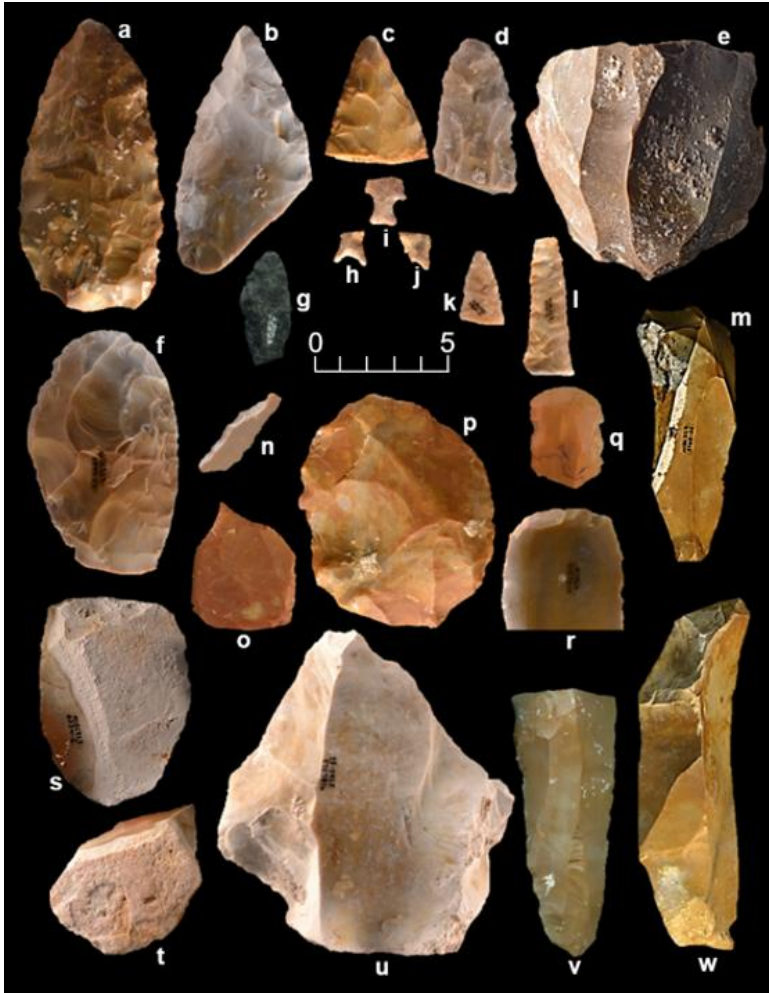


The American Upper Paleolithic and Evidence from the Gault Archaeological Site

Presentation by Archaeologist D. Clark Wernecke, PhD



Since the 1970s the archaeology of the earliest peoples in the Americas has gone through a major paradigm shift. The idea that the Clovis technological culture was representative of the first peoples in the Western Hemisphere has been refuted by numerous sites containing culturally dissimilar stone tools and with dates much older.

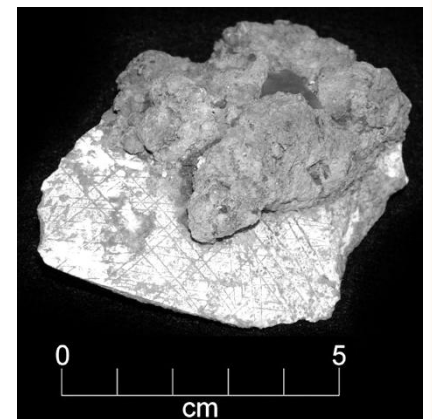
Left: 16,000- to 20,000-year-old tools from the Gault site

Early estimations that those first migrations had occurred 3,000 years ago were replaced by 10,000 and then 13,700 years ago, and now are being pushed back even further, perhaps as early as 30,000 to 35,000 years ago. Several factors suggest multiple migrations occurred over time and the very real possibility that people arrived in the Americas in watercraft, traveling along the coasts.

Right: One of the incised stones from Gault – in this case, a chert flake with a herringbone design, partially covered by calcium carbonate, incised into the cortex

(All photos courtesy of D. Clark Wernecke)

The Gault archaeological site in central Texas is one of those more recent discoveries. It dates as old as 20,000 years ago and is beginning to help us understand the ancient past and build new hypotheses regarding the first modern humans in the Americas.



(See next page.)

Thursday June 18, 2026

7 pm ARIZONA/Mountain Standard Time
(Same as Pacific Daylight Time)

To register for the Zoom program, click on this link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HszxiMafRlaEt96O8xD3Gg

For more information contact Old Pueblo at info@oldpueblo.org or 520-798-1201.

The American Upper Paleolithic . . .

Our Third Thursday presenter D. Clark Werneke, PhD

had a successful career in business before returning to school for archaeology. With an MBA as well as a PhD in Anthropology, Dr. Wernecke has specialized in organizing and administering large projects.

He retired in 2022 as Director of the Prehistory Research Project at The University of Texas at Austin and as Executive Director for the Gault School of Archaeological Research. Currently he is a director of the Texas Historical Foundation and on the editorial boards of several magazines and journals covering history and archaeology.

↓ Area 15 at Gault, a 56-square-meter area excavated down to bedrock (The excavators had fans!)



Photo of Dr. Wernecke

The Third Thursday Series

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's Third Thursday Food for Thought Zoom webinars on the Third Thursday evening of each month feature presentations about archaeology, history, and cultures.

If you would like to be added to Old Pueblo's list of persons who receive semi-monthly email announcements about Old Pueblo's Third Thursday and other activities (and other southwestern archaeology organizations' activities), you can visit www.oldpueblo.org, scroll down to the Subscribe box, and enter your name and email address there. One can unsubscribe from our emailing list at any time.

