stone tools beyond the human lineage.



Date/Time *Wednesday 8th November 2023 @ 1pm*

Room *N76_1.04 Seminar Room (Nathan Campus)*