Unit #1: Art of the Paleolithic

Announcements:

• Assignment folders handed out
• Buy your art materials for next Thurs. Questions???
• Unit 1 activities and terms are posted
• Initial questionnaire due next Tuesday.

Hunter/Gatherer lecture
Ice Age Bay Area video
   write up
Paleolithic Cave Art of Europe
Sign up for prehistoric animal groups
   email power points
Unit 1 lecture concepts

Hunter/Gatherers:
characteristics of early hominid groups

Paleolithic Ice age:
Age of Innovation and adaptation
environmental conditions affecting humans
Paleolithic extinctions in the new world

3 European Caves:
description of caves and artwork they contain

Animal rarities:
Cave crisis:
Unit 1 assignments

• **Connections concept map** – Prehistoric era

• **Video write up** – *Ice Age Bay Area*
  – ¾ of a page describing the bay area region 10,000 years ago as presented in the video.

• **Video write up** – *Lascaux Cave Virtual tour*
  – ½ page on your impressions of the caves and what theory stated in the lecture you believe is most valid.

• **Prehistoric Animal Group work** - Art Session #1
  • SRC research notes
  • You image on the cave painting panel
Unit #1 : Art of the Paleolithic

Paleolithic
Cro-Magnon humans
totemism
shamanism
anthropomorphic
Przewalski horse
In the beginning….

- Primates-Our earliest ancestors arrived as far back as 85 mya
- scavenger /gatherers until 1.8 mya
- Prey species without much protection or technology to hunt.
- Nature was an uncontrollable scary place where survival was difficult.
- No means of protection
- Solitary, diurnal and arboreal
HUNTING & GATHERING

Homo erectus 1.8 mya--first true Hunter/gatherer group,
1st to make tools
use of fire- warmth, protection, social interaction, light and cooking
1st to migrate out of Africa
Homo sapiens-- 200,000 years ago the arrival of H. sapiens
Ice Age Environmental Conditions

• Ice Age ~1.8 mya - ~10,000 ya
• World’s water locked into giant glaciers---bringing drought to Africa and most parts of world
• sea levels dropped 400 feet exposing continental shelves
• Change in vegetation:
  Decrease in rainfall caused grasslands and dry forests to develop in “corridors” between ice fields.
• mega-fauna migrations and expansion
Typical of most h/g cultures:

- nomadic
- limited population size
- egalitarian society
- earth wisdom
- few possessions
- subsistence lifestyle...
- marginal land (today)

Photo: Last of the Ona, Tierra del Fuego
HUNTING & GATHERING

Limited impact:
Most h/g cultures did not have much of an impact on their natural environment
But there were exceptions...
Environmental Impact

Burning grasslands: the sixth use of fire

- Altering plant communities—opening up forests encouraging grasslands therefore large herbivores.
- Halting succession and creating edges.
- Disperse prey—collect insect and small mammal species as they fled the fire.
- Increase grass species for food and quality basketry material

Over hunting resulting extinctions of mega fauna:
HUNTING & GATHERING

The Pleistocene (1.8 m to 10 kya) New World mega fauna represents one of the greatest assemblages of animals in Earth’s history.
North American Extinctions

• 15,000 to 10,000 ya -- 85% of large mammals went extinct in North America -- coincided with H. sapien's arrival

• The Americas were the last continent to be populated by humans.

• many went extinct over a period of 400 years.

• N. Amer. Mega species:
  – Giant sloth
  – Saber-toothed Tiger
  – Columbian Mammoth
  – Camelops
Survivors of the Paleolithic Extinction

- California Condor
- California Grizzly Bear
- Jaguar
- Pronghorn Antelope
- Tule Elk
In Australia, over 60 species of large marsupials vanished with the arrival of aboriginal peoples (40-60 kya on).
Hunting and Gathering

Theories of Mass extinction of mega fauna in N. America and Australia:

- Over hunting by humans
- Climate change
- Loss of habitat
- Disease
- Combination of all
HUNTING & GATHERING

- For 99% of our hominid history, we collected the resources we needed directly from the natural environment.

- Today, fewer than 1/10 of 1% of us still follow this lifestyle – marginal lands

- Today the remaining H/G cultures are on the front lines of environmental
Ice Age Bay Area

**video write up:**
After viewing this video write 250 words or half a page giving

- a description of what it must have been like living in California 20,000 years ago.
- What was the SF bay like back then?
- What habitat would you call it?
- What animals did humans hunt?
- What predators did humans have to deal with?
- What evidence do we have?

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ice+age+bay+area
ART of the EUROPEAN
PALEO-LITHIC
ART of the EUROPEAN PALEOLITHIC

In some cases dating back over 32,000 years, these images are among the most beautiful ever made.

(Yellow horse & cows, Lascaux)
Dating the cave paintings

- Extinction of subject matter
- Layering of art work
- By proximity to settlements and fossil evidence
- Radio carbon dating
- Uranium-thorium technique

El Castillo, Spain
ART of the EUROPEAN PALEOLITHIC
S. Africa 8,000 ya

S. America, 10,000 ya

Australia, 40,000 ya?

Indonesia 10,000 ya

India, 30,000 ya

N. American, 1,000 ya
ART of the EUROPEAN PALEOLITHIC

Possible Outline of EUROPE & Western ASIA in the Later Paleolithic Age (35,000 to 25,000 years ago)

Glacial conditions receding

Steppes...

Forests advancing

Water
High land
Very high mountains
ART of the EUROPEAN PALEOLITHIC

• There are 350 cave art sites in France and Spain alone.

• Known cave art sites are those that were most protected from the elements therefore survived

  El Castillo, Spain – 41,000 years old
  Discovered in 1903
The Art of Paleolithic Europe

5 Well-Known Caves that Contain Cave Paintings from the Upper Paleolithic Era

- **ALTAMIRA**
  - Discovered 1868
  - Date of paintings: 14,000 - 16,000 years ago

- **LASCAUX**
  - Discovered 1940
  - Date of paintings: 15,000 - 10,000 years ago

- **COSQUER**
  - Discovered 1994
  - Date of paintings: 27,000 - 19,000 years ago

- **GARGAS**
  - Discovered 1906
  - Date of paintings: 27,000 - 22,000 years ago

- **CHAUVEY**
  - Discovered 1991
  - Date of paintings: 32,000 - 30,000 years ago
ART of the EUROPEAN PALEOLITHIC
Prehistoric animal groups- sign up
Paleolithic Group Project

• HOMEWORK

• Over the weekend, I will email each member of each group a power point with images of how your animal was depicted in the European cave art.

• Download and Look through the images and get a good sense of how they were depicted ie colors they chose, male/female, line drawing? Action? etc. draw your own conclusions.

• Do a google search of your animal ie

• “images of bison depicted in European cave art “

• Make observations and take notes on the artwork you find.

• Each of you will be working in your groups to create a panel of drawings of your chosen animal from these images in the style